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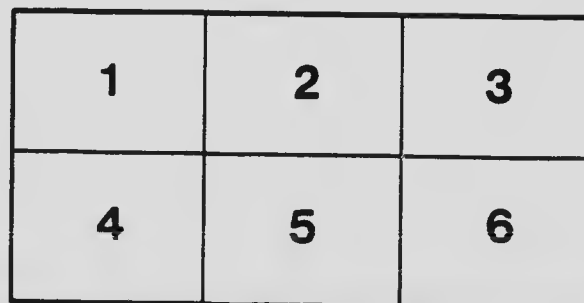
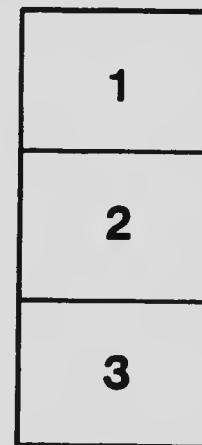
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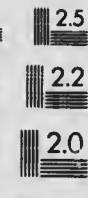
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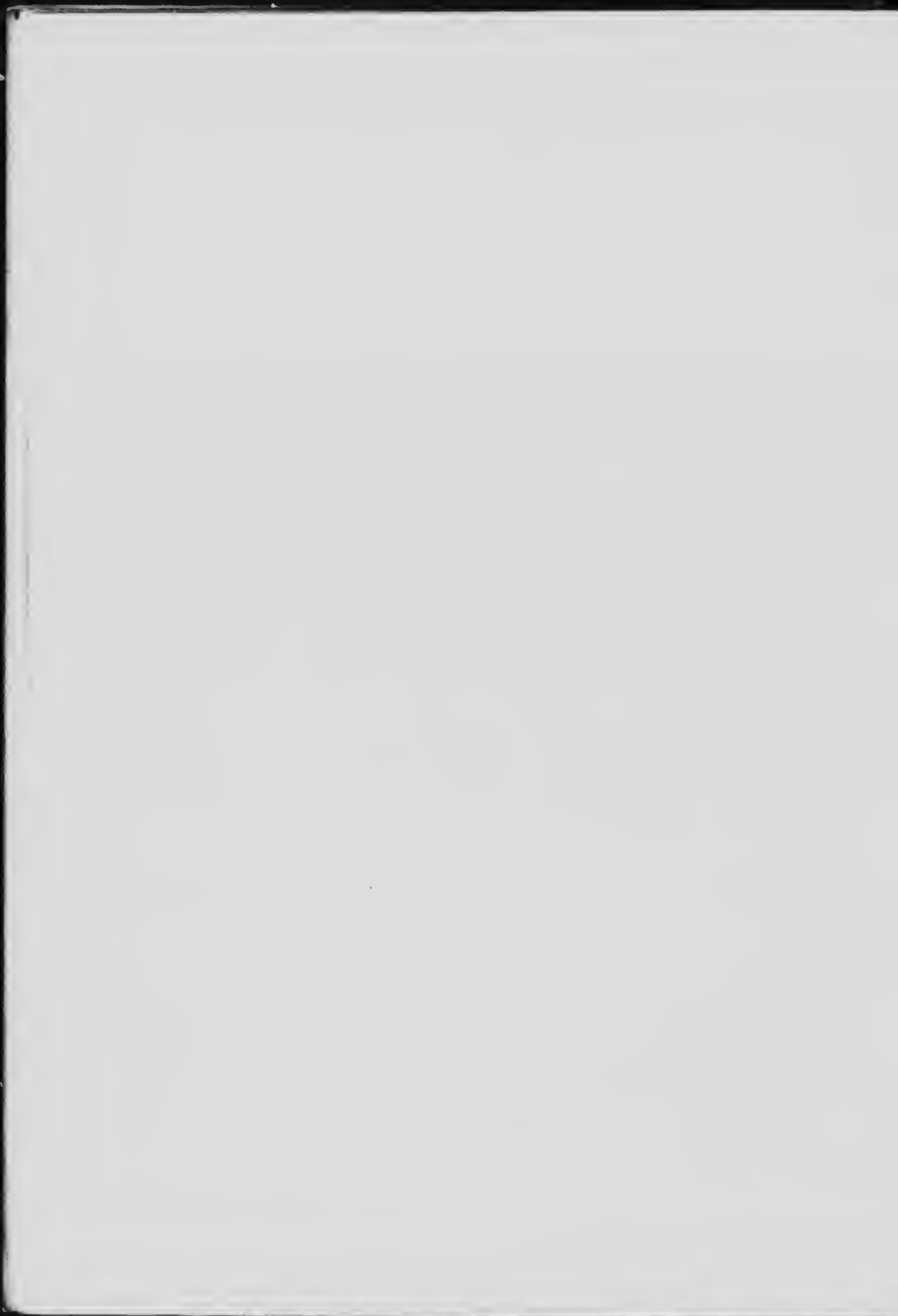
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ÆTAT 36, 1806.

[*Vol. i. Frontispiece.*]

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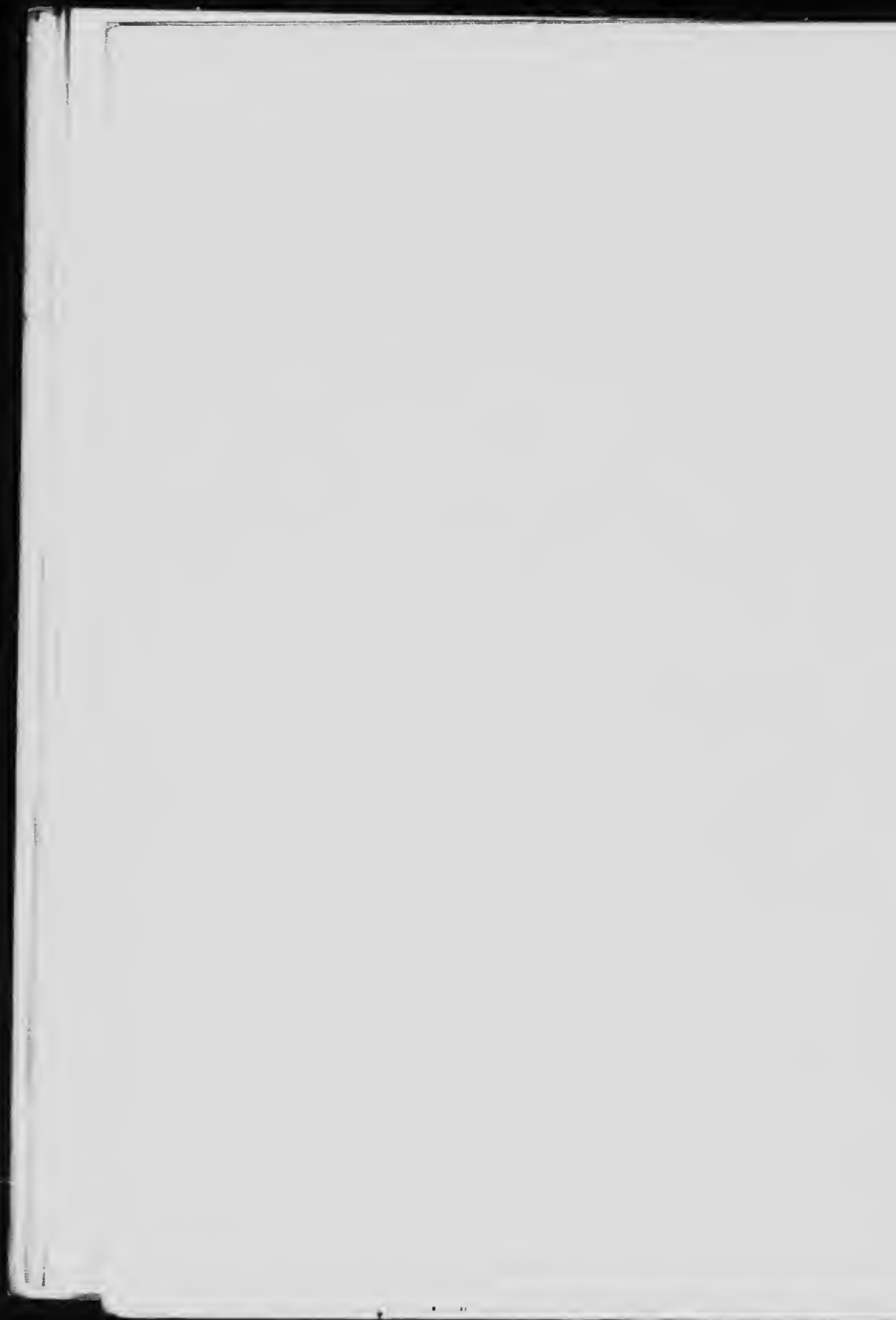
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*To the BRITISH ARMY, in  
profound admiration for its  
past and equal confidence in  
its future, this Memoir of its  
Great Example is dedicated by*

*THE AUTHOR.*



PREFACE TO  
THE SIXTH (ONE-VOLUME) EDITION.

---

THE recognition accorded by the public to the "Life of Wellington," as attested by the large sales of the book in a costly form, has been very gratifying. Nevertheless, both author and publisher have been aware that the high price of the earlier editions has put the work beyond the reach of a large number of readers. They have been frequently urged to prepare an edition in one volume at such a price as would bring it well within the reach of students for examination and others. They have kept this proposal in view, and the time for carrying it into effect seems to have arrived.

It has been matter of consideration whether, in compressing two volumes into one, it would be expedient also to condense the narrative. There are several reasons why this could scarcely be attempted without impairing any value which the biography, in its original form, may be considered to possess.

Chief among these reasons is the fact that the Duke's active career, extending as it did over sixty

years, and covering such varied fields of energy, had already been subjected to severe compression and condensation, before it could be brought into the compass in which I ventured to submit it to the public. Nothing had been admitted to the narrative which did not appear to me germane to the motives and character of one of Britain's foremost sons. To curtail it would be to deprive it of any value greater than an article in a biographical dictionary.

Moreover, to render the story of this life more succinct would have been to weaken what seems to me the chief lesson to be derived therefrom, namely, that nothing short of severe concentration of purpose, involving the sacrifice of much that goes to brighten and sweeten the lives of men, would have served to sustain Wellington in the extraordinary, unflagging energy he applied to the public service, military and civil. Nothing can be achieved without its price in sacrifice; for great achievement the price exacted is proportionately heavy.

Another reason against abbreviation is that even a general sketch of the Duke's military operations could not be made intelligible without the moderate amount of detail given in describing his campaigns in the Netherlands, in India, in the Peninsula, and in France. This must be evident when it is considered that Napier required six large volumes to describe the Peninsular Campaign alone, and even that amplitude dwindles into insignificance before the scale of the *Times* "History of the Boer War."

The edition now presented, therefore, differs only from the others in appearing between one pair of boards instead of two pairs, and in being offered at a price which, it is hoped, may bring it within the reach of all who desire a compendious history of events which gave the map of Europe its present general arrangement, and of the man who exercised a dominant influence upon these events.

HERBERT MAXWELL.

MONREITH, *February*, 1907.





## PREFACE.

---

IT occurred to me one day not very long ago, while reviewing for one of the weeklies a work on Wellington, so slight as to amount to no more than a sketch, what a delightful task it would be to tell the story of such a life, to trace out the sources of such splendid success, and to make plain the effect upon the British army and on public life of such a conspicuous example. The thought, of course, was dismissed immediately by the reflection how many abler pens than mine had been employed over the ground; but it was revived a few weeks later by a curious coincidence. A letter came from my friend, Mr. R. B. Marston, a partner in the firm of Messrs. Sampson Low, Marston and Co., the publishers of Captain Mahan's *Life of Nelson*, proposing that I should undertake a work on Wellington as companion to that admirable work. It was not without very serious reflection and considerable hesitation that I determined to set my hand to it. On the whole it seemed to be a question of competence in the writer to whom such a task should be committed (a question on which certainly I was the last that should pass

opinion), for most readers must feel that the chief biographers of the great Duke have been cramped by nearness in time to their subject, and by the desire to avoid controversial matter during the lifetime of some of the actors. Well-nigh half a century having run since the Duke passed away from the scene whereon, for nearly half a century preceding, he had been the most conspicuous figure, the time seems to have arrived when a just review may be attempted of the value of his life-work, an impartial judgment pronounced on his character, and especially his influence on the land forces of his country estimated.

For these purposes there is abundant material. Besides the earlier narratives of W. H. Maxwell, Brialmont, Gleig, Stoqueler, and others, the memoirs of officers under whom the Duke served, of others who served under him, and of his political colleagues, it is hardly possible to open a book dealing with civil, military, or social affairs in England during the first half of the nineteenth century, without finding constant allusion to Wellington. Then there are Wellington's own military despatches, which, entrusted as they were to an excellent compiler, Colonel Gurwood, must ever hold rank among the most remarkable historical works in existence. There is far more than these. The second Duke of Wellington used to say to his old schoolfellow, the late Mr. John Murray: "I cannot write my father's life, but I can at least see that the material is there for a biographer

some day." Accordingly, with praiseworthy diligence, he set to work and edited fourteen volumes of supplementary military despatches, and eight volumes of civil correspondence, bringing it down to the year 1832. Here, then, are thirty-four volumes, each containing, on an average, about six hundred and fifty closely printed pages—truly he were a bold man who should claim to have extracted all that is of moment from such a vast storehouse.

Special recognition must be made of two recent works on the campaign in the Netherlands, namely, *The Campaign of Waterloo*, by Mr. J. C. Ropes of Boston, U.S. (1893), and *1815—Waterloo*, by M. Henry Houssaye de l'Académie française (1899). These two writers have dealt so exhaustively and impartially with the materials for that part of the history, that they have left very little for their successors to add.

Mr. Marston, not content with setting me to work, has been indefatigable in collecting for me valuable sources of information. In addition to published works, I have been very fortunate in being allowed access to a large quantity of original journals and correspondence. I desire to record my gratitude to the present Duke of Wellington for permission to examine his grandfather's unprinted papers at Apsley House, especially those covering the last twenty years of his life, to give in facsimile the orders pencilled at Waterloo, and to photograph several portraits. His Grace's private secretary, Colonel

Coxon, with unfailing courtesy and patience, has assisted me constantly in my researches.

The Marquess of Salisbury has placed at my disposal the journals of the second Marchioness, together with her ladyship's correspondence, and that of the second Marquess, with the Duke of Wellington. I desire also to express my thanks to Lord de Ros for allowing me to make use of his father's manuscript notes of conversations with the Duke on military matters; to the Hon. Maud Winn for the correspondence of her grandfather, Captain H. Dumaresq; to the Hon. Gavin Hamilton for the journal kept by his grandfather, Mr. Hamilton of Dalzell, in the Peninsula and Netherlands; to the Hon. Mrs. Swinton, whose personal recollections of the Duke have proved invaluable to me, and who has been at the pains to read the proofs of this work; and to very many others who have furnished me with original documents and references to scarce or forgotten works. It has been remarkable how closely these hitherto unpublished writings corroborate the accuracy of such writers as Lord Stanhope, C. Greville, and J. W. Croker, who have reported the Duke's conversation and opinions.

Critics of the Duke's conduct have been as plentiful as chroniclers. In regard to his military career I have not attempted to add to their number, but have been content to notice and compare the opinions of those writers who seem best qualified to pass judgment on the operations of war, although I have

ventured to suggest that the Duke's action as a military administrator has not always been fairly esteemed, considering the circumstances and resources of the time. As a statesman it has been customary to speak of him on the one hand indulgently as an impracticable Tory—on the other, disparagingly as an inconsistent politician. I have attempted to show that, although the long-ingrained habit of military command unfitted him for attaining the first rank among Prime Ministers, it was his influence in Opposition which mainly operated to prevent sweeping political change becoming a vast and destructive convulsion. He lost the confidence and, in concert with Peel, shattered the ranks of his own party; but he retained personal ascendancy therein such as Peel never had, and he used it to establish the rule which has become incorporated in its traditions—that the first object must be to carry on the Sovereign's government, and that Ministers must never be overthrown unless their opponents are ready and able and see their way clearly to undertake the responsibility of office.

In another direction I have endeavoured to correct what I believe to be a false impression. Sir William Napier, who exhibited the rare combination of military genius and experience with the power of brilliant literary expression, was a strong Radical. In him the soldier's natural impatience of departmental method and jealousy of civilian control was intensified—embittered—by distrust of a Tory administration. Those difficulties and delays which must occur in

every protracted campaign were invariably set down by him as the effects of parsimony or mismanagement on the part of the successive Cabinets of Portland, Perceval, and Liverpool, and received unsparing condemnation in the *History of the War in the Peninsula*. Readers of that fine narrative have carried away the impression that Wellington was not properly supported from home, and little attention has been paid to the Duke's frequent assertion to the contrary. I shall esteem myself fortunate if I have succeeded in placing the action of George III.'s Ministers in a truer light, and enabling my countrymen to take a just pride in the resolution and constancy of those statesmen who triumphantly steered the United Kingdom through circumstances of extraordinary difficulty, and brought her to a high position among the nations.

From the earliest times foremost men have become after death the subjects of manifold myth, and stories of every degree of mendacity were sure to gather round such a dominant personality as Wellington. To repeat these, while it might enliven the narrative, would obscure or distort the traits and principles which it has been my chief object to make plain; the only anecdotes, therefore, which have been admitted are such as appear to rest on trustworthy evidence.

HERBERT MAXWELL.

MONREITH, 1899.

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

---

THE opinion has been expressed by some competent critics that in the account of the battle of Waterloo I have understated the effect upon the fortunes of that day wrought by the Prussian attack upon the rear of the French. It was certainly contrary to my intention to do so. Nobody can have studied the campaign of 1815 without becoming convinced that Wellington's movements were all made with regard to those of Blücher, and nothing can be more frank than the Duke's own despatch (quoted vol. ii. p. 88) written on the morning after the battle, in which he attributed "the successful result of this arduous day to the cordial and timely assistance I received" from the Prussians. Had Wellington not reckoned upon and believed in the co-operation of Blücher there are very slender reasons for supposing that he would have attempted, with his composite army, to hold the position of Mont-Saint-Jean. Most probably he would have moved by his right upon his true base—the coast and ships—as afterwards indicated by himself (vol. ii. p. 48). Napoleon



could not have stopped him, because the Imperial Guard, Lobau's corps d'armée, Durutte's division, and Kellermann's cuirassiers did not arrive from Genappe until close on midday.

I am to blame for the accidental omission from the first edition of a plan of the battle-field in the afternoon. This has now been added (vol. ii. p. 87), and will serve, I trust, to give a more correct understanding of the important share in the victory to which our gallant allies were entitled.

H. E. M.

*December, 1899.*

PREFACE TO THE THIRD AND  
FOURTH EDITIONS.

---

IT was inevitable that in a memoir covering more than fourscore years some blunders should have been committed. The exceeding abundance of material, printed and in manuscript, in English and in foreign languages, containing numerous statements and descriptions wholly irreconcilable with each other, proved in itself a source of difficulty in composing an exact narrative. *Inopem copia fecit.*

Of this abundance, perhaps an incident occurring *in limine* may serve to illustrate the embarrassment. The first step I took, after undertaking the work, was to ascertain what books were in my own possession bearing upon the Duke's military and civil career. Living as I was and am in a small house outside my own park, I drove up to Monreith one morning to examine the modest library there. In a couple of hours I returned with fifty-seven volumes, stowed away in the dog-cart!

Since the publication of the earlier editions, I have received very numerous communications, many of them of much value, and to some of the criticisms

therein I have been able to give effect in the text. Some of the few ladies surviving who knew and loved the Duke are of opinion that I have done scant justice to his real kindness of heart, which was veiled by an abrupt mode of expression and a somewhat cold manner. To this I would reply that a just estimate of character can be based only upon a comprehensive survey of the whole life, and not upon a study of the last few years thereof. Further, that any such survey must include intercourse with men as well as with women. To women the Duke was always chivalrously considerate and gentle; the impression made upon persons of his own sex was not so uniformly conciliatory.

Many persons and some press critics have alleged that I have shirked the problem whether the Duke rode over to visit Blücher at Wavre on the night before Waterloo. Apparently these have overlooked the third footnote, vol. ii. p. 45. Had I undertaken the discussion at length of every story resting upon such shadowy foundations as this one, the memoir must have filled not two volumes but ten.

Objection has been taken to the statement that the Peninsular war was undertaken without any trained workmen or mechanics except the few pioneers attached to each battalion. Nevertheless this was the case, and the siege works of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos were executed entirely by the rank and file of infantry of the line. It is true that during the campaign a corps of sappers and miners

was improvised at Chatham under Captain (afterwards Sir Charles) Pasley, that it was first employed at the siege of San Sebastian in 1813, and that in 1854 this corps became the Royal Engineers; but it is no less true that it continued a hand-to-mouth affair until after Waterloo, and that the power of sketching respectably was considered sufficient qualification in almost any officer of other branches of the service to justify his appointment to the new corps.

For one error, of which a new edition affords opportunity for correction, no excuse can be offered. It is the statement, so often made by previous writers, that after the flight of Napoleon from Waterloo, Wellington and Blücher met and embraced at La Belle Alliance at nine o'clock. To disprove this there is the Duke's own letter, published in the *Supplementary Despatches*, x. 509, informing Mr. W. Mudford that it was in the village of Genappe, after ten o'clock at night, that he met the Prussian Field-Marshal. "Anybody," he adds, "who attempts to describe with truth the operations of the different armies will see *that it could not be otherwise.*"

In regard to the statement on page 115, that the 20th Light Dragoons suffered severely from Margaron's more numerous cavalry, I have received information to the effect that Wellesley's despatch is erroneous in this particular. Lieutenant Du Cane of the 20th has left it on record that it was from

xxii *PREFACE TO THE THIRD AND FOURTH EDITIONS.*

the French infantry that his regiment suffered at Vimeiro; that the French cavalry never stirred to meet them, thereby deceiving some of our dragoons, who, believing them to be Portuguese, rode up to them and were taken prisoners.

H. E. M.

*January, 1900.*

## PRINCIPAL AUTHORITIES QUOTED

### *Manuscript.*

ABBREVIATED REFERENCE.	DESCRIPTION.
<i>Apsley House MSS.</i> . . .	Unpublished correspondence, etc., of the Duke of Wellington at Apsley House, 1833-52.
<i>De Ros MS.</i> . . .	Manuscript notes by William, 20th Baron de Ros, on conversations with the Duke of Wellington, 1836-40.
<i>Dumaresq, MSS.</i> . . .	Unpublished letters from Capt. H. Dumaresq, 9th Regiment of Foot, to his family and friends, 1815.
<i>Hamilton MS.</i> . . .	Manuscript journal kept by Mr. Hamilton of Dalzell, Scots Greys, in the Peninsula and Netherlands, 1814-15.
<i>Salisbury MSS.</i> . . .	Unpublished correspondence between the 2nd Marquess and Marchioness of Salisbury and the Duke of Wellington, with notes of conversation and extracts from Lady Salisbury's journals, 1828-46: from the originals at Hatfield.

### *Printed.*

<i>Belmas</i> . . . . .	Journeaux des sieges faits ou soutenus par les Français dans la Péninsule de 1807 à 1814, rédigé d'après les ordres du Gouvernement, sur les documents existant aux Archives de la Guerre et au Dépôt des Fortifications. Par J. Belmas, Chef de Bataillon du Génie. 4 vols. 1836.
<i>Civil Despatches</i> . . .	Despatches, Correspondence, and Memoranda of F. M. Arthur Duke of Wellington, K.G. Edited by his son, the Duke of Wellington, K.G., in continuation of the former series. 2 vols. 1867-73.
<i>Brialmont</i> . . . . .	History of the Life of Arthur Duke of Wellington from the French of Brialmont, with emendations and additions by the Rev. G. R. Gleig. 4 vols. 1858-60.
<i>Croker</i> . . . . .	The Correspondence and Diaries of the Right Hon. J. W. Croker. Edited by Louis Jennings. 3 vols. 1884.
<i>Despatches</i> . . . . .	The Despatches of F. M. the Duke of Wellington during his various campaigns in India, Denmark, Portugal, Spain, the Low Countries, and France. Compiled by Lieut.-Colonel Gurwood. 12 vols. 1834-38.
<i>Gleig</i> . . . . .	See <i>Brialmont</i> .

xxiv      *PRINCIPAL AUTHORITIES QUOTED.*

ABBREVIATED REFERENCE.	DESCRIPTION.
<i>Greville</i> . . . . .	Journal of the Reign of George IV., William IV., and Queen Victoria. By Charles C. F. Greville, Esq., Clerk of the Council. 8 vols. 1874-87.
<i>Houssaye</i> . . . . .	1815—Waterloo, par Henry Houssaye. Paris. 1899.
<i>Jones</i> . . . . .	Journals of Sieges carried on by the Army under the Duke of Wellington in Spain. By Colonel John T. Jones. 2 vols. 2nd ed. 1827.
<i>Kincaid</i> . . . . .	Adventures in the Rifle Brigade in the Peninsula, France, and the Netherlands. 2nd ed. 1838.
<i>Larpent</i> . . . . .	The Private Journal of F. S. Larpent, Esq., Judge-Advocate-General of the British Forces in the Peninsula. 3 vols. 1853.
<i>Lettres inédites</i> . . . . .	New Letters of Napoleon omitted from the edition published under the auspices of Napoleon III. From the French by Lady Mary Loyd. 1898.
<i>Life and Opinions</i> . . . . .	The Life and Opinions of General Sir Charles Napier, G.C.B. By Lieut.-General Sir William Napier. 4 vols. 1857.
<i>Lockhart</i> . . . . .	Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott. 7 vols. 1837.
<i>Napier</i> . . . . .	History of the War in the Peninsula and in the South of France. By Colonel W. T. F. Napier, C.B. 6 vols. 2nd ed. 1832.
<i>Palmerston's Journal</i>	Selections from private Journals of Tours in France in 1815 and 1818. By Viscount Palmerston, K.G. 1871.
<i>Peel Letters</i> . . . . .	Sir Robert Peel from his private papers. Edited by Charles Stuart Parker. 3 vols. 1891-99.
<i>Recollections</i> . . . . .	Recollections of the Peninsula. By the author of Sketcher in India [Major Moyle Shere-]. 1823.
<i>Ropes</i> . . . . .	The Campaign of Waterloo: a military history. By John Codman Ropes. New York. 1893.
<i>Siborne</i> . . . . .	History of the War in France and Belgium in 1815. By Capt. W. Siborne. 2 vols. 2nd ed. 1844.
<i>Stanhope</i> . . . . .	Notes of Conversations with the Duke of Wellington, 1831-51. 4th ed. 1889.
<i>Stapleton</i> . . . . .	George Canning and his Times. By Augustus Granville Stapleton. 1859.
<i>Suppl. Despatches</i> . . . . .	Supplementary Despatches, Correspondence, and Memoranda of F. M. Arthur Duke of Wellington, K.G. Edited by his son, the Duke of Wellington, K.G. 15 vols. 1858-72.
<i>Tomkinson</i> . . . . .	The Diary of a Cavalry Officer in the Peninsula and Waterloo Campaigns, 1809-1815. By Lieut.-Colonel Tomkinson, 16th Light Dragoons. 1895.
<i>Waterloo Letters</i> . . . . .	Waterloo Letters: A selection of original and hitherto unpublished letters bearing on the operations of the 16th, 17th, and 18th June, 1815, by officers who served in the campaign. Edited by Major-General H. T. Siborne. Abridged edition. 1891.

# CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

## CHAPTER I.

### EARLY YEARS: CAMPAIGN IN THE NETHERLANDS. 1769-1795.

		PAGE
May 1 (?) . . . 1769.	The Colleys and the Wesleys . . . . .	1
	Birth of Arthur Wesley . . . . .	2
	His boyhood . . . . .	3
March 7 . . . . 1787.	Enters the army . . . . .	5
	Elected to the Irish Parliament . . . . .	7
February 25 . . 1793.	Advocates removal of Roman Catholic disabilities . . . . .	7
	Falls in love . . . . .	7
May . . . . . 1794.	Joins the expedition to the Netherlands in command of 33rd Regiment . . . . .	9
September 15. . . .	The affair of Boxtel . . . . .	11
	The retreat through Holland . . . . .	12
	Incompetence of British officers . . . . .	13
March . . . . . 1795.	Returns to England . . . . .	15
	Wesley wishes to leave the army . . . . .	15
June 25 . . . . .	Applies for a post in the Civil Service . . . . .	16

## CHAPTER II.

### INDIAN SERVICE. 1795-1800.

November 15, 1795.	Col. Wesley sails for the West Indies and is driven back . . . . .	18
April . . . . . 1796.	Ordered to East India . . . . .	19
February . . . . 1797.	Arrives with his regiment at Calcutta . . . . .	19
	Projected expedition against Manila . . . . .	18
	Wesley's memorandum on operations against Manila . . . . .	20
	The expedition sails, but is recalled . . . . .	21
1798.	Lord Mornington becomes Governor-General . . . . .	22
	Condition of British India . . . . .	22
	Hostile attitude of Tipu Sultan . . . . .	3
	The Wesleys alter their name to Wellesley . . . . .	23



		PAGE
October . . . . .	Surprise of Hyderabad . . . . .	26
	New treaty with the Peshwá . . . . .	27
February 22 . 1799.	War declared against Tipú . . . . .	27
	General Harris assumes command of the army . . . . .	28
	Wellesley commands the Nizám's contingent . . . . .	29
March . . . . . 1799.	Invasion of Mysore . . . . .	31
" 27 . . . . .	Battle of Malavelly . . . . .	31
April 5 . . . . .	Wellesley meets with a reverse . . . . .	32
" 6 . . . . .	But retrieves it . . . . .	33
" 6-May 4 . . . . .	Siege and capture of Seringapatam . . . . .	34
May 5 . . . . .	Col. Wellesley takes command of Seringapatam . . . . .	35
	Renewed difficulty with General Baird . . . . .	36
	Difficulty with the Company's servants . . . . .	37
	Partition of Mysore . . . . .	37
April . . . . . 1800.	Rising of Dhoondia Waugh . . . . .	39
June 14 . . . . .	Wellesley takes the field against Dhoondia . . . . .	41
September 10 . . . . .	Defeat and death of Dhoondia . . . . .	41
December . . . . .	Col. Wellesley appointed to command expedition against the French . . . . .	42
January 24 . 1801.	But is superseded by General Baird . . . . .	42
May 7 . . . . .	He returns to Seringapatam . . . . .	45
	His discontent . . . . .	46

## CHAPTER III.

## FIRST MARHATTÁ CAMPAIGN. 1801-1805.

1801.	Dissatisfaction in England with Lord Wellesley . . . . .	48
1802.	Threatening posture of the Marhattás . . . . .	50
	Holkar invades the Peshwá's territory . . . . .	51
October 25 . . . . .	Defeats Sindhia and the Peshwá . . . . .	52
December 31 . . . . .	Treaty of Bassein signed . . . . .	52
March 9 . . . 1803.	General Wellesley takes the field against Holkar . . . . .	52
April 20 . . . . .	Captures Poona . . . . .	53
May 13 . . . . .	Restoration of the Peshwá . . . . .	53
June 26 . . . . .	General Wellesley appointed Commander-in-chief in the Marhattá states . . . . .	53
	Negotiations with Sindhia . . . . .	53
August 6 . . . . .	War declared against Sindhia and the Rájá of Berar . . . . .	54
" 11 . . . . .	Capture of Ahmadnagar . . . . .	54
	General Lake's operations . . . . .	55
September 23 . . . . .	Battle of Assaye . . . . .	56
November 27 . . . . .	Battle of Argaum . . . . .	62
December 15 . . . . .	Siege and capture of Gawilghur . . . . .	63
" 17 . . . . .	Peace concluded with Sindhia and the Rájá . . . . .	64
February 5 . 1804.	Dispersal of Marhattá brigands . . . . .	64
	General Wellesley's discontent and resignation . . . . .	65
	Character of the Wellington despatches . . . . .	66

CONTENTS.

XXVII

	PAGE
Wellesley's friendship with Sir John Malcolm ...	68
War with Holkar ... ..	69
November 9 . . . . . Wellesley resumes his command in Mysore ...	70
He receives knighthood and sails for England ...	71
Summary of his Indian service ... ..	71

CHAPTER IV.

THE COPENHAGEN CAMPAIGN—FIRST EXPEDITION TO THE PENINSULA, 1805-1808.

1805.	Sir Arthur Wellesley's one interview with Nelson	75
	He takes command of a brigade at Hastings ...	77
October . . . . .	Receives the colonelcy of the 33rd Regiment ...	77
April 10 . . . . . 1806.	Marries the Hon. Catherine Pakenham ...	79
" 12 . . . . .	Elected member for Rye ... ..	78
	Work in Parliament ... ..	79
March 25 . . . . . 1807.	Fall of "All the Talents" Ministry ... ..	81
	Sir Arthur becomes Irish Secretary ... ..	81
	Disturbed condition of Ireland ... ..	82
	Expedition to Copenhagen ... ..	84
July . . . . .	Sir Arthur Wellesley receives command of a division	85
	Siege of Copenhagen ... ..	87
August 29 . . . . .	Battle of Roskilde ... ..	87
September 2 . . . . .	Bombardment of Copenhagen ... ..	88
" 5 . . . . .	Its capitulation ... ..	88
October 1 . . . . .	Sir Arthur resumes duty as Irish Secretary ...	89
February 1 . . . . . 1808.	Receives the thanks of Parliament ... ..	89
	Is urged to return to India ... ..	90
	Scheme for assisting the Spanish revolutionaries in	
	South America ... ..	90
	Unsatisfactory state of the British army ... ..	91
	New relations with Spain ... ..	93
	Napoleon's designs upon that country and on	
	Portugal ... ..	93
March . . . . .	Abdication of Charles IV. of Spain ... ..	94
April 25 . . . . .	Sir Arthur Wellesley promoted to Lieut.-General	97
May 5 . . . . .	Napoleon abolishes the Bourbon dynasty in Spain	95
	Resistance of the Spanish people ... ..	95
	Joseph Buonaparte made King of Spain ... ..	95
	Insurrection in the Provin. . . . .	96
June . . . . .	Sir Arthur Wellesley appointed to command an	
	expedition to the Peninsula ... ..	97
	Interesting conversation with J. W. Croker ...	97
July 20 . . . . .	Sir A. Wellesley arrives at Coruña ... ..	98
	Ferocious character of the war ... ..	101

## CHAPTER V.

## CAMPAIGN OF VIMEIRO. 1808.

		PAGE
July . . . . .	1808. The expedition is reinforced . . . . .	103
" 14 . . . . .	Surrender of Dupont at Baylen . . . . .	104
" 30 . . . . .	Sir A. Wellesley superseded in command . . . . .	104
	Flight of King Joseph from Madrid . . . . .	104
August 1-5 . . . . .	The British army disembarks in the Mondego . . . . .	105
	Difficulties with the Portuguese authorities . . . . .	106
" 13 . . . . .	Advance of the British army . . . . .	107
" 17 . . . . .	Combat at Roliça . . . . .	110
" 20 . . . . .	Arrival of Sir H. Burrard . . . . .	112
" 21 . . . . .	Battle of Vimeiro . . . . .	113
	After the victory, Sir Hew Dalrymple arrives in command . . . . .	117
" 30 . . . . .	The Convention of Cintra . . . . .	118
September 10 . . . . .	Evacuation of Lisbon by the French . . . . .	119
	Political settlement of Portugal . . . . .	120
" 17 . . . . .	Sir A. Wellesley returns to England . . . . .	121
	Dissatisfaction caused by the Convention of Cintra . . . . .	121
November 14 . . . . .	Court of Inquiry on the Generals . . . . .	123
December 29 . . . . .	Its report and finding . . . . .	125

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE CAMPAIGN OF TALAVERA. 1808-1809.

September . . . . .	1808. Napoleon sends reinforcements to the Peninsula . . . . .	129
December 4 . . . . .	He enters Madrid in person . . . . .	130
	Sir John Moore takes the field . . . . .	131
" 23 . . . . .	He begins his retreat . . . . .	132
January 16 . . . . .	1809. Battle of Coruña . . . . .	132
" 9 . . . . .	Treaty between Great Britain and Spain . . . . .	135
	The position in Portugal . . . . .	133
April 2 . . . . .	Sir A. Wellesley receives command of a second expedition to Portugal . . . . .	134
	Nature of his instructions . . . . .	135
" 22 . . . . .	Arrives in Lisbon . . . . .	134
" 27 . . . . .	Takes over the chief command . . . . .	135
	Position of the Spanish and French armies . . . . .	135
May 5 . . . . .	Sir A. Wellesley advances against Soult . . . . .	138
	Incident of the French Captain d'Argenton . . . . .	138
	Soult prepares to retreat from Oporto . . . . .	139
" 12 . . . . .	Passage of the Douro and capture of Oporto . . . . .	140
June 27 . . . . .	The British army advances from Abrantes towards Madrid . . . . .	144
	Forces opposed to their advance . . . . .	146
Appendix A . . . . .	"The Marquess Romana" . . . . .	147

CONTENTS.

xxix

CHAPTER VII.

THE CAMPAIGN OF TALAVERA—(continued). 1809.

PAGE		PAGE
103	1809. The expeditions to Walcheren and Southern Italy	152
104	Lavish expenditure on the war by the British	
104	Government	151
104	June 27 . . . . . The British army advances from Abrautes	155
105	Difficulties of the British	156
106	July 27 . . . . . Narrow escape of the Commander of the Forces	160
107	" 27, 28 . . . . . Battle of Talavera	159
110	King Joseph holds a council of war	162
112	The Marshals disagree	162
118	Renewal of the combat	163
117	Fine charge of the 23rd Light Dragoons	164
118	Impetuosity of the Guards	164
119	Steadiness of the 48th Regiment	164
120	Retreat of the French	165
121	" 29 . . . . . Forced march of the Light Brigade	166
121	August 1 . . . . . Dangerous situation of the Allies	167
123	" 3 . . . . . The British and Spanish armies separate	167
125	" 4 . . . . . Wellesley crosses the Tagus, and commences his retreat	168
	" 11 . . . . . Defeat of Wilson at Puerto de Baños, and of Venegas by Sebastiani	168
	September . . . . . The British go into cantonments at Badajoz	170
	" 4 . . . . . Sir Arthur Wellesley receives a peerage	171
	Appendix B . . . . . "The conduct of the Spanish armies"	172

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS. 1809-1810.

34	1809. The Marquess Wellesley is appointed British	
35	Minister to Spain	177
34	Lord Wellington acts on the defensive	179
35	Napoleon appoints Masséna to command the army	
35	of Portugal	182
38	January 15 . . 1810. The British army recrosses the Tagus	183
38	March . . . . . The Hon. H. Wellesley succeeds the Marquis Wel-	
39	lesley as Ambassador to Spain	179
40	Wellington calls the whole Portuguese population	
	to arms	186
	Ferocious character of the war	187
41	June . . . . . Masséna invests Ciudad Rodrigo	189
46	July 11 . . . . . Fall of Ciudad Rodrigo	189
47	" 24 . . . . . General Craufurd disregards his orders, and jeopardises his division	190
	August 27 . . . . . Capitulation of Almeida to the French	191

	PAGE
	191
	191
September 10 . . . . .	193
"    27 . . . . .	195
	198
	199
	200
October . . . . .	203
November 14 . . . . .	204

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE OVERTHROW OF MASSÉ 1810-1811.

1810.	Position and condition of the two armies . . . . .	209
December 21 . . . . .	Soult moves north to support Masséna . . . . .	211
January 27 . . . . . 1811.	He invests Badajoz . . . . .	211
March 5 . . . . .	Masséna retreats from Santarem . . . . .	212
"    11 . . . . .	Treasonable surrender of Badajoz . . . . .	211
	Usefulness of Portuguese spies . . . . .	216
	Smartness of British cavalry in reconnoitring . . . . .	216
"    . . . . .	Soult returns to the South . . . . .	217
"    15 . . . . .	Affair at Foz d'Aronee . . . . .	215
	Dissension among the French commanders . . . . .	219
"    22 . . . . .	Marshal Ney removed from his command . . . . .	220
"    29 . . . . .	Attack and capture of Guarda by the Allies . . . . .	220
April 3 . . . . .	Combat of Sabugal . . . . .	221
"    20 . . . . .	Masséna is driven out of Portugal . . . . .	222
May 2 . . . . .	Wellington leaves his army to visit the Alentejo . . . . .	223
"    4 . . . . .	Masséna resumes the offensive . . . . .	223
"    5 . . . . .	Beresford lays siege to Badajoz . . . . .	233
"    8 . . . . .	Battle of Fuentes de Oñoro . . . . .	226
"    10 . . . . .	Masséna retreats, and is removed from his command . . . . .	232
"    12 . . . . .	Escape of the garrison of Almeida . . . . .	232
"    16 . . . . .	Soult causes the siege of Badajoz to be raised . . . . .	234
	Battle of Albuera . . . . .	234
	King Joseph leaves Madrid and renounces his crown . . . . .	235
"    25 . . . . .	Marmont assumes command of the army of Portugal . . . . .	235
June 12 . . . . .	Reinvestment of Badajoz . . . . .	236
	The siege raised a second time . . . . .	237
	The French retire from Estremadura . . . . .	238
September 21 . . . . .	Wellington blockades Ciudad Rodrigo . . . . .	240
"    21 . . . . .	Marmont advances to relieve Ciudad Rodrigo . . . . .	240
"    25 . . . . .	Action at El Bodou . . . . .	241
	General retreat of the Allies . . . . .	242
	Withdrawal of the French . . . . .	243
	The blockade of Ciudad Rodrigo is resumed . . . . .	244

CONTENTS.

xxxii

CHAPTER X.

SIEGES OF CIUDAD RODRIGO AND BADAJOS. 1812.

		PAGE
January . . . 1812.	Appointment of a new Regency in Spain . . . . .	247
	Changes in the British Cabinet . . . . .	247
" 8 . . . . .	The Allies besiege Ciudad Rodrigo . . . . .	249
" 19 . . . . .	Assault and storm of Ciudad Rodrigo . . . . .	251
	Disorderly scenes after the capture . . . . .	253
February 28 . . . . .	Lord Wellington receives a British earldom and a Spanish dukedom . . . . .	255
	Ife prepares to attack Badajos . . . . .	256
March 16 . . . . .	Third siege of Badajos . . . . .	256
" 25 . . . . .	The Picurina carried by storm . . . . .	257
April 6 . . . . .	General assault on Badajos . . . . .	258
	Escalade and capture of the castle . . . . .	259
	Failure of assault on the breaches . . . . .	260
	Escalade and capture of the San Vincente Bastion . . . . .	261
" 7 . . . . .	Surrender of the garrison . . . . .	261
	Discontent of Napoleon with his Marshals . . . . .	263

CHAPTER XI.

CAMPAIGN OF SALAMANCA, 1812.

May 18 . . . 1812.	Destruction of the bridge at Almaraz . . . . .	273
	Position and strength of the armies . . . . .	273
June 13 . . . . .	Advance of the Allies into Castile . . . . .	275
" 17 . . . . .	They enter Salamanca . . . . .	275
" 17-27 . . . . .	Reduction of the forts . . . . .	276
" 28 . . . . .	Marmont resumes his retreat . . . . .	276
July 20 . . . . .	Wellington outmanœuvres <i>en</i> by Marmont . . . . .	280
" 22 . . . . .	Battle of Salamanca . . . . .	281
	Retreat of the French . . . . .	285
" 23 . . . . .	Fine charge of German cavalry . . . . .	286
October 8 . . . . .	Wellington is advanced to the rank of Marquis . . . . .	287
	Napoleon's anger with Marmont . . . . .	287
	Movements of King Joseph with the army of the Centre . . . . .	289
" 30 . . . . .	The Allies enter Valladolid . . . . .	290
August 10 . . . . .	King Joseph flies from Madrid . . . . .	290
" 12 . . . . .	The Allies enter Madrid . . . . .	291
September 1 . . . . .	Wellington marches from Madrid against Clausel . . . . .	294
" 19 . . . . .	Siege of Burgos begun . . . . .	294
" 22 . . . . .	Lord Wellington appointed Commander-in-chief of the Spanish armies . . . . .	298
	Resentment of Ballesteros and consequent advance of Soult . . . . .	299

	PAGE
October 18 . . . .	Souham, superseding Clausel, advances to relieve Burgos . . . . . 296
" 21 . . . . .	Siege of Burgos raised: the Allies begin their retreat to the Douro . . . . . 297
	Wellington's foxhounds . . . . . 298
November 13 . . . .	Wellington awaits attack on the Arapiles . . . . . 300
" 15 . . . . .	Retreat resumed . . . . . 301
" 17 . . . . .	Lient.-General Sir E. Paget taken prisoner . . . . . 301
	The Allies go into winter quarters on the frontier . . . . . 301
	Disorders and losses of the retreat . . . . . 302
	Wellington rebukes his officers . . . . . 302
March 13 . . 1813.	Festivities at Ciudad Rodrigo . . . . . 302
	Wellington's extraordinary powers of endurance . . . . . 303

## CHAPTER XII.

## CAMPAIGN OF VITORIA. 1813.

	Discontent in England at the progress of the war . . . . . 305
January . . . 1813.	Wellington visits Cadiz . . . . . 307
March . . . . .	Position and strength of the armies . . . . . 307
May 18 . . . . .	Advance of the left wing from Lamego . . . . . 310
" 22 . . . . .	Advance of the centre and left from Freneda and Bejar . . . . . 310
	Retreat of the French . . . . . 310
May 29 . . . . .	Junction of Graham with Wellington at Miranda de Douro . . . . . 311
	Evacuation of Burgos . . . . . 312
June 14, 15 . . . . .	Passage of the Ebro . . . . . 314
" 21 . . . . .	Battle of Vitoria . . . . . 316
	Decisive defeat of the French . . . . . 319
	Wellington is made a Field Marshal . . . . . 322
" 22 . . . . .	Disorderly conduct of the Allies . . . . . 324
July 1 . . . . .	The French are driven across their frontier . . . . . 326
" 13 . . . . .	Soult resumes command of the French armies . . . . . 329
" 25 . . . . .	He forces the passes of Maya and Roncesvalles . . . . . 330
	Assault on San Sebastian repulsed . . . . . 331

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE PYRENEES. 1813.

July 28 . . . . 1813.	First battle of Sorauren . . . . . 334
" 30 . . . . .	Second battle of Sorauren . . . . . 336
August 2 . . . . .	Soult is driven across the frontier . . . . . 337
" 6 . . . . .	Siege of San Sebastian renewed . . . . . 339
" 31 . . . . .	Storm and capture of the town . . . . . 341
	Disorders of the sack . . . . . 341





		PAGE
March 1 . . . . .	Napoleon lands at Cannes . . . . .	389
„ 20 . . . . .	Enters Paris . . . . .	389
	The Hundred Days . . . . .	391
„ 25 . . . . .	The Quadruple Alliance . . . . .	391
April 5 . . . . .	Wellington takes command of the army in the Netherlands . . . . .	392
	Position of the forces of the Powers . . . . .	395
	Strength and character of Napoleon's forces . . . . .	397
	His plan of campaign . . . . .	398
	The Prussian army . . . . .	401
June 13 . . . . .	The Anglo-Belgian army . . . . .	402
Appendix C. . . . .	The Affair of Sultanpettah . . . . .	404

PAGE  
389  
389  
391  
391

392  
395  
397  
398  
401  
402  
404

## CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

### CHAPTER I.

#### LIGNY AND QUATRE-BRAS. 1815.

	PAGE
May 3 . . . . . 1815. Wellington and Blücher assume defensive positions	1
June 12 . . . . . Napoleon leaves Paris ... ..	3
	His skilful manœuvres ... .. 3
.. 14 . . . . . Takes up headquarters at Beaumont ... ..	3
	His plan of campaign ... .. 4
.. 15 . . . . . Crosses the Sambre and captures Charleroi ... ..	6
	Arrival of Marshal Ney ... .. 6
	The Emperor gives him command of the left wing ... .. 6
	And that of the right wing to Grouchy ... .. 7
	Desertion of the French General Bourmont ... .. 7
	The situation in Brussels ... .. 8
	The Duke's orders to the allied army ... .. 8
	The Duchess of Richmond's ball ... .. 11
.. 16 . . . . . Wellington rides to Quatre-Bras ... ..	14
	Inactivity of the French in the morning ... .. 17
	Wellington inspects Blücher's position at Ligny ... .. 19
	And returns to Quatre-Bras ... .. 20
	Battle of Quatre-Bras ... .. 21
	The Emperor recalls d'Erlon and the 1st Corps ... .. 22
	Consequent confusion ... .. 22
	Ney's attack on Quatre-Bras ... .. 23
	Arrival of Picton's division ... .. 24
	Charge of Kellermann's cuirassiers ... .. 25
	The French attack finally repulsed ... .. 26
	Heavy loss on both sides ... .. 27
	Wellington's narrow escape ... .. 28

### CHAPTER II.

#### THE SEVENTEENTH OF JUNE. 1815.

June 16 . . . . . 1815. Confusion in Brussels ... ..	30
	Was Wellington surprised by Napoleon? ... .. 32

	PAGE
June 17 . . . . .	Wellington retreats from Quatre-Bras . . . . . 37
	Napoleon's inactivity and its cause . . . . . 38
	His orders to Marshal Grouchy . . . . . 39
	Cavalry action at Genappe . . . . . 40
	Napoleon's energy in pursuit . . . . . 41
	Great rain-storm . . . . . 41
	Strength of the allied army . . . . . 42
	Strength of Napoleon's army . . . . . 43
	Wellington's communications with Blücher . . . . . 44
	He decides to receive battle . . . . . 44
	Blücher assures him of support . . . . . 45

## CHAPTER III.

## WATERLOO. 18th June, 1815.

8 a.m. . . . .	Position of the allied army . . . . . 54
	The advanced posts of La Haye, Papelotte, La Haye Sainte, and Hougoumont . . . . . 55
8-9 . . . . .	Napoleon prepares to attack . . . . . 57
10 . . . . .	The Emperor's first order to Grouchy . . . . . 60
	The French order of battle . . . . . 62
11 . . . . .	Having marshalled his line of battle, the Emperor returns to Rossomme . . . . . 64
11.30 . . . . .	Attack on Hougoumont . . . . . 65
1 p.m. . . . .	Bülow's corps appears on the French right . . . . . 66
	The Emperor's second order to Grouchy . . . . . 66
1.30 . . . . .	Ney receives the order to attack . . . . . 67
2 . . . . .	Advance of d'Erlon's corps d'armée . . . . . 67
2.15 . . . . .	Bylandt's Dutch Brigade is broken . . . . . 69
	Donzelot is repulsed by Kempt's brigade . . . . . 69
2.30 . . . . .	Death of Sir Thomas Picton . . . . . 70
	Marcoguet is repulsed by Pack's brigade . . . . . 70
2.40 . . . . .	Charge of the Union Brigade . . . . . 71
2.45 . . . . .	Death of Sir William Ponsonby . . . . . 71
2.40 . . . . .	Charge of Lord E. Somerset's brigade . . . . . 71
	Repulse of Durutte's column at Papelotte . . . . . 72
11 a.m.—7 p.m. . . . .	Well sustained defence of Hougoumont . . . . . 72
3.30 p.m. . . . .	Second attack on La Haye Sainte . . . . . 73
4-6 . . . . .	Ney attacks with the cavalry . . . . . 76
4.30 . . . . .	Bülow's Prussian corps enters the field . . . . . 77
5 . . . . .	Engages Lobau's 6th corps, and carries Plancenoit Lord Hill moves up on the right . . . . . 79
	Critical position of both armies . . . . . 78
5.30-7.30 . . . . .	Plancenoit taken and retaken . . . . . 79
7.30 . . . . .	Zieten's Prussian corps begins to operate on the French right . . . . . 80
	Final attack on the Allies . . . . . 80

CONTENTS.

xxxvii

	PAGE
8 . . . . .	Defeat of the Middle Guard . . . . . 84
	General advance of the Allies . . . . . 85
	Rout of the French . . . . . 87
9 . . . . .	Meeting of Wellington and Blücher . . . . . 87
<i>Appendix D</i> . . . . .	The Duke's conversation about Waterloo . . . . . 91
<i>Appendix E</i> . . . . .	The defeat of the Imperial Guard . . . . . 93

CHAPTER IV.

THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION. 1815-1818.

June 19 . . . . .	1815. How the news of victory came to England . . . . . 97
	Napoleon's flight to Paris . . . . . 98
" 15 . . . . .	His surrender to Captain Maitland, R.N., at Rochefort . . . . . 93
" 29 . . . . .	The British and Prussians encamp before Paris . . . . . 93
" 29-July 4 . . . . .	Negotiations for an armistice . . . . . 99
July 3 . . . . .	The Convention of Paris . . . . . 99
" 6 and 7 . . . . .	Occupation of Paris by the allied armies . . . . . 100
" 8 . . . . .	Restoration of Louis XVIII. . . . . 100
	Moderating influence of the Duke upon the Allies . . . . . 102
	Unpopularity of the Duke with the French, and causes thereof . . . . . 103
	Trial and execution of Marshal Ney . . . . . 106
November 20 . . . . .	The army of occupation . . . . . 103
" . . . . .	1817. The Duke appointed chief commissioner of arbitration and finance . . . . . 110
February 10 . . . . .	1818. Attempt to assassinate the Duke . . . . . 114
" 21 . . . . .	The British Cabinet recall the Duke from Paris . . . . . 118
" 25 . . . . .	The Duke's one act of disobedience . . . . . 119
October 30 . . . . .	Evacuation of France by the Allies . . . . . 120
<i>Appendix F</i> . . . . .	Influence of the Duke of Wellington on the character of the British Army . . . . . 121

CHAPTER V.

WELLINGTON AS CABINET MINISTER. 1818-1822.

October . . . . .	1818. The Duke enters Lord Liverpool's Cabinet . . . . . 141
	State of domestic politics in Great Britain . . . . . 143
August 16 . . . . .	1819. The Peterloo riot . . . . . 146
January 29 . . . . .	1820. Death of George III. . . . . 151
February 23 . . . . .	The Cato Street Plot . . . . . 149
	Proceedings against Queen Caroline . . . . . 152
June . . . . .	Popular excitement and mutiny of the Guards . . . . . 153
July 5 . . . . .	Bill introduced to divorce the Queen . . . . . 155
August 17 . . . . .	Trial of Queen Caroline . . . . . 156
	Resignation of Canning . . . . . 157

		PAGE
July 17 . . . 1821.	Coronation of George IV. . . . .	159
	The Duke revisits Waterloo . . . . .	160
August 12 . . 1822.	Death of Lord Londonderry (Castlereagh) . . . . .	163
September 13 . . . . .	The Duke persuades the King to receive Canning to office . . . . .	166

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE FEUD WITH CANNING. 1822-1827.

September . . 1822.	The Congress of Vienna . . . . .	169
October . . . . .	The Congress moves to Verona . . . . .	170
	The Duke and the Quaker . . . . .	171
1822-3.	Good understanding between the Duke and Canning . . . . .	172
1824.	Differences in the Cabinet . . . . .	173
	Recognition of the Spanish-American revolution . . . . .	173
1825.	The Roman Catholic claims . . . . .	175
March . . . . .	Suppression of the Catholic Association . . . . .	178
	The Duke of Wellington's scheme of Roman Catholic relief . . . . .	178
	The Duke of York's declaration . . . . .	180
1826.	General Election . . . . .	180
	Wellington loses the hearing of one ear . . . . .	181
	His mission to St. Petersburg . . . . .	181
December 5 . . . . .	Death of the Duke of York . . . . .	184
January 7 . . 1827.	The Duke of Wellington appointed Commander-in-Chief . . . . .	185
	Fresh differences in the Cabinet . . . . .	187
February 17 . . . . .	Lord Liverpool struck with apoplexy . . . . .	188
April 11 . . . . .	The Duke and five others leave the Cabinet . . . . .	198
" 12 . . . . .	He resigns command of the army . . . . .	198
May 2 . . . . .	Defeuds himself in the House of Lords . . . . .	201
" 21 . . . . .	Renewed offer of the command of the army declined . . . . .	202
	Reconstruction of Cabinet under Canning . . . . .	203
	Defeat of Government on the Corn Bill . . . . .	204
August 8 . . . . .	Death of Canning . . . . .	204
" 13 . . . . .	Lord Goderich becomes Prime Minister . . . . .	206
" 17 . . . . .	The Duke resumes command of the army . . . . .	207

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE DUKE AS PRIME MINISTER. 1828-1829.

January 8 . . 1828.	Resignation of Lord Goderich . . . . .	208
" 9 . . . . .	The King sends for the Duke of Wellington . . . . .	210
	Repeal of the Tests and Corporations Acts . . . . .	216
March . . . . .	The Corn Duties . . . . .	217

CONTENTS.

XXXIX

		PAGE
May 20 . . . . .	Mr. Huskisson resigns . . . . .	219
	And is followed by four other Ministers . . . . .	219
	New appointments in the Cabinet . . . . .	219
	The Clare Election . . . . .	220
August 11 . . . . .	Peel alters his opinion on the Roman Catholic question, but desires to resign office . . . . .	222
January 12 . 1829.	Peel agrees to retain office . . . . .	226
February 1 . . . . .	The King consents to repeal of the disabilities . . . . .	226
" 23 . . . . .	The Attorney-General refuses to draw the Bill . . . . .	227
March 4 . . . . .	Interview of Ministers with the King, and their resignation . . . . .	228
" 5 . . . . .	The King consents to the Bill proceeding; Ministers resume office . . . . .	229
" 21 . . . . .	The Duke's duel with Lord Winchilsea . . . . .	231
" 22 . . . . .	Dismissal of the Attorney-General . . . . .	236
" 31 . . . . .	The Relief Bill introduced in the Lords . . . . .	237
April 2 . . . . .	The Emancipation Bill in the Lords . . . . .	238

CHAPTER VIII.

THE EVE OF REFORM. 1830-1831.

March 26 . . 1830.	Defeat of the Government on the Estimates . . . . .	243
April 5 . . . . .	Defeat of the Government on the Jews Relief Bill . . . . .	244
June 20 . . . . .	Death of George IV. . . . .	246
	The Duke desires to retire . . . . .	248
	William IV. keeps the old Ministry . . . . .	248
	General election . . . . .	251
November 1 . . . . .	Overtures from the Whigs and Canningites . . . . .	252
" 2 . . . . .	The Duke puts down his foot on Reform . . . . .	253
" 15 . . . . .	Defeat of the Government and resignation of Ministers . . . . .	256
" 20 . . . . .	Lord Grey forms a Ministry . . . . .	258
March 21 . . 1831.	The first Reform Bill . . . . .	258
April 19 . . . . .	Defeat of the Government . . . . .	258
	Dissolution of Parliament . . . . .	258
" 25 . . . . .	Death of the Duchess of Wellington . . . . .	259
" 27 . . . . .	The windows of Apsley House broken by the Reform mob . . . . .	259

CHAPTER IX.

THE BATTLE OF REFORM. 1831-1834.

June 24 . . . 1831.	The Second Reform Bill . . . . .	261
October 8 . . . . .	Thrown out by the Lords . . . . .	263
December 12 . . . . .	The Third Reform Bill . . . . .	265

		PAGE
April 6 . . . . .	1832. Passes second reading in the Lords . . . . .	266
May 9 . . . . .	The Government, having been defeated in Committee, resign on the King's refusal to create Peers . . . . .	266
" 10 . . . . .	The Duke undertakes to form a Government . . . . .	269
" 15 . . . . .	Resigns the attempt . . . . .	270
June 18 . . . . .	His great unpopularity . . . . .	271
	Attacked by a mob in the city . . . . .	277
	The Duke in the hunting-field . . . . .	280
	His letter to Miss J. . . . .	290
January . . . . .	1834. The Duke and Sir Robert Peel are nominated for the Chancellorship of Oxford University . . . . .	289
	Estrangement between Wellington and Peel . . . . .	294
	The Duke's difficulties with his party . . . . .	296
August 2 . . . . .	Death of Mrs. Arbuthnot . . . . .	296

CHAPTER X.

AFTER THE STORM. 1834-1839.

July . . . . .	1834. Gloomy apprehensions of the Tories . . . . .	298
November 12 . . . . .	Resignation of Lord Grey . . . . .	301
" 15 . . . . .	Fall of the Melbourne Ministry . . . . .	301
	The King sends for the Duke of Wellington . . . . .	302
	Who becomes First Lord of the Treasury, Home, Foreign, and Colonial Secretary . . . . .	302
	Lord Stanley declines office . . . . .	303
April . . . . .	1835. Sir R. Peel's first Cabinet . . . . .	304
	Defeat and resignation of Ministers . . . . .	306
	The Duke's relations with his party . . . . .	306
	<i>Rapprochement</i> of Canningites and Moderate Tories . . . . .	308
September . . . . .	Municipal Corporations Bill . . . . .	309
June 20 . . . . .	1837. Renewal of coldness between the Duke and Peel . . . . .	311
	Death of William IV. . . . .	315
January . . . . .	1837-8. The Duke's forbearance in Opposition . . . . .	316
June 28 . . . . .	The Canadian Rebellion . . . . .	320
May . . . . .	1838. Coronation of Queen Victoria . . . . .	323
	Resignation of Lord Melbourne . . . . .	323
	The Queen sends for the Duke of Wellington . . . . .	324
	Who recommends her Majesty to lay her commands on Sir Robert Peel . . . . .	324
	The Bedchamber difficulty . . . . .	324
October 15 . . . . .	Lord Melbourne recalled to office . . . . .	326
November 18 . . . . .	Death of Lady Salisbury . . . . .	327
	Sudden illness of the Duke . . . . .	327

CONTENTS.

xli

CHAPTER XI.

THE CORN LAWS. 1840-1846.

		PAGE
January 16 . . . 1840.	The Queen's betrothal . . . . .	328
	Renewed coldness between Wellington and Peel . . . . .	329
May 27 . . . . 1841.	Defeat of the Government . . . . .	332
June 23 . . . . .	Dissolution of Parliament . . . . .	333
	Peel's second Administration . . . . .	333
	The Corn Duties . . . . .	334
	General relaxation of tariffs . . . . .	335
	The Duke's intercourse with early associates . . . . .	336
August . . . . 1845.	The potato disease appears . . . . .	339
November . . . . .	Lord John Russell's manifesto . . . . .	340
December 2 . . . . .	Difference in the Cabinet . . . . .	341
" 5 . . . . .	Sir R. Peel resigns . . . . .	341
" 6 . . . . .	Lord John Russell sent for . . . . .	341
	Peel resumes . . . . .	342
January 4 . . . 1846.	The Duke's letter to Lord Salisbury . . . . .	344
" 22 . . . . .	Peel proposes to repeal the Corn Laws . . . . .	348
February 17 . . . . .	The Duke considers his position, and explains it to Lord Stanley . . . . .	348
June 25 . . . . .	The Corn Bill passes the Lords . . . . .	352
	Defeat of Ministers on the Irish Coercion Bill . . . . .	353
	They resign, and Lord John Russell takes office . . . . .	353
Appendix G . . . . .	"The Duke's principles in Opposition" . . . . .	354
Appendix H . . . . .	"National Defence" . . . . .	356

CHAPTER XII.

LAST DAYS. 1848-1852.

April 8 . . . . 1848.	The Duke's precautions against the Chartists . . . . .	369
" 10 . . . . .	The Kensington meeting dispersed . . . . .	370
" 3 . . . . 1850.	The Duke proposes that Prince Albert should command the Army . . . . .	370
July 2 . . . . .	Death of Sir Robert Peel . . . . .	371
August . . . . .	And of Mr. Arbuthnot . . . . .	372
	The Duke in private life . . . . .	373
	His personal habits . . . . .	380
February 20 . . 1852.	Defeat and resignation of the Russell Cabinet . . . . .	384
" 27 . . . . .	Lord Derby's first Administration . . . . .	384
September 14 . . . . .	Death of the Duke of Wellington . . . . .	385





VOLUME I.  
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

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	TO FACE PAGE
Major-General Sir Arthur Wellesley, K.B., <i>ætat.</i> 36, 1806 ( <i>Frontispiece</i> )	22
Richard, 2nd Earl of Mornington, afterwards Marquess Wellesley	32
Part of Letter to Colonel Gurwood in 1833, in the Duke's handwriting, referring to the affair of Sultanpettah	34
Tipú Sahib, Sultan of Mysore	42
Lieut.-General Sir David Baird, K.C.B.	78
Catherine, 1st Duchess of Wellington	118
The Right Hon. Lieut.-General Sir George Murray, G.C.B., F.R.S., etc., Quartermaster-General of the British Army in the Peninsula	122
Viscount Castlereagh, afterwards 2nd Marquess of Londonderry	142
Lieut.-General Rowland Hill, afterwards Field-Marshal Viscount Hill, G.C.B.	162
Maréchal Jourdan, Author of the Conscription	182
Maréchal André Masséna, Prince d'Essling	214
Ney, Prince de la Moskowa	224
Le Maréchal Bossières, Duc d'Istrie	244
Napoleon I., aged 43. 1812	248
Robert Banks Jenkinson, 2nd Earl of Liverpool	250
Lieut.-General Sir Thomas Picton, G.C.B.	260
Major-General Sir James Leith, K.C.B.	272
Don Miguel Ricardo d'Alava	304
General Viscount Wellington, <i>ætat.</i> 43	310
Lieut.-General Sir Thomas Graham, afterwards General Lord Lynedoch, K.B.	328
Lieut.-General the Hon. Sir Galbraith Lowry Cole, G.C.B.	332
Major-General Lord Fitzroy Somerset, afterwards Field-Marshal Lord Raglan, G.C.B.	346
Lieut.-General the Hon. Sir John Hope, K.B., afterwards 4th Earl of Hopetoun, G.C.B.	386
Alexander I., Emperor of Russia	392
Memorandum, in the Duke's handwriting ( <i>reduced</i> ), of the Allied Cavalry before Waterloo	

VOLUME II.  
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	TO FACE PAGE
Napoleon I., Emperor of the French. 1815 ...	(Frontispiece)
Field-Marshal Von Blücher, aged 72 ...	20
Le Maréchal Grouchy ...	40
Hougoumont ...	66
Orders pencilled by the Duke of Wellington during the Battle of Waterloo to Sir H. Vivian, commanding Light Cavalry Brigade on the Left ...	66
Major-General Sir Denis Pack, K.C.B. ...	68
Lieut.-General the Earl of Uxbridge, G.C.B., afterwards 1st Marquis of Anglesey ...	70
Order pencilled by the Duke of Wellington during the Battle of Waterloo, to Lieut.-Colonel Macdonell, commanding detachment of Guards in Hougoumont ...	71
Order pencilled and sent by the Duke of Wellington, during the Battle of Waterloo, to the Earl of Uxbridge, commanding the Cavalry ...	74
La Haye Sainte, from the South ...	76
Waterloo, June 18, 1815 ...	80
Retreat of the Imperial Guard ...	86
Field-Marshal Gebhard L. von Blücher, Prince of Wahlstaat ...	88
Lady Bagot, Lady Burghersh, Lady F. Somerset, the Duke's Nieces ...	96
Frederick William, Prince of Orange, afterwards first King of the Netherlands ...	116
Arthur, Duke of Wellington, ætat. circa 51 ...	140
The Right Hon. George Canning, M.P. ...	168
Part of Letter from the Duke to George IV., with proposal for new Ministry ...	210
The Right Hon. Sir Henry Hardinge, G.C.B., M.P., afterwards Field- Marshal Viscount Hardinge ...	232
Mrs. Arbuthnot ...	296
The Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, Bart., M.P. ...	304
Le Maréchal Soult, Duc de Dalmatie ...	320
Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington, e. 1846 ...	352
Frances Mary, first wife of the 2nd Marquis of Salisbury ...	374

VOLUME I.

LIST OF MAPS AND BATTLE PLANS.

*Such of the Maps and Plans in this work as are printed by Messrs. W. & A. K. Johnston, of Edinburgh, are given by permission of Messrs. Wm. Blackwood & Sons, of Edinburgh and London. The Map of Belgium (vol. ii. p. 2) is taken from M. Houssaye's "Waterloo," by permission of MM. Perrin et Cie, Paris, and Messrs. A. and C. Black, London, and the Plan of Waterloo (vol. ii. p. 64) has been altered and adapted from one in the same work.*

	TO FACE PAGE
Map of India ... ..	26
Battle of Assaye, fought September 23rd, 1805 ... ..	56
Sketch of the Combat of Rolicca, 17th August, 1808 ... ..	110
Battle of Vimeiro ... ..	114
Map of Spain and Portugal ... ..	134
The Passage of the River Douro by Sir Arthur Wellesley, May 12th, 1809 ... ..	140
Battle of Talavera ... ..	160
Map of Part of Portugal, to illustrate the Defence of Lisbon by the Lignes of Torres Vedras ... ..	184
Battle of Busaco ... ..	194
Battle of Fuentes Oñoro, 5th May, 1811 ... ..	226
Explanatory Sketch of the Operations and Combat of El Bodon ... ..	240
Fortifications of Ciudad Rodrigo ... ..	250
Siege of Badajos ... ..	256
Battle of Salamanca ... ..	280
Siege of the Castle of Burgos ... ..	294
Battle of Vitoria ... ..	314
Siege of St. Sebastian ... ..	326
Battle of Sorauren, 28th July, 1813 ... ..	334
Attack of the French Entrenched Position on the Nivelle ... ..	354
Battles in Front of Bayonne ... ..	358
Battle of Orthes ... ..	364
Battle of Toulouse ... ..	370

VOLUME II.

LIST OF MAPS AND BATTLE PLANS.



\* \* Such of the Maps and Plans in this work as are printed by Messrs. W. & A. K. Johnston, of Edinburgh, are given by permission of Messrs. Wm. Blackwood & Sons, of Edinburgh and London. The Map of Belgium (vol. ii. p. 2) is taken from M. Houssaye's "Waterloo," by permission of MM. Perrin et Cie, Paris, and Messrs. A. and C. Black, London, and the Plan of Waterloo (vol. ii. p. 64) has been altered and adapted from one in the same work.

	TO FACE PAGE
Map of the Campaign of 1815 ... ..	2
Battle of Quatre-Bras ... ..	22
Position of the Armies of Wellington and Napoleon in front of Waterloo	64
Battle of Waterloo, 18th June, 1815, crisis of the Battle ... ..	87

# THE LIFE OF WELLINGTON.

## CHAPTER I.

### EARLY YEARS: CAMPAIGN IN THE NETHERLANDS.

1769-1795.

The Colleys and the Wesleys.	to the Netherlands in command of 33rd Regiment.
May 1(?) 1769. Birth of Arthur Wesley.	September 15. The affair of Boxtel. The retreat through Holland.
His boyhood.	Incompetence of British officers.
March 7, 1787. Enters the army.	March, 1795. Returns to England. Wesley wishes to leave the army.
1790. Elected to the Irish Parliament.	June 25 . . . Applies for a post in the Civil Service.
Feb. 25, 1793. Advocates removal of Roman Catholic disabilities.	
Falls in love.	
May . . 1794. Joins the expedition	

TOWARDS the middle of the seventeenth century an Irish landowner named Garret Wesley married the daughter of another Irish squire of the name of Colley or Cowley. The families thus united were both of English descent, the Colleys, originally belonging to Rutland, having been settled in Kilkenny probably as early as the reign of Henry IV.;\* the Wesleys tracing their descent from Waleran de Wellesley, who was Justice Itinerant of Ireland in 1261, and a cadet of the family of de Wellesley in

\* Certainly earlier than that of Henry VIII., as stated by Mr. Gleig. In 1407 Walterus Cowlyfy was portrieve of Kilkenny, in 1425 John Cowle was appointed commissary of the Earl of Ormonde's army, and in 1496 John Cowley was given the office of Gauger of Ireland under Henry VII.

Somerset. This Waleran was the progenitor of a long line of landowners in the counties of Meath and Kildare, Christopher, the fifth son of Sir Richard, High Sheriff of Kildare in 1416, being termed "of Dangan," and succeeding as heir to his father in 1449.

Garret Wesley's marriage proving childless, he adopted as his heir Richard Colley, son of his wife's brother, on condition that he assumed the name and arms of Wesley. This Richard, having been elected a member of the Irish House of Commons, was created Baron Mornington in 1747, and married Elizabeth, eldest daughter of John Sale, M.P. for Carysfort. He was succeeded by his eldest son Garret, who in 1760 was raised to the dignity of an earl, chiefly, it is believed, because of the favour his musical gifts secured him from George III.

Birth of  
Arthur  
Wesley.

In the year before his promotion, the first Earl of Mornington married the Hon. Anne Hill, eldest daughter of Viscount Dungannon. Dying in 1781, he left his widow in circumstances the reverse of affluent, with five sons and one daughter. Of these sons, the fourth, Arthur, was born in 1769; but it is not a little remarkable that neither the place nor the exact date is positively known. The nurse who attended Lady Mornington in her confinement is reported to have been prepared to state before a Committee of the Irish House of Commons that it took place at Dangan Castle in Meath; according to other contemporary accounts it was in Lord Mornington's Dublin house. The Ulster Office of Arms gives the place as Mornington House, 24 Merrion Street, and the date as 1st May; on the other hand, the parish register of St. Peter's, Dublin, records that on 30th April, Isaac Mann, Archdeacon, christened Arthur, son of the Earl and Countess of Mornington. This discrepancy in dates might be explained by confusion between the old and new style of reckoning, the new calendar having been legally constituted in England and Ireland only as recently as 1752. Thus if Arthur Wesley was born on

1st May, new style (18th April, old style), he might have been christened on 30th April, old style (12th May, new style). But the obscurity is increased by the following entry in the *Freeman's Journal* of the time:—

“BIRTH.—Dublin, May 6. In Merrion St., the right hon. the Countess of Mornington of a son.”

*Ecshaw's Magazine*, again, for May, 1769, gives the birthday as 29th April, which is irreconcilable with all the others.\*

There was no seer to foretell the splendour of the life then begun, nor to show that the exact birthplace of the younger son of an embarrassed Irish peer should ever become a question of the slightest interest to the world at large; and similar uncertainty hangs over the birthplace and natal day of another boy born in this same year, 1769 — Napoleon Buonaparte, to wit.

Vain must be all attempts to detect in Arthur Wesley the <sup>His boy-</sup>child and the schoolboy the promise of the man. Precocious <sup>hood.</sup> boys have been known to ripen into brilliant or able men; dull ones sometimes never emerge from their larval inactivity; more often, perhaps, the fulfilment of manhood falsifies, for good or ill, the expectations created by school days: experience can formulate no rule but that of patience. Arthur was certainly far from being a precocious boy, and there are few or no signs of patience in dealing with him as a stupid one. Even if the theory be well founded that no great man was ever born but of a clever mother, the

\* The Countess of Mornington herself wrote, on 6th April, 1815, to Mr. James Cuthbertson, Seton Mains, Tranent, in answer to his inquiry as to the proper day to hold a birthday celebration, informing him that it was 1st May. See *Notes and Queries*, 10th January, 1891, where her letter is printed. The Duke of Wellington himself always reckoned that as his birthday, and he stood sponsor to H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, born 1st May, 1850. The whole question might have been set at rest had the petition been proceeded with which was lodged against the return of the Hon. Arthur Wesley for Trim, on the ground that he was a minor. Mrs. Masters, nurse at Dangan Castle, received an order to attend the Committee with the family Bible in which the births were entered; but the petition was withdrawn.



intellectual qualities of Arthur Wesley cannot be cited in evidence, so little is known or recorded of the first Countess of Mornington. It is believed that she disliked Arthur as a boy, because of his slow, thick speech and dull manner, which gave him an air of stupidity.\* She sent him first, it is believed, to a private school at Chelsea, whence he went to Eton. Finding it difficult, out of her limited income, to meet the expenses of that school, she took the boy with her to Brussels in 1784, where, for twelve months, he was educated in a desultory manner by one M. Goubert, in whose house he and his mother lodged. Arthur had a companion in his studies, John Armytage, the son of a Yorkshire baronet, who kept a diary, in which he entered that Wesley was fond of music and played on the fiddle.†

Lady Mornington seems to have agreed with Armytage in failing to detect in the lad any good natural gifts, except for music. She declared that he was "food for powder and nothing more," and when she returned to England in 1785, Arthur was sent to the French academy at Angers, at the head of which was an accomplished engineer, by name Pignerol.‡

Of Wesley's boyhood, therefore, the record must be pronounced unsatisfactory, both because of its meagre extent, and of the joyless or commonplace character of the few details which have been preserved. That this boyhood was devoid of the sunshine which seems to most of us to lie broadest and warmest on far-off years, may be inferred from some passages

\* The widow of William, third Earl of Mornington, Arthur Wesley's elder brother, lived till 1851, and used often to quote the exact words used by her mother-in-law, countess of the second earl. "I vow to God," she would exclaim in the strong language once habitual among fashionable ladies, "I don't know what I shall do with my awkward son Arthur."

† He seems to have inherited his father's gift of music, for in after years, when serving in India, he used to play a great deal on the violin. Suddenly it occurred to him that this was not a very soldier-like accomplishment, and he consigned his instrument to the flames (*Croker*, i. 337).

‡ This was not, as Mr. Gleig and other writers have assumed, a military college, like that at Brienne, where Napoleon was being educated at the same time (*Stanhope*, 166).

in his subsequent correspondence. Writing in 1797 to urge his elder brother to accept the Governor-Generalship of India, he observed, "I acknowledge that I am a bad judge of the pain a man feels on parting from his family;"—a sentence which, while it might be understood as no more than comparing his condition as a bachelor with that of Mornington as the father of a family, seems also to reflect the loneliness of a life which had never felt the warmth of home ties.

In one respect the characteristics of Arthur Wesley and his family showed a notable difference from what is usually observed in persons of English descent naturalised in Ireland. These, almost invariably, acquire traits and habits of thought more Irish than the Irish themselves; the virtues and foibles of the native race seem to become confirmed and intensified in the alien settlers; but in the case of the Wesleys, and especially in that of Arthur, their manners, their opinions, their aspirations, even their prejudices, seem to have been wholly English.

Reserved, apparently dull, as he was in youth, Arthur Wesley must have been more observant than he got credit for; he certainly stored his memory with more general knowledge than a more brilliant boy might have retained. About this everybody is free to speculate to what extent he will: there is only one shred of authentic evidence that the youth possessed any faculty, but that of music, in a special degree, and that shred came from his own lips in after life. His biographer, the Rev. G. R. Gleig, records that he heard him say more than once that his special talent was rapid and correct calculation, and that "if circumstances had not made him a soldier, he probably would have become distinguished in public life as a financier."\*

The next trace which can be recovered of these early days Enters the army. is in a letter from Lord Mornington to the Duke of Rutland, Viceroy of Ireland in 1786. "Let me remind you," he writes, "of a younger brother of mine, whom you were so

\* The Duke of Wellington was what would now be termed a confirmed bimetallist, and in later life often urged on the directors of the Bank of England the advantage of a double standard (*Stanhope*, 158).

kind as to take into your consideration for a commission in the army. He is here at this moment, and perfectly idle. It is a matter of indifference to me what commission he gets, provided he gets it soon." On 7th March, 1787, Arthur Wesley, being then nearly eighteen, was gazetted to an ensigny in the 73rd Foot. His subsequent commissions and exchanges ran as follows:—

Lieutenant . . .	76th Foot . . . . .	December 25, 1787
" . . .	41st Foot . . . . .	January 23, 1788
" . . .	12th Light Dragoons . . . . .	June 25, 1789
Captain . . . .	58th Foot . . . . .	June 30, 1791
" . . .	18th Light Dragoons . . . . .	October 31, 1792
Major . . . .	33rd Foot . . . . .	April 30, 1793
Lieut.-Colonel . . . . .	" . . . . .	September 30, 1793
Colonel (Brevet) . . . . .	" . . . . .	May 3, 1796
Brigadier-General (Egypt) . . . . .	" . . . . .	July 17, 1801
Major-General . . . . .	" . . . . .	April 29, 1802
Lieut.-General . . . . .	" . . . . .	April 25, 1808
General . . . . .	" . . . . .	July 31, 1811
Field-Marshal . . . . .	" . . . . .	June 21, 1813

Rapid as was this promotion, especially in its earlier stages, even more so was that of Napoleon Buonaparte, who attained the rank of major-general at seven-and-twenty. It cannot be pretended that young Wesley owed his advancement at first to any unusual proficiency in regimental duties.\* Up to the time when, in 1794, he sailed for Ostend in command of the 33rd, he had met with no opportunity of

\* It is true that, as he told J. W. Croker, within a few days of his joining the 73rd as ensign, he had one of the privates weighed, first in his clothes only, and then in heavy marching order, in order to ascertain what was expected of a soldier on service. Croker observed that this was remarkable forethought in so young a man. "Why," replied the Duke, "I was not so young as not to know that since I had undertaken a profession I had better try to understand it. I believe," he added, "that I owe most of my success to the attention I always paid to the inferior part of tactics as a regimental officer. There were very few men in the army who knew these details better than I did; it is the foundation of all military knowledge. When you are sure that you know the power of your tools and the way to handle them, you are able to give your mind altogether to the greater considerations which the presence of the enemy forces on you" (Croker, i. 337).

distinguishing himself beyond other officers. His advancement was due to what was all-powerful in those days—family influence and timely pecuniary assistance in purchasing steps.

Of the first three years of Wesley's life as a regimental officer no more can now be gleaned than about his school-days. Simultaneously with his promotion to the rank of captain and his exchange into the 18th Light Dragoons, he received the appointment of aide-de-camp to Lord Westmorland,\* Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, having previously been elected to the Irish Parliament to represent his brother's borough of Trim. He voted steadily with his party, and in the brief record of his few speeches in the House one may discern no more than a reflection of Lord Mornington's political principles; but interest attaches to his defence, on 25th February, 1793, of a bill to remove some of the disabilities of Roman Catholics. This measure, introduced into the Irish Parliament at the instance of Pitt, was framed to confer the franchise on Roman Catholics, and to redress some of their educational grievances. It received young Wesley's warm support; but he resisted an amendment to allow Roman Catholics to enter Parliament, on the ground that voters would unite to support any candidate of their own religion, irrespectively of general policy or party ties.

Lord Westmorland's vice-regal court being a lively one, thither were attracted all the young beauties of Ireland, to enjoy balls and other gaieties. Among them came one whose charms made captive the captain of light dragoons. Wesley became the accepted lover of the Hon. Catherine Pakenham, third daughter of the second Baron Longford; they exchanged vows, but prudent relations raised objection to their ratification, Miss Catherine being no heiress, and Wesley's means no more than slender. The lovers separated, therefore, but on the mutual understanding that they belonged to each other, although there was no regular betrothal. Wesley, resigning his post as aide-de-camp, and desiring to

\* Not Lord Camden, as stated by Gleig and Brialmont.

drown his disappointment in active service, obtained a majority in the 33rd Regiment, and then, understanding that a corps was about to be formed for special foreign service, wrote to Lord Mornington—

“The way in which you can assist me is to ask Mr. Pitt to desire Lord Westmorland to send me as major to one of the flank corps. If they are to go abroad, they will be obliged to take officers from the line, and they may as well take me as anybody else; but if you think it would be improper to apply to Mr. Pitt upon this occasion, I will refer it to Lord Westmorland himself. I think it both dangerous and improper to remove any part of the army from this country at present, but if any part of it is to be moved, I should like to go with it, and have no chance of seeing service except with the flank corps, as the regiment I have got into as major is the last for service.”

Up to this period Wesley's experience of regimental duties must have been very slight, owing to his position on the Lord Lieutenant's staff and in Parliament, but henceforth he applied himself with ardour to the details of his profession. It was at this time that he acquired the habit of private study, without which his mind never could have been furnished to deal effectively with the vast variety of work it was applied to in after years.\*

It is necessary, to the right understanding of the materials out of which great actions are wrought, that to this inconspicuous fact should be assigned its real importance. Profoundly did Thucydides understand the essentials of knowledge when he dedicated his history of the Peloponnesian war “to those who desire to have a true view of what has

\* “In one of the numerous visits which the Duke of Wellington necessarily paid to Calais on his way from France to England, during the continuance of the Army of Occupation in France, while walking from the Hôtel Dessin to the pier to embark, he said to me that he had always made it a rule to study by himself for some hours every day; and alluded to his having commenced acting upon this rule before he went to India, and to his having continued to act upon it.”—*Notes on the Battle of Waterloo*, by General Sir James Shaw Kennedy, G.C.B.

happened, and of the like or similar things which, *in accordance with human nature* (τὸ ἀνθρώπιον), will probably hereafter happen." It is only the Mascarellles who cherish the belief that *les gens de qualité savent tout sans avoir jamais appris*. Had the course of Wesley's love run smooth—had he possessed the means to enable him to marry Miss Pakenham off-hand—he had never, perhaps, felt the spur of ambition or the necessity of the equipment which knowledge alone can supply—never risen above the ruck of army officers of that day, among whom the standard of professional attainment was so deplorably low.

If it is difficult to conceive the circumstances which would tempt a British minister and his Cabinet to go willingly to <sup>Expedition to the Netherlands.</sup> war, it were still harder to imagine a minister and Cabinet more firmly resolved on keeping clear of Continental complications, more sanguine of the prospect of peace, than William Pitt and the Cabinet in which the warlike Lord Grenville had made way for the pacific Lord Dundas as Foreign Secretary.

"Unquestionably," said Pitt, in his budget speech of February, 1792, "there never was a time in the history of this country when, from the situation of Europe, we might more reasonably expect fifteen years of peace, than at the present moment."

In token of the sincerity of his opinion, Pitt asked for a vote of 16,000 seamen instead of 18,000, withdrew the subsidy hitherto voted for Hessian troops, and repealed several taxes. Yet within twelve months from that time the French Convention had declared war on Great Britain and Holland. This is no place wherein to trace the rapid march of events which led up to that war. Enough to remember how the September massacres, the slaughter of Louis XVI in January, 1793, the summons of the Convention to all nations to join the Revolution and obtain their freedom—struck horror into the minds of the public in Britain, and convinced Pitt that he could not afford to hold aloof from the struggle. The Duke of York was sent with 10,000 British soldiers to co-operate

Æt. 25. with the Austrians and Prussians in driving the French out of the Netherlands. For the first six months of 1793 the Allies were victorious everywhere against the armies of the Republic, and Belgium passed into the possession of Austria.

Early in 1794, another British expedition was prepared to create, under command of the Earl of Moira, a diversion in favour of the French royalists in Brittany, and the 33rd Regiment formed part of the force. But, at the last moment, the project had to be abandoned, for the fortune of war had turned in the Netherlands; the Duke of York was in a critical position and called urgently for reinforcements. Lord Moira, therefore, received orders to proceed to Ostend. Early in May Colonel Wesley sailed from Cork for that destination in command of his regiment, and, as senior officer, took command of the brigade of which it formed part.

Wesley  
takes the  
33rd to the  
Nether-  
lands.

The young colonel's first experience of active service was a discouraging one.

In the previous autumn the Duke of York had been forced to raise the siege of Dunkirk; the Allies had been driven out of the Netherlands; serious dissensions had arisen between the Austrians and Prussians, and the French, despite the horrible scenes that were being enacted during the Reign of Terror, threatened to annihilate the enemies of their country.

By the time Lord Moira arrived at Ostend, Bruges and Ypres had fallen into the hands of the French; the Duke of York, driven out of Audenarde, was in full retreat along the Scheldt; the Austrians under Clerfayt had sustained a series of defeats from the army of the North under General Pichegru; while the Duke of Coburg had been routed at Turcoing by General Moreau. Pichegru, the son of a labouring man at Arbois, was one of those capable soldiers discovered, like Hoche and Jourdan, by Carnot and Saint Just, and was advanced to high command when the French army was purged of its aristocratic Generals. He had succeeded Jourdan as Commander-in-chief of the army of the North in February, 1794, when his vigorous strategy soon made

untenable the position of the Allies, which extended from the ANN. 1791. Sambre to the Scheldt, with Antwerp as a base.\* A little later, Jourdan brought into the field the newly formed army of the Sambre and Meuse, and utterly shattered the Austrian power by a defeat inflicted on 27th Juno.

As a consequence of those crushing reverses, the whole line of the Allies was driven back upon Malines and Maestricht; and Moira was exceedingly anxious to join the Duke of York before he should meet with some disaster. He asked Colonel Wesley's opinion as to the best way to reach the Duke; Wesley told him he would save both risk and time by re-embarking the troops at Ostend, and taking them right up the Scheldt or the Maes to the nearest point.

"However, he would not do it, but set off marching along the great canal, choosing most luckily the opposite side from the French, who tried to intercept him. He left me with my brigade of 3000 men to settle matters at Ostend, and then to come on as quick as I could. I obeyed his instructions as to Ostend, and then felt so sure it was best to go round by sea, that I re-embarked, and actually reached the Duke of York some days before him."†

At Malines the Duke of York was joined also by the Prince of Orange with the Dutch army. This position they were soon obliged to yield to the French, and retired upon Antwerp, where they lay till September. In that month the General retreat of the Allies. Duke of York began the retreat from Belgium, and entered Holland, of which country the Government, though not, as it turned out, the people, were strenuously opposed to revolutionary principles.

On 15th September the Duke of York ordered The affair of Boxtel. General Abercrombie to retake the villago of Boxtel, which had been captured by one of Pichegru's divisions on the previous evening. The British force, consisting of six battalions of

\* Pichegru was found strangled in prison, shortly after the judicial murder of the Duc d'Enghien in 1805.

† *De Ros MS.*



Æt. 25. infantry, some cavalry, and a brigade of artillery, advanced to the assault, but were repulsed under a severe fire of musketry, followed by a charge of cavalry. The situation was critical: the British were in danger of being cut to pieces; but Colonel Wesley handled his battalion to such good effect in covering the retreat, that the enemy abandoned the pursuit, and Abercrombie's troops were enabled to rejoin the main body.

This, therefore, which was probably Wesley's first taste of anything more serious than a skirmish, was an unpleasant one, and it was but the prelude to an experience still more disastrous. Young as he was, however, being then but five-and-twenty, his coolness and promptitude on this critical occasion brought him into favourable notice of his superiors. The brigade of three regiments under his command formed the rear-guard of the army during its retreat through Holland.

The  
retreat  
through  
Holland.

A sorrowful, inglorious progress in truth it was. Popular feeling among the Dutch was rising rapidly in favour of union with France and the republican cause. Crossing the Waal in the last days of October, the Duke of York trusted to the French advance being stopped by that river. But a winter of unusual severity set in; rivers and marshes, the immemorial defences of Holland, became hard frozen, and afforded no obstacle to the triumphant divisions of Pichegru, who, flushed with their sweeping success against the Austrians on the Meuse, harassed the retreating British columns in their painful progress to the coast. It fell to Wesley's lot to hold a post on the Waal from October to January, the British headquarters being five-and-twenty miles distant at Arnheim. During all this time he only saw a general officer once,\* and he learnt more by his letters from England of what was passing at headquarters, than he did from headquarters themselves. He perceived the full evil of such defective organisation, and used to say afterwards, "The real reason why I succeeded in my own campaigns is because I was always

\* Stanhope, 182. He told Lord de Ros, however, that he was visited by General Sir David Dundas about once a fortnight (*de Ros MS.*).

on the spot—I saw everything, and did everything for ANN. 1794. myself.”

Far different was the prevailing practice in the British army at that time. Persons high in command thought far more about the regularity of their own meals than the movements of the enemy. Wesley frequently saw officers, when wine was on the table, fling aside despatches which arrived to await such attention as they might be in a condition to give when they had finished the bottles. As for the business of their profession, the ignorance of most British officers was contemptible.

Prevalent  
incom-  
petence of  
British  
officers.

“There was a fellow called Hammerstein, who was considered the chief authority in the army for tactics, but was quite an impostor; in fact, no one knew anything of the management of an army, though many of the regiments were excellent: the 33rd was in as good order as possible. . . . The system of the Austrians was all the fashion . . . that was, to post themselves with an advanced guard some ten miles in front, and extend their smaller posts much too wide, under the notion that this was a security from surprise. What usually happened was that the distant post was attacked and driven in, the small ones fell back in confusion, and the enemy arrived at their heels and attacked the main army with every advantage.” \*

A good sketch of Wesley's experience during these dreary winter months is given in one of his letters to Sir Chichester Fortescue:—

20th December, 1794.—“At present the French keep us in a perpetual state of alarm; we turn out once, sometimes twice, every night; the officers and men are harassed to death, and if we are not relieved, I believe there will be very few of the latter remaining shortly. I have not had the clothes off my back for a long time, and generally spend the greatest part of the night upon the bank of the river, notwithstanding which I have entirely got rid of that disorder which was near killing me at the

\* *De Ros MS.*

Ær. 25. close of the summer campaign. Although the French annoy us much at night, they are very entertaining during the daytime; they are perpetually chattering with our officers and soldiers, and dance the *carmagnol* upon the opposite bank whenever we desire them; but occasionally the spectators on our side are interrupted in the middle of a dance by a cannon ball from theirs."\*

Here is another glimpse of the cheerless scene, when matters were at their worst with the British expedition:—

"A short time before the French took Utrecht from us, I was sent in charge of a Dutch officer to meet General Pichegru, the French Commander-in-chief, upon the ice for some secret communications. I have often thought this Dutchman was in the French interest, and that this had something to do with the betraying of Utrecht. I heard nothing they said, for I was only told to take the man to the rendezvous, allow him to converse with Pichegru, and bring him back. I heard afterwards that the ostensible reason was the recovery of some papers."†

The Duke of York was recalled to England in December, the chief command passing to the Hanoverian Count Walmoden. In January, on the British army moving across the Leck, Wesley was relieved from his post on the Waal. A position was taken up at Amersfoort,‡ whence, on the approach of spring, the British marched eastward to Deventer. Moving thence in a north-easterly direction to the frontier of Hanover, they marched along the Ems, finally embarking, as soon as the ice broke up, at Bremen, and thus returned to England. No laurels were woven for the brave fellows who had come through the privations of that terrible winter. The expedition had been a deplorable failure, all the darker by contrast with Howe's splendid victory over the French fleet at Ushant. It cannot be doubted that Wesley laid deeply to heart the lesson of disaster, and learnt how far the art of war

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xiii. 2.

† *De Roo MS.*

‡ Not Amsterdam, as Brialmont has it.

by land had been forgotten by the countrymen of Marl- ANN. 1795.  
borough.\*

Landing with his regiment at Harwich in March, 1795, Return to  
Lieut.-Colonel Wesley marched it into camp at Warley, and England.  
went on leave; first, to take counsel with Lord Mornington in  
London, and then to Ireland, to look up his constituents at Trim.

From very early days Lord Mornington showed constant  
care for the interests of his brother Arthur, and from this  
point it is not difficult to perceive the extent to which they  
relied on and helped each other. The question on which  
the younger brother now sought the elder's advice was Wesley  
whether he should continue in the army or seek civil wishes  
employment under the Government. To have obtained to leave  
command of his regiment at four-and-twenty may well seem the army.  
a piece of good fortune that could scarcely, under any  
circumstances, befall an officer in our own times; never-  
theless Wesley was dissatisfied with his profession. No  
doubt the mismanagement of the Duke of York's expedition  
had disgusted him with the condition and prospects of the  
army; but there probably were other considerations to  
induce him to abandon a career in which he had made such  
a fair start. Before he could fulfil his engagement to  
Catherine Pakenham he must secure some pecuniary inde-  
pendence, and acquit himself of his debt to Mornington for  
money advanced for his promotion. The last could only be  
accomplished by the sale of his commission, and although  
Mornington cannot be suspected of being impatient for  
repayment, he certainly agreed with Colonel Wesley in dis-  
trusting the army as a profession, and advised him to apply  
for a post under the Revenue or Treasury Board. Wesley,  
therefore, wrote to Lord Camden, who had succeeded Lord  
Westmorland as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, asking for an  
appointment on the first vacancy.

\* Long afterwards, in reply to Lord Mahon, who asked him if his experience  
in the Dutch campaign had been of service to him, the Duke of Wellington  
said, "Why, I learnt what one ought *not* to do, and that is always something"  
(*Stanhope*, 182).

Æt. 26 *Trim, 25th June, 1795.*—“Considering the persons who are at present at those Boards, and those who, it is said, are forthwith to be appointed. . . . I hope that I shall not be supposed to place myself too high in desiring to be taken into consideration. . . . You will probably be surprised at my desiring a civil instead of a military office. It certainly is a departure from the line which I prefer; but I see the manner in which military offices are filled, and I don't wish to ask you for that which I know you cannot give me.”

Applies for  
a civil  
appoint-  
ment.

Never, perhaps, did such far-reaching issues hang on the answer vouchsafed to an office-seeker's letter. Nothing could have been more closely in accord with the system of patronage which then prevailed, than that Mornington's influence with Camden and Pelham should have secured a comfortable post for his brother. One is free to speculate to any extent whether the intellect which was to bear so powerful a part in moulding the British empire in the East and the configuration of European kingdoms, might have carved its way to renown in a civil department, or have become merged in the multitude of respectable, useful, but undistinguished lives. One might go further and inquire whether, if Wesley, discouraged by the state of the army and the incapacity of its chiefs, had obtained his desire for civil employment, any other commander might have emerged to balance, and ultimately to overthrow, the menacing ascendancy of Napoleon Buonaparte. But to follow such a line of thought speedily leads into a darkness that may be felt. One conclusion only is pressed on the mind of him who contemplates this remarkable attempt to abandon a career which is now inseparable from, and seems indispensable to, European history, and it is this:—that, no matter how resolute and sagacious the man may prove under stress of circumstance, his will in choosing a field for his faculties is subject to indefinite, perhaps providential, but apparently accidental, limitations.

## CHAPTER II.

### INDIAN SERVICE.

1795-1800.

- Nov. 15, 1795. Col. Wesley sails for the West Indies and is driven back.
- April . . 1796. Ordered to East India.
- February, 1797. Arrives with his regiment at Calcutta.  
Projected expedition against Manila.  
Wesley's memorandum on operations against Manila.  
The expedition sails, but is recalled.
1798. Lord Mornington becomes Governor-General.  
Condition of British India.  
Hostile attitude of Tipu Sultan.  
The Wesleys alter their name to Wellesley.
- October . . . . Surprise of Hyderabad.  
New treaty with the Peshwá.
- Feb. 22, 1799. War declared against Tipu.  
General Harris assumes command of the army.  
Wellesley commands the Nizám's contingent.
- March . 1799. Invasion of Mysore.  
" 27 . . . . Battle of Malavelly.
- April 5 . . . . Wellesley meets with a reverse,  
" 6 . . . . But retrieves it.  
" 6-May 4. Siege and capture of Seringapatam.
- May 5 . . . . Col. Wellesley takes command of Seringapatam.  
Renewed difficulty with General Baird.  
Difficulty with the Company's servants.  
Partition of Mysore.
- April . . 1800. Rising of Dhoondia Waugh.
- June 14 . . . . Wellesley takes the field against Dhoondia.
- September 10. Defeat and death of Dhoondia
- December . . . Col. Wellesley appointed to command expedition against the French.
- Jan. 24, 1801. But is superseded by General Baird.
- May 7 . . . . He returns to Seringapatam.  
His discontent.

ÆT. 26.  
Col. Wesley sails for the West Indies.

NO record remains of the reception given to Wesley's application for employment in the Civil Service. In the autumn of 1795 he received orders to embark with his regiment in an expedition against the French colonies in the West Indies. The fleet, under command of Admiral Christian, sailed from Southampton in October, but it encountered a terrible calamity. The Hon. Edward Paget, then in the 28th Regiment, gave a vivid account of the disaster in a letter to his father, Lord Uxbridge. In the first place, the transports were badly found and infamously dirty.

"Can you form in your imagination anything more thoroughly inhuman, more thoroughly disgusting, than the transportation of the finest and best troops in England—I believe in the world—in ships that, in the capacity of hospital and prison transports, are so lately returned from the West Indies that they have neither had time to cleanse themselves of the pestilential disorders that infect every board of the ship, or many of them, to get on board the common victualling provisions for a voyage to the West Indies. . . . Not the most urgent occasion, in my opinion, can justify a Ministry's submitting to send out troops in ships that nothing but the basest corruption could ever have tempted men to hire into our service. Oh, my poor dear 28th!"

This was written before they sailed on 15th November. On the 17th they encountered a gale,

"the consequences of which are so thoroughly dreadful that I have scarcely courage to relate them. . . . About four leagues to the eastward of Weymouth one ship struck, and is completely lost with all hands. In Portland Roads are seven or eight transports, the most of which are totally dismasted. The *Alfred* and *Alemene* are both here; the former has sprung her mainmast. In the bay to the westward of Portland Roads are the remains of seven transports, so *completely* knocked to pieces by the violence of the surf that in no instance could I discover two timbers that had not separated. The bodies of between 400 and 500 soldiers have been collected and buried upon the beach. I

recognised an unfortunate acquaintance, an officer of the 63rd Regiment. You may guess my anxiety for the remainder of the fleet, as there are four ships of the 28th I know nothing about. A fifth came in here yesterday totally dismasted." \*

ANN.  
1796-7.

Such were the incidents—such the suffering—to be encountered as preparation for a campaign, before the use of steam had rendered obsolete the wooden coffins which often did duty as sailing transports.

Of Wesley's personal experience no record remains, only that on disembarking the 33rd Regiment was sent into quarters at Poole, where, in the following April, he once more received orders for foreign service, this time for India. Being very ill at the time, he was unable to embark with his men; in June he sailed in H.M.S. *Caroline*, overtook them at the Cape, and arrived with his regiment at Calcutta in February, 1797.†

Arrival in  
India.

Great Britain was now at war, not only with the French Directory, but with Spain, which, since 6th October, 1796, had been in alliance with France. On 14th February the Spanish fleet was destroyed by Sir John Jervis off Cape St.

\* *Letters and Memorials of General the Hon. Sir Edward Paget, G.C.B.* Privately printed, 1898.

† In the dearth of early notices of Arthur Wesley, the following extract from a letter written by Lord Mornington to Sir Chichester Fortescue possesses some interest:—

20th June, 1796.—“My dear brother Arthur is now at Portsmouth, waiting for a wind for India. The station is so highly advantageous to him that I could not advise him to decline it, but I shall feel his loss in a variety of ways most bitterly, and in none more than in the management of Trim, where, by his excellent judgment, amiable manners, admirable temper, and firmness, he has entirely restored the interest of my family.”

Captain Page, R.N., commanding the *Caroline*, took dire offence at Colonel Wesley's practice of turning into his cot on the larboard side of the fore cabin “all standing, like a trooper's horse.” Wesley explained that as he was starting upon a campaign in India, he wished to accustom himself to sleeping in his clothes; but Captain Page was not pacified till his steward assured him that although the colonel slept in his breeches, he took them off and tubbed before he appeared at breakfast.



Æt. 27. Vincent, which encouraged Pitt to strike at Spain through her colonies. In pursuance of this policy, an expedition was projected by the Governor-General of India, Sir John Shore,\* to proceed under General St. Leger to attack the Philippine Islands, and the 33rd Regiment was detailed for service in this force.

Projected  
attack of  
Manila.

From this point may be traced the beginning of Wesley's influence upon military affairs—an influence which soon extended to political administration also. Still a very young soldier, he had applied himself heart and soul to the duties of a commanding officer; every detail of the internal economy of a regiment and of its movement in the field was at his fingers' ends—a qualification which, though it is the rule in the British service now, was undoubtedly a remarkable exception then. Added to this, from his observations on active service he had acquired very clear opinions of tactics and of what was necessary in the profession he had embraced; while sedulous study had enabled him to grasp the great principles of strategy. The weight of his intellect, slow of ripening, but enriched by experience and cultivation, began to impress itself in a remarkable manner on the minds of others.

Of this, the first documentary evidence is supplied in a memorandum on the projected expedition against the Philippines, submitted by Wesley to Sir John Shore, in which he urges strongly that the first step should be the destruction of the Dutch colony of Batavia in the island of Java, "a town surrounded by a slight brick wall, which has no defence." Particulars are given of the strength of the garrison, position of guns and redoubts in the neighbourhood, of the climate and the most suitable season for operations, and he dismisses the apprehension of danger from "the six French frigates which are said to be cruising in the China seas," conceiving the maritime strength of the expedition to be more than equal to deal with these.† In short, the paper, which in its thoroughness of detail and scope is typical of the

\* Afterwards Lord Teignmouth.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, i. 4, note.

long series which was to follow it, reads more like the ANN. 1797. despatch of an officer long versed in Indian affairs and topography, than of one who had been scarcely three months in the East. It betokened what afterwards became a constant characteristic of Wesley's memoranda on projected undertakings—namely, the persistency with which he dwelt on such difficulties as had to be reckoned with. Were it not for the zeal and success with which, in every subsequent enterprise, he grappled with and overcame these difficulties, one might interpret his excessive caution in forecast as a symptom of want of confidence or even of timidity. Pitt, however, learned before his death the true value of Wesley's calm survey of a problem. The last conversation which Pitt ever held on public affairs was with Lord Mornington, shortly before his own death, of whose brother Arthur, he observed—

“ I never met any military officer with whom it is so satisfactory to converse. He states every difficulty before he undertakes any service, but none after he has undertaken it.”

Wesley entertained very decided views about the capacity of his superior officers, which he did not hesitate to communicate privately and frankly to Lord Mornington. He observes that in the appointing a Commander-in-chief to the expedition, the Governor-General—

“ does so without fear of failure, although he knows his incapacity, as he says he sends with him a good Adjutant-General, and a good Quartermaster-General, and a good army. But he is mistaken if he supposes that a good, high-spirited army can be kept in order by other means than by the abilities and firmness of the Commander-in-chief.” \*

The correctness of this estimate was not put to the test, for the expedition came to naught. The attitude of Tipú Sultan, monarch of Mysore, the son of Britain's ancient foe Hyder Ali, who had long been in secret negotiation with

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, i. 7.

Æt. 29. the French for the expulsion of the British from India, suddenly became very threatening. General St. Leger sailed from Calcutta, but on arriving at Penang, where he was joined by the contingent from Madras, he found orders recalling his troops to their respective Presidencies.

Lord  
Morning-  
ton be-  
comes  
Governor-  
General.

An event was now impending which was to prove of great moment in the professional prospects of Colonel Wesley. The Governor-Generalship of India had been offered to the Earl of Mornington, the friend and favourite of Pitt, in succession to Sir John Shore. Mornington hesitated to accept this brilliant post, involving, as it must, separation from his young family. Wesley besought him to remember that "if for the sake of remaining with them in England, you refuse this offer, you forego both for yourself and them what will certainly be a material and lasting advantage." \*

In the end Mornington accepted the appointment, to which he brought the experience of several years on the Board of Control, and, having taken an active share in its deliberations, he was no stranger to questions affecting the Indian dominions of the Crown. From the first he was resolved on resisting the countless solicitations which poured in upon him from acquaintances who had needy relatives to provide for.

"Nor would I," he wrote to Sir Chichester Fortescue in reference to one such application, "accept this high station, unless I were assured of my possessing firmness enough to govern the British Empire in India without favour or affection to a human being, either in Europe or Asia."

The only appointment Lord Mornington bestowed among his own relations was that of private secretary, selecting for that important post his youngest brother Henry.† He arrived in Calcutta on 17th May, 1798.

Condition  
of British  
India.

The British possessions in India at this period, and indeed until the abolition of the East India Company in 1858, were governed by a dual control of a peculiar kind. The directors

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, i. 18.

† Afterwards created Lord Cowley.



RICHARD, 2ND EARL OF MORNINGTON,  
AFTERWARDS MARQUESS WELLESLEY.

[Vol. I, p. 22.]



of the Company were the titular rulers of its territory, and ANN. 1798. all patronage was in their hands, except the appointment of Governor-General and one or two other officials; but their acts were subject to a revision by a Board of Control composed of members of the Cabinet, which could even issue orders to the Company's servants without consulting the directors. On the other hand, the Governor-General, while bound to carry out the policy of the Board of Control, was also responsible to the Court of Directors. Mornington, therefore, in taking office, was in the position of a man undertaking to serve two masters, and, in addition, to carry into effect the well-defined views he himself entertained on Indian politics.

Although the Company's dominions were tranquil at the time of Lord Mornington's arrival, and although the intentions alike of the Cabinet and the Company towards the independent native princes were distinctly pacific, the elements of disturbance were neither feeble nor remote. French victories in Europe had found their echo in India; French influence was supreme in Mysore, in the Deccan, and with the formidable Marhattá chiefs; French officers were busy drilling and organising the armies of those powerful princes. In fact, the one circumstance which had prevented a formidable coalition of native powers against the English, was the internal animosity and jealousy which prevented them from acting in concert, and finally caused them to take the field separately and successively.

Hardly had the reins of government passed into the hands of Lord Mornington when the designs of the Sultan of Mysore were revealed by General Malartic, French Governor of the Mauritius, who issued a proclamation announcing an alliance between the French Republic and Mysore for the purpose of driving the British out of India, although at first it seemed doubtful how far this proclamation indicated practical co-operation with Tipú, or was merely a ruse to embroil the British with their nominal ally.

Hostility  
of Tipú  
Sultan.

Art. 29. In January, on the recall of St. Leger's expedition from Penang, Wellesley,\* having seen his regiment settled in quarters in Calcutta, went on leave to visit his friend Lord Hobart, Governor of Madras; and, at the special request of General Harris,† commanding the forces in that Presidency, he remained there after the inauguration of the new Governor, Lord Clive.‡

15th September, 1798.—“ He (General Harris),” wrote Wellesley to Lord Mornington, “ has kept me in Fort George in order, as he says, to co-operate with him in keeping Lord Clive on the right road. I think that we shall succeed in that object.”

Every successive page of his correspondence at this time proves how much his superiors in rank relied on the opinions of Colonel Wellesley. His relationship to the Governor-General naturally lent much weight to his views with Lord Clive and General Harris, but it is remarkable how freely and frequently the elder brother sought the younger's advice. Nevertheless, his position at Fort George was a delicate one. He had to control and direct Lord Clive without appearing to exercise authority; and, on the other hand, sought to avert rebukes from Calcutta to which Lord Clive's inexperience and irregularities frequently exposed him.

19th October, 1798.—“ He (Lord Clive) improves daily,” wrote Wellesley to his brother Henry. . . . “ A violent or harsh letter from Fort William (the Governor-General's residence) will spoil all. The conduct which I recommend is perfect confidence with him upon all subjects; and I would extend it even to his government, when it is safe to do so. . . . With regard to my staying

\* In 1798 Lord Mornington and his family altered the form of their name from “ Wesley” to what was considered the original form—“ Wellesley.”

† Afterwards Lord Harris.

‡ Wellesley, writing to Mornington on 15th September, says: “ Lord Clive is a mild, moderate man, remarkably reserved, having a bad delivery, and apparently a heavy understanding. He certainly has been unaccustomed to consider questions of the magnitude that now appear before him, but I doubt whether he is so dull as he appears, or as people imagine he is ” (*Suppl. Despatches*, i. 87).

here, I am perfectly satisfied to remain here as long as my presence may be necessary, although I consider my situation a very awkward one, and without remedy. I should not, however, wish M(ornington) to know that I feel it at all. As far as my stay regards my pecuniary matters, I don't mind it. As the war in Europe is likely to last I shall certainly be made a Major-General in the course of a year.\* Whether I return £500 richer in consequence of having been in command, or poorer in consequence of having been in Fort St. George, is a matter of indifference to me." †

At first, and for several months, Colonel Wellesley was exceedingly averse from precipitating a rupture with Tipú. He was disposed to give him the benefit of every doubt, and, even when doubts were dispelled, to leave him a loophole of escape—a more statesmanlike view, perhaps, than a mere regimental officer and a keen soldier might have been expected to take. His opinion was conveyed, at the Governor-General's request, in a long memorandum, of which the following sentences may indicate the general drift:—

28th June, 1798.—“If we are to have war at all, it must be one of our own creating; a justifiable one, I acknowledge. . . . In my opinion, if it be possible to adopt a line of conduct which would not inevitably lead to war, provided it can be done with honour, which I think indispensable in this Government, it ought to be adopted in preference to that proposed. . . . I would therefore propose that, in canvassing this question, the evidence of the officers of the *Brist* should be sunk. † . . . Let the proclamation be sent to Tippoo, with a demand that he should explain it and the landing of the troops. Don't give him reason to suppose that we imagine he has concluded an alliance; there is every probability that he will deny the whole, and be glad of an opportunity of getting out of the scrape.” §

\* He was not promoted till 1802.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, i. 109.

‡ These officers had reported the issue of Malartic's proclamation, and the landing of French volunteers from a Republican frigate at Mangalore.

§ *Suppl. Despatches*, i. 52.



Apr. 29. Even later, when Tipú's bad faith in negotiating with the French had been placed beyond all doubt, and it had been discovered that simultaneously he was engaged in an extensive conspiracy with several other Indian princes, Wellesley was far from counselling extreme measures.

19th September, 1798.—“I am very anxious,” he wrote to Lord Mornington, “to hear of your negotiations with the Peshwah and the Nizám, that you may make your proposition, whatever it may be, to Tippoo as soon as possible, and that he may see you are not bent upon annihilating him.”

Tipú, a ruler of spirit and great military genius, had no reason to love the British; his experience of British diplomacy under Lord Cornwallis had not imbued him with any deep respect for their fidelity to compacts; he burned to regain the territory which he had been forced to cede in 1791; and, in short, his hatred of England, and his longing to drive the English out of India, were natural and even patriotic. Not the less was it Mornington's duty to be beforehand with him. Although Tipú's overtures to the French in the Mauritius had produced very little except the manifesto, it would have been as foolish to allow him to persist in warlike preparations, as to doubt the intentions of the French to support him in his enterprise. In the Deccan, the Nizám was personally well disposed to the British, though the policy of former Governors-General had done much to throw him into the arms of the French. He had at Hyderabad a well-trained and well-equipped army of 14,000 infantry, with forty pieces of artillery, and, seeing that this force was officered by 125 Frenchmen, the Nizám was practically powerless to resist Tipú's desires.

Surprise of  
Hydera-  
bad.

Wellesley advised that this army should be disarmed by a bold *coup-de-main*.\* In accordance with this advice, a force of 6,000 men was sent without warning to Hyderabad in October. Their task, as it happened, was rendered an easy

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, i. 73.



[Pl. t. p. 20.]

# MAP OF INDIA





[Vol. 1, p. 28.]

1000

one, by reason of a mutiny which had broken out among the Nizám's troops against their French officers. The Nizám, only too glad to be quit of them, ordered these officers to surrender; they had no choice but to obey, and were sent as prisoners to England, where, at the Governor-General's request, they were set at liberty and allowed to return to France. The Sepoys lately under their command were reorganised under British officers, and the Nizám bound himself by a new treaty to maintain 6,000 British troops at Hyderabad for the security of his dominions. With the Peshwá, New treaty with the Peshwá. also, the constitutional but nominal head of the great Marhattá confederacy, Mornington concluded a new treaty, binding the Marhattás not to side with Tipú Sultan in the event of his going to war with the British, and then proceeded to Madras to superintend the preparation for war which had been proceeding, lest the negociations with Tipú should break down.

If they had not broken down already, they had ominously hung fire. Fortified by the famous message sent by Napoleon from Egypt, informing him that he was approaching at the head of "a countless and invincible army" to deliver Mysore from the yoke of England, Tipú at first refused to respond to the Governor-General's reiterated overtures and remonstrances. Finally, on 22nd February, 1799, Lord Mornington, perceiving that Tipú's design was "evidently to gain time until a change of circumstances and War declared against Tipú Sultan. season should enable him to avail himself of the assistance of France," issued a declaration of war against the Sultan of Mysore, and ordered the British forces to advance. Previous to this, in September, 1798, the 33rd Regiment had been transferred from the establishment of Bengal to that of Madras. In November the army intended, in the event of war, for the invasion of Mysore, was assembled at Arnee, under temporary command of the senior officer, Colonel Aston. This gentleman, having become involved in a dispute with two officers under his command, fought a duel with each, and was killed by Major Allen on 17th

Æt. 29. December,\* whereupon Colonel Wellesley took over the command of the troops, pending the arrival of General Harris. To the last moment, though indefatigable in preparing the forces for the field, and arranging commissariat, transport and other essential details, he continued to urge that, if possible, hostilities even yet might be avoided. "I have repeated," he wrote to his brother Henry on 2nd January, 1799, "some of these objections to hostilities so frequently, that I am afraid I shall be accused of boring Mornington." †

General Harris, on arriving in Madras early in February to take over the command of the field forces, issued a general order expressing his sense of the admirable state of organisation and discipline to which Wellesley had brought the troops. These forces now amounted to about 21,000 men, of which 1,000 cavalry, 500 artillery, and 4,300 infantry, were British.

The Governor-General, who, on Colonel Wellesley's advice, had come on a visit to the Madras Presidency, now proposed to visit the camp at Vellore, where the forces were assembled, a project which by no means earned approval from the younger brother, who proceeded to express himself with a vigour which, making all allowance for his relationship with Lord Mornington, can only be described as extraordinary on the part of so young an officer.

*Camp near Vellore, 29th January, 1799.*—"Your presence in the camp, instead of giving confidence to the general, would, in fact, deprive him of the command of the army. . . . If I were in General Harris's situation, and you joined the army, I should quit it. . . . Your presence will diminish his powers, at the same time that, as it is impossible you can know anything of military matters, your powers will not answer the purpose which even those which he has at present may, if you or Lord Clive are not in the army."

\* A full report of this extraordinary affair is preserved in an official memorandum by Wellesley (*Suppl. Despatches*, i. 163).

† *Suppl. Despatches*, i. 156.

Lord Mornington, whose confidence in his brother's judgment must have been almost boundless, took the hint and stayed away. But there were other matters which incurred the displeasure of this terrible young colonel, and no official etiquette restrained him from speaking his mind on them. He resented the power of the Madras Military Board in making appointments to the field force under General Harris, and expressed himself very freely on the subject both to Lord Clive and, as follows, to the Governor-General:—

“ I told Lord Clive all this long ago, and particularly stated to him the necessity of giving the General credit, at least, for the appointments of the different Commissaries, if he did not allow him to make them. It was impossible to make him too respectable, or to hold him too high, if he was to be placed at the head of the army in the field. This want of respectability, which is to be attributed in a great measure to the General himself,\* is what I am most afraid of. However, I have lectured him well on the subject, and I have urged publicly to the army (in which I flatter myself I have some influence) the necessity of supporting him, whether he be right or wrong.”

Marching on 11th February, Harris effected a junction on the 18th with the Nizám's contingent, numbering upwards of 16,000 of all arms, including the British subsidiary force under Lieut.-Colonel Dalrymple. Harris, probably having good reason to desire that Wellesley should have command of this contingent, attached to it the 33rd Regiment; upon which its colonel, as senior officer, became commander of that wing of the army of invasion with the rank of brigadier. This appointment gave rise to the first of a series of remonstrances addressed by Major-General Baird † to the Commander-in-chief. Baird conceived himself aggrieved by the

Col. Wellesley commands Nizám's forces.

\* There is here no reflection on General Harris's character. “ Respectability ” is intended to express the dignity of the office of commander-in-chief, of which Wellesley considered Harris was not sufficiently jealous, but submitted too much to departmental interference.

† Afterwards Lieut.-General Sir David Baird.



Æt. 29. promotion of Wellesley, a regimental officer, to the command of thirteen regiments, while he himself, a major-general, had command of only three. Baird would have been less or more than human had he not detected in this distribution of military patronage symptoms of undue favour towards the Governor-General's brother; as it happened, he was exceedingly human, and protested vehemently against what he considered a slight on himself. General Harris, however, who might well have treated Baird's conduct as a breach of discipline, showed the utmost forbearance and tact, and smoothed the gallant General's ruffled feelings. Theodore Hook, the biographer of Baird, has made upon this incident insinuations equally unfavourable and unfounded. The truth is that Wellesley was far better suited than Baird for the command of the Nizám's contingent, because of the ease with which he conciliated native peculiarities. Baird, although a gallant and skilful officer, was hot-tempered, and the native troops disliked him.\*

Wellesley's command was far from being a sinecure, for, in addition to the ordinary anxiety of providing for so large a force in the field, he was not supplied regularly with money to pay the men, and there was the greatest difficulty in obtaining food.† But his duties as a divisional commander did not cause him to remit solicitude for his own regiment. "There is nothing," he wrote to Colonel Close, "about which I am personally so much interested as the proper equipment of the 33rd."

\* This matter, and difficulties which subsequently arose between Baird and Wellesley, are fully explained in General Harris's letters. See Lushington's *Life of Lord Harris*, pp. 293-321. In replying to some inquiries about Sir David Baird's life addressed to him by Mr. Lushington, the Duke of Wellington wrote that he would give him all assistance, but "I have not read Sir David Baird's Life. I never read these modern productions called histories, in which my name must be made use of, because I don't want to be tempted to write myself" (*Apsley House MSS.*, 1833).

† He writes to the Governor-General on 4th February, 1799:—"The want of money in my own camp was so great, that I was obliged to borrow from the officers of the army and to sell my own horses to find money to send off two detachments" (*Suppl. Despatches*, i. 192).

The Bombay army, numbering 6,000, advancing from the east under General Stuart, was the first to come in contact with the enemy. It was attacked near Sedaseer on 6th March by a detachment of the Mysore army under the command of Tipú himself, which sustained a decided reverse, and retired from the field with heavy loss. Meanwhile, Harris's columns were laboriously advancing towards Seringapatam, terribly hampered by the enormous amount of baggage and camp followers which invariably accompanied an Indian army on the march,\* and by an epidemic which broke out among the draught-bullocks. Nevertheless, though constantly harassed by bodies of Tipú's light horse, nothing fell into the enemy's hands, although, owing to the sickness among the cattle, Harris was forced to abandon stores and ammunition to a very serious extent.

On 27th March the enemy were found posted in force on a high ridge three miles east of Malavelly. At ten o'clock the Sultan's artillery opened fire on the British advance guard, to support which Harris threw forward an European brigade and two cavalry corps on the right to support it, while Wellesley, in command of the left, advanced his division in echelon of battalions to the attack. He succeeded in turning Tipú's right flank, upon which General Floyd, seizing the critical moment, detached Colonel Dallas with the 19th Light Dragoons and two regiments of Native cavalry. These, by a well-executed charge, completed the rout of the Mysorean infantry, and the enemy abandoned the position about one o'clock, having lost about 2,000

\* The number of bullocks for draught and carriage can hardly be realised by an European. Wellesley informed General St. Leger (*Suppl. Despatches*, i. 204) that there were 60,000 bullocks in the service of the British grand army, besides 20,000 belonging to the brinjaries, or grain-merchants. In the Nizám's contingent there were 28,000 bullocks; "besides all these the number of elephants, camels, bullocks, carts, coolies, plunderers, etc., etc., belonging to individuals in the army, particularly in that of the Nizám, was beyond calculation." When General Harris had formed a junction with General Stuart before Seringapatam, his army was reckoned at 35,000 combatants, with no fewer than 120,000 followers.

ANN. 1799.  
Invasion of  
Mysore.

Battle of  
Malavelly.

Æt. 29. killed and wounded. The casualties among the British amounted only to 7 killed and 53 wounded.

Owing to the miserable state of his transport, Harris was unable to follow up his success. Although not more than eight-and-twenty miles from Seringapatam, so great was the mortality and exhaustion of his oxen that it took the invading army five days to accomplish that distance.

Arriving at the outworks on 5th April, General Harris directed a simultaneous attack at night by two detachments on two posts occupied by the enemy. The first, under Colonel Shaw, was successful; the second, under Colonel Wellesley, directed against a *tope* \* and village called Sultanpettah, was repulsed with serious loss. This place was 900 yards in advance of the British lines, and about 4,000 from the rampart of Seringapatam. The enemy were on the alert, and received the attacking party with a hot fusillade.

Wellesley  
meets with  
a reverse.

"Near twelve," noted General Harris in his private diary, "Colonel Wellesley came to my tent in a good deal of agitation, to say he had not carried the *tope*. It proved that the 33rd, with which he attacked, got into confusion, and could not be formed, which was great pity, as it must be particularly unpleasant to him." †

Lieutenant Fitzgerald of the 33rd was killed in this affair; twelve grenadiers of that regiment were taken by the enemy, and, on being brought before Tipú, were ordered to be put to death by driving nails into their skulls. Wellesley, as he told Lord Mornington, adopted, after this taste of defeat, a resolve never to attack by night a post which had not been reconnoitred by day. ‡

A great deal has been written about this reverse, which, had it happened to an officer less distinguished in after life, might have been forgotten long ago. The fact is that the attack on the *tope* was a mistake, as Wellesley

\* A grove or thicket. The facsimile opposite page 32 is taken from a letter written by the Duke in 1832 to Colonel Gurwood, then compiling the Indian despatches.

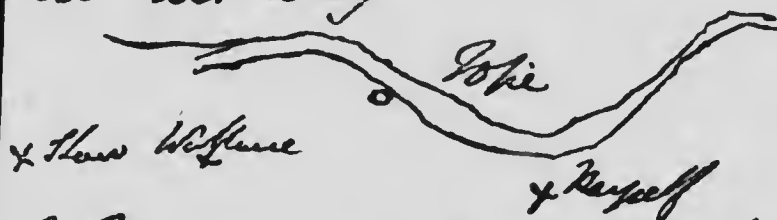
† *Despatches*, i. 24.

‡ *Suppl. Despatches*, i. 209.

Several Publications.

The best is what I stated.

We had not remembered the  
penal. He & she was on the  
-hinner's side of the Nallah  
in this way



I had carried the Nallah quite  
up of the wall. O. My advanced  
guards under Capt. West of the 33<sup>rd</sup>  
was beyond it and through the  
and he lost himself on the hinner  
side of it. But we could not  
maintain ourselves in it. In  
fact we knew nothing about  
the matter.



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pointed out to General Harris during the afternoon of the 5th. He wrote to say he did not understand where the post was to be established, and asked the General to ride out in front of the lines and point out the exact place. ANN. 1799.

"Upon looking at the tope as I came in just now, it appeared to me that when you get possession of the bank of the nullah, you have the tope as a matter of course, as the latter is in the rear of the former. However, you are the best judge, and I shall be ready." \*

Next morning an accident very nearly intervened to deprive Wellesley of the opportunity which General Harris offered him of retrieving his misfortune. He was put in orders to attack Sultanpettah again, his force this time being strengthened by the Scottish brigade † and three battalions of Sepoys. The appointed hour arrived: the columns were formed up, but where was Wellesley? Precious time was slipping away. General Harris, getting impatient, ordered General Baird to take command. Baird was riding off towards the brigade, not without compunction, because of the chagrin he knew Wellesley would feel when he understood his mischance, when the Commander-in-chief recalled him. "I think," said he, "upon reflection, that we must wait a little longer for Wellesley." In a few minutes the missing Colonel appeared. The morning orders had never reached him. He assumed the command after a brief explanation, immediately advanced to the attack, and carried the obnoxious tope by assault with trifling loss. ‡ But retrieves it.

\* *Despatches*, i. 23.

† Afterwards the 94th Regiment.

‡ A very different and unpleasant interpretation has been read into this incident in Theodore Hook's *Life of Sir David Baird*. Mr. Lushington, in his *Life of Lord Harris*, quotes Sir David's explanation of it, which he had from his own lips. The Duke of Wellington's recollection of the details differed somewhat from Mr. Lushington's narrative. "Till I heard of these stories in England," he wrote to Colonel Gurwood in 1833, "I never knew that, in my absence in the morning, General Baird had been appointed to command the attack. Indeed I should doubt, from General Harris's papers, that General Baird ever did receive such orders" (*Apsley House MSS.*).



Æt. 30. — It was about this time that General Harris received by the hands of a native messenger a letter from the Governor-General, sealed up in a quill for readier concealment in the enemy's country through which it had to pass. This letter contained among other matters the request, "Do not allow Arthur to fatigue himself too much," an injunction which recalls Lord Panmure's famous message to the Commander-in-chief in the Crimea, "Take care of Dowb!" "Arthur" was earning the reputation of a man whom it was impossible to fatigue, and was rapidly acquiring the art of taking care of himself.

Siege and capture of Seringapatam.

After this affair Seringapatam was invested, and siege works were begun. The town was defended by a garrison of 22,000 of Tipú's best troops, with 240 guns; the British force amounting, after the arrival of the Bombay army on 14th April, to 35,000 men, with 100 guns. On 30th April a heavy fire was poured from the British batteries at close range, and on 3rd May the breach was pronounced practicable. The assault was committed to General Baird, who marched 4,300 men into the trenches before dawn on 4th May, and kept them concealed till past noon—the hour when Asiatic troops are generally most drowsy. At one o'clock Baird led the assault under a heavy fire from the fort, Wellesley being left in command of the reserve in the advanced trenches. The resistance was fierce, but the assailants swept all before them: at half-past two they were in complete possession of the fort, the palace, and the town.

Brave Tipú Sultan, lame as he was from an old wound, and despondent as he had been ever since his defeat at Malavelly, fought like a tiger to his last breath. When the British mounted the breach he placed himself, musket in hand, behind a traverse, and kept firing on the assailants till the backward rush of his own men carried him away. His body was found among five hundred corpses piled together in the gateway of the interior work.

The British lost in the assault 8 officers and 75 men killed,

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TIPU SHIB, SULTAN OF MYSORE.  
(From an Indian Painting on Panel at Apsley House.)



besides upwards of 300 wounded and missing; the total loss among the 20,000 men actually engaged in the siege, which lasted exactly a month, being 22 officers and 310 men killed, and 45 officers and 1,164 men wounded and missing.

General Baird having applied to be relieved in order to make his report in person to the Commander-in-chief, Colonel Wellesley, as next senior officer, took over the command on the morning of the 5th, and became responsible for the security of the town and the property therein. A stern task it was, for war was a worse affair for non-combatants and private citizens in those days than it has been rendered since by the common assent of civilised nations. The scene to which Wellesley applied himself in restoring order is described in a few sentences in his letter to Lord Mornington on 8th May:—

ANN. 1799.  
—  
Col. Wellesley takes command of Seringapatam.

“It was impossible to expect that after the labour which the troops had undergone in working up to the place, and the various successes they had had in six different affairs with Tippoo’s troops, in all of which they had come to the bayonet with them, they should not have looked to the plunder of this place. Nothing, therefore, can have exceeded what was done on the night of the 4th. Scarcely a house in the town was left unplundered, and I understand that in camp jewels of the greatest value, bars of gold, etc., etc., have been offered for sale in the bazaars of the army by our soldiers, sepoy, and foreigners. I came in to take command on the 5th, and by the greatest exertion, by hanging, flogging, etc., etc., in the course of that day I restored order among the troops, and I hope I have gained the confidence of the people. They are returning to their houses, and beginning again to follow their occupations, but the property of every one is gone.”

The treasure taken in Seringapatam, besides that made away with in private plunder, was valued at £1,143,216, besides the contents of arsenal and foundry—nearly one thousand guns, and a great store of ammunition.

ÆT. 30.  
Renewed  
difficulty  
with  
General  
Baird.

Wellesley was confirmed in his appointment as commandant of Seringapatam, which greatly incensed General Baird, who had led with great gallantry the assault on the very fortress in which he had once suffered a long imprisonment. For the second time he found himself superseded by a junior officer, and addressed bitter letters on the subject to General Harris, who showed admirable temper and tact in dealing with his rival subordinates. After rebuking Baird pretty sharply for some of his expressions, he allowed him to withdraw the letters which contained them. He knew that his gallant major-general had good reason for irritation, and, as he informed the Governor-General, Wellesley's selection for this command occasioned a good deal of unfavourable comment. Lord Mornington replied—

“ . . . With respect to the language which you say people held of my brother's appointment to command in Seringapatam, you know that I never recommended my brother to you, and, of course, never suggested how or where he should be employed; and I believe you know also that you would not have pleased me by placing him in any situation in which his appointment would be injurious to the public service. My opinion, or rather knowledge and experience, of his discretion, judgment, temper, and integrity are such, that if you had not placed him in Seringapatam, I would have done so of my own authority, because I think him in every point of view the most proper for that service.” \*

\* The following passages from a letter to J. W. Croker, written by the Duke of Wellington many years after Baird's death, convey his own judgment on this subject:—

24th January, 1831.—“ Baird was a gallant, hard-headed, lion-hearted officer, but he had no talent, no *tact*; had strong prejudices against the natives; and he was peculiarly disqualified from his manners, habits, etc., and it was supposed his temper, for the management of them. He had been Tippoo's prisoner for years. He had a strong feeling of the had usage he had received during his captivity; and it is not impossible that the knowledge of this feeling might have induced Lord Harris, and those who advised his Lordship, to lay him aside. . . . There were many other candidates besides Baird and myself, all senior to me, some to Baird. But I must say that I was the *fit person* to be selected. . . . It is certainly true that this command afforded one opportunities

Many passages in Wellesley's correspondence at this time betray the difficulty he always found in co-operating with the political agents of the Company. From the moment he set foot in India till he finally left it in 1805, he never ceased to protest indignantly against the prevalent system which tacitly allowed British agents to receive presents—neither more nor less than bribes—from natives of position.

ANN. 1799.  
Difficulty  
with the  
Company's  
servants.

"Before the General goes, I intend to come to a thorough understanding with him respecting the nature of my situation here. . . . I intend to ask to be brought away with the army as any civil servant of the Company is to be here, or any person with civil authority who is not under my orders, for I know that the whole is a system of job and corruption from beginning to end, of which I and my troops would be made the instruments."

Tipú had fallen, and among his papers had been discovered abundant justification of the opinion formed of the nature of his relations with the French. How to dispose of his realm was now a problem not very simple of solution. To follow Indian precedent by dividing it into three portions, to be assigned respectively to the victorious allies—the Company, the Nizám and the Marhattás (if, indeed, the last-named could be reckoned as allies)—would have been to strengthen unduly two native powers which, on very slight provocation, might combine against the third—a foreign one. This, and other alternative plans were discussed anxiously and at great length in Wellesley's letters to the Governor-General. Finally, it was decided by Lord Mornington to propitiate the Marhattás by assigning to the Peshwá a small portion of the lands of Mysore, and larger portions to the Company and the Nizám respectively; while the residue

Partition  
of Mysore.

for distinction, and thus opened the road to fame which poor Baird always thought was, by the same act, closed upon him. Notwithstanding this, he and I were always on the best of terms, and I don't believe that there was any man who rejoiced more sincerely than he did in my ulterior success" (*Croker*, ii. 102).

Æt. 30. — was constituted a dominion under the representative of the Hindú dynasty ousted by Hyder Ali, Tipú's father. This residue, upon the sovereignty of which the new Rájá entered on seating himself on the ancient ivory throne of Mysore, brought him a larger revenue than the whole territory of which his ancestors had been deprived by the usurper.

Colonel Wellesley was greatly responsible for the prudent and generous policy which was followed in providing liberal pensions for the sons and family of the fallen Tipú. A commission of five, including Colonel Wellesley and his brother Henry, was appointed to carry the provisions into effect.

The new Rájá of Mysore was a child of five years old. For the security of his dominion, Wellesley was appointed Commander of the Forces in Mysore, with Licut.-Colonel Barry Close as political Resident, an officer of whom Wellesley had previously written to Henry Wellesley as "by far the ablest man in the Company's army." \* This was an independent command, Wellesley receiving orders from and reporting direct to the Governor-General in Calcutta.

Colonel Wellesley's share in the prize-money distributed among the troops engaged in the Mysore campaign amounting to upwards of £4,000, his immediate intention was to repay the money which Lord Mornington had advanced for the purchase of his lieutenant-colonelcy and other objects. To this proposal Lord Mornington, who had already departed from the precedent set by former Governors-General by declining £100,000 voted to him by the Court of Directors as his share of the prize-money, replied at once—

19th June, 1799.—"My dear Arthur, to your letter of the 14th I answer that no consideration can induce me to accept payment of the sums which I formerly advanced to you. I am in no want of money, and probably never shall be; when I am, it will be time enough to call upon you." †

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, i. 95.

† *Ibid.*, 246, note.

Four thousand pounds may seem a handsome guerdon for the services of a colonel in a campaign of little more than two months' duration,\* yet it would be a great mistake to suppose that Wellesley, either at this or any future period of his Indian service, enriched himself. On the contrary, the expenses of his position at Seringapatam far exceeded his means.

*Col. the Hon. Arthur Wellesley to the Governor-General.*

"14th June, 1799.

"Since I went into the field in December last, I have commanded an army with a large staff attached to me, which has not been unattended by a very great expense, particularly latterly. About six weeks ago I was sent in here with a garrison, consisting of about half the army and a large staff, and I have not received a shilling more than I did at Fort St. George. The consequence is that I am ruined. . . . I should be ashamed of doing any of the dirty things that I am told are done in some of the commands in the Carnatic, as I believe I sufficiently proved at Wallajah-Nuggur; but if Government do not consider my situation here, I must either give up the command or be ruined forever. I assure you that since December I have in some months spent five times, in others four times, more than I received." †

For one, at least, of their acts of clemency towards the natives of Mysore, the British conquerors had to pay a heavy price. Some years previously Tipú had captured a notable robber chief named Dhoondia Waugh; and, recognising his ability as a warrior, instead of putting him to death, had induced him to become a Mahomedan and given him a military command. Subsequently, however, Dhoondia incurred afresh the displeasure of his sovereign, and on our troops entering the capital he was found a prisoner in irons.

Rising of  
Dhoondia  
Waugh.

\* Mr. Gleig mentions £7,000 as Wellesley's share in the prize-money; but in a letter of 14th June, 1799, to Lord Mornington he (Wellesley) gives it as 3,000 pagodas in jewels, and 7,000 in money; in all, 10,000 pagodas, equal to about £4,000.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, i. 246.



Æt. 30. Without further inquiry he was set at liberty with the other captives, and no sooner was he free than, gathering round him a few of Tipú's disbanded soldiery, he seized some places in the neighbourhood of Bednore, and began a system of raiding and exactions, enforced by deeds of atrocious violence and cruelty. Two light forces, sent by different routes in pursuit of Dhoondia, were successful in several encounters with the mounted banditti; but, being under strict orders not to violate the Marhattá frontier, they could not follow him when he took refuge in the Peshwá's territory on 20th August, 1799.

The Marhattás, having suffered on former occasions from Dhoondia's depredations, had no reason to befriend him; his camp was plundered by a division of the Peshwá's army, and nothing more was heard of him till the following April, when he reappeared at the head of an immense band in the neighbourhood of Savanore, having assumed in the interval the imposing title—King of the World. Wellesley kept a watchful eye on him, and, as soon as he threatened a descent on Mysore, took the field against him with two brigades of cavalry and three of infantry, having obtained authority to pursue the brigands into Marhattá territory if necessary.

While engaged in making his preparations, Wellesley was offered the command of the land forces in an expedition directed against Batavia. Recognising the advantage and credit to be gained on an independent command on active service, his personal inclination would have led him to accept it eagerly, but he would not place his private advancement in competition with the public interest. He laid the matter before Lord Clive, requesting him to reply to the Governor-General, accepting or declining the offer according to his judgment of the best interests of Mysore. Lord Clive earnestly requested the Governor-General to make another appointment, so as to leave the administration of Mysore in the capable hands of Wellesley.\*

\* *Despatches*, i. 46-54.

On 16th June the British force crossed the Toombuddra, ANN. 1800. then in high flood, in boats. Several places of importance had by this time fallen into Dhoondia's hands. He had with him a very large army, including the whole of Tipú's fine cavalry, and moved with extraordinary rapidity. For several weeks he eluded the combined pursuit of the British and Marhattá forces, but Wellesley took his garrisons in Bednore and other fortresses by assault. Dummul was stormed on 26th July; on the 30th, by a forced march of 26 miles,\* he captured the whole of Dhoondia's baggage and six guns. This was a severe blow to the enemy, whose men began to desert in large numbers. On the other hand, the Marhattá chiefs attached to Wellesley's command gave a lot of trouble, plundering far and wide and refusing to obey his orders. This made him additionally anxious to bring the campaign to a close; he never left Dhoondia at peace for a day, but hunted him with three separate columns, marching between 20 and 30 miles almost daily. On 24th August Dhoondia crossed the Malpoorba into the Nizám's territory; the British force, less lightly equipped, could not ford the river till the 29th, and not before 4th September were the separate columns united for the advance. Wellesley moved with the cavalry in advance of his infantry, which he left to follow under Colonel Stevenson, and, on the morning of the 10th he surprised Dhoondia at a place called Conahgull. Stevenson was 15 miles to the rear; the enemy was about 5,000 strong, all cavalry, double the numbers at Wellesley's disposal; but, having made his front equal to that of Dhoondia by extending his four weak regiments in a single rank, Wellesley charged without a moment's delay. The rebels broke and fled; they were pursued for many miles with heavy loss, Dhoondia Defeat and death of Dhoondia. Waugh himself being among the slain, and his son, a mere boy, being taken prisoner.† Had this ambitious and able

\* "Which, let me tell you, is no small affair in this country" (Col. Wellesley to Major Munro, *Despatches*, i. 60).

† Wellesley maintained this lad till his return to England, when he placed

Æt. 31. warrior been less vigorously dealt with, he would undoubtedly have become the founder of a new dynasty, most dangerous to the British force in India.

In recognition of his services in the conquest and re-settlement of Mysore, the Earl of Mornington, Governor-General of India, was created Marquess Wellesley, 20th December, 1800.

Wellesley appointed to command expedition against the French.

Previous to that date he had relieved Colonel Wellesley from his command in Mysore in order to appoint him to the command of a force of 5,000 troops to embark at Trincomalee, and intended to act against the French either in the Mauritius, or in co-operation with General Abercrombie's army in Egypt. Accordingly Colonel Wellesley went to Trincomalee in December, 1800, and began preparations for the transport and provisioning of his troops. Evidence of the scrupulous care he had schooled himself to take in the humble but essential details of the command of troops may be found in the numerous letters written by him at this time. Long lists of provisions, from beef, flour, and rum down to raisins and vinegar, specifying the amount required for each, are appended *in his own handwriting* to letters addressed to various officials.

He is superseded.

Disappointment was in store for this keen officer. Unfavourable reports continuing to arrive of the movements of the French in Egypt, the Governor-General determined to augment the expeditionary force and to send it to operate in the Red Sea, instead of against the Mauritius. The effect of this rendered it necessary for Lord Wellesley to supersede his brother, who was not of staff rank, in favour of one of the generals then serving in India, which was done by the appointment, on 24th January, 1801, of General Baird to the chief command, Colonel Wellesley being mentioned as second in command.

Before intimation of this change reached Wellesley, he 1,000 pagodas (£400) in the hands of trustees to provide for his education, the interest thereafter to be paid to him for life.

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LIEUT-GENERAL SIR DAVID BAIRD, K.C.B.

[Vol. 1, p. 12.]



was authoritatively apprised by Lord Clive of the intention of the British Cabinet, which happened to coincide with that formed independently by the Governor-General—namely, that the destination of the expedition should be, not the Mauritius, but Egypt. Lord Clive forwarded to Wellesley the requisition of the Secretary of State,\* upon which Wellesley anticipated what he knew must be the orders of the Governor-General when he should receive, some days later, the same requisition, by embarking the whole of his force at Trincomalee. This he did on his own responsibility, not knowing that he had been superseded, and against the advice of the Governor of Ceylon. He moved the troops to Bombay, where they might be properly provisioned and ready to sail at a day's notice. Thus when Baird, whose temper was not of the most equable, arrived at Trincomalee to take up his command, and found that his subordinate had removed his army to a distant port, his feelings may be more easily imagined than described.

Colonel Wellesley's high-handed proceeding might have brought upon him serious consequences with a less friendly Governor-General. Lord Wellesley did, indeed, express some displeasure,† and communications between the brothers were interrupted for some weeks;‡ but in the end the

\* See the Duke of Wellington's letter to Colonel Gurwood, *infra*.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, ii. 345.

‡ *The Duke of Wellington to Colonel Gurwood.*

“6th December, 1833.

“I never expected to be superseded in command. I sailed from Trincomalee on the — February, having received the requisition of the Secretary of State, and it appears (from my papers) that on the voyage to Bombay on the 21st of February I received the notification of Sir David Baird's appointment to the command. . . . I take the truth to have been that the General Officers of superior Rank remonstrated; this was very right. I am not surprised at it. I never was. But the Governor-General having made the appointment ought to have had strength to adhere to it; it was of the unexplained supersession that I complained. . . . The reason why we had not sailed on the expedition to the Mauritius was that Admiral Bannier had not arrived with the ships-of-war. This is an important fact, because I considered myself, and I believe I was,

Æt. 31. Governor-General, on receiving an explanation from his brother, wrote: "I entirely approve of the alacrity and promptitude which you have manifested in moving the troops to the place of rendezvous." \*

Wellesley's first impulse, when he did hear of the supersession, was to throw up the appointment. He had been, perhaps, too long in independent command to relish the idea of serving as a subordinate, especially under an officer with whom he had already found it difficult to get on. He persisted in regarding his treatment as a mark of want of confidence. To the Governor-General, indeed, he admitted afterwards that his original appointment to command the expedition—"out of your partiality for me" †—was justifiable ground for displeasure on the part of senior officers; but he complained bitterly, and with something short of dignity, that all his "drudgery" in equipping the expedition and collecting information should be requited by removing him from the command at the very moment when the results of his labour were to be put into effect.

"At least," he wrote to Lord Wellesley, "I should have refrained from incurring expense, and from taking officers from their situations to put them under the command of a man they all dislike."

Again, to Henry Wellesley—

"I can easily get the better of my own disappointment, but how can I look in the face of the officers who, from a desire to share my fortunes, gave up lucrative appointments, and must go

very ill-used by the Government; and in point of fact I had from that time no communication with the Governor-General Lord Wellesley till after I negotiated and signed the Treaty of Peace. This is the reason, for which, after Sir John Malcolm quitted my camp, I corresponded privately upon all public matters with Colonel Shaw and not with Lord Wellesley himself" (*Apsley House MSS.*).

\* *Despatches*, i. 77\*.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, ii. 362, 16th April.

with one whom none of them admires? I declare that I can't ANN. 1801.  
think of the whole business with common patience."

Lord Wellesley showed excellent discretion in soothing his brother's ruffled feelings. He gave him permission to resign his appointment and to resume his command in Mysore,\* but at the same time he expressed the belief that "you will better satisfy the exigencies of public duty, and better maintain your character for public spirit, by serving pleasantly and zealously in your actual position."

Colonel Wellesley was too good a soldier to hang back when troops were going on active service. News of Abercrombie's operations against Alexandria came to dispel his reluctance, and at once he placed at General Baird's disposal a vast amount of information he had collected about the shores of the Red Sea.†

In the end, however, he worried himself into a fever. Baird was delayed on the voyage from Ceylon to Bombay; he had not arrived on the 26th March, and Wellesley intended to sail for Mocha and await him there. But the fever prevented his carrying out this project; fortunately, perhaps, for Baird's equanimity, which might not have proved equal to a second pursuit of his army. The fever was followed by something worse; Wellesley contracted a most troublesome complaint—the Malabar itch—from occupying on board ship a man's berth that had been given up to him,‡ and by the time he was cured of that, by means of strong baths of nitric acid, Baird had arrived and sailed for the Red Sea. Then came news from Europe indicating that the operations of the British in Egypt were likely to be abandoned, which decided Wellesley to avail himself of the option left to him, by returning to Seringapatam, which he did on 7th May.

Now, it is impossible to read impartially the voluminous

\* *Despatches*, i. 85\*.

† *Ibid.*, 89\*; *Suppl. Despatches*, ii. 357, 365.

‡ *Stanhope*, 103.



**Æt. 32.** correspondence about this affair without receiving the impression that, had Wellesley retained the chief command, neither fever nor Malabar itch would have kept him from accompanying the expedition. At all hazards, and in spite of all suffering, he would have persisted—nay, he never would have fallen sick. It would be foolish to assume that, because Wellesley in after years proved himself more resolute and more successful than any other military commander in Europe, he was therefore at all times superior to human weakness. The conduct of life is comparatively simple to one who has either preserved his obscurity or achieved fame. At this period, Arthur Wellesley had done neither; he had attained distinction—a difficult middle state, wherein a man is most apt to betray inequality of balance. How blind the wisest of us are to what is best for us! Baird, envy of whose prospects of distinction in Egypt drove Wellesley nearly frantic with chagrin, reached Rosetta just as the French were on the point of evacuating Alexandria; while for Wellesley, reluctantly remaining behind, lay close at hand the work which was to bring him his first meed of fame.

Wellesley's  
chagrin.

It was a considerable time before he recovered his equanimity. He contemplated returning to England, which would have been practically to abandon his profession. This idea, repeatedly communicated to his brother Henry,\* with whom his correspondence was at all times most intimate, met with no encouragement from that wise counsellor. Henry's letters are full of calm, sympathetic advice, and may have had no little effect in restoring the wounded spirit of the commander of Mysore. In return, Arthur Wellesley gave Henry at least one valuable piece of advice. Hearing that he, too, had been ill, he wrote on 8th July, 1801—

“I know but one receipt for good health in this country, and that is to live moderately, to drink little or no wine, to use exercise, to keep the mind employed, and, if possible, to keep in

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, ii. 409, 474.

good humour with the world. The last is most difficult, for, as ANN. 1801. you have often observed, there is scarcely a good-tempered man in India." \*

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, ii. 501. Thirty-six years later the Duke of Wellington observed to Lord Mahon : "Through life I have avoided medicine as much as I could, but always eaten and drunk very little" (*Stanhope*, 103). The austerity of his diet and his indifference to luxury, sometimes bore hardly on his companions. When travelling with Wellington in France in 1814, Alava always received "At daylight" as the answer to inquiry when they should start, and "Cold meat" to that of what they should have for dinner. "J'en ai pris en horreur," Alava used to say, "ces deux mots 'daylight' et 'cold meat'" (*Stanhope*, 29).

## CHAPTER III.

### FIRST MARHATTÁ CAMPAIGN.

1801-1805.

<p>1801. Dissatisfaction in England with Lord Wellesley.</p> <p>1802. Threatening posture of the Marhattás. Holkar invades the Peshwá's territory.</p> <p>October 25 . . . Defeats Sindhia and the Peshwá.</p> <p>December 31. Treaty of Bassein signed.</p> <p>March 9, 1803. General Wellesley takes the field against Holkar.</p> <p>April 20 . . . Captures Poona.</p> <p>May 13 . . . Restoration of the Peshwá.</p> <p>June 26 . . . General Wellesley appointed Commander-in-chief in the Marhattá states.</p> <p>Negociations with Sindhia.</p> <p>August 6 . . . War declared against Sindhia and the Rájá of Berar.</p> <p>„ 11 . . . Capture of Ahmadnagar.</p>	<p>General Lake's operations.</p> <p>September 23. Battle of Assaye.</p> <p>November 27. Battle of Argaum.</p> <p>December 15. Siege and capture of Gawilghur.</p> <p>„ 17. Peace concluded with Sindhia and the Rájá.</p> <p>Feb. 5, 1804. Dispersal of Marhattá brigands.</p> <p>General Wellesley's discontent and resignation.</p> <p>Character of the Wellington despatches.</p> <p>Wellesley's friendship with Sir John Malcolm.</p> <p>War with Holkar.</p> <p>November 9. Wellesley resumes his command in Mysore. He receives knighthood and sails for England.</p> <p>Summary of his Indian service.</p>
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Murmurs  
against  
Lord  
Wellesley.

THE Marquess Wellesley's administration of India had been a brilliant success. Not only had a large and valuable territory been added to the British dominions, but the authority of the East India Company and the British

Government had been consolidated and established on a just and durable basis. Nevertheless, there were not wanting, both in India and in England, many persons who looked with disfavour on the policy of the Governor-General and its results. Features of that policy had been the infringement of the monopoly hitherto enjoyed in the export trade by placing private merchants on a more equal footing with the privileged company, and the encouragement of shipbuilding in India to the alleged detriment of British yards. Parliamentary criticism, too, though possibly not so well—or at least so copiously—informed as at the present day, was just as nimble and persistent. The “Perish India” party is no creation of recent years, and the resignation of Pitt in March, 1801, exposed Lord Wellesley to the growing hostility of his critics. It was whispered, most falsely, that he had enriched himself and his brothers enormously, and that his public administration was grossly extravagant. He received orders from the Court of Directors to reduce largely the military forces in India, a course which he knew would be inconsistent with the security of British rule. But that which wounded him most cruelly was an order issued by the Court for the reduction of Colonel Wellesley’s allowances as Governor of Mysore.\* Fully conscious of the degree to which he himself had reformed the dealings of the Company with the native princes, a proceeding which those of the old school regarded as quixotic and irritating,† he was equally confident in the absolute integrity of his brother. ‡

\* For his services against Dhoondia Waugh the Court made Colonel Wellesley a special grant of 10,000 pagodas (£1,000).

† Clive amassed a huge fortune during his administration. It may be remembered that he accepted £160,000 and a life annuity of £27,000 a year for placing Meer Jaffer on the throne of Bengal.

‡ Colonel Wellesley read a pretty sharp lesson to a certain British officer who conveyed to him a proposal from the Rájá of Kittoor, one of the minor Marhattá chiefs, who desired to be taken under British protection. The proposal contained the offer of a gift to Wellesley of 10,000 pagodas and another to the said officer of 1,000, provided the arrangement were effected.

“In respect to the bribe offered to you and myself, I am surprised that any

Æt. 32. "The Court," wrote Lord Wellesley to the Prime Minister, Mr. Addington, "by reducing the established allowance of Colonel Wellesley, has offered me the most direct, marked, and disgusting personal indignity which could be devised. The effect of this order must be to inculcate an opinion that I have suffered my brother to derive emoluments beyond the limits of justice and propriety, and that I have exhibited an example of profusion and extravagance in an allowance granted to my nearest connexion."\*

Deeply affronted by these and other humiliating acts of the Court of Directors, Lord Wellesley tendered his immediate resignation; but internal affairs in India had taken such an unfavourable turn, that the Court recoiled from the idea of placing them in less experienced hands, and, at their earnest request, he consented to retain his office till 1804.†

Threatening posture of the Marhattás.

The danger which the Government of India had in view arose from the attitude of the Marhattá nation. This great confederation represented the empire carved by Sevajee in 1680 out of the dominion of Aurangzeb, and was ruled by five semi-independent and powerful princes—namely, the Peshwá of Poona, in the hill-country of the Western Gháts; Sindhia of Gwalior and Holkar of Indore, in Central India; the Gaikwár of Baroda; and, on the east, the Bhonsla Rájá of Nágpur, ruling from Berar to the coast of Orissa. Nominally the Peshwá was suzerain of the others; on the other hand, while each of the five Princes was free to form alliances affecting only his own realm, none of them—not even the Peshwá—could enter upon engagements affecting the Marhattá nation as a whole, except with the concurrence of all the rest. Diplomatic relations with rulers acting under such a constitution were delicate and complicated. It had been

man, in the character of a British officer, should not have given the Rajah to understand that the offer would be considered an insult. . . . I can attribute your conduct on this occasion to nothing but the most inconsiderate indiscretion, and to a wish to benefit yourself, which got the better of your prudence" (*Suppl. Despatches*, iii. 548).

\* *Marquess Wellesley's Despatches*, vol. iii. p. iv.

† *Ibid.*, p. xxv.

the desire of the British Government to contract an alliance with the Marhattá confederation as a whole, but all attempts to do so had been baffled hitherto by the chronic jealousy and hostility between the chiefs themselves, and by the fact that the powerful armies of Sindhia had for many years been organised and in a large measure officered by Frenchmen. Lord Wellesley had often been strongly urged by his Council to put an end to the suspense by undertaking aggressive operations against the Marhattás, advice which Colonel Wellesley had as often and as strenuously opposed.

"They breathe nothing but war, and appear to have adopted some of the French principles on that subject. They seem to think that because the Mahrattás do not choose to ally themselves with us more closely . . . it is perfectly justifiable and proper that we should go to war with them."\*

At great length he discussed the political, as well as the military aspects of the question, displaying a clear perception of what are now recognised to be the true interests of Great Britain in India, and deprecating above all things harshness, hastiness, and the slightest taint of insincerity in dealing with native rulers. Arthur Wellesley was a soldier, but he was a gifted administrator also, and never suffered professional desire for distinction to incline him to fight when it was possible to negotiate.

Early in 1802 Lord Wellesley concluded a defensive alliance with the Gaikwar of Baroda. Negotiations for a similar one with the Peshwá had been pending for long, but Sindhia's influence was paramount at the time in the court of Poona, and was exerted to prevent an agreement. Towards the autumn, however, events took a turn which threw the Peshwá into the arms of the British. Holkar, jealous of Sindhia's military predominance, had followed his rival's example in obtaining French officers to organise and drill his forces. Having by this time not less than 80,000 men, chiefly

ANN. 1802.

Holkar  
invades the  
Peshwá's  
territory.

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, ii. 255, 258, 268, etc.

**Æt. 33.** cavalry, under arms, by a sudden and rapid movement he crossed the Nerbudda, swept down upon Poona, and, on 25th October, 1802, inflicted a total defeat on the combined armies of Sindhia and the Peshwá.

**The treaty of Bassein.** The Peshwá fled for refuge under the British flag, and, on 31st December, signed at Bassein a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance with the Governor-General. One of the articles stipulated for the maintenance at Poona of 6,000 British troops at the Peshwá's charges; but, inasmuch as Poona had fallen into the hands of Holkar, the first effect of the treaty was to render incumbent on the Government of India his expulsion and the restoration of the Peshwá.

**War with Holkar.** A corps of observation of nearly 20,000 men having been sent by Lord Clive under General Stuart immediately after the fall of Poona to the north-west frontier of Mysore, and the Nizám's contingent of 8,000 or 9,000 men having advanced under Colonel Stevenson from Hyderabad, Major-General Wellesley\* was appointed to command a detachment of General Stuart's army, and directed to operate against Holkar. His troops consisted of the 19th Light Dragoons and two regiments of Native cavalry, the 74th Regiment, the Scottish Brigade, and six Native battalions making, with artillery, 10,617 men. He was exceedingly anxious to have his own beloved 33rd also, but it was not found possible to gratify his wish.

**General Wellesley marches against Holkar.** Marching from Hurryhur on 9th March, 1803, General Wellesley entered Marhattá territory on the 12th, and formed a junction at Aklooss on 15th April with the Hyderabad contingent, of which Colonel Stevenson had assumed the command. This increased the invading army to 19,000, a force which Wellesley foresaw could not be provisioned if kept together. Holkar, moreover, having consumed all the grain and forage within 150 miles of Poona, was retiring to the north, leaving a garrison of 1500 in the Peshwá's capital.

\* Colonel the Hon. Arthur Wellesley had been promoted to general on 29th April, 1802.

He was known to have reached Chandore, about 130 miles north of Poona, and obviously was meditating a descent on the Deccan. Wellesley, therefore, continuing his own advance on Poona, detached Stevenson's force to cover the Nizám's frontier. ANN. 1803.

News coming to hand that Amrut Rao, Holkar's governor in Poona, was about to burn that city and evacuate it, Wellesley resolved to be beforehand with him. Taking the cavalry only, he dashed forward on the morning of 19th April through the Little Boorghát pass, and, traversing sixty miles of very difficult country in thirty-four hours, arrived before Poona on the 20th in time to save it from destruction. Amrut Rao beat a hasty retreat, and Wellesley's cavalry rode into the capital without striking a blow. The Peshwá was brought back from Bassein, and on 13th May British guns thundered out to his people the announcement that he was seated once more on the throne Sattarah. Capture of Poona by the British.

The position was now this—the Peshwá, under the treaty of Bassein, was the ally of the East India Company; Sindhia also, as the Peshwá's ally against Holkar, might have been reckoned constructively as in alliance with the Company, but the Peshwá was no sooner free from Sindhia's control than he ceased to be the object of his friendly interest—became, indeed, the object of his unmitigated dislike. Sindhia, therefore, began overtures of peace with Holkar, and, associating himself with the Rájá of Berar, took up in force a position threatening the Deccan. Sindhia's attitude.

On 26th June General Wellesley received commission to the chief command of the British forces in the Marhattá states, with extraordinary political powers. Averse, as usual, from hostilities except as a last resource, he was indefatigable in negotiating with the native chiefs, hoping to induce them to resume friendly, or at least neutral, relations.\*

To trace all the steps in the events which ultimately led to a rupture with Sindhia would be almost as tedious as it Negotiations with Sindhia.

\* *Despatches*, i. 203-294.



**Æt. 34.** was Sindhia's policy to make the proceedings themselves. The chief features in the negotiations were a demand by General Wellesley that Sindhia should withdraw his army from the position it occupied on the Nizám's frontier. Sindhia replied that he could only do so on the withdrawal of the British forces into their own territory. Wellesley's reply was made from his camp at Walkee on 6th August—

War declared against Sindhia and the Rájá of Berar.

"I offered you peace on terms of equality, and honourable to all parties: you have chosen war and are responsible for all consequences."\*

On the same day he instructed the officer commanding the troops in Baroda to begin operations against Sindhia's fort at Baroach, † and on the 7th August issued a proclamation of war against Dowlut Rao Sindhia and the Rájá of Berar.‡

Capture of Ahmadnagar.

On the 8th August the rain which had lasted some weeks having cleared away, Wellesley moved forward to Ahmadnagar § with 1,731 cavalry and 7,000 infantry, besides artillery, pioneers, and 5,000 Indian horse from Mysore and Poona. Ahmadnagar was strongly fortified, and refused a summons to surrender. The *pcttah*, a fortified suburb, was carried after a stubborn resistance; fire was opened on the morning of the 10th, and, on the evening of the 11th, the place surrendered, possession thereof, as covering the road to Poona, being considered of great importance by Wellesley. The loss of the attacking force amounted to no more than 22 killed (including four British officers) and 97 wounded.

On 2nd September Colonel Stevenson, operating independently with the Hyderabad force, stormed Jalnapur on

\* *Despatches*, i. 287. In his translation of Brialmont, Mr. Gleig has not corrected that author's rendering of the last sentence, which he gives as—"you have chosen war and you shall undergo all its calamities;" a menace more dramatic, perhaps, than Wellesley's habitually cool language, but not the words he actually used.

† *Despatches*, i. 292.

‡ *Ibid.*, 299.

§ "Except Vellore, in the Carnatic, Ahmednuggur is the strongest country fort that I have seen" (*Ibid.*, i. 301).

the Marhattá frontier, while Wellesley advancing from Ahmednagar on 16th August, intended to reunite the forces. It was uncertain, as yet, whether Holkar was in the field against the British, as well as Sindhia and the Rájá of Berar.

Simultaneously with Wellesley's and Stevenson's invasion from the south-west, General Lake was advancing from Cawnpore with 14,000 men against the north-east frontier of the Marhattás. On 29th August he defeated Sindhia's forces under the French General Perron, who thereupon threw up his command and retired to France with the enormous wealth he had amassed during his service with the Marhattás. Another Frenchman, Bourquien, having succeeded to the command, he, too, was defeated by Lake near Delhi on 11th September.\*

General  
Lake's  
operations.

Wellesley effected his junction with Stevenson at Budnapur on 21st September, and, learning that the enemy occupied a position between Bokerdun and Jaffierabad, on the other side of the hills, he detached Stevenson once more on the 22nd to move by a pass to the west of these hills, while he himself marched round by the east. Arriving at Naulniah about 11 o'clock on the 23rd, Wellesley, who had to rely entirely on information collected by native *hircarrahs*, or messengers, was told that Sindhia and the Rájá of Berar had moved off with their cavalry, nearly 30,000 strong, leaving their infantry, about 20,000, to follow. The latter, he was informed, were still in camp about six miles distant, instead of twelve or fourteen miles as he had reckoned from his previous information. The mistake arose from confusion between the village of Bokerdun and the district of the same name.† The enemy's right, indeed, rested on the village of Bokerdun, but their front extended eastward about six miles to Assaye, which brought them within six miles of the British outposts.

\* In consequence of this victory the Company restored Shah Alum to the throne of Delhi, where henceforward British influence remained paramount.

† *Despatches*, i. 391.

Æt. 34. Under these circumstances, Wellesley found it impossible, in presence of the whole Marhattá army, to await Stevenson's arrival for the concerted attack next day. He had to decide between an immediate and offensive movement with 7,500 men and 17 guns against an enemy numbering 50,000 with 128 guns, strongly posted, and a retreat to Naulniah, exposed to the whole of the Marhattá horse. Nor did this include all his disadvantage. His men had already marched twenty miles that morning, whereas the Marhattás had been lying in camp for several days.

It was one of those moments in which the renown of an individual is made or marred—the destiny of an empire shattered or confirmed.

The certainty of suffering severely from the enemy's cavalry if he attempted to retreat, and the necessity of abandoning all his baggage, decided him. Wellesley sent word to Stevenson, then distant about twelve miles, to come on with all speed, and resolved to attack at once.\*

Battle of  
Assaye.

The Marhattá position was a very strong one. In front of it ran the Kaitna, a shallow stream, but impassable, except at two places, by guns and cavalry, because of its precipitous banks. The enemy's rear was protected by another stream, the Juah, while the junction of these two waters formed a good defence to his left flank. Nearly opposite that left flank, about four miles to the British right, lay the village of Peepulgaon, on the right bank of the Kaitna. Wellesley could not see the river, and could not have it reconnoitred in presence of a large body of Marhattá horse on the hither side of it. The native guides assured him there was no ford, but he would not rest content till he had examined the place

\* Lord Roberts (*Rise of Wellington*, p. 22) follows M. Brialmont in citing Wellesley as describing his attack as "a desperate *expedient*." This may be an appropriate expression, but it was not the phrase used by Wellesley. What he did say in his letter to Colonel (afterwards Sir Thomas Munro) was this: "I determined upon attack immediately. It was certainly a most desperate one, but our guns were not silenced" (*Suppl. Despatches*, iv. 211). There is a good deal of difference between a "desperate expedient" and a "desperate attack."

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LA Second position of Scindiah.  
OO Last position of Scindiah.





[Vol. 4, p. 56.]



himself. Taking the whole of his cavalry as an escort he ANN. 1803. rode forward to a position where, through his glass, he could see the far bank of the Kaitna, and found that immediately opposite Peepulgaon there was another village. From this he argued that there must be some communication between the two villages, and that the banks must be practicable at that point.\* He made up his mind to risk it, and, in order to reach the hypothetical ford, began a flank march, parallel with the enemy's front, but with the river between the two armies. The 74th and 78th Highlanders and four Sepoy battalions led the way, the cavalry brought up the rear to protect the column from the enemy's horse on the near side of the stream. Luckily it was some time before the enemy perceived the movement of the infantry; still more luckily, he did not occupy the ford, as he might have done in overwhelming force. Instead of this, as soon as Sindhia perceived his right flank threatened, he changed front, bringing up his right to rest on the Kaitna, and throwing back his left to the village of Assaye. This movement, which was executed with great steadiness and precision, was covered by a heavy fire of grape and chain shot. It was an anxious moment as the advance guard reached the water.

Was there a ford or was there none?

Hurrah! the Highlanders are halfway across, and no more than waist deep; some of them fall and are swept away, for the enemy's shot ploughs the water all around them; but the leading sections reach the further shore; the main body, as it lands, deploys and forms a line of attack right across the peninsula. The enemy, to meet them, withdraws his left, which causes Wellesley to alter his tactics; at about three o'clock he begins to manœuvre by his left against the Marhattás' right. By this time the British guns were nearly

\* Referring to this incident in conversation with Lord Mahon, the Duke of Wellington observed: "That was common sense. When one is strongly intent on an object, common sense will usually direct one to the right means" (*Stanhope*, 49; *Croker*, i. 353).



ÆT. 34. useless, most of the bullocks having been shot, so they were kept in rear of the attack. The whole force Wellesley was able to bring into action did not amount to 5,000 men. It advanced in three lines, the two infantry brigades leading, the cavalry covering the rear, the Mysore and Peshwá's horse protecting the left flank. After firing a couple of rounds, the 78th Highlanders and the Sepoys dashed forward and engaged the enemy with the bayonet, driving the Marhattás from their guns in the first line and scattering their infantry. Then they moved on to the second line of guns and captured these in like manner.

Perilous  
position of  
the British  
right.

At this moment, the officer commanding the pickets on the right, mistaking his orders, continued to advance against the village of Assaye, supported by the 74th Highlanders. This dislocated the whole British formation, causing a wide break between the right and left wings of the two foremost lines, while the advanced pickets and 74th were exposed to a destructive fire from guns posted in Assaye, and were charged by the cavalry attached to the enemy's infantry battalions. To save them, Wellesley brought up his cavalry, who, charging under Colonel Maxwell of the 19th Light Dragoons, managed to bring off the remnants of the attacking party; but in this affair the cavalry suffered heavily, Colonel Maxwell being among the slain. To silence the fire from Assaye, Wellesley threw forward the 78th against the corps round that village. A smart bayonet charge threw the Marhattás into confusion; they fled in panic across the nullah, the 19th Light Dragoons charging again and cutting down many fugitives.

At six o'clock the combined armies of Sindhia and the Rájá of Berar were in full retreat towards Burrampur, leaving the field in possession of the British.

This brilliant and most momentous victory was not won without a loss sadly disproportionate to the number of British troops engaged. Seventy-nine officers and 1,778 soldiers were killed and wounded, among the slain being 43 officers,

nearly all having been struck by cannon shot. The blunder ANN. 1803. of the gallant fellow who led his pickets too near the guns at Assaye was the chief cause of this excessive proportion of casualties. In the 74th Highlanders, which was ordered to support this officer's pickets at a distance of 300 or 400 yards, every officer present, except Quartermaster James Grant, was either killed or wounded. One company of the pickets, consisting of one officer and fifty men, lost all but six rank and file. General Wellesley had one horse shot under him and another one piked.

The Marhattá loss was very severe. They left 1,200 dead on the field, besides 102 pieces of cannon and a great part of their camp equipage; but Wellesley's small force of cavalry had suffered too heavily to enable him to pursue the fugitives. Of the young General's behaviour under fire there remains the interesting testimony of his brigade-major, Lieutenant Colin Campbell, who was himself wounded and had two horses shot under him.

"The General was in the thick of the action the whole time, and had a horse killed under him. No man could have shown a better example to his troops than he did. I never saw a man so cool and collected as he was the whole time, though I can assure you, till our troops got orders to advance, the fate of the day seemed doubtful; and if the numerous cavalry of the enemy had done their duty, I hardly think it possible we should have succeeded."\*

Colonel Stevenson, being led astray by his guides, did not arrive till the night of the 24th, when he set off to follow the enemy in their retreat to Berar.

Of Wellesley's tactics in this battle critics have been numerous and, as must be admitted, not unreasonably. Objection has been taken in the first place to his having separated from Colonel Stevenson's division when so near a superior force of the enemy. Wellesley's own defence

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, iv. 186, note.

Æt. 34. on that point is that the separation was necessary, because both corps could not have advanced through the same defile on the same day; and that it was advisable, because if one of these defiles had been left open, the enemy might have passed through it into the territory which it was the object of the campaign to defend. Of course, the most obvious reflection on the General's conduct arises from his having found himself in close proximity to a stationary enemy which he believed to be at a considerable distance, a surprise which could not have occurred with an efficient system of reconnoitring. But the enemy's horse was so numerous that no reconnoitring could be undertaken by an European officer without an army behind him; neither could Wellesley employ his own *hircarrahs*, who, as natives of the Carnatic, were as easily recognised as Europeans: he had to rely on natives hired in the enemy's own country, whose information naturally was far from trustworthy. No doubt, had such a situation arisen in the course of autumn manœuvres at home, the umpire must have pronounced the inferior force beaten, and badly beaten; but when a capable general in real war is entrapped in a dilemma, it sometimes happens that his genius and the enemy's unreadiness combine to force the hand of fate. By all the formal rules of war Wellesley, in making a flank march of four miles across the front of an immensely superior force, exposed to artillery fire and with cavalry threatening his rear—in then fording a difficult river and advancing across an exposed plateau in face of more than one hundred guns—lastly, in being compelled to call prematurely into action his only semblance of a reserve in order to rectify the mistake of one of his officers, and having been obliged to abandon his artillery—Wellesley, I say, fulfilled all the conditions necessary to ensure the doom of any ordinary general and of any ordinary troops. That they wrested the palm of victory under such tremendous hazards seems to show that neither commander nor commanded were of the common kind.

Stevenson having continued to operate with success ANN. 1803. against the Marhattás, and having taken Burrampur and Assirghur, the chiefs began overtures for an armistice. Wellesley, preferring to deal with one at a time, agreed to Overtures for peace. treat with Sindhia, but declined to do so with the Rájá of Berar.\* Sindhia, though he had lost all his guns and though his infantry was scattered, was still at the head of a powerful force of cavalry, which it was desirable to put out of the field before treating with the Rájá. Accordingly, on 23rd November, a suspension of hostilities was arranged between Wellesley and Sindhia's *vakeels*, † preliminary to a treaty of peace, one condition being that Sindhia should move his position forty miles to the east of Elichpúr. Instead of carrying this out, Sindhia remained with his army in close proximity to the Rájá's camp, and Wellesley prepared to attack them both.

Although he had been long separated from Stevenson, sometimes at a distance of hundreds of miles, he had maintained constant communication with him by *dawk*, or foot-messengers, who, rattle in hand to scare wild beasts and with loins strictly girt, traversed enormous distances at the rate of five or six miles an hour and supplied a very trustworthy substitute for a regular post. On 27th November Wellesley, perceiving in the distance the dust raised by a body of troops, judged it to be Stevenson's division, and desired an officer near him to ride off and desire him to wait at the village of Huttee Andorah, where the two divisions might form a junction.

"But suppose," said the officer, "it should not be Colonel Stevenson?"

"Why then," replied Wellesley, "you are mounted on a good horse, and you have eyes in your head: you must ride off as hard as you can." ‡

The Native officers on his staff expressed much surprise at their General's discernment.

\* *Despatches*, ii. 73.

† *Envoys*.

‡ *Stanhope*, 181.

**Æt. 34.** "How," they asked, "can you tell Colonel Stevenson's dust from any other dust?"\*

Wellesley had calculated exactly the time it ought to take Stevenson to fulfil his orders, and he knew he could rely on his man.

**Battle of  
Argaum.**

The united British force, consisting of six regiments of cavalry, 4,000 irregular horse, and fourteen battalions of infantry—about 18,000 in all—marched twenty miles to Parterley, whence the enemy could be perceived about six miles distant, drawn up on the plain of Argaum. Their line extended for more than five miles, Sindhia's cavalry being on the right, the Rájá of Berar's infantry and guns in the centre, and a body of cavalry on the left. In front of the Marhattá position lay a plain, much intersected with water-courses; in their rear was the village of Argaum with gardens and enclosures.

It was late in the afternoon: his troops were exhausted by their long march and the intense heat: the enemy were six miles distant, yet Wellesley determined to attack them at once, and marched on in a single column. Arriving on the plain, he deployed his forces in two lines—the infantry in the first, the cavalry in the second line, supporting the right of the infantry. When the enemy's artillery opened, three battalions of Sepoys, who had behaved with the utmost steadiness and gallantry under far hotter fire at Assaye, broke and ran away. Wellesley himself galloped among them and succeeded in rallying them. "If I had not been there," he wrote afterwards, "I am convinced we should have lost the day." † As it was, much valuable time was wasted, but the line having been reformed, the advance was resumed in good order. Sindhia's horse, charging the left of the British line, was repulsed in great disorder and fled, spreading confusion among the Marhattá forces, who broke and abandoned their position, leaving thirty-eight guns in the hands of the victors. Night was now falling, but the British and Native

\* Stanhope, 182.

† Despatches, i. 533.

cavalry pursued for miles in the moonlight, capturing elephants, camels, and much baggage, and killing many fugitives. ANN. 1803.

On this day, when the Marhattá power was broken, the British troops were under arms from six in the morning till midnight. Their loss, considering the completeness of their success and the numerical superiority of the enemy, was surprisingly light, consisting of only 46 killed and 303 wounded and missing.

Allowing a single day to rest his men and to write his despatches, Wellesley advanced on 1st December towards Gawilghur, an important and well-fortified stronghold of the Rájá of Berar. The heavy ordnance and stores, which were in Stevenson's division, had to be drawn by hand for thirty miles over mountains and through ravines, on roads constructed by the troops as they went along. "Colonel Stevenson's division," Wellesley reported to the Governor-General, "went through a series of laborious services, such as I never before witnessed, with the utmost cheerfulness and perseverance." \* Siege and capture of Gawilghur.

Wellesley covered these operations with his division and the whole of the cavalry. Fire was opened on the defences of Gawilghur on 13th December: on the morning of the 15th, the breaches being pronounced practicable, a storming party was told off under Lieut.-Col. Kenny, while two other assaults were directed simultaneously against the southern and north-western gates. The garrison was numerous, but badly commanded; the British speedily overcame their resistance, and became masters of the place with very slight loss. In his general orders on that evening Wellesley assigned most of the credit to the troops under Colonel Stevenson, who bore the chief labours of the siege and furnished the storming party.

These repeated reverses, combined with the victorious progress of General Lake at Delhi and Agra and the occupation by Colonel Harcourt of the district of Cuttack belonging to

\* *Despatches*, i. 551.

Æt. 34. — the Rájá of Berar, convinced the Marhattá leaders of the futility of further resistance, and before the close of the year Wellesley concluded treaties of "perpetual peace and friendship with both Sindhia and the Rájá." As strong, apparently, in diplomacy as in strategy, he obtained important concessions to indemnify the Company for the expenses of the war. Delhi, Agra, Broach, and Ahmadnagar, with territory yielding a yearly revenue of £3,000,000, passed into the possession of the British. "Your treaty," wrote the Governor-General to Wellesley, "is wise, honourable, and glorious, and I shall ratify it the instant a copy can be made." \*

Peace concluded with Sindhia and the Rájá.

Dispersal of Marhattá brigands.

The break-up of the Marhattá forces was the cause of serious disturbance in various hill districts, whither many of the disbanded soldiery betook themselves and began a system of brigandage. Wellesley determined to disperse the worst of these bands, which was devastating the Soubah of the Deccan. Crossing the Godavery, therefore, with the 19th Light Dragoons, three Native regiments of cavalry, and a small force of infantry, by making an extraordinary forced march he came up with the brigands on 5th February, 1804, and cut them to pieces, capturing the whole of their guns and baggage. In after years Wellesley used to speak of this march as the most arduous he ever undertook. He calculated that between 6 a.m. on the 4th and noon on the 5th his infantry had marched sixty miles.

\* *Despatches*, ii. 14. Writing to the Governor-General, Wellesley describes an amusing incident of the peace negotiations:—

21st January, 1804.—"Malcolm writes from Scindhia's camp that at the first meeting Scindhia received him with great gravity, which he had intended to preserve throughout the visit. It rained violently, and an officer of the escort, Mr. Pepper, an Irishman (a nephew of old Bective's, by-the-by), sat under a flat part of the tent which received a great part of the rain. At length, it burst through the tent upon the head of Mr. Pepper, who was concealed by the torrent that fell, and was discovered after some time by an 'Oh Jásus!' and an hideous yell. Scindhia laughed violently, as did all the others present; and the gravity and dignity of the durbar degenerated into a Malcolm riot—after which they all parted on the best of terms" (*Despatches*, ii. 62).

The operations against the Marhattás having been brought to a successful close, Wellesley returned to Poona, and thence proceeded to Bombay. It appears from his correspondence that he felt dissatisfied at the degree of recognition his services had received from the Home Government and the Commander-in-chief, the Duke of York. His appointment on the staff, made eighteen months previously, had not been confirmed, and he was apprehensive that another officer might be appointed over his head. So strong was his feeling on this subject that he asked General Lake's permission to return to Europe, proposing to resign the military and political appointments he held from the Governor-General.

ANN. 1804  
General  
Wellesley  
is discon-  
tented.

It may be observed here, once for all, that during his service in India Wellesley frequently betrayed in his letters undue impatience with the authorities and ingratitude for what had been, even for those days, singularly rapid promotion and singularly happy opportunities of distinguishing himself. To have obtained the command of his regiment at four-and-twenty, to have been appointed military and civil Governor of Mysore at thirty, to have been promoted to major-general at thirty-three—these seem to be points in an enviable propitious career, and undoubtedly did create much jealousy in the minds of officers who had less family influence at their back. Although in writing to the Governor-General he often expressed his gratitude for the favour shown by him, it would have been agreeable had there been less grumbling in the rest of his correspondence. He complains in one letter that he has "never received anything but injury from the Court of Directors," yet in another he acknowledges that, between prize-money and the sum (£4,000) awarded him by the Court in recognition of his services, he has quite enough to render him "independent of all office or employment."

However much one might wish that some passages in these letters had been differently expressed (and which of us ever have felt very sympathetic with the grievances of others?) we owe it to Wellesley's habitual frankness that they have



Æt. 35. been allowed to remain as they were written. His correspondence with Colonel Gurwood, preserved at Apsley House, shows how scrupulous he was to allow no alterations in them, except the omission of a passage here and there which might wound the susceptibilities of persons, European or Native, still living when the papers were being prepared for publication, and of the names of such officers and soldiers who fell into disgrace in his many campaigns, and of those regiments which he had occasion to reprimand. Taken as a whole, this correspondence during Wellesley's eight years of Indian service is no whit inferior in style and scope to that of his later years. His insight into native character and the wants of the people—his conception of the right policy to pursue alike in the interests of the British power and the native rulers—his reluctance to appeal to arms when the end could be attained by peaceful means—above all, his resolute adherence to the principles of honour and his contempt for indirect emolument—appear as clearly in these papers as his solicitude for the welfare of his troops and minute attention to organisation of transports, supplies, and equipment. As a literary work, the whole series of the despatches from 1794 down to 1832,\* filling the greater part of 15,000 large octavo pages, closely printed, forms one of the most remarkable achievements from a single hand that ever were penned. There is hardly an ambiguous sentence in the whole of it; clearness is never risked by economy of words—in fact, the sense is sometimes amplified by expressions which might be judged redundant. When one reflects upon the variety of agitating and fatiguing circumstances under which the military part of the correspondence was conducted, it is impossible not to marvel at the cool head and iron frame which enabled the writer to set them at defiance.† The

The Wel-  
lington  
despatches.

\* The correspondence from 1832 to the close of his life has not been printed, but I have had the privilege of inspecting it at Apsley House.

† When Colonel Gurwood's edition of Wellesley's Indian despatches was published thirty years later, the author of them read them with much interest,

letters abound in maxims and aphorisms which, had they ANN. 1804  
 occurred in anything but official documents, had surely long  
 ago been gleaned by those industrious persons who compile  
 birthday-books. On the completion of the twelfth volume  
 of the Despatches the Duke wrote to Colonel Gurwood—

6th November, 1838.—“You have brought before the publick  
 a work which must be useful to statesmen and soldiers, as con-  
 taining the true details of important political and military  
 operations of many years' duration. I did not believe it possible  
 that a correspondence which I preserved at first solely as  
 memoranda and for reference, and afterwards from idleness and  
 the desire to avoid the trouble of looking over the papers to see  
 what might be destroyed, could ever be turned to a purpose so  
 useful to our profession and the publick interests.”\*

It must not be understood that the feelings of resentment  
 or discontent which found expression in some of these letters  
 had the slightest effect in diminishing Wellesley's energy in  
 carrying out his own work and seconding the work of others.  
 Whatever jealousy his good fortune may have awakened in  
 certain officers less lucky than himself, there is abundant  
 evidence of the confidence Wellesley secured both from his  
 superiors and from those under his command. Many attempts  
 have been made to define genius; it has no more constant  
 characteristic than readiness to turn opportunity to good  
 account. Personal interest was as much recognised in those  
 days as the chief motor in military promotion, as seniority  
 and merit are now. What would now be denounced as  
 jobbery was then perfectly fair and above-board. It often  
 placed men in positions for which they were deplorably—  
 disgracefully unfit: Wellesley was an instance of a man

and expressed his surprise to find them so good—“as good as I could write now.  
 They show the same attention to details—to the pursuit of all the means, how-  
 ever small, that could promote success.” When Lord Mahon expressed his  
 astonishment that Wellesley could write so lucidly and at such length in the  
 midst of active operations, he said, “My rule always was to do the business of  
 the day in the day” (*Stanhope*, 49, 57, 70).

\* *Apeley House MSS.*

Æt. 35. favoured by fortune and able to turn her favours to the service of his country. The College of Heralds deserve no little credit for having so aptly epitomised his career in the motto which they assigned to him—*Virtutis fortuna comes*—“Fortune the comrade of Valour.”\*

Wellesley's  
friendship  
with Sir  
John Mal-  
coln.

Injustice, however, would be done to a wise and brave man if no mention were made of Colonel John Malcolm,† with whom Wellesley formed a close friendship and corresponded more intimately than with any one else during his Indian service, or, indeed, for long afterwards. Malcolm undoubtedly possessed a strong influence for good over Wellesley. In urging him in 1804 to give up his resolution to return to England he founded his arguments on the subordination of private to public interests.

“. . . I know circumstances might arise which would make your situation, in the subordinate part it might fall to your share to act, unpleasant; but a sense of duty and zeal for the public service would prevent such feelings having weight. . . . At all events we should not decline a station in which we are positive we can do a great deal of good, from a fear of not having it in our power to do all the good we might wish or intend.”‡

Malcolm perceived, as clearly as we can now perceive in reading these letters, the share which personal ambition had in directing Wellesley in his choice of employment, however little it interfered with the discharge of duty undertaken.

“I acknowledge,” Wellesley replied to the letter above quoted, “that I don't exactly see the necessity that I should stay several years in India in order to settle affairs which, if I had been permitted, I should have settled long ago. . . . I look to England, and I conceive that my views in life will be advanced by returning there. I don't conceive that any man has a right to

\* It is a paraphrase, not specially elegant, of Cicero's apostrophe (Ep. x. 3)—“*Omnia summa consecutus es, virtute duce, comite fortunâ.*”

† Afterwards Major-Geueal Sir John Malcolm, G.C.B.

‡ Kaye's *Life and Correspondence of Sir John Malcolm*, i. 290.

call upon me to remain in a subordinate position in this country, ANN. 1804. contrary to my inclination, only because it will suit his views, and will forward objects for which he has been labouring. . . . If they are duties which require extraordinary qualifications in the person who is to perform them, let General Lake, or the Commander-in-chief at Fort George, or anybody else, be charged with them. But surely it is not exactly reasonable to expect that I should remain in a subordinate position, contrary to my inclination, only to involve myself in fresh troubles and difficulties."\*

Wellesley coupled his resignation and application for leave Wellesley resigns his appointment. to retire to England with an assurance that they were subject to any help he might still give in co-operating with General Lake, or in carrying out the Governor-General's policy.†

At the time this application was made, the Company was at peace with all the native powers, but circumstances soon arose which induced Wellesley to alter his purpose. War with Holkar. Holkar, whose hatred of Sindhia would not permit him to assist that prince in his struggle with the British, no sooner saw him in alliance with them than he assumed the offensive. Colonel Monson, commanding 12,000 troops detached from General Lake's army, was attacked by Holkar's cavalry in the Mokundra pass. He began a retreat, which turned into a flight, until of the whole detachment scarcely one-tenth reached the gates of Agra alive.

Wellesley recognised in Monson's calamity the neglect of those principles of campaigning which he never failed to observe, and was never weary of inculcating on his officers.

11th September, 1804.—"Monson's disasters are really the greatest and the most disgraceful to our military character of any that have ever occurred. The detachment had not two days' provisions: was cut off from its resources by many rivers, on which we had neither bridge nor boat; and all measures to supply the only fort (Rampoora) to which, in case of emergency,

\* *Kaye's Life and Correspondence of Sir John Malcolm*, p. 292.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, iv. 377.

Æt. 35. he might have recourse, were omitted. To employ the detachment at all was an error; out the common modes of securing its safety have been omitted." \*

Next day he writes of Monson's "retreat, defeats, disgraces, and disasters," as

"woful examples of the risk to be incurred by advancing too far without competent supplies, and of the danger of attempting to retreat before such an army as Holkar's is. He would have done much better to attack Holkar at once, and he would probably have put an end to the war." †

In Monson's fate he seems to have recognised what would have been his own had he attempted to retreat before Sindhia from Assaye.

Previous to this, on 23rd May, 1804, Wellesley had joined the army intended to operate against Holkar. But the task of crushing the last of the hostile Marhattás was entrusted to General Lake; the army of the Deccan was broken up. On 24th June Wellesley gave up his military and political offices in that principality and returned to Calcutta. There he was occupied for some months in military deliberations, till, on 9th November, he resumed his functions as administrator at Seringapatam.

Wellesley resumes command in Mysore.

During the winter Wellesley suffered from attacks of fever, and, seeing peace re-established on all the Company's frontiers, he renewed his application to be permitted to return home. The last few months of his residence in India was one long series of fêtes and presentations. The inhabitants, British and Native, civilian and military, of Bombay, Madras, Seringapatam, Calcutta, and the officers of his division, vied with each other in paying honour and making gifts to the hero of Assaye. The thanks of the King and Parliament for his services in command of the army of the Deccan were published by the Governor-General in general orders; but

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, iv. 465.

† *Ibid.*, 466.

of all these tokens of respect, perhaps none touched the heart ANN. 1805. of the General so nearly as one from his own regiment, the 33rd, in which, since he had resigned command thereof, he had never ceased to take a special interest.

One more honour accorded him deserves special mention. The Order of the Bath at that time was restricted to twenty-four knights. King George, as a special mark of grace, directed that General Wellesley should be invested as an extra knight-companion—a distinction, as Lord Roberts has observed, higher than the Grand Cross carries at the present day.\* Wellesley receives knight-hood.

Sir Arthur Wellesley embarked for England in H.M.S. *Trident*, in March, 1805. Writing to Lord Wellesley from St. Helena on 3rd July, he says that the voyage and a short residence have done much to restore his health. "The island is beautiful, and the climate apparently the most healthy I have ever lived in." Possibly, after ten eventful years had passed, the impression he retained of this place may have had some little effect in fixing the last abode of Napoleon.

To form an estimate of the character and extent of Sir Arthur Wellesley's influence on British power in India it is necessary to look further than upon his military achievements. Brilliant as these were, and great as were the reforms which he instituted in the organisation of armies in the field, they are not more remarkable than the power he exerted in directing the policy of the Governor-General. Marquess Wellesley was an able man, with lofty and perhaps ambitious views of government; but Sir Arthur was the stronger, and, while in complete harmony with the Governor-General in his resolution to put down corruption and maintain honourable relations with Native governments, it is easy to trace through their correspondence how greatly the elder was guided in his actions by the opinion and advice of the younger brother. Between them, the change effected on Summary of his work in India.

\* *Rise of Welling'on*, p. 33.

Er. 35. British India was enormous and durable. French influence, supreme at the courts of Seringapatam, Hyderabad, Delhi, Agra, and Poona, was utterly effaced; the Hindu dynasty was re-established in Mysore; the Nizám, the Peshwá, Sindhia, Holkar, and the Rájá of Berar were brought into alliance with the British, while the due maintenance of their authority was scrupulously provided for: the territory and revenue of the East India Company was immensely increased. Yet of all the changes effected by the brothers Wellesley, none was so vital—so valuable to British ascendancy in India—as the end which, between them, they put to the old system of private peulation and corruption. The administrative body became for the first time what it had long been in name—the *Honourable* East India Company—and military officers learnt to look with as great horror upon underhand transactions with natives as their training as gentlemen made them regard it among themselves.

Wellesley's military services in India have suffered much eclipse from his subsequent campaigns nearer home, but he often referred to his experience in the East in conversation with friends in later life.

“In India,” he told Lord de Ros, “we always marched ‘by the wheel.’\* The men who had charge of these wheels attained such extraordinary correctness of judging distance that they could be depended upon almost as completely without the wheel as with it. The soldiers were in messes of six or eight; each mess had its own native cook and a bullock which carried the men's knapsacks and their cooking materials, etc. The native soldiers, however, at that time carried their knapsacks on their backs, but I believe they now no longer do so. An army in good order in India would march very near three miles an hour. Everything depended on finding halting stations at convenient distances, 16 or 18 miles, where there was water. Generally the villages were by the bank of what in winter was a river, but in summer was to all outward appearance perfectly dry, and a mere

\* For measuring distance.

bed of sand. The water, however, though unseen, was always ANN. 1805.  
flowing at a depth of from one to three feet below this bed of  
sand. Scouts were always sent forward to look for these dry  
rivers, and on the arrival of the army a great number of small  
wells were excavated the first thing. A few days afterwards  
the sand would blow into these holes, and after a short time no  
vestige of wells or excavations would remain." \*

\* *De Ros MS.*



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE COPENHAGEN CAMPAIGN—FIRST EXPEDITION TO THE PENINSULA.

1805-1808.

<p>1805. Sir Arthur Wellesley's one interview with Nelson. He takes command of a brigade at Hast- ings.</p>	<p>Scheme for assisting the Spanish revolu- tionaries in South America. Unsatisfactory state of the British army. New relations with Spain.</p>
<p>October . . . . . Receives the colonelcy of the 33rd Regi- ment.</p>	<p>Napoleon's designs upon that country and on Portugal.</p>
<p>April 10, 1806. Marries the Hon. Cath- erine Pakenham.</p>	<p>March . . . . . Abdication of Charles IV. of Spain.</p>
<p>„ 12 . . . . . Elected member for Rye. Work in Parliament.</p>	<p>April 25 . . . . . Sir Arthur Wellesley promoted to Lieut.- General.</p>
<p>Mar. 25, 1807. Fall of "All the Tal- ents" Ministry. Sir Arthur becomes Irish Secretary. Disturbed condition of Ireland.</p>	<p>May 5. . . . . Napoleon abolishes the Bourbon dynasty in Spain. Resistance of the Spanish people.</p>
<p>Expedition to Copen- hagen.</p>	<p>Joseph Buonaparte made King of Spain. Insurrection in the Pro- vinces.</p>
<p>July . . . . . Sir Arthur Wellesley receives command of a division. Siege of Copenhagen.</p>	<p>June . . . . . Sir Arthur Wellesley appointed to com- mand an expedition to the Peninsula.</p>
<p>August 29 . . . . . Battle of Roskilde.</p>	<p>Interesting conversa- tion with J. W. Croker.</p>
<p>September 2 . . . . . Bombardment of Co- penhagen.</p>	<p>July 20 . . . . . Sir A. Wellesley ar- rives at Coruña. Feroocious character of the war.</p>
<p>„ 5 . . . . . Its capitulation.</p>	
<p>October 1 . . . . . Sir Arthur resumes duty as Irish Secre- tary.</p>	
<p>Feb. 1, 1808. Receives the thanks of Parliament. Wellesley is urged to return to India.</p>	

ARRIVING in England after an absence of nine years, ANN. 1805. Sir Arthur Wellesley had frequent interviews with Mr. Pitt, Lord Castlereagh and other ministers, touching the affairs of India, and especially regarding the results of Lord Wellesley's policy as Governor-General. Pitt sought Sir Arthur's advice on affairs nearer home than India.

"I was consulted several times on expeditions to be undertaken; once in particular, when they wanted to make a treaty with the King of Prussia to raise a body of troops to fall upon the rear of Buonaparte. They fancied it could be done in a moment, but I knew better. I knew as much of war then as I do now, and I was aware that the King of Prussia could not have his troops raised and equipped and on the Danube in less than three months, and I was right. In the meantime Napoleon won the battle of Austerlitz." \*

Lord Wellesley was then on his way home, having resigned his appointment; the Court of Directors were greatly agitated at the prospect of future wars arising out of the system, strongly advocated by Sir Arthur and adopted by his brother, of re-establishing the native princes after they had been defeated, and encouraging them to maintain strong armies. This, feared the directors, would lead to further wars and increased expenses; and there was a strong party in Parliament prepared to attack in the most vehement way Lord Wellesley's administration, especially in regard to the Marhattá war.

Of all the scenes which are cherished by the imagination of a later generation—a scene, surely, worthy of being made the subject of a great historic picture †—none is more interesting

Arthur Wellesley's interview with Nelson.

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1837.

† It has been painted by J. P. Knight, and reproduced in Captain Mahan's *Life of Nelson* (vol. ii. p. 320), but the disposition of the figures is far from felicitous, the splendour of the curtains and furniture strangely at variance with that dinginess so characteristic of the waiting-rooms in our public departments. The very poorness of the actual setting should, in the hands of an artist worthy of the subject, serve to enhance the splendour of the group.

Æt. 36. than that presented by the only meeting of Arthur Wellesley and Horatio Nelson, which took place shortly after the soldier's return from India. It cannot be better described than in his own words.

"I went to the Colonial Office in Downing Street, and there I was shown into the little waiting-room on the right hand, where I found, also waiting to see the Secretary of State, a gentleman, whom, from his likeness to his pictures and the loss of an arm, I immediately recognised as Lord Nelson. He could not know who I was, but he entered at once into conversation with me, if I can call it conversation, for it was almost all on his side and all about himself, and in really a style so vain and so silly as to surprise and almost disgust me. I suppose something that I happened to say may have made him guess that I was *somebody*, and he went out of the room for a moment, I have no doubt to ask the office-keeper who I was, for when he came back he was altogether a different man, both in manner and matter. All that I had thought a charlatan style had vanished, and he talked of the state of this country, and of the aspect and probability of affairs on the Continent with a good sense, and a knowledge of subjects at home and abroad that surprised me . . . in fact he talked like an officer and a statesman. The Secretary of State kept us long waiting, and certainly, for the last half or three-quarters of an hour, I don't know that I ever had a conversation that interested me more. Now, if the Secretary of State had been punctual and admitted Lord Nelson in the first quarter of an hour, I should have had the same impression of a light and trivial character that other people have had." \*

Indian affairs were soon to be driven out of Sir Arthur's thoughts. War had been resumed between Great Britain and France, and in November he was appointed to command a brigade in Lord Cathcart's expedition to Hanover. But scarcely had this army landed in the Weser when the European coalition was broken up by Napoleon's victory at Austerlitz, and the troops were recalled to England, to be distributed

\* Croker, ii. 233.

at various places along the coast. Wellesley's brigade was stationed at Hastings, where an acquaintance one day expressed his surprise that, after commanding armies of 40,000 men in the field, and receiving the thanks of Parliament for his victories, Wellesley should condescend to such a subordinate post. His reply was calculated to console many an Indian officer, who, returning home, has found himself in a position of far inferior dignity to what he occupied in the East.

ANN. 1806.  
Wellesley  
commands  
a brigade  
at Hast-  
ings.

"I am *nimuk halah*," said Wellesley, "as we say in the East. I have eaten of the King's salt, and therefore I conceive it to be my duty to serve with zeal and cheerfulness, when and wherever the King or his Government may think fit to employ me." \*

At the same time, though he was too proud or too loyal to allow a comparative stranger to perceive his discontent, in writing privately to his brother he complained roundly of his ill treatment in not receiving the colonelcy of a regiment. † This lucrative honour, however, was not long delayed. Lord Cornwallis, who had gone out to India as Governor-General in succession to Lord Wellesley, died there on 5th October, 1805, and the colonelcy of the 33rd Regiment which he had held was bestowed most appropriately on Sir Arthur. On 23rd January, 1806, William Pitt died, and the coalition known as the Ministry of All the Talents entered upon office with Fox as Prime Minister. Wellesley was elected member for Rye on 12th April in that year.

Receives  
colonelcy  
of 33rd  
Regiment.

Is elected  
member  
for Rye.

Of even greater personal moment to himself was an event which took place two days earlier, requiring, as the election for Rye did *not*, his personal attendance. It will be remembered that when, twelve years previously, Arthur Wellesley, or Wesley, as he then wrote himself, left Dublin for active service in the Netherlands, he was a disappointed lover. Not a line, not even a word or reference in all his correspondence during the interval, has remained to throw light

\* *Despatches*, ii. 616, note.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, iv. 540.

Et. 36. upon the state of his feelings, or whether he cherished either hope or desire of claiming Catherine Pakenham as his bride. It is believed that they never corresponded while in different hemispheres, but when Wellesley went to spend his leave at Cheltenham, he met that amiable busybody Lady Olivia Sparrow, who twitted him with heartlessness to her bosom friend "Kitty Pakenham," and assured him that his lady-love had never changed.

"What!" exclaimed Wellesley, "does she still remember me? Do you think I ought to renew my offer? I'm ready to do it."

In consequence, he wrote at once to Miss Pakenham, renewing his proposal of marriage. She replied that, as it was so long since they had met, he had better come over and see her before committing himself, lest he should find her aged and altered.\* Sir Arthur replied that *minds*, at all events, did not change with years; he hastened over to Ireland, and they were married in Lady Longford's drawing-room in Dublin on Friday, 10th April.

Marriage  
of Sir  
Arthur to  
the Hon.  
Catherine  
Pakenham.

There are many allusions in Maria Edgeworth's letters at the time to this marriage, which she describes as "one of those tales of real life in which the romance is far superior to the generality of fictions." "Sir Arthur," she writes to her stepmother, "is handsome, very brown, quite bald,† and a hooked nose," and she adds that they all called him "the great Sir Arthur." For Kitty Pakenham, as she called her, Maria had a warm affection, which lasted through life, and she has left abundant testimony to her charms. Writing to Mrs. Sneyd, in 1811, about a portrait, she says: "Lady Wellington is not like: it is absurd to draw Lady Wellington's face; it is all countenance."

\* There is no foundation for the legend that she had been disfigured by smallpox, as one biographer after another has stated. To the end of her days the Duchess of Wellington's complexion remained fresh and delicate.

† Miss Edgeworth's eyes must have deceived her. The Duke of Wellington retained a good head of hair till the very end of his days.



CATHERINE, 1ST DUCHESS OF WELLINGTON.  
*(From a Crayon Drawing at Apsley House.)*

[Vol. i. p. 78.]



There was a profound pathos in this union. The lady with whom Wellesley stood before the altar in 1806 was less different in appearance from the girlish beauty of the Viceregal Court than the bronzed, war-worn, ambitious commander from the impressionable, pleasure-loving aide-de-camp who had lost his heart under the influence of her bright eyes and soft cheeks twelve years before. His head was now filled with far other schemes than matrimony and domestic bliss: one has not to look far for instances of faith broken under similar circumstances, and great men will never be without eager apologists for what, in lesser men, is accounted dishonourable. In this regard—in the respect for plighted troth—surely no more complete contrast to Wellesley's conduct could be found than in that great Emperor, against whom, for many years to come, his whole energy was to be matched.

As the event proved, Kitty Pakenham, though a sweet creature in the esteem of her friends, proved scarcely a suitable match for England's greatest commander.

Wellesley's sole object in entering the House of Commons, which he did on the invitation of Lord Grenville, and according to the advice of Lord Castlereagh, was the defence of his brother's administration in India, especially in regard to the Marhattá war.\* No sooner was the new Parliament assembled than the long-threatened storm broke. Mr. Paull, the ambitious son of a Perth tailor, and educated in the office of an Edinburgh writer, had spent some years in India as a trader. He had been expelled from the dominion of Oude by the Nawab, reinstated by the influence of Lord Wellesley, hospitably entertained at the Governor-General's house, and finally, returning to England with a large fortune, became a member of Parliament in order to effect the impeachment of his benefactor. On 22nd April, 1806, he carried a motion preferring charges "for high crimes and misdemeanours against Richard Colley, Marquess Wellesley." This motion

Sir  
Arthur's  
parliamentary  
work.

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, v. p. iii., xiii. p. 285.



Æt. 37. stood on the paper for months; Wellesley repeatedly pressed that it should be brought to a decision, but, on one pretext or another, it was postponed. Paull's intimate knowledge of Indian affairs, and his fluency in debate, enabled him to carry a section of the House with him, and he cherished hopes of enlisting the sympathy of the Prince of Wales, in what constituted an attack upon the Government and the Court party. The proud Whigs, however, did not care to fall in behind such a plebeian leader; Paull renewed his onslaught from time to time, until, on 14th April, 1808, maddened by losses at play which he could not liquidate, he committed suicide. The charges were renewed by Lord Folkestone, when Lord Wellesley's reputation was vindicated on a division by 182 votes to 31.

Roman  
Catholic  
disabilities.

Meanwhile, Fox died in the same year as his great rival, and the Cabinet became embroiled with the King in connection with proposals for the removal of certain disabilities from Roman Catholics. At that time Roman Catholics were prohibited by law from holding commissions in his Majesty's land or sea forces. It was to some extent an imaginary grievance, because the same statutory disability applied to all dissenters from the Church of England. Wellesley notes in an official memorandum "that it is notorious that no officer of the army or navy had been required for many years to take any oath, or to qualify in any manner; that it is equally notorious that there are many Roman Catholic officers in the King's service, and that I know four, the sons of one Irish Roman Catholic gentleman." Nevertheless, it was proposed to redress matters by the insertion of a new clause in the Mutiny Act. The King, when this came to his ears, declared he would never consent to such a reform, and the obnoxious clause was withdrawn. But the conflict was rekindled by Lord Howick,\* who brought in a bill to effect the same purpose, which secured the approval of the majority of the Cabinet. The King rebuked his ministers, who replied that

\* Afterwards Earl Grey.

they could not "give assurances which would impose upon ANN. 1807. them a restraint incompatible with the faithful discharge of the duty which they owe to your Majesty." The controversy waxed warm, and on 25th March, the Ministry of all the Talents resigned. A new Cabinet was formed by the Duke of Portland, Castlereagh going to the War Office, and George Canning to the Foreign Office. The Duke of Richmond was sent to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, and Sir Arthur Wellesley took office for the first time as Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. His brother Henry also joined the Ministry as one of the Secretaries to the Treasury.

Fall of  
the Min-  
istry of  
"All the  
Talents."

Sir Arthur  
becomes  
Irish Sec-  
retary.

Sir Arthur made no secret of his dislike to the office to which he was appointed. He had resolved, on returning to England, to have nothing to do with politics; but, having entered Parliament for the purpose of defending his brother, he did not consider it prudent to refuse a duty which conferred on him the standing and influence of a Privy Councillor, and he accepted the post on condition that it would not interfere with his professional prospects as a soldier.\*

In the mean time, for some reason not apparent in his correspondence, Wellesley had ceased to be member for Rye, and on 20th January, 1807, he was elected to represent Mitchell, or Midsall. At the General Election he was again in search of a seat, and the manner in which he found one is described in the following curious way in one of his letters to Mr. Charles Long, Paymaster-General:—

*Dublin Castle, 17th May, 1807.*—"I heard from Lord Castlereagh respecting the return of Mr. Quintin Dick, and I have settled that he shall be returned for Cashell. Justice Day had, as usual, opened a negotiation in England for the sale of Tralee, having before agreed with the Government here that we should have the borough; Lord Castlereagh discovered that Dick was to be the purchaser, and recommended that he should

\* Letter to Marquess of Buckingham: *Suppl. Despatches*, xiii. 285.

Æt. 33. — be the member for any place rather than Tralee. I have, therefore, put him in for Cashell; and as Henry desired that either he or I might be returned for any of the Irish seats, the elections for which should be on an early day, I have directed Justice Day to return me for Tralee, and I shall desire Hardwicke to return Henry for Athlone. . . . Our elections go on well. We shall have about three-quarters of the Irish members."

Disturbed  
condition  
of Ireland.

The Lord Lieutenant and his Chief Secretary took up their duties in Dublin at a time when Ireland was in one of her periodical fever fits. The rebellions of 1798 and 1803 had left the people in a very restless and resentful temper; the hopes of religious equality which Pitt had encouraged, to smooth the way for the legislative union in 1800, had been frostbitten by the King's refusal to entertain any proposal for the removal of disabilities; Napoleon's victorious progress on the Continent had fanned the ideas of the disaffected into renewed activity, and it was essential to the Ministry that, in the General Election which was at hand, the Loyalist party should be kept in good humour. To this end, the administration of patronage, of which there was an immense amount in the Viceregal Office, became a subject of prime importance; \* Wellesley's correspondence, therefore, teems with applications for and disposal of innumerable offices of every degree of value and dignity, from a bishopric to a customs boatman, and from a Knight of St. Patrick's riband to a militia ensigncy. There are, besides, the usual informations laid by spies about secret conspiracies, and many anxious deliberations about the distribution of troops and the general military system in Ireland. Much also relates to plans for securing the return of Government candidates in a majority of the Irish seats. Very frank is the language in which certain influential persons are requested to bring

\* Wellesley does not mince matters in this regard. After the elections were decided he wrote to the Duke of Richmond on 6th July: "We must keep our majority in Parliament, and, with such a minority as there is against us, that can only be done by a good use of the patronage of the Government."

their influence to bear on certain others who have seats at ANN. 1807. their disposal, and very cold are the calculations on which an estimate of the result is based.

6th May, 1807.—“I have seen Roden this day about his borough,” writes Sir Arthur to his brother Henry, the Patronage Secretary. “It is engaged for one more session to Lord Stair, under an old sale for years, and he must return Lord Stair’s friend unless Lord Stair should consent to sell his interest in the borough for the session which remains, upon which subject he has written to him. Robinson has the return for Carlow, and Canning that for Sligo, and we don’t know yet whether Mr. Handcock will return himself or give us the return. Portarlington was sold at the late general election for a term of years, as I understand, so that we have the returns of Tralee, Cashell and Enniskillen.” \*

Strange work this for the head and hand which for years had been matched against the statecraft and strategy of Tipú and the Marhattá princes; but Wellesley went into it as thoroughly and minutely as into any duty he ever undertook. More congenial must have been the task of complying with Lord Hawkesbury’s † request for a report on the military defences of Ireland in the event of a French invasion and a corresponding rising on the part of the disaffected Irish. This he fulfilled in an elaborate statement dated 7th May, 1807, recommending the establishment of a naval station in Bantry Bay, and the fortification, not of the coast, as was contemplated by some authorities, but, most characteristically, of inland stations as magazines and stores, situated on the lines of defence most suitable for resisting an invading army supported by an insurrectionary populace.

“I really consider a measure of this kind to be indispensable: I am convinced that unless we should adopt it, Great Britain will lose her dominion in Ireland as soon as the French are

\* *Civil Despatches, Ireland*, 28.

† Home Secretary, afterwards Earl of Liverpool and Prime Minister.

Æt. 38. enabled to attack us in such numbers as to employ a large proportion of our regular force."

The following passage shows how imminent and real had been the danger if Napoleon ever had been able to carry out the oft-mooted project of an invasion of Ireland.

"I am positively convinced that no political measure which you could adopt would alter the temper of the people of this country. They are disaffected to the British Government; they don't feel the benefits of their situation; attempts to render it better either do not reach their minds, or they are represented to them as additional injuries: and, in fact, we have no strength here but our army."\*

Wellesley, in short, took very much the same view of the position of the British in Ireland as he had expressed about their position in India—namely, that they were an alien power, depending on the sword for the maintenance of their dominion. No other view was possible, perhaps, for a calm observer at that stormy period of European politics. Much conciliatory legislation has been lavished on Ireland since that time: British statesmen cherish the hope that the benefits conferred have not failed to win the good-will of some, at least, of her people; and Wellesley himself lived to be convinced that, if the British Empire must indeed be held together by the sword, that part of her armament which is manned by Irishmen is not the weakest.

Expedition  
to Den-  
mark.

Wellesley had not been many months at his office in Dublin Castle before he was summoned to other and more familiar work. Strange as it must seem to those accustomed to recent politics to witness the Irish Secretary bartering boroughs and appointing Government nominees to represent Irish constituencies, it is even more so to read of his accepting a command in an army ordered on foreign service. As the warhorse "smelleth the battle from afar, the noise of the captains and the shouting," so the stir of military

\* *Civil Despatches, Ireland, 28-36.*

preparation roused Wellesley from his desk in Dublin. As ANN. 1807  
 soon as the rumour reached his ears, he wrote to Lord Castle-  
 reagh, reminding him of the condition under which he had  
 undertaken the Irish Secretaryship—namely, that it should  
 not interfere with his profession, urging that a successor  
 should be found for the office, in order to leave him free to  
 press his claim to a command in the projected expedition. He Wellesley  
 received the command—a division in Lord Cathcart's army of receives  
 20,000 men—but he was not relieved of the Chief Secretary- command  
 ship. In order, however, that the Government should not of a divi-  
 be deprived of a vote in the House he resigned his seat for sion.  
 Tralee, in a manner highly characteristic of the good old times.

*To James Trail, Esq.*

“London, 11th July, 1807.

“I propose to vacate my seat for Tralee this day, and to move  
 for a new writ for that borough; and I request you to desire Mr.  
 Justice Day to have *Evan Foulkes, Esq., of Southampton Street,*  
*London,* returned for that borough. I request you also to desire  
 Mr. Justice Day, Mr. Hancock, and Mr. Pennefather to draw upon  
 Messrs. Drummond, Charing Cross, London, for £5,000 British  
 cash, at ten days' sight. This is as good as cash, but it will be very  
 convenient to us here if you can delay to give them these directions.

“Ever, my dear sir, yours most sincerely,

“ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

“*Evan Foulkes, Esq., of Southampton Street, London,* to be the  
 member for Tralee.”

And no doubt the £5,000 British cash would have smoothed  
 Mr. Foulke's entry to the Imperial Legislature, but the  
 arrangement does not seem to have been carried into effect.

The expedition to Denmark has been commonly denounced The inva-  
 as one of the most inglorious developments of British foreign sion of  
 policy, without sufficient regard to the dangers against Denmark.  
 which Canning had to prepare. By the treaty of Tilsit,  
 7th July, 1807, Napoleon had reached the zenith of his  
 power, and had gained over Alexander of Russia's assent to

Ær. 38. the destruction of the British empire. The strength of that empire, then as now, was its maritime supremacy; contemptible as she had been deemed hitherto on land, Great Britain could only be overcome by a powerful combination of fleets. The treaty of Tilsit contained several secret articles; among others, one by which Alexander undertook not to interfere if Napoleon should seize the excellent fleet of Denmark lying in the roads of Copenhagen. This design having come to Canning's knowledge by means of an eaves-dropper, who had listened to the privy conference of the two Emperors, he resolved to anticipate it. The Danish fleet must by no means pass into French clutches. England, it is true, was at peace with Denmark, but in the presence of mortal peril, international etiquette must to the wall.

Lord Cathcart was commander-in-chief of the army of 27,000 destined for service in Denmark; the Irish Secretary and his old rival, Sir David Baird, each received command of a division. Embarking at Sheerness at the end of July in a fleet of twenty-seven sail of the line and numerous transports commanded by Admiral Gambier, the expedition arrived off Copenhagen on 4th August. No apprehensions disturbed the minds of the Danish Government, who believed themselves to be on the best of terms with that of King George, till, on 12th August, Lord Cathcart proceeded to execute his mission. He demanded that the whole of the Danish fleet and naval equipment should be delivered into the custody of Great Britain until such time as peace should be restored in Europe, when it was promised they should be restored to their rightful owners. The Crown Prince of Denmark indignantly refused to comply with this humiliating demand, and prepared to resist it against all the power of England.

The British troops, reinforced by the arrival of the Pomeranian Legion under General Linsingen, proceeded to disembark at Veldbeck in a scene of extreme confusion and mismanagement.

"I never," wrote Captain Napier of the 43rd Regiment, "saw ANN. 1807 any fair in Ireland so confused as the landing; had the enemy opposed us, the *remains* of the army would have been on their way to England."

But the Danes were ill prepared for resistance. There were not above 5,000 regular troops in Zealand, and the blockading squadron prevented more arriving from the mainland. Probably the British might have marched straight into Copenhagen, but Lord Cathcart, having summoned the capital, decided on a regular siege. Delay and confusion continued; at the end of ten days one battery had been erected. Siege of Copenhagen.

Wellesley received orders to operate with his division and General Linsingen's Germans against the Danish General Castenskiold, who lay at Roskilde with 14,000 of all arms, chiefly militia. Linsingen was sent forward to turn the enemy's left, but when he failed to appear at the appointed time, Wellesley decided not to wait for him, and prepared to attack the Danish position in front. Forming his infantry—the 3rd, 52nd, 92nd, and five companies each of the 43rd and 95th Regiments\*—into line with their left on the sea, and with two squadrons of cavalry on their right, Wellesley advanced in echelon of battalions from the left, covered by his artillery. The Danes made but a poor stand, being little more than peasants thrust hastily into uniform, and were driven into their entrenchments. Expelled thence by the 92nd under Colonel Napier, they fell back on the town, where they were routed with very heavy loss; six guns and 1,100 prisoners, including 60 officers, being taken. "Not a man," wrote Wellesley, "would have made his retreat if General Linsingen had carried into execution his part of the plan." The Germans, however, made up for their slowness in action by atrocious cruelty in pursuit and their activity Battle of Roskilde.

\* The 43rd, 52nd, and 95th, with some Portuguese battalions, afterwards formed the famous Light Division in the Peninsula. The old 95th is now the Rifle Brigade, and at that time contained some Highland companies.



Mr. 38. in plunder. Unarmed country people were mercilessly butchered; Captain Napier declared that "every British soldier shuddered at the cruelty." Writing to his mother he said—

"I can assure you that, from the General of the Germans down to the smallest drumboy in the legion, the earth never groaned with such a set of infamous murdering villains."

Lord Cathcart in the mean time having established his batteries, proceeded to summon the city. Wellesley was exceedingly averse from having recourse to a bombardment, and submitted to the Commander-in-chief a plan for the occupation of the island of Amager, commanding the approaches to Copenhagen from the east, whereby all supplies should be cut off, and the capital reduced to capitulate.\* Other views, however, prevailed. People in London were impatient, and Lord Cathcart wished to make short work of it; the bombardment began on the evening of 2nd September. The Danes replied, but, having neglected to raze their suburbs and fell the trees, their fire was ineffective. On the 5th, overtures for capitulation began; an armistice of twenty-four hours was granted, and Sir Arthur Wellesley, with Sir Horne Popham and Lieut.-Colonel Murray, were appointed to arrange the terms of surrender.

Bombardment and capitulation of the capital.

Thus ended this inglorious, though successful campaign, on the policy or justice of which Wellesley does not seem to have expressed any opinion. Probably he reciprocated the sentiments of the Danish General Oxholm, who, writing in English to Wellesley to express his gratitude for his "human (*sic*) and generous conduct to me and all the officers prisoners," added, "it is a great pity that political views should counteract the private feelings of individuals, but, as soldiers, our lot is to obey." †

Since leaving England, Wellesley had not been informed whether he had been superseded, as he had requested he

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 9.

† *Ibid.*, vi. 12.

might be, by the appointment of another Irish Secretary. ANN. 1808.  
 Learning that he was still in office, and operations in Wellesley resumes his duties as Irish Secretary.  
 Denmark being at an end, he applied to Lord Cathcart for  
 leave to return, "for," said he, "there is much to do in  
 Ireland. The *long nights* are approaching fast, and if I am  
 to have any concern in the government of that country, it is  
 desirable I should be there." On 1st October, 1807, he was  
 back at his post, busy trying to satisfy the myriad office-  
 seekers, and anxiously devising military measures against  
 insurrection and invasion. At his own request, and on his  
 representation that Ireland was very badly off for intelligent  
 general officers, he received an appointment on the staff of  
 the army in that country. At the same time he gave deep  
 thought to the best means of conciliating the Irish people,  
 and held the strong opinion, much less commonly entertained  
 in those years than it is now, that "the great object of our  
 policy in Ireland should be to endeavour to obliterate, as far  
 as the law will allow us, the distinction between Protestants  
 and Catholics, and that we ought to avoid anything which  
 can induce either sect to recollect or believe that its interests  
 are separate and distinct from those of the other." \*

On 1st February, 1808, the Speaker, on behalf of the Wellesley receives the thanks of Parliament.  
 House of Commons, returned thanks to the General Officers,  
 Members of the House, who had taken part in the Danish  
 campaign, and particularly referred to Sir Arthur Wellesley  
 as one "long since known to the paths of glory, whose  
 genius and valour had already extended our fame and empire,  
 whose sword has been the terror of our distant enemies, and  
 will not now be drawn in vain to defend the seat of empire  
 itself, and the throne of his King." Wellesley rose in his  
 place and, on behalf of the officers and troops, returned  
 thanks for the honour conferred by the resolution of the  
 House.

At this time affairs in India were not in a satisfactory  
 state. Discontent was general in the army, and mutinous

\* *Civil Despatches, Ireland, 185.*

Ær. 38. symptoms were becoming common. The Directors of the East India Company had begun to realise their loss in parting with such a servant as Wellesley, and were clamouring for his return to India. Sir Arthur felt no inclination to return to the Indian service; much the reverse, indeed; nevertheless he assured Lord Castlereagh that he was "happy to aid the Government in any manner they pleased, and ready to set out for any part of the world at a moment's notice." Colonel Malcolm wrote with great urgency—

Wellesley is urged to return to India.

"You know me incapable of flattery; my opinion . . . is fixed beyond the power of being altered, that upon your appointment to be Governor and Commander-in-chief of Madras, the actual preservation of that part of our British Empire may in a great degree depend."

To this Wellesley replied somewhat coldly. He felt no doubt, he said, that, if sent to India, he could restore a right temper and spirit to the army, but—

"The fact is that men in power in England think very little of that country, and those who do think of it feel very little inclination that I should go there. Besides that, I have got pretty high up the tree since I came home, and those in power think that I cannot well be spared from objects nearer home. . . . I am employed in this country much in the same way that I was in India, that is to say, in everything." \*

Proposal to assist the Spanish colonies in rebellion. There was no exaggeration here. In addition to his service in Denmark, his duties at the Irish Office, on the Irish staff, and in Parliament, Sir Arthur was commissioned to confer with General Miranda, an emissary of the revolutionary party in the South American colonies. This soldier of fortune, although a brother of the French Republican General of the same name, was exceedingly anxious to enlist the assistance of Great Britain in throwing off the Spanish yoke, a proposal of which Wellesley, as a staunch Tory,

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xiii. 288.

could not bring himself to approve. "I always had a horror," he said afterwards, "of revolutionising any country for a political object. I always said—if they rise of themselves, well and good, but do not stir them up; it is a fearful responsibility." \* Nevertheless, though Wellesley could not approve of such a policy, he prepared full plans for such an expedition should the Government decide to embark on it. In a series of memoranda of extraordinary detail, extending from the autumn of 1806 to the summer of 1808, he not only specified the number of troops to be employed, the places where they should be landed, the character of the population among which they would have to operate, and the form of government to be set up after these colonies were conquered, but he drew up *in his own handwriting* long lists of ordnance and stores required for each division of the forces, even to the number of flints for Brown Bess, carbine, and pistol. † The last memorandum of this series concludes with a pregnant paragraph.

"These plans upon Spain would be much facilitated by anything which could be done to alarm Buonaparte in France. Surely this is not impossible; and the manner in which his armies are now spread in all parts of Europe, each portion of them having great objects and ample employment, which cannot be given up without injury to his affairs, afford an opportunity which ought not to be passed by."

Here spoke the victor of Assaye, and one cannot wonder if such bold counsel found at first but faint response in the Cabinet. Although Nelson was dead, his captains held the seas; but the record of the land forces of Great Britain for the last fifty years was not one to reflect on with pride. Yorktown and the Netherlands, Saratoga and the Waal, had dimmed the glories of Dettingen, Minden, and even Maida; matters had not mended very much since Cope's dragoons fled before Prince Charlie's half-armed clansmen at Preston Pans.

\* *Stanhope*, 69

† *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 35-82.

Unsatisfactory state of the British army.

Æt. 88. True, there were the Indian, the Egyptian, and the Danish campaigns; but the first two had been in distant scenes, and in the last, much glory could not be claimed for scattering the Danish militia. At sea, therefore, if you will—witness St. Vincent, the Nile, and Trafalgar—our wooden walls will batter down any fleet or blockade any port; but a second-rate army, under generals mostly unsuccessful, and inexperienced except in hunting down the “mild Hindoo” and dispersing hordes of Moslem barbarians, is not the kind of force to pit against the seasoned legions of Napoleon. The bone and muscle and stout hearts were there to fill the ranks, of the same quality that manned the fleets of Nelson and Howe; but the well-nigh universal and inveterate habit of hard drinking had fuddled the brains of that class which ought to have led them. During the American war Lord North, scanning a list of officers submitted for his approval, observed drily, “I know not what effect these names may have on the enemy, but I know they make *me* tremble.” When Sir Ralph Abercromby went to Ireland as Commander of the Forces in 1798, he was so much shocked by the condition of the service that he issued a general order which Lord Camden, the Lord Lieutenant, in writing to Pitt, referred to as “injudicious and almost criminal.” One of the paragraphs was to this effect: “The very disgraceful frequency of Courts-martial, and the many complaints of irregularities in the conduct of the troops, have too unfortunately proved the army to be in a state of licentiousness which must render it formidable to every one but the enemy.” In the interval the Duke of York, although an unsuccessful commander in the field, had proved an effective reformer at the Horse Guards. Experience and military talent were just beginning to be recognised as qualifications for high command, preferable to jobbery and family interest—recognised, that is to say, to a degree which painfully awakened ministers to the fact that experience and military talent were exceedingly scarce commodities.\*

\* See Appendix C. p. 104.

Suddenly, affairs took a turn which, by ranging Spain on ANN. 1808. the side of her ancient enemy Great Britain, brought Wellesley's suggestion of action in the Peninsula into immediate prominence. Possibly the germ of the idea had been planted in his mind by William Pitt, who not many months before his death had indicated the Spanish peninsula as the spot where the stand against Napoleon must ultimately be made.

A witless King, a scandalous Queen, a greedy favourite—such were the rulers who had prostrated Spain at the tyrant's feet. But the national spirit was not yet dead; a patriotic party was forming behind Ferdinand, Prince of Asturias, the heir to the kingdom. In his design to obtain possession of Spain, Napoleon had the connivance of Russia, whose interest it was to divert attention from her doings in Poland. Desiring a pretext for sending an army into Spain, Napoleon, who had concluded with Charles IV. a treaty engaging France and Spain in a combined attack on Portugal, secretly encouraged Ferdinand to rise against the King, the Queen, and Godoy, and received from that prince overtures for an alliance by marriage with the Imperial family of France. Godoy, to whose knowledge Napoleon was careful that information of this transaction should come, obtained an order for the imprisonment of Ferdinand on a charge of high treason; but the prince's popularity was so great that alarming disturbances took place in the capital. Godoy, taking fright, obtained from the King a proclamation of pardon, and released the prince.

With Portugal Napoleon had dealt with less ceremony. When the Portuguese Government hesitated to close their ports to British trade, he sent General Junot to take possession of Lisbon, whereupon the Prince Regent, with greater sagacity than dignity, gathered his family and friends around him, and, on the approach of General Junot, took ship and sailed off for the Portuguese colony of Brazil.

Portugal was but a mouthful for Napoleon, though a rich

Æt. 38. one; Spain was a nobler prize, and the Emperor's designs became more clear in that direction at the beginning of 1808. His brother-in-law Murat crossed the Spanish frontier at the head of 80,000 men, and took possession of San Sebastian, Pamplona, Figueras, and Barcelona. At the same time, Napoleon kept up an amicable correspondence with the King of Spain, expressing his earnest desire for the completion of the projected alliance of their families by marriage. Assuming the rights of exclusive possessor of Portugal, he proposed to hand it over to the King of Spain in exchange for Galicia, Biscay, and Navarre. Godoy, among whose vices dulness of perception could not be numbered, saw that the game was up in the Old World, and, following the example of the royal family of Portugal, planned the secret departure of the Court to the Spanish territories in South America, where the seat of sovereignty might be founded anew, beyond the grasp of the terrible Corsican. The secret leaked out: Prince Ferdinand indignantly protested against the intended desertion of the country by its monarch: in March, 1808, the people rose in arms, seized Godoy, and forced the King to abdicate in favour of Ferdinand. Godoy's life was saved only by the personal intervention of the new King, who resumed negotiations with Napoleon for the hand of one of his family.

Abdication  
of Charles  
IV.

It was far from the Emperor's intention to strengthen the seat of a Bourbon on the throne of Spain. He remained in communication with the dethroned king as well as with the new one, and in playing off one party against the other Napoleon perceived the surest means of getting the realm of Spain into his own undisputed possession. His attitude towards both was indicated by the occupation of Madrid by Murat, the establishment of military law in the capital, ostensibly only until the dissensions in the state should be reconciled, and the appointment of General Grouchy as Governor. Godoy was taken out of prison and sent to Bayonne, whither the Emperor had repaired, in order better to direct the course of events.

Meanwhile King Charles had revoked his abdication, and appealed to Napoleon for his support. He and his queen were summoned to take counsel at Bayonne with the great arbiter of Europe. Ferdinand, also, having formally notified to Napoleon his accession to the throne, was persuaded to proceed to Bayonne, to confirm the alliance to which he had been induced to believe Napoleon was about to admit him. Charles and his Queen, Godoy and King Ferdinand, having thus all been led into the trap, the Emperor threw off the mask. First, on 5th May, he extracted from Charles the abdication of all his rights in favour of the Emperor of the French, and, next, on the following day obtained from Ferdinand unconditional surrender of his claim to the throne.

ANN. 1808.

It is clear that Napoleon greatly underrated the strength of the patriotic party in Spain. With Murat at the head of a powerful army in Madrid—Junot holding Lisbon with another army—Dupont at Valladolid—and Catalonia, Biscay, and Navarre already occupied in force by other French generals, he felt little apprehension of any resistance that might be offered by the mere people. It was a momentous miscalculation. Wherever the invaders came in contact with the Spanish population, their severity and want of consideration brought about violent friction, and the ancient friendship between the two nations was exchanged for the bitterest hate. Spain had been betrayed by corrupt and incompetent rulers, its armies allowed to decay under officers as ignorant as they were aristocratic and vain; but the ancient spirit of the conquerors of half the world was not dead in the mass of the people. Far and wide the peasantry and townspeople flew to arms: on 2nd May an insurrection took place in Madrid, only to be subdued with merciless slaughter by Murat's troops, many thousands of Spaniards being mowed down in the streets, and others executed afterwards in cold blood. The disturbance was considered at an end. Joseph, brother of Napoleon, was placed on the throne of Spain, and Murat was sent to reign over Naples in his

Napoleon dismisses the Bourbon dynasty.

Resistance of the Spanish people.

Joseph made King of Spain.



Æt. 38. — stead. Many craven grandees, anxious at any price to secure their property and position, welcomed the new King with importunate servility; but these were not the people of Spain. The bloodshed in Madrid only served to nourish the growing flame of revolt. The provinces of Galicia and Asturia led the way under an elected junta at Oviedo; similar juntas were established in nearly every province, expelling or executing such officials as fear of France withheld from joining the insurrection. The northern Junta sent two deputies to England, imploring aid in money and arms: that of Seville invited the co-operation of Sir Hew Dalrymple, British Governor of Gibraltar. Solano, Governor of Cadiz, hesitating to attack the French squadron in the harbour, was slain as a traitor to the national cause, and de Morla, the Governor elected in his place, opened fire on Admiral Rossilly's ships in the presence of Lord Collingwood's fleet, the assistance of which, though proffered, he declined. On 14th June Rossilly surrendered at discretion. A French corps under General Avril was approaching to relieve the garrison, and regain possession of Cadiz; but on the arrival off the harbour of 5,000 British from Gibraltar, under General Spencer, it fell back. Spencer landed and took up a position at Ayamonte, on which the French garrison surrendered.

Insurrec-  
tion of the  
provinces.

Thus it had come to pass that Great Britain, without any change of policy on her part, found herself the ally of that nation against which she had been busily fitting out fleets and mustering troops.

The case  
of Por-  
tugal.

With Portugal the case was different. Portugal was an old ally of England; many English merchants were in business in Lisbon, and the trade between Lisbon and London was very large and profitable, for nobody drank so much port as Englishmen. Napoleon's sole pretext for aggression on Portugal had been the refusal of her Government to break off all relations with Great Britain. It had certainly been wise policy in King George's ministers to defend Portugal; but, while they hesitated, Portugal

disappeared from the map of Europe, and they continued to prepare their expedition against the Spanish colonies. ANN. 1808.

Then came the Spanish insurrection. The delegates from the Junta were welcomed in London with great display of popular sympathy. Money, arms, and stores were shipped in liberal measure for the patriots in Galicia, and General Spencer was given a free hand in Andalusia.

More, however, had to be done: the moment foreseen after Austerlitz by Pitt, and greatly longed for by him, had arrived. In Spain was to take place the final struggle against the Terror of Europe. Sir Arthur Wellesley had elaborated all the details of the expedition against the Spanish colonies in America: 9,000 troops lay at Cork ready for embarkation, waiting only for the appointment of a general to command them. No doubt that had this expedition sailed the command would have been entrusted to Sir Arthur. But it did not sail; just as in 1795, so now, Wellesley's prospect of service in the New World was altered at the last moment.

In June, 1808, Sir Arthur, who had been promoted to Lieut.-General on 25th April, was appointed to the command of the forces assembled at Cork, with instructions to proceed to the coast of Portugal, and co-operate with the Spanish and Portuguese commanders. The night before he left London to take command at Cork, Wellesley had a conversation with J. W. Croker, who had undertaken to discharge the Parliamentary business of the Irish Office during the Chief Secretary's absence at the seat of war. After discussing some bill which was then in preparation, the General relapsed into a reverie, and remained silent so long that Croker asked him what he was thinking about.

"Why, to say the truth," he replied, "I am thinking of the French I am going to fight. I have not seen them since the campaign in Flanders, when they were capital soldiers; and a dozen years of victory under Buonaparte must have made them better still. They have besides, it seems, a new

Æt. 39. — system of strategy, which has outmanœvred and overwhelmed all the armies of Europe. 'Tis enough to make one thoughtful: but no matter: my die is cast: they may overwhelm me, but I don't think they will outmanœuvre me. First, because I am not afraid of them, as everybody else seems to be; and secondly, because if what I hear of their system of manœuvres be true, I think it a false one as against steady troops.\* I suspect all the continental armies were more than half beaten before the battle was begun. I, at least, will not be frightened beforehand."

During his voyage out, Sir Arthur devoted his leisure to acquiring a rough knowledge of the Spanish language, by means of a dictionary and a Spanish translation of the Book of Common Prayer,† so that by the time he reached Castile, as he told Lady Salisbury, "I was perfectly able to understand the addresses of congratulation made to me for some little successes I had had about Oporto, and so on." ‡

Although Wellesley had received strict instructions from Lord Castlereagh to proceed with his armament off the Tagus, "not separating yourself from it," but sending a confidential officer to Coruña to learn the actual state of things,§ he considered it within the limits of his discretion to depart from these instructions. The fleet sailed from Cork on 12th July. Next day, preferring, as he always did, his own ears and eyes to those of any subordinate, Sir Arthur went on board the *Crocodile*, a fast-sailing frigate, sailed ahead to Coruña, where he arrived on the 20th, and put himself in communication with the Junta of Galicia. Nothing could exceed the confidence and enthusiasm of these gentlemen. It is true that the first news they had to communicate was the defeat on 14th July of 50,000 Spaniards—the great army of Galicia—at Rio Seco by Marshal Bessières;

Wellesley  
arrives at  
Coruña.

\* The French system of fighting in heavy columns against troops in line.

† This prayer-book is now in the possession of Lord de Roe, to whose mother it was given by the Duke of Wellington.

‡ *Salisbury MSS.*, 1834.

§ *Despatches*, iv. 11.

but this they represented as an immaterial check, as, indeed, ANN. 1808. a moral victory. Nevertheless Wellesley perceived that it had given the French command of the valley of the Douro—cutting off communication between Galicia and the southern provinces. The spirit, however, of Spaniards and Portuguese was excellent: "the difference between any two men is whether the one is a better or a worse Spaniard, and the better Spaniard is the one which detests the French most heartily." \* Howbeit, when Wellesley came to real business with the Junta he found it a different affair. They were eager for money, arms, and stores: they accepted an instalment of £200,000 willingly enough; but his offer to cooperate with the Galician officers in retrieving the reverse at Rio Seco was received with coldness. Coldness of the Junta. Pride of race and confidence in the undoubted gallantry of Spanish soldiers blinded them to the miserable incompetence of their officers and the defects of their organisation, while hereditary hatred of the English rendered the idea of assistance from them intolerable. The Junta recommended the employment of British troops in the north of Portugal, and promised to send a Spanish division to Oporto. This rebuff confirmed Wellesley in the belief that had for some time been fixing itself in his mind that in Portugal was to be found the proper theatre of British operations in the Peninsula. † With a powerful navy at its back, and transports to ensure reinforcements and supplies, or, in case of defeat, to provide the means of withdrawal, the army would be secure in the two conditions to which every commander must assign the place of first importance—supplies and communication. With command of the sea, the real base of his operations would be Britain itself, while Portugal, a strip of land with numerous harbours, would form the point of communication between

\* Sir A. Wellesley to Viscount Castlereagh, 21st July, 1808.

† In a letter to Mr. Raikes in 1833 he referred to Portugal as "the basis on which the machinery was founded which finally overthrew the world" (*Raikes Correspondence*, p. 62).

Æt. 39. northern and southern Spain, so long as the French should remain in possession of the northern provinces. In the opinion thus adopted he never wavered; it remains the key to his whole subsequent strategy in the Peninsula.

The fleet having arrived off Cape Finisterre on 22nd July, Wellesley preceded it to Oporto, where he arrived on the 24th. The insurrection was general throughout northern Portugal, and a considerable force existed on paper; but it was miserably armed and, if possible, worse disciplined, most of their old officers having fled with the royal family to Brazil. Fifteen hundred of these troops lay in Oporto, five thousand at Coimbra. Quitting Oporto early on the 25th, Wellesley sailed in the *Crocodile* for the Tagus, in order to communicate with the British admiral, Sir Charles Cotton; but he left orders for the fleet to remain off the mouth of the Mondego. To the Cabinet in London the Tagus had always presented itself as the point where active operations ought to begin: but to the General on the spot it seemed impracticable, or at least unwise, to disembark precisely where the enemy was in greatest force, and immediately under the guns of the forts. Junot had nearly 30,000 troops distributed through Portugal, of which 12,000 were at his headquarters in Lisbon.\*

Sir Charles Cotton agreed with Wellesley that the most favourable spot for debarkation was Mondego Bay; which, although upwards of a hundred miles north of the Tagus, was the nearest spot where that operation could be effected except in presence of the enemy. Orders, therefore, were sent to General Spencer at Cadiz to repair with all haste by sea to the Mondego, whither Sir Arthur returned.

The utter indiscipline of the Spanish and Portuguese

\* Wellesley, perhaps intentionally, underrated the strength of the French army at this time, estimating it at 16,000 men (*Despatches*, iv. 67). The Imperial muster rolls disclose the fact that 29,584 troops marched with Junot into Portugal, to which must be added 1,200 in garrison at Elvas and Almeida, and the official embarkation return shows that 26,000 left with him when he evacuated Lisbon (*Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 207).

troops, the ferocity of the half-armed peasantry, and the relentless severity with which the French had set about quelling the insurrection, had combined to give a horrible ferocity to the warfare which had now endured for three months. Stragglers and wounded were murdered, sometimes with the addition of atrocious mutilations. Colonel René, a French envoy sent to Lisbon before the commencement of hostilities, was captured on his way back and sawn in pieces alive. The balance of cruelty was redressed by frightful massacres of townspeople and peasants by the French at Leiria, Evora, and other places. Technically the Portuguese and Spaniards were rebels, for the Grandees had acknowledged the French as rulers of the country, and peasants encountered or taken with arms in their hands were liable to death by the laws of war; but all this was abhorrent to Sir Arthur's ideas of fair fighting. His general order before landing reads like a gospel of mercy, expressing his firm intention of punishing with the utmost severity all offences against persons or property, and even prescribing minute regulations for behaviour in church, and in presence of religious processions in the streets. If the empire of England has been won by the sword, she has at the same time been foremost in the cause of humanity, and in banishing from warfare all supplementary and avoidable horrors.

Although deplorably ill provided with land transport, Sir Arthur positively forbade the practice customary with armies in the field, of pressing carts and draught animals\* and requisitioning supplies without payment. From the first he insisted on everything being paid for, not only in friendly countries like Portugal and Spain, but after he had carried the war across the frontier into France. It cost him a great struggle to enforce this principle: the punishment of plunder was frightfully frequent and severe; it set him at an initial disadvantage, and a serious one, in his contest with an enemy

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 106.

ANN. 1808.

Ferocious  
character  
of the war.

Act. 39. which "made the war support the war," and seized everything that they needed for daily consumption. But he succeeded in carrying out his will, and the time was to come when his army was to reap the reward of self-restraint, for the principle is of universal application that short accounts make long friends.

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## CHAPTER V.

### CAMPAIGN OF VIMEIRO. 1808.

- |                                                                    |                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| July . . 1808. The expedition is re-<br>inforced.                  | August 21 . . Battle of Vimeiro.                                 |
| „ 14 . . . . Surrender of Dupont<br>at Baylen.                     | After the victory, Sir<br>Hew Dalrymple ar-<br>rives in command. |
| „ 30 . . . . Sir A. Wellesley super-<br>seded in command.          | „ 30 . . The Convention of<br>Cintra.                            |
| Flight of King Joseph<br>from Madrid.                              | September 10. Evacuation of Lisbon<br>by the French.             |
| August 1-5 . . The British army dis-<br>embarks in the<br>Mondego. | Political settlement of<br>Portugal.                             |
| Difficulties with the<br>Portnguese authori-<br>ties.              | „ 17. Sir A. Wellesley re-<br>turns to England.                  |
| „ 13 . . Advance of the British<br>army.                           | Dissatisfaction caused<br>by the Convention<br>of Cintra.        |
| „ 17 . . Combat of Roliça.                                         | November 14. Court of Inquiry on the<br>Generals.                |
| „ 20 . . Arrival of Sir H. Bur-<br>rard.                           | December 29 . Its report and finding.                            |

CASTLEREAGH had been slowly convincing his colleagues that in landing 9,000 British troops in the presence of French armies numbering 300,000 seasoned soldiers they had embarked on a hare-brained undertaking which must end in failure, and might mean disaster. He persuaded them to increase the force; but there were professional objections to entrusting a larger army to an officer so junior in his rank as Sir Arthur Wellesley. Accordingly, Sir John Moore, who had been despatched from the Mediterranean with his fine force of 10,000 men on a will-o'-the-wisp expedition to

The expe-  
dition rein-  
forced.



Æt. 39. Sweden, was recalled to the Peninsula, and Brigadier-Generals Aeland and Anstruther were sent from England with 5,000 more; thus, with Speneer's division, raising the total British strength in Portugal to some 30,000 of all arms. On 30th July, when on the point of disembarking in Mondego Bay, Sir Arthur received a despatch from the Horse Guards, informing him that Sir Hew Dalrymple had been appointed to the chief command, an arrangement which reduced Sir Arthur, though retaining a division, from the first place in seniority to the seventh.

Sir A. Wellesley superseded in command.

Surrender of Dupont at Baylen.

Simultaneously with this somewhat chilling intelligence, Sir Arthur received news of Dupont's capitulation to Castaños at Baylen on 18th July, which made him certain that General Speneer would presently be with him, and that the debarkation might proceed without undue risk of interference on the part of the enemy. This surprising success of Castaños, whereby a corps of 18,000 French soldiers laid down their arms,\* was the crowning act of a series of successes at Zaragoza, Valencia, and other places which materially loosened Napoleon's grasp of the Peninsula. Whatever failures and incompetence may have to be recorded against the Spanish generals hereafter, the spirited manner in which they acted at this period, and the noble efforts of the Spanish and Portuguese people struggling to be free ought never to be forgotten. But for these, the diversion created by Great Britain on the coast of Portugal must have proved of little avail against the resources of the French Emperor.

Flight of King Joseph.

The effect of the victory of Baylen was immediate. Joseph, who had been proclaimed King of Spain and the

\* They did so on the stipulation that they should be sent by sea to France, but the Spaniards acted with treacherous cruelty, massacring many of their prisoners in cold blood, and bestowing others in hulks, whence very few ever came out alive. Eighty officers were shot down together in the town of Lebrixa. Incidents such as this should be borne in mind when considering the subsequent cruelties inflicted by the French on the people of Spain and Portugal.

Indies on 24th July, received news of Dupont's disaster on the 29th. A council of war was held in Madrid, the result of which was that King Joseph abandoned the capital, withdrawing all his troops to the north of the Ebro. The Duc d'Abrantes \* was thus left isolated in Portugal under rapidly increasing difficulties. The Spanish troops under his command revolted; the insurrection spread among the Portuguese like fire in stubble; at Beja, Villa Viçosa, and Leiria the rising had to be suppressed with horrid slaughter. Junot himself remained in Lisbon, where his presence alone prevented the people seizing the capital.

Dupont's corps having been effaced at Baylen, General Spencer was released from his post of observation at Cadiz. He was already on his way to the Tagus before the summons which Wellesley had sent reached him, and joined his chief at Mondego Bay on 5th August. General Loison, who had threatened at one time to oppose the disembarkation, had now crossed to the south side of the Tagus to quell the insurrection in the Alemtejo; General Acland's corps, which was to sail from the Downs on 19th July, was hourly expected in the offing. Under the circumstances, Wellesley felt justified in assuming the offensive at once, without waiting further reinforcements. He was the more anxious to do so because of the impatience of the Portuguese insurgent leaders, who began to fret at seeing the army kept so long on board ship.

The landing was accomplished between the 1st and 5th August, and the troops went into bivouac and cantonments at Lavos.† After the arrival of General Spencer, the force under Wellesley's command consisted of the 5th, 6th, 9th,

The army  
disem-  
barks.

\* Marshal Junot. All Napoleon's marshals bore high-sounding titles, but, in order to avoid confusion, I shall mention them by their personal surnames.

† Immediately on landing Sir Arthur, in accordance with a sensible order from the Horse Guards affecting the whole army, directed the amputation of the pigtailed hitherto worn by regulation. The officers of the Welsh Fusiliers (old 23rd) still wear a bow of black riband behind the collar of the tunic, a survival of the departed pigtail, and anybody may study the pigtail itself in all its glory as shown in the equestrian statue of George III. in Cockspur Street.

Æt. 39. 29th, 32nd, 36th, 38th, 40th, 45th, 50th, 71st, 82nd, and 91st Foot, with a battalion each of the 60th and 95th Rifles, formed in six brigades with half a battery of artillery attached to each. The only cavalry was the 20th Light Dragoons, half of whom were without horses, and a nine-pounder brigade of artillery was held in reserve. In all there were about 14,200 men.

The transport service was lamentably deficient, as Sir Arthur bitterly complained in writing to Castlereagh.

*8th August.*—"This department deserves your serious attention. The existence of the army depends on it, and yet the people who manage it are incapable of managing anything out of a counting-house. I shall be obliged to leave Spencer's guns behind for want of means of moving them, and I should have been obliged to leave my own, if it were not for the horses of the Irish Commissariat. Let nobody ever prevail upon you to send a corps to any part of Europe without horses to draw their guns. It is not true that horses lose their condition at sea." \*

Junot, though unable himself to leave Lisbon unprotected, recalled Loison from the south of the Tagus and sent him forward to Abrantes; Delaborde was posted at Alcobaga to observe the movements of the British, with instructions to form a junction with Loison at Leiria, where the Junta had arranged to place a magazine for the use of Wellesley's force. But Sir Arthur, though long delayed at the Mondego for want of transport, managed to be beforehand with his enemy. Advancing from Lavos on 10th August, he occupied Leiria on the 11th, when he began to realise how little his allies could be relied on. The whole Portuguese force north of the Tagus was less than 10,000 men, yet the tone of their commander, Dom Bernardim Freire, and of the Junta of Oporto, was of the sort that should be backed by 100,000. No provision whatever had been made for feeding the men they had, and not only were the stores laid up at Leiria for

Difficulties  
with the  
Portu-  
guese  
authorities.

\* *Despatches*, iv. 59.

the British army entirely consumed by the Portuguese, ANN. 1808  
 but General Freire coolly requested Wellesley to supply the Portuguese troops with bread from his own commissariat throughout the campaign. To this preposterous demand Sir Arthur replied that, inasmuch as he drew his own bread stuff from England, and would pay for meat and wine supplied in the country, he could not feed his allies also; but he gave Freire 5,000 stand of arms, with ammunition.

From Leiria, two routes offered themselves to a force advancing upon Lisbon—the first running inland by the east of Monte Junto to Santarem, and thence down the right bank of the Tagus; the second along the coast as far as the Sierra de Baragueda, turning the position at Torres Vedras, forcing that at Mafra, and so by Quelus to Lisbon.

Sir Arthur never hesitated in his choice of roads. Advance of the British army. Wretchedly weak in cavalry, he could not hope to protect his communication with the Mondego, whence, were he to take the inland route, all his supplies must have been drawn; whereas in selecting the route between the sea and the mountains, he could remain in touch with the fleet all the time, and, if necessary, cover the debarkation of reinforcements. It is true that his flank was thereby dangerously exposed, but even in the event of a reverse, the transports would be at hand, which would diminish the risk. In the letters he left for Burrard he strongly recommended that Sir John Moore's corps should disembark in the Mondego, and proceed by the route of Santarem—thus forming a second line of operation, to which sound tacticians usually take objection on principle. But when it is remembered that Wellesley possessed accurate surveys of the whole of these alternative routes, that he designed that Moore should turn the position of Torres Vedras on the east, while he himself having turned it on the west, carried Mafra, and turned the heights of Bellas, should join Moore before Lisbon, most

Æt. 39. military men will agree that the plan of campaign was a masterly one.\*

But in this scheme the Portuguese Commander-in-chief would take no part. It must be allowed in his justification that his Government—the Junta of Oporto—had only limited confidence in the thoroughness of British support, and no experience at all in the quality of British soldiers or the skill of their generals. Accordingly, when on 12th August Wellesley communicated to Freire his intention of marching on the morrow, and fixed the hour for the departure of the Portuguese corps, Freire laid before him a plan of campaign of his own, involving an advance upon Santarem through the interior. He declined to co-operate with Sir Arthur, unless on the condition that the British Commissariat should undertake the whole charge of feeding the Portuguese army. Now, although Wellesley did not attach much value to the Portuguese troops as a fighting force, seeing how miserably they were equipped and disciplined, he perceived the importance of maintaining at least the semblance of co-operation, if it were only to convey assurance to the populace. By laborious diplomacy he obtained Freire's consent to detach 1,400 foot and 250 horse to act with the British and be supported at their expense; and he also persuaded him to remain at Leiria for a week, to protect his rear and communications during the advance.

Sir Arthur's impending supersession had no effect either in retarding or quickening his movements. So much his despatches at the time clearly prove, although he was afterwards charged with having tried to snatch a success before the arrival of a senior officer. He wrote repeatedly to Burrard, informing him fully of the state of the country, of his own dispositions, and of his views upon the proper way of conducting the campaign. To Lord Castlereagh he

\* It was severely criticised at the time and afterwards. Wellesley's justification is contained in his statement before the Court of Inquiry.—*Despatches*, iv. 180.

referred thus, on 1st August, to the change in his own ANN. 1808. prospects:—

“All that I can say upon that subject is, that whether I am to command the army or not, or am to quit it, I shall do my best to ensure its success; and you may rely upon it that I shall not hurry the operations, or commence them one moment before they ought to be commenced, in order that I may obtain the credit of the success. . . . The Government will determine for me in what way they will employ me hereafter, whether here or elsewhere.”\*

Again, on the 8th:—

“I shall be the junior of the Lieut.-Generals; however, I am ready to serve the Government wherever and as they please.”

Sir Arthur now went forward alone in his design of driving Junot out of Lisbon, putting his Portuguese allies out of his calculations.

13th August.—“It is obvious that whether I am too weak to contend with General Junot, or sufficiently strong for him, there is nothing in common between the Portuguese troops and me. My object is to obtain possession of Lisbon, and to that I must adhere, whatever may be the consequence, till I shall have attained it, as being the first and greatest step towards dispossessing the French of Portugal.”†

Leaving Freire, therefore, at Leiria, Sir Arthur marched south on 13th August, General Delaborde falling back from Alcobaca on his approach, and taking up a position at Obidos, about twenty miles further on the road to Lisbon. Loison, who was at Thomar on the 11th, retired to Santarem, twenty miles east of Obidos. On the 15th, the 60th and 95th Rifles had the first brush with the French outposts at Roliça. Having dislodged them, they followed over-zealously in pursuit, and were saved from an awkward predicament by the arrival of General Spencer with supports. They lost

\* *Despatches*, iv. 43.

† *Ibid.*, iv. 74.

Br. 39. nine-and-twenty killed and wounded, among the former being Lieutenant Bunbury, the first officer killed in the Peninsular campaign.

Combat of  
Roliça.

Delaborde, though he had retired from Obidos, yet, expecting support from Loison, continued to occupy the plateau of Roliça, an isolated table-land rising in the centre of a valley formed by the spurs of the mountains. A mile to the rear of, and parallel with this strong position, rose the steep ridge of Zambugeira. During the night of 16th and 17th August Sir Arthur was roused from his sleep and informed that a stranger demanded an interview on business that would brook no delay. A monk was admitted.

"I am come," said he, "to inform you that the French corps before you intends to retire before daylight, and if you want to catch your enemy you must be quick."

"How do you know that?" asked Sir Arthur.

"Well," replied the monk, "when General Junot's army first entered Portugal, he had his quarters in our convent of Alcobaça, and one of his staff shared my cell. We became very intimate, being both young men, and now the same officer is again lodged with me. Last evening he sat copying a despatch. I was curious to know what it was about. I stole behind him, clapped my hands over his eyes, and, in a feigned voice, challenged him to guess which of the brethren was his captor, for you must know that we and the younger officers are accustomed to play like schoolboys. He struggled free, but in vain, for I am a powerful fellow; then, while he was running over the names of the brethren, I quietly mastered the contents of his despatch, which were as I have informed you." \*

Early in the morning the British moved forward to the attack in three columns, numbering 13,480 infantry, 470 cavalry, and 18 guns, disposed in three columns. On the right

\* In the *De Ros MS.* the Duke of Wellington is reported as having said that the monk did not appear in person at his tent, but conveyed the information by means of a peasant.







was the Portuguese contingent under Colonel Trant; the left, under General Ferguson, moved along the heights on the south-east, to intercept any movement on the part of Loison's corps; and the centre, 9,000 strong with 12 guns, under Wellesley himself, advanced against the position in front, General Craufurd's brigade being in reserve. Fane's brigade, extended to connect Ferguson's column with the centre, drove in the enemy's skirmishers and appeared on his right flank, with Ferguson's brigades descending the hill behind them. Simultaneously Trant's Portuguese showed on the French left, and General Hill and Nightingale, supported by the fire of nine guns, delivered a vigorous attack in front. Delaborde, outnumbered by nearly three to one, perceived that he was outflanked; but with admirable nerve he made use of his cavalry, in which he was far stronger than the British, and, covered by them, moved steadily back to the ridge of Zambugeira.

It was Wellesley's first experience of the sensation of numerical superiority over his enemy, but it was also the first time he had encountered a practised modern tactician. The retreat of the French was superbly executed. Their new front lying along the summit of a precipitous ridge, Ferguson and Trant resumed their flanking movements along the hills to the right and left, and the 29th Regiment, supported by the 9th, led the attack in front; the 29th stormed the steep brow first, but being overpowered by superior numbers, and driven back, with the loss of their colonel, the Hon. G. Lake, they reformed, advanced again with the 9th, and later, the 5th; while General Ferguson, appearing again beyond the enemy's right flank, showed Delaborde that the position was lost. Still this gallant General, though himself wounded, would not yield. He fell back slowly, fighting every yard of the way, protecting in a masterly manner by his cavalry the movement of alternate masses of his infantry, until about four in the afternoon he entered a narrow pass in the mountains, where Wellesley could not

Æt. 39. pursue him owing to his want of cavalry, and marched all night in the direction of Torres Vedras. The British loss in this action amounted to 479 killed, wounded, and missing, including 4 officers killed and 20 wounded. The French lost about 600 killed and wounded, and left three guns in the hands of the victors, though they carried off upwards of 50 prisoners of the 29th Regiment, including four officers.

Loison was now only five miles distant, at Bombaral; Sir Arthur, therefore, took up a position parallel to the road to Lourinha, whither he marched next day. He was delighted with the behaviour of his troops, of which the health remained excellent, although, having no tents, they were "in the sun all day and in the dew all night" \*—such sun and dew as never shines and falls in England.

"As soon as Anstruther shall be landed," he wrote to Lord Castlereagh, "I shall give you a good account of the remainder of the French army; but I am afraid I shall not gain a complete victory; that is, I shall not entirely destroy them, for want of cavalry." †

Arrival of  
Sir H.  
Burrard.

On 20th August, being then at Vimeiro, the army was reinforced by the arrival of Anstruther's and Acland's brigades—5,150 men in all. Hearing that Junot had marched from Lisbon with 2,000 men and taken command of the divisions of Delaborde and Loison at Torres Vedras, about ten miles to the south, Sir Arthur issued orders for the army to march against him at 4.30 on the morning of the 21st. Sir Harry Burrard, however, having arrived off the coast late on the 20th, Wellesley went on board to report himself and surrender his command. He explained to Sir Harry the preparation he had made for the attack on the morrow, and repeated the recommendation he had made before leaving the Mondego, that Sir John Moore's corps should be disembarked in that river and proceed to Lisbon by the inland route of Santarem, so as to cut off Junot's retreat. Moore was already

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 116.

† *Despatches*, iv. 88.

at the Mondego, and had actually begun to disembark his corps; but Burrard sent him orders to re-embark and land at Maceira, so as to concentrate the whole British force in an advance on Lisbon. He considered Sir Arthur's scheme too venturesome, and ordered him to remain at Vimeiro till reinforced by Moore.

Sorely must Wellesley have chafed at having to countermand the advance.

"Sir Harry Burrard," he wrote to Castlereagh, "will probably acquaint your Lordship with the reasons which have induced him to call Sir John Moore's corps to the assistance of our army, which consists of 20,000 men, including the Portuguese army, which was to join this morning, notwithstanding former determinations to the contrary, and is opposed by, I am convinced, not more than 12,000 or 14,000 Frenchmen, and to halt here till Sir John's corps shall join. You will readily believe, however, that this determination is not in conformity with my opinion, and I only wish Sir Harry had landed, and seen things with his own eyes, before he made it." \*

However, the stars in their courses were on the side of the daring, and against the over-cautious General. At midnight a German sergeant of dragoons dashed into the lines, announcing the approach of the French in great force, who, he said, were only three miles off. Relying on his patrols, Sir Arthur refrained from disturbing his troops before the usual hour, which was always before daybreak, and no signs of the enemy were detected till seven in the morning.

The village of Vimeiro stands on the road between Lourinha and Torres Vedras, where the river Maceira passes through a range of mountains running nearly east and west. The greater part of the British infantry, with eight guns, lay on the mountain to the west of the stream and village; Anstruther's and Fane's brigades occupied elevated ground on the

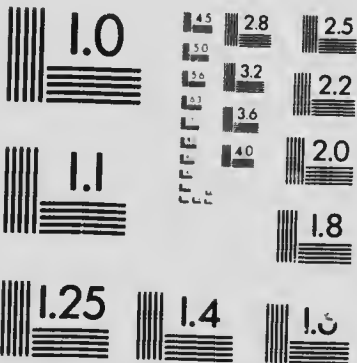
Battle of  
Vimeiro.

\* *Despatches*, iv. 92.



# MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

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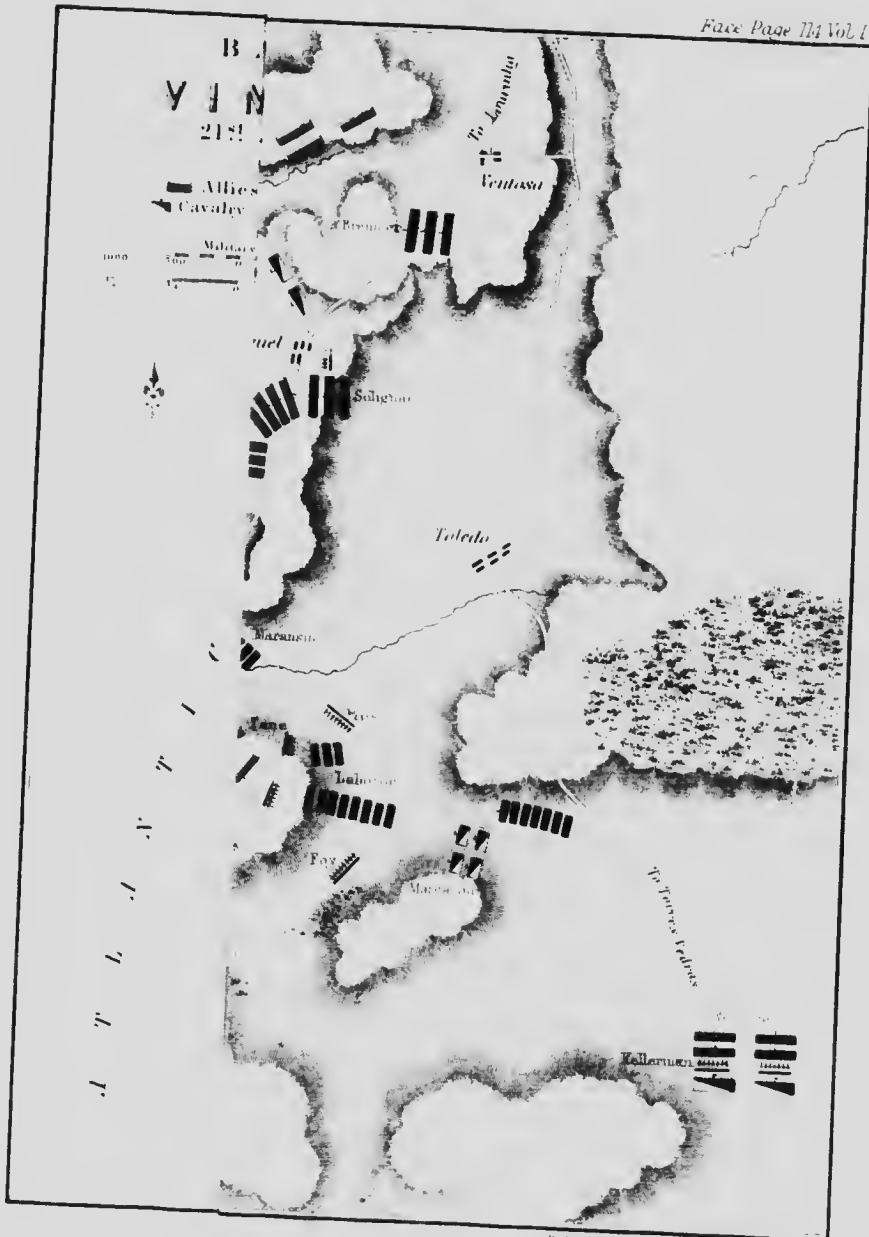
Æt. 39. east bank, with two half-brigades of artillery; while the cavalry and reserve of artillery lay in the valley behind Fane's rifle brigade.

Large bodies of the enemy's cavalry appearing to the south about eight o'clock, threatening the British right, Wellesley threw four brigades from his right across the stream to form the right of the new alignment on heights to the north of the village. The Portuguese infantry, supported by Craufurd's brigade, were moved still further to the left, on the ridge terminating at the landing-place of Maceira. General Hill moved to the height immediately overlooking Vimeiro on the west, his division forming a reserve to the whole.

The action began by General Delaborde, supported by General Loison, attacking Anstruther and Fane in their advanced position, General Kellermann moving behind them with a brigade of grenadiers in reserve; General Brennier, who was to attack the British left at the same time, being delayed by the broken ground. Delaborde's battalions, although enfiladed by Robe's guns with Acland's brigade, advanced with the usual famous impetuosity of the French infantry, but they were met in a manner novel to them. "They seemed to feel their way less," said Wellesley long afterwards with a smile, "than I always found them do afterwards." \* Never before had these massive columns been received by troops standing deployed in two ranks, and consequently with a firing front extending far beyond the flanks of their assailants. The attacking force first came in contact with the 50th—commonly called "The Dirty Half-hundred" †—"not a good-looking regiment," as Wellesley said, "but devilish steady, who received them admirably, and

\* *Croker*, ii. 122.

† The territorial regimental system initiated by Mr. Cardwell has proved an undoubted success. Nevertheless the old numerals are still used in common parlance, and such are their glorious associations that it must be hoped that they may never be altogether suppressed.

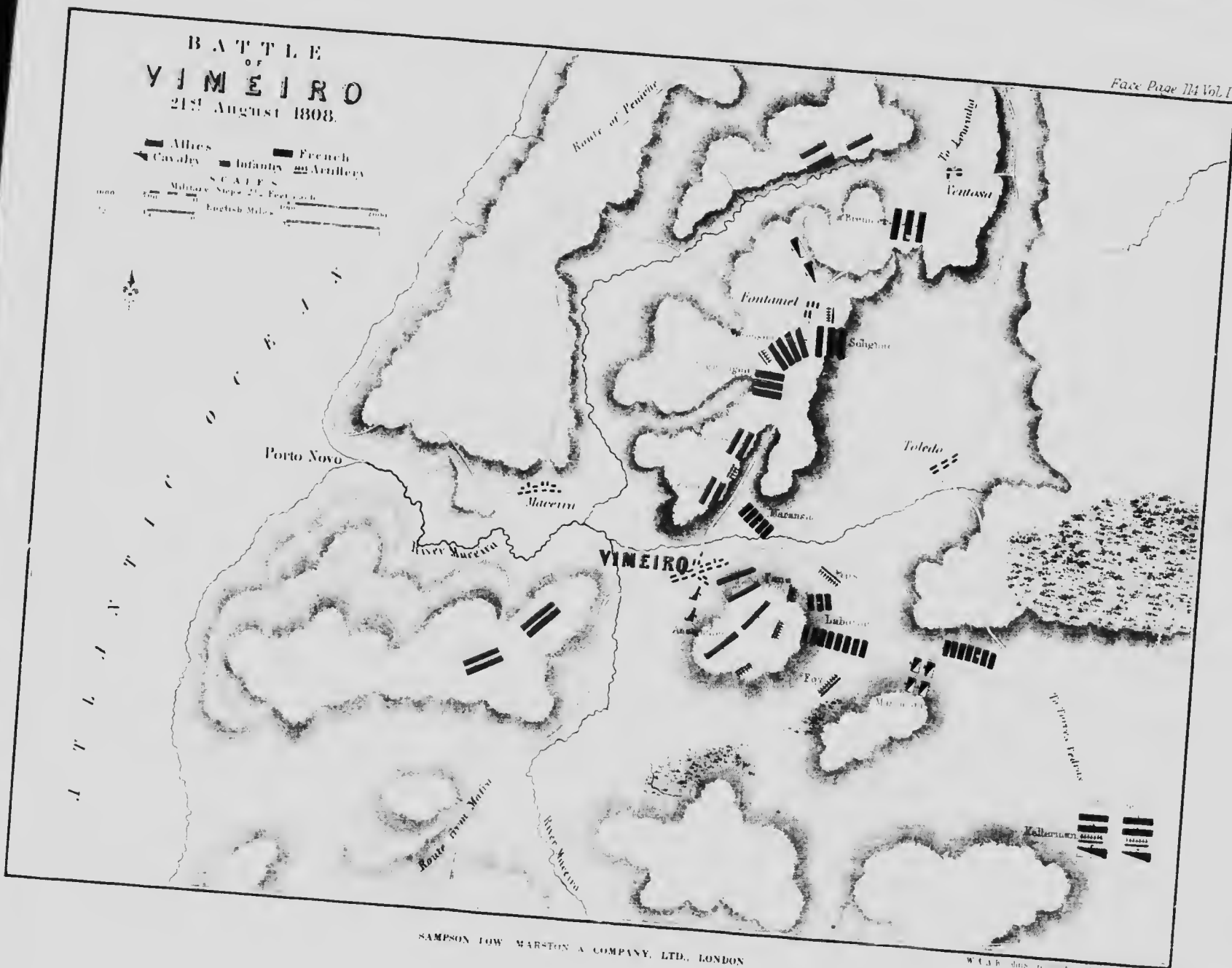




BATTLE  
OF  
**VIMEIRO**  
21st August 1808.

Face Page III Vol. I

— Allies      — French  
 ▲ Cavalry    ■ Infantry    ☛ Artillery  
 SCALES  
 Military Steps 2 1/2 Feet each  
 0 100 200 300  
 English Miles



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W.C.B. this is the first



brought them to a full stop immediately." \* Next the 50th ANN. 1808 stood the 43rd, and these two regiments, after pouring in a shattering volley from their long front, charged with bayonet, and completely repulsed the attack. Acland, then, descending the hill, fell on Delaborde's right flank, and the French retired in confusion. Then it was that Wellesley felt his weakness in cavalry; an effective charge at this moment would have completed the rout. He had only a single weak squadron of the 20th Light Dragoons, which, coming suddenly in contact with a far superior body of horse under Margaron, suffered severely, their commander, Lieut.-Col. Taylor, being killed.

While the British right was thus engaged, General Solignac, supported by a large body of cavalry, was attacking their left. Mounting the height beyond the left of the British position, he expected to take Ferguson's brigade in flank; instead of which he found himself opposed to a solid front drawn right across the narrowest part of the ridge. Ferguson, strong in the support of Nightingale's and Bowes's brigades behind him, gave the enemy not a moment to reflect, but advanced towards him with the 36th, 41st, and 71st Regiments, while the guns maintained a galling fire. When within easy distance, he gave the word to charge. There was a moment of suspense as the line of red coats dashed against the heavy blue columns: then the blue began slowly to yield ground: the ridge widened as the French were pressed back, allowing room for the British front to be prolonged; first the 82nd, then the 29th being sent up into the fighting-line by General Nightingale. Solignac fell, severely wounded: his corps, now wholly detached from the main body of the French, was driven for two miles—the whole length of the ridge—down into the village of Perenza, where six of his guns were taken † and left in charge of the 71st and 82nd Regiments, while Ferguson continued to press on the enemy.

\* Croker, ii. 122.

† "It was a most laudable sight to see the Highlanders in their kilts riding the French horses and driving the guns they had taken" (*Dumarsais MSS.*).

Æt. 39. Suddenly General Brennier, who had been in difficulties in a ravine and unable hitherto to take part in the action, appeared on the scene, and retook the guns by surprise. The British regiments, however, quickly rallied, poured in a volley of musketry, charged, and not only recaptured the guns, but took Brennier himself prisoner.

At noon the victory was all but complete: Junot had withdrawn so far to the east that the road to Torres Vedras lay open; Solignac, overpowered by Ferguson in front, and threatened in rear by the 5th Brigade and Portuguese contingent, must inevitably have surrendered, when suddenly came a command for the cessation of hostilities. Sir Harry Burrard had arrived on the field, after the commencement of the action, but had considerably refrained from interfering with Sir Arthur Wellesley's dispositions. Now, however, not apprehending that the enemy's whole force had been in action, and unaware that Solignac's corps had been cut off from the main body,\* he decided that offensive operations must cease, and that his army should halt at Vimeiro till the arrival of Sir John Moore's corps.†

In vain Ferguson sent to represent to Wellesley the important advantage he must gain if allowed to proceed. In vain Wellesley urged on Sir Harry that his right, containing four battalions that had not been engaged, was several miles nearer Torres Vedras than the enemy, through which pass alone Junot could reach Lisbon. In vain he proposed to follow Junot with five brigades and force him across the Sierra Baragueda upon the Tagus, while General Hill with three brigades should push on to Torres Vedras to intercept him at Montechico.‡ Sir Harry Burrard could not share the

\* See Sir H. Burrard's statement before the Court of Inquiry, *Despatches*, iv. 232.

† "Our brigade was then ordered to advance, but was not allowed by Sir H. Burrard; for which we all hope, and certainly expect, he will be hanged" (*Dumaresq MSS.*).

‡ Wellesley was in possession of a very complete survey of the district, with which Burrard had no acquaintance whatever.

confidence or discern safety in the plan of the younger General. He shrank, rightly or wrongly, from the risk, and the troops were recalled. ANN. 1808.

Mortifying as this check must have been to a victorious army and their commander, yet they had done a good morning's work. They had completely defeated the Duc d'Abrantès and 14,000 of the best French troops; \* a General, thirteen guns, and many hundred prisoners remained in their hands; their own loss being 720 killed and wounded, including 4 officers killed and 37 wounded. In his report to Sir Harry Burrard, Sir Arthur, after praising the superb conduct of his troops, made this remarkable observation: "I must add that this is the only action that I have ever been in, in which everything passed as it was directed, and no mistake was made by any of the officers charged with its conduct." †

Sir Harry Burrard's reign was brief. Before nightfall on the day of battle Sir Hew Dalrymple arrived and assumed the chief command. Although approving of Burrard's action in countermanding the advance, he moved the army forward to Ramalhal on the 22nd August, where the troops were suddenly called to arms on the appearance of a strong body of the enemy's cavalry. This, however, turned out to be no more than an escort to General Kellermann, who demanded an interview with Sir Arthur Wellesley in order to propose an armistice. The truth was that Junot, who had abandoned Torres Vedras and Mafra, had taken alarm at the state of affairs in Lisbon, where the populace, excited by the approach of the British, seemed on the eve of revolt. Kellermann was authorised to offer a convention under which the French should evacuate Portugal immediately.

Sir Hew  
Dalrymple  
arrives in  
command

\* General Thiebault, who was present in the battle, has tried to prove that Junot had not more than 12,000 men at Vimeiro, and M. Thiers puts the force at 9,000. Both statements are disproved by the French *Ordre de Bataille* found on the field, where 14,000 men are accounted for, including 1,300 cavalry (*Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 206).

† *Despatches*, iv. 100.

ÆT. 39. By Sir Hew's desire, Kellermann was conducted to his presence as Commander-in-chief. But forasmuch as Sir Hew had received none of the despatches which Wellesley had left at the Mondego for his information, and was therefore necessarily ignorant of a great deal essential to rightly understanding the position, he had not been long in conference with Kellermann before he sent for Sir Harry Burrard and Sir Arthur Wellesley to listen to the proposals of the French commander. After long deliberations,\* an agreement was arrived at, and the instrument had to be signed. This was done by Wellesley, at Sir Hew's request, on the ground that, as it was signed by an inferior officer (Kellermann) on the French part, it would not be fitting that the British Commander-in-chief should affix his signature. The instrument was then submitted to Admiral Sir Charles Cotton for his approval, who took exception to the provision that the Russian fleet in the port of Lisbon should not be molested, but undertook to negotiate separately on that matter. Cotton's reply was received at daylight on 25th August by Sir Hew, who thereupon asked Sir Arthur what he thought should be done. "Inform General Junot," was, in effect, Sir Arthur's reply, "that the Admiral disapproves of the armistice, and give him forty-eight hours' notice of its suspension. If Junot will not renew negotiations independently of the Russians, then push forward and compel him to accept your own terms."

The Con-  
vention of  
Cintra.

Sir Hew did not act on the advice he had invited, although Sir John Moore's corps had arrived in Maceira Bay, raising the total British strength to 30,000. He sent, indeed, his Quartermaster-general, Colonel Murray, to inform Junot of the Admiral's objection, and to give forty-eight hours' notice of the resumption of hostilities, but he empowered him to

\* "In the first interview I had with Sir Hew Dalrymple . . . I, who am supposed to have been his adviser, and am here now for no crime except my supposed advice, had reason to believe I did not possess his confidence: nay more, that he was prejudiced against the opinions I should give him" (Sir A. Wellesley's statement before the Court of Inquiry, *Despatches*, iv. 187).



THE RIGHT HON. LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR GEORGE MURRAY, G.C.B., F.R.S., ETC.,  
QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN  
THE PENINSULA.

*Vol. I, p. 118.*





"enter upon and conclude" a treaty with the objectionable ANN. 1808. clauses left out.

Junot, with a beaten army, and in presence of the angry populace of Lisbon, was assuredly in no position to dictate terms. Leaving the Russian Admiral Siniavin to negotiate with Cotton, he agreed to the convention, commonly, though erroneously, referred to as the Convention of Cintra, which was ratified on 30th August. By a separate transaction, Sir Charles Cotton received from the Russian Admiral the surrender of all his ships, to be held by Great Britain until six months after peace should be concluded, the officers and crews to be sent back to Russia in British vessels.\*

The British troops, in accordance with the convention, took possession of Lisbon on 10th September, and of the citadel on the 12th, General Sir John Hope being appointed Governor. Junot and his staff embarked on the 13th; his army, to the number of 26,000 men, as shown in the official return, were conveyed in British ships to La Rochelle, and by the end of the month the only French troops left in Portugal were the garrisons of Elvas and Almeida.

Evacua-  
tion of  
Lisbon by  
the  
French.

It is worthy of note that Napoleon, expressing his discontent with Junot for his ill success, indicated as the course which he ought to have pursued, precisely that which Wellesley subsequently adopted on the same ground with complete success against Masséna.

"I wish to know why he (Junot) did not entrench himself in a camp at the mouth of the Tagus . . . and await assistance, having supplied his army. This is what he should have done by the rules of warfare in such a situation."

\* "It would be highly gratifying to hear that Sir Hugh was hang'd, for it is rather provoking to think that we, through his stupidity, not only lost a great many men, but that we have, on account of the Russian fleet not being taken as prizes, lost two million guineas that were on board. But we must not think of this, as *honour* is the *only idea* a soldier can have in conquering, and it is well known that we have *plenty of money*, and that we *cannot* feel the loss of £200 or £300 pounds. The idea of prize money only is thought of by a sett of mersanaries (*sic*)" (*Dumarsais MSS.*)

Æt. 39.  
Political  
settlement  
of Portu-  
gal.

Military operations were now merged in political arrangements for the government of Portugal, and the latter were not in harmony with the designs Wellesley had kept in view. His correspondence at this period betrays an intense feeling of irritation against Sir Hew Dalrymple's conduct of affairs, both civil and military. To the Duke of Richmond,\* Lord Castlereagh,† even to Sir John Moore,‡ and Capt. Maleclm, R.N.§ he wrote expressing his disapproval of much that was going on. On 9th September Sir Hew Dalrymple proposed that Sir Arthur should go as plenipotentiary to Madrid. He replied, in terms not exactly submissive, that he could only undertake that mission if he enjoyed Sir Hew's full confidence, and on the assurance that any plan which he (Wellesley) might recommend should be carried into effect.

"The view which I have taken of the state of affairs in Spain has long ago suggested to me the propriety of placing in that kingdom a person of the description stated by yourself, possessing full powers, the means of exerting them on all parts of Spain, and of communicating and treating with all the local juntas of government. In order to perform the important part allotted to him, this person should possess the confidence of those who employ him; and, above all, in order that he may recommend with authority a plan to the Spaniards, he should be acquainted with those of his employers, the means by which they propose to carry them into execution, and those by which they intend to enable the Spanish nation to execute that which will be proposed to them. I certainly cannot consider myself as possessing those advantages, personally, which would qualify me for the situation you have proposed for me; and you must be the best judge whether you have made up your own mind, and are enabled to instruct me, and are inclined to confide in me to the extent which, in my opinion, will be necessary in order to derive any general advantage from such a mission."||

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 129, 132: *Despatches*, iv. 138.

† *Despatches*, iv. 118.

‡ *Ibid.*, 142.

§ *Ibid.*, 125.

|| *Ibid.*, iv. 138.

Lord William Bentinck was eventually chosen by Sir Hew ANN. 1808.  
 for this mission; and on 17th September Sir Arthur asked Sir A. Wellesley returns to England.  
 and obtained leave to return to England, to attend to his  
 duties as Irish Secretary. He carried with him a gratifying  
 tribute from the general officers who had served under him  
 in the campaign, in the shape of a valuable piece of plate,  
 and another from the field officers of his army. "We have  
 but one sentiment," they said, "on the occasion—admiration  
 of your talents and confidence in your abilities." \*

Neither the British nor the Portuguese public shared this Dissatis-  
 faction caused by  
 the Con-  
 vention of  
 Cintra.  
 admiration and confidence. Although Sir Arthur was not  
 responsible for the terms of the Convention of Cintra, and  
 had repeatedly expressed his disapproval of some of them,  
 the treaty had been signed by him on behalf of the British,  
 and he incurred the chief share of the indignation that was  
 poured out upon those who, it was believed, had thrown  
 away all the advantage gained by the bloody victories of  
 Roliça and Vimeiro, and allowed Marshal Junot to depart  
 without further molestation from the kingdom which his  
 soldiers had laid waste. The Junta of Oporto complained  
 that the British Generals, commanding what was only an  
 auxiliary force, had unwarrantably arrogated the right of  
 treating for the Portuguese nation. Considering the part  
 played in this brief campaign by General Bernardim Freire,  
 who had withdrawn from co-operation with the British  
 General at the most critical moment of advance against the  
 enemy, the British Government might have been justified in  
 disregarding the remonstrance of the Portuguese, albeit the  
 patriotic efforts of the Junta had earned perhaps more con-  
 sideration than they received in settling the terms of the  
 evacuation. But the Government could not remain indifferent  
 to the general clamour which arose in Britain when the  
 terms of the convention were made known. The press led  
 the way, demanding almost unanimously, and in many cases  
 with extreme violence, that the Generals who had betrayed

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 138.

ÆT. 39. their country and its ally should be brought to justice. The public next took up the cry—

“The blunt monster with uncounted heads,  
The still discordant, wavering multitude—”

and their voice found official reflection in the Speech from the Throne, wherein the Generals were blamed for “acceding to the terms of the convention.”

It was all very unreasonable. He had been sanguine indeed, who, four months before, when the expedition sailed from Cork on 15th June, had predicted that before the end of harvest Sir Arthur Wellesley would have encountered in pitched battle the hitherto invincible troops of Napoleon, routed them, and driven the last French soldier out of Portugal. Not less than this had been done; yet, with one voice, the nation were demanding the trial of the successful commanders—if not for their lives, at least for their honour and professional prospects. Byron himself, scorning topographic accuracy, depicted the imaginary scene of Britain’s humiliation—the palace of the Marchese Marialva at Cintra, although the treaty was really signed many miles from that place. The stanzas are well known; \* not so well the more vindictive ones which stood in the original manuscript and were withdrawn at the earnest instance of the poet’s friends.

“But when Convention sent his handy-work,  
Pens, tongues, hands, feet combined in wild uproar;  
Mayor, aldermen, laid down the uplifted fork;  
The Bench of Bishops half forgot to snore;  
Stern Cobbett, who for one whole week forbore  
To question aught, once more with transport leapt  
And bit his devilish quill agen, and swore  
With foe such treaty never should be kept,  
Then burst the blatant beast † and roared and raged and slept!

“Thus unto Heaven appealed the people; Heaven,  
Which loves the lieges of our gracious King,  
Decreed that, ere our generals were forgiven,  
Inquiry should be held about the thing.

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\* *Childe Harold*, i. 24, 25, 26.

† “The blatant beast”—a term employed by Smollett to denote the mob.



VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH,  
AFTERWARDS 2ND MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY.  
[Vol. i. p. 122]



But Mercy cloak'd the babes beneath her wing ;  
 And as they spared our foes, so spared we them ;  
 (Where was the pity of our sires for Byng ?)  
 Yet knaves, not idiots should the law condemn ;

ANN. 1808.

Then live, ye gallant knights, and bless your judges phlegm ! ”

Men of all parties were indignant ; even Castlereagh, Sir Arthur's firmest friend, had misgivings. Wellesley, having no carriage of his own, asked him to carry him to one of the King's weekly levées. Castlereagh looked confused, said something about public ill-humour, and at last advised his friend not to attend the levée.

“ When I first mentioned it,” said Wellesley, “ I only thought it a matter of respect and duty to the King ; I now look upon it as a matter of self-respect and duty to my own character, and I insist on knowing whether this advice proceeds in any degree from his Majesty. I wish you distinctly to understand that I will go to the levée to-morrow, or I never will go to a levée in my life.”

Castlereagh then withdrew his opposition. Sir Arthur attended the levée, was received cordially by the King, and had the satisfaction of seeing the representatives of the City of London present a petition praying for his own disgrace.\*

Nevertheless, no constitutional Government could with-  
 stand the general manifestation of anger among all classes. Court of Inquiry on the Generals.  
 King George's Cabinet were compelled to take action ; but, disregarding the ill-omened precedent of Admiral Byng, which Byron was not ashamed to quote, they set a new one of commendable procrastination. Instead of appointing a court-martial to decide on the main issue—the conduct of the Generals—they formed a court of inquiry to sift the facts which might be submitted to a trial.

This court assembled at Chelsea Hospital on 14th November, 1808, under the presidency of General Sir David Dundas,† Sir Hew Dalrymple and Sir Harry Burrard having

\* *Croker*, i. 344 ; *Stanhope*, 243.

† The other members of the court were Generals the Earl of Moira, Peter Craig, and Lord Heathfield ; Lieut.-Generals the Earl of Pembroke, Sir G. Nugent, and Oliver Nicholls.

Æt. 39. — been recalled from Portugal to appear before it: Sir Arthur Wellesley being already in Dublin, attending to his duty as Irish Secretary. The chief matter submitted to this court was the conditions of the convention, but they were also called on to review "all the causes and circumstances (whether arising from the previous operations of the British army or otherwise) which led to them," as well as the conduct and proceedings of the Generals.

Wellesley, while making a spirited defence, and not disguising his disapproval of some of the details of the convention, admitted that he "concurred in and advised the adoption of the principle of the measure—namely, that the French should be allowed to evacuate Portugal," and that when he signed the instrument he considered he was doing it at the *desire* of his Commander-in-chief, and not at his *command*. The most interesting part of the proceedings, however, is that in which Sir Arthur defends himself against the charge of rashness in advancing against the enemy after landing at the Mondego, without waiting for the reinforcements which he knew were on their way to join him, and repeats his conviction that the British army should have moved forward immediately after the victory at Vimeiro, in order to occupy the position at Mafra and thus turn the defences at Torres Vedras.\* In short, "had that been done," said Wellesley, "there would have been no need of concluding the convention which has given so much offence." While stoutly maintaining this opinion, Sir Arthur asked leave of the court to state that he believed Sir Harry Burrard had decided against the advance from Vimeiro "upon fair military grounds."† But he bitterly resented what he considered the unjust imputations cast on him by Sir Hew Dalrymple in his defence.

The court delivered their report on 22nd December: it was so vague in its conclusion that it was referred back for reconsideration. The seven members were divided. On

\* *Despatches*, iv. 178.

† *Ibid.*, 233.



the 29th Wellesley received a private letter from Major Campbell,\* containing a *précis* of the final judgment. By a majority of one the court had agreed to pronounce high encomium on Sir Arthur's operations up to and including the action at Vimeiro, refrained from pronouncing "whether or not a pursuit after the battle of the 21st could have been efficacious," and in face of Burrard's "weighty considerations" declined to determine "on the expedience [*sic*] of a forward movement to Torres Vedras." The court commented on the confusion caused by the rapid succession of three Commanders-in-chief within twenty-four hours, expressed approval of the advantages secured by the convention itself, and gave their opinion that no further military proceedings were necessary, "because, however some of us may differ in our sentiments respecting the fitness of the convention in the relative situation of the two armies, it is our unanimous declaration that unquestionable zeal and firmness appear throughout to have been exhibited by Lieut.-Generals Sir Hew Dalrymple, Sir Harry Burrard, and Sir Arthur Wellesley." The minority, consisting of Lords Moira and Pembroke, and General Nicholls, gave their reasons for dissent in a separate memorandum.

Contradictory and inconclusive though this report was in its terms, it proved fatal to the professional prospects of two out of the three Generals arraigned. The King, in accepting it, repeated his disapproval of several articles in the convention, and sharply rebuked Sir Hew Dalrymple for delaying transmission of the armistice for the Royal approval from 22nd August till 4th September. Neither Sir Hew nor Sir Harry was ever employed again. Similar eclipse might have fallen upon Sir Arthur, but for the efforts of Castlereagh and other powerful friends, whose confidence in their General was never shaken.†

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 193.

† Mr. Gleig repeats without comment Brialmont's statement that "the judgment gave perfect satisfaction to Wellesley." This is hardly consistent

ANN. 1808.  
Finding of  
the court.

Æt. 39. By the time Parliament re-assembled in January, 1809, the public in general had forgotten their wrath about the convention, and thoughtful persons had begun to realise that, by the evacuation of Portugal, something substantial had been gained in the struggle with Napoleon. Wellesley defended his conduct in the campaign from his place in the House of Commons, and laid down an important principle regulating the action of officers to their superior.

“As to the letter sent by my noble friend (Castlereagh), desiring my superior officers to consult me particularly, had I been aware of the existence of such a document, I should have felt my situation very uncomfortable. But I must say that, from the first hour these officers landed, nay, even before they landed, I clearly perceived that I was not in possession of their confidence. I did everything, however, that I could to forward their objects, though I differed from them in opinion. This is what I consider to be the great distinction between military and civil inferior situations. If, in a civil office, the inferior differ materially from the superior, he ought to resign; but in military appointments it is the duty of the inferior officer to assist his commander in the mode in which that commander may deem his services most advantageous. . . . It is a principle on which, on that occasion, as I have ever done before, I acted, and on it I ever will act.”

Both Houses of Parliament voted their thanks to Sir Arthur for the victories of Roliça and Vimeiro, and the cities of Londonderry and Limerick dissociated themselves from Irish sympathy with the French by presenting him with their freedom.

Looking back at this day upon the conduct of the first with passages in Wellesley's correspondence at the time. For instance, writing to Lord Burghersh, 11th January, 1809, he says—

“The Report of the Court of Inquiry is indeed an extraordinary production. Opinions, like colours, are now matters of taste, and may in this view of them be inconsistent with each other. But a court of this description ought, if it touches facts, to state them correctly: and a principal member, if he observes upon the subject, ought not to pass unnoticed, or contradict, the principal fact bearing upon the question” (*Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 196).

expedition to Portugal, one cannot but believe that, had ANN. 1808. Wellesley not been superseded, Junot's army must have surrendered, and the disastrous campaign of the following winter have had a very different issue. Such, at least, was the belief of Walter Scott, who, as is well known, had a keen eye for military combinations, and kept it on Wellington at this trying time, feeling in him a confidence which few, except those under his command, shared with Castlereagh himself.

"I cannot but feel exceedingly low," he wrote to Mr. Ellis on 23rd December, 1808. "I distrust what we call thoroughbred soldiers terribly, when anything like the formation of extensive plans, of the daring and critical nature which seems necessary for the emancipation of Spain, is required from them. Our army is a poor school for genius. . . . I would to God Wellesley were now at the head of the English in Spain. His late examination shows his acute and decisive talents for command; and although I believe in my conscience that when he found himself superseded, he suffered the pigs to run through the business, when he might in some measure have prevented them—

'Yet give the haughty devil his due,  
Though bold his quarterings, they are true.'

Such a man, with an army of 40,000 or 50,000 British, with the remains of the Galician army . . . might place Buonaparte in the precarious situation of a General with 100,000 enemies between him and his supplies. . . . I heartily wish our Generals would learn to play for the gammon, and not sit down contented with a mere saving game." \*

Again, in writing to Southey on 31st January:—

"I fear it will be found that Moore was rather an excellent officer than a General of those comprehensive and daring views necessary in his dangerous situation. Had Wellesley been there the battle of Corunna would have been fought and won at Somosierra." †

\* Lockhart, ii. 226.

† *Ibid.*, 237.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE CAMPAIGN OF TALAVERA.

1808-1809.

<p>September, 1808. Napoleon sends reinforcements to the Peninsula.</p>		<p>Position of the Spanish and French armies.</p>
<p>December 4 . . . He enters Madrid in person. Sir John Moore takes the field.</p>	<p>May 5 . . . . . Sir A. Wellesley advances against Soult.</p>	<p>Incident of the French Captain d'Argenton.</p>
<p>„ 23 . . . He begins his retreat.</p>		<p>Soult prepares to retreat from Oporto.</p>
<p>January 16. 1809. Battle of Coruña.</p>		<p>„ 12 . . . . . Passage of the Douro and Capture of Oporto.</p>
<p>„ 9 . . . . . Treaty between Great Britain and Spain. The position in Portugal.</p>		<p>June 27 . . . . . The British army advances from Abrantes towards Madrid.</p>
<p>April 2 . . . . . Sir A. Wellesley receives command of a second expedition to Portugal. Nature of his instructions.</p>		<p>Forces opposed to their advance.</p>
<p>„ 22 . . . . . Arrives in Lisbon.</p>		<p><i>Appendix A.</i> . . . “The Marquis Romana.”</p>
<p>„ 27 . . . . . Takes over the chief command.</p>		

ALTHOUGH the campaign of 1808 in Portugal failed to satisfy King George, his Cabinet, and his people, yet it convinced the Emperor of the French that Great Britain possessed some good troops, and at least *one* General who could handle them. To retrieve the first reverse which his

army had yet encountered, he had recourse to the half-million ANN. 1808 or so of troops which were under arms to maintain the authority he had wrested from the Powers of Europe. In Napoleon sends reinforcements to the Peninsula, September, 1808, while English journalists were shrieking for the punishment of the General who had overthrown Marshal Junot, and were raking out into public view the private scandals of the Commander-in-chief, the Duke of York, Napoleon, having concluded a fresh alliance offensive and defensive with the Czar at Erfurth, collected a vast army, which he addressed in terms strangely in contrast with the unemotional phrases of a British general order.

"Soldiers! I have need of you! The hideous presence of the leopard\* contaminates the peninsula of Spain and Portugal. In terror he must fly before you. Let us bear our triumphant eagles to the Pillars of Hercules: there also we have injuries to avenge. . . . Soldiers! all that you have done, all that you will do, for the happiness of the French people, and for my glory, shall be eternal in my heart."

Simultaneously with the movement of 200,000 troops through the Western Pyrenees, Napoleon, as adroit in statecraft as in strategy, addressed a joint appeal with the and appeals to King George. Emperor of Russia to King George, to consent to peace for the sake of the suffering nations.

"We entreat your Majesty—we unite to entreat your Majesty to listen to the voice of humanity; to silence that of passion; to seek, with the intention of arriving at pacification, to conciliate all interests, and thus, preserving all powers which exist, insure the happiness of Europe and of this generation, at the head of which Providence has placed us."

It was an adroit move, because, as the Opposition in Parliament took care should be proclaimed to the world, there was a strong peace party in England, actuated not by

\* Alluding to the three leopards passant, the ancient arms of the Kings of England—not lions, as it has become the fashion to call them.

**Æt. 39.** sentimental and religious motives alone, but by prudential calculation of the futility of persevering in an unequal struggle. But Canning proved inflexible in loyalty to Spain, whose cause had been espoused by Great Britain. If the Spanish Government were acknowledged as a party to the negotiation, then King George would be ready to treat on the basis of *uti possidetis*; but if the Emperors persisted in calling Joseph Buonaparte King of Spain, and the existing Government at Madrid rebels, negotiations could go no further. They were broken off, and the world awaited the development of the scheme which surely lay behind the bold front of the British Cabinet. Amazing it is to record that, while Napoleon was calling out two conscriptions of 80,000 men each, and disposing his armies in Spain to throw open the road for his own advance on Madrid, no plan of operations had been matured, no definite instructions had been issued to Sir John Moore, who, on the removal of Dalrymple and Burrard, had become Commander-in-chief of the British forces in Portugal.

The outlines of the disastrous campaign of that winter must be given here in a few sentences. While Wellesley, still under the cloud of the Court of Inquiry, was manipulating patronage in the Chief Secretary's office, and writing about dirty bedding in Irish barracks, Soult was moving upon Burgos, where, on 10th November, he dispersed the army of Estremadura under the young Marquis of Belvedere; on the 11th Marshal Victor defeated Blake at Espinosa; Marshal Lannes routed Castaños and Palafox at Tudela on the 23rd; and on the 4th December Napoleon in person entered Madrid, which the Marquis de Castelar abandoned at his approach. Who could be surprised that Napoleon was confirmed in the belief, founded on repeated experience, that he had but to show himself in any quarter of Europe to receive the submission of its inhabitants? The Spanish insurrection, which would never have taken place had it been possible for him to have been in the country, was at an end: there

Napoleon  
enters  
Madrid.

remained but those troublesome "leopards" to drive ilto ANN. 1808  
the sea.

It seemed at first as if this would be a light task. It was Sir John Moore takes the field.  
not till November that Sir John Moore, acting under tardy orders from home, and in accordance with the urgent counsel of Mr. Frere, British Minister to the Central Junta, resolved to advance on the capital. "Resolved," perhaps, is scarcely the right term to express Sir John's action—"I mean," Southey quotes him as saying, "to proceed bridle in hand; for, if the bubble bursts, and Madrid falls, we shall have a run for it." He had the option of concentrating his army by a voyage round the coast, or by a march through the interior. Choosing the latter, he relinquished communication with Lisbon, crossed the Spanish frontier on 11th November, and on 13th was at Salamanca, awaiting the assembly of his various divisions and detachments, in all 30,000 foot and 5,000 cavalry—the largest force as yet employed by Great Britain in the Peninsula. While at Salamanca he heard tidings of the fall of Madrid. The Spanish armies—180,000 troops disposed between Zaragoza and the sea-coast—had ceased to have any military cohesion, and the British force was in the presence of 300,000 victorious French. Nevertheless, after much hesitation, and still influenced by Mr. Frere's earnest representations, Moore ordered the advance. He had been sent out, though against his own judgment,\* to assist the Spaniards, and the utmost he could do now was to fall on the French communications and, by creating

\* Sir John Moore, though second to none in bravery, was oppressed with misgiving from the first. After he had received his final instructions from Lord Castlereagh and taken his leave, he re-opened the door and said to the minister, "Remember, my lord, I protest against the expedition and foretell its failure." Canning told Mr. Stapleton that when Castlereagh related this incident at a meeting of the Cabinet, he (Canning) could not help exclaiming, "Good God! and do you really mean to say that you allowed a man entertaining such feelings to the expedition to go and take command of it?" In consequence of this, a letter was sent to Sir John virtually demanding his resignation; but he only sent a dignified reply and sailed for Portugal (*George Canning and his Times*, by A. G. Stapleton, p. 159).

*Æt.* 39. a diversion, draw Napoleon away from the southern provinces.

Sir John  
Moore's  
retreat.

This purpose he certainly effected. When preparing to attack Soult at Saldanha, he heard that Napoleon was advancing by forced marches from Madrid at the head of 50,000 Guards. With less than 25,000 effectives in his command, Moore had no choice but to retreat. Fixing on Vigo as his port of embarkation, he fell back slowly, fighting daily and suffering frightfully from inclement weather and scanty supplies.

"Dost thou remember all those marches weary  
From gathering foes to reach Coruña's shore?  
Who can forget that midnight sad and dreary,  
When to his grave we lower'd the noble Moore?"

The story is part of the history of the war, not of that of Arthur Wellesley, though it was closely interwoven with his fortunes in the years to come. The battle of Coruña and the death of Moore took place on 16th January, 1809; 14,000 worn and ragged soldiers, less than half the brave array that Wellesley had left near Lisbon, embarked for England, and so the curtain fell on the British first expedition to Portugal.

Sir A. Wel-  
lesley's  
opinion  
remains  
unshaken.

Sir Arthur Wellesley, however, whose intimacy with Canning and Castlereagh seems to have been almost the only tie which restrained these rivals from their proximate rupture, while it invested him with much influence upon their policy, was never shaken in his opinion that Portugal, with her long seaboard and a configuration which enabled an army to operate within her land frontiers on short lines of communication with her harbours, was the one base on which Great Britain could effectually operate against Napoleon. Despite the darkness of the prospect, Wellesley maintained that the right course was to subsidise the juntas, organise the national forces of Portugal under English officers (he did not yet know that the Spanish armies, so numerous on paper, were as bad as he had proved the Portuguese to be), and encourage the



patriotic peasantry and townsmen by a liberal supply of arms and ammunition. Wellesley's counsel prevailed, the most cogent argument in support of his view being the certainty that, if the question was not fought out in the Peninsula, it would have to be decided with Napoleon's columns on British and Irish soil. On 9th January, 1809, a treaty of alliance was concluded between Great Britain and the provisional Government of Spain, and a new expedition was set on foot on a larger scale than hitherto.

ANN. 1809.  
—  
Treaty  
between  
Great  
Britain  
and Spain.

The prospect was threatening indeed. Soult was preparing to descend upon Oporto with 30,000 men, leaving Ney to suppress any movement in Galicia; Lefebre had driven one Spanish army before him to the Sierra Morena, Victor another into the mountains of Murcia. All these corps were now concentrating in a crushing movement upon the little kingdom in which the only British force was a detachment of 10,000 men left in Lisbon by Sir John Moore under Lieut.-General Sir John Cradock.\* Weak as this was—far too weak to take the field against the invaders—its presence, and the uncertainty how soon it might be reinforced, acted as a check upon Marshal Soult after he seized Oporto on 29th March. His hesitation to advance at once upon Lisbon probably saved Portugal from total subjugation, but he feared the open door which that port held to England.

Position in  
Portugal.

Early in March, General Beresford † was sent out to Lisbon, and, receiving the rank of marshal from the Portuguese Government, fixed his headquarters at Thomar and proceeded to remodel the Portuguese army. By the appointment of British officers and the establishment of British habits of discipline, he ultimately succeeded in transforming the disorderly levies into "an obedient, well-disciplined and gallant force." ‡

\* Afterwards Lord Howden.

† Afterwards Viscount Beresford, a natural son of the first Marquess Waterford.

‡ *Napier*, ii. 147. Beresford's discipline was pretty drastic, and his stringency in revising the pay list was regarded at first as impious. He found that the

Æt. 39. On 2nd April, 1809, Sir Arthur Wellesley was appointed to command a fresh expedition to Portugal, and, resigning his seat in Parliament and his office as Chief Secretary, embarked at Portsmouth on the 16th, arriving in Lisbon on the 22nd.

Sir A. Wellesley leads a fresh expedition to Portugal.

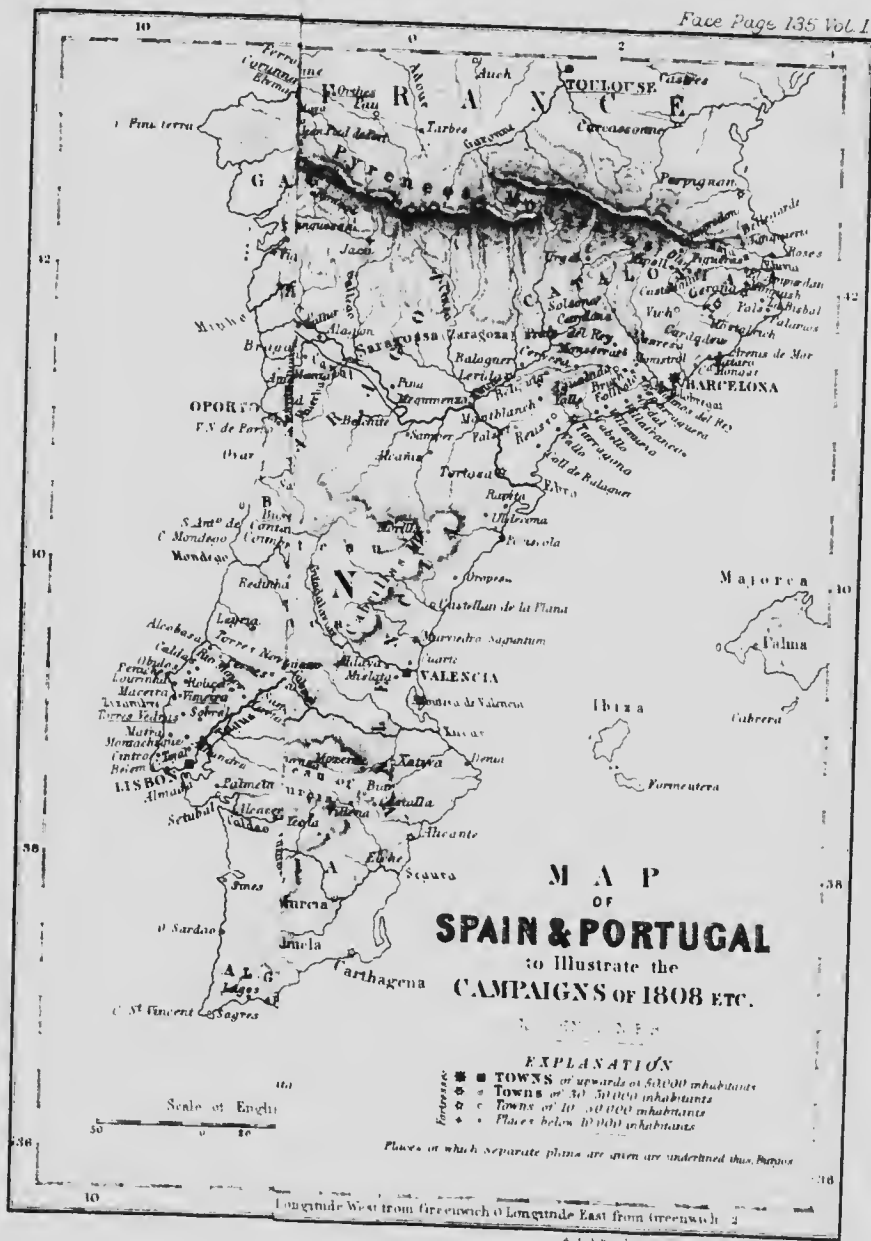
The difficulty which Castlereagh had to overcome in securing the appointment of Sir Arthur to this command is singularly illustrated by a passage in a subsequent letter to him from George III. (Oct. 3, 1809)—

“Lord Castlereagh must remember that the King was not disposed to question the correctness of the representations made by the late Sir John Moore, which subsequent experience has so fully confirmed. And, although he was induced to yield to the advice of his confidential servants, he never could look with satisfaction to the prospect of another British army being committed in Spain, under the possible recurrence of the same difficulties. It was this impression which prompted the King to acquiesce in the appointment of so young a Lieutenant-General as Lord Wellington, to the command of the troops in Portugal; as he hoped that this consideration would operate with others against any considerable augmentation of that army; though that augmentation has been gradually produced by events not then foreseen.”

The calm confidence with which Wellesley undertook his task was in striking contrast to the boding resignation of Moore, and was all the more encouraging to the Cabinet because Sir John Cradock, who succeeded to Moore's command, always kept in view and repeatedly referred to the contingency of evacuation, to which Wellesley only referred in his despatches when asked for an opinion about it.

By ancient constitutional usage, a General accepting a command in the field receives what is called a Letter of

name of its patron saint appeared in the list of officers in every regiment; that full pay was drawn for him and handed over to some religious house associated with his name. Needless to say that this solemn farce was put to a speedy end.







MAP  
OF  
**SPAIN & PORTUGAL**  
to illustrate the  
**CAMPAIGNS OF 1808 ETC.**

- EXPLANATION**
- TOWNS of upwards of 50,000 inhabitants
  - Towns of 30,000 inhabitants
  - Towns of 10,000-30,000 inhabitants
  - ◌ Places below 10,000 inhabitants

Places at which separate plans are given are underlined thus: Burgos



Service, which begins by informing him "that the King has ANN. 1809. been graciously pleased to appoint him to command a detachment of his army," and goes on to direct him "to carry into effect such instructions as he may receive from his Majesty's ministers." Wellesley's instructions, in the tenour of which Nature of instructions to the Commander of the Forces. may be heard the echo of his own opinions, prescribed the defence of Portugal as the cardinal object of the expedition.\* This fortified him in resisting the urgent desire of the Portuguese Regency that he should at once carry the war into Spain, with Cadiz and Gibraltar as bases, instead of the Tagus.

In sending out Wellesley to supersede Cradock in the presence of the enemy, the Horse Guards were re-enacting the policy which had caused so much confusion after the battle of Vimeiro. Wellesley, mindful of his own chagrin on that occasion, and determined not to be the instrument of discouragement to a brave officer, requested and obtained leave to exercise his own discretion, should he find on landing that Cradock was actively engaged.† It turned out, however, that, although Sir John had moved out as far as Leiria, preparatory to advancing against Oporto, the presence of Marshal Victor on the frontier of the Alemtejo threatened Lisbon and prevented a further advance. Wellesley, therefore, took over the chief command on 27th April, and Sir John proceeded to assume command of Gibraltar.

The position of the enemy at this time was as follows. Position of the French and Spanish armies. Zaragoza, after a gallant defence, had fallen, and was in possession of Marshal Junot; Mortier's corps was moving into Old Castile; Marshal Victor's corps, 30,000 strong, occupied the Guadiana, with headquarters at Merida and advanced posts as far forward as Los Santos; Sebastiani's corps was at Ciudad Real, holding Venegas in check; Marshal Ney held Galicia; a detachment of French was in possession of Salamanca; St. Cyr's corps was in Catalonia, and General Kellermann commanded the 6th Corps in Valladolid. Sout,

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 210.

† *Ibid.*, 221-226.

Ær. 39. with 24,000 men, lay at Oporto, which he had captured on 29th March, and his advanced post held Ovar.

Of the Spanish, General Cuesta, having been defeated at Medellín on 29th March, was getting together a fresh army at Monasterio in the Sierra Morena; General Venegas lay further to the east in the Sierra Morena with some 12,000 men; the Marquis de Romana had retired with his corps into the Asturias.\*

The Portuguese army had almost ceased to exist, but was being reorganised by Beresford at Thomars. Silveira had a force of Portuguese on the Tamega, Trant another on the Vouga, and there were always isolated bodies of *ordenanças* and insurgents more or less ready to act on French detachments and foraging parties.

The fortresses of Almeida, Ciudad Rodrigo, Elvas, Abrantes, Peniché, and Badajos were held for the Allies; while the presence of the British fleet off the coast ensured Wellesley's supplies.

The troops under command of Sir Arthur Wellesley on landing numbered 937 artillery, 1,870 cavalry, and 18,790 infantry—in all 21,597; while reinforcements were under orders to raise his strength to 30,000.

The British Cabinet shared the impatience of the public for something to be accomplished which should wipe out the recollection of Sir John Moore's misfortune; but ordinary readers of despatches or newspaper reports never can realise the position of a commander at the beginning of a campaign, especially in a foreign country. Their whole attention is fixed on the enemy, how he is to be attacked and defeated, and how his attacks are to be repelled. Of the pressing consideration

\* Such is the disposition of the Spanish forces described by Wellesley in his memorandum of the campaign of 1809, written on 9th December (*Despatches*, v. 336). It is, however, exceedingly difficult to follow the movements of the Spanish armies: new ones were constantly being formed and dispersed as often as they came in contact with the French. As Wellesley afterwards used to say, whenever the Spaniards had an army, they had no General; and if, by chance, they had a General, there were no troops for him to work with.



of base, communications and supply, they make little account, ANN. 1809. although these must occupy the General's thoughts and foresight to a far larger degree than the other. The failure of a single day's rations may paralyse the energy of the finest force that ever was under arms; and however much arms of precision, and the use of railways and telegraphs may have modified the conditions of modern war, the maintenance of communications remains the paramount consideration in all strategy. No commander ever paid stricter attention to this than Napoleon, and his marshals were trained to form magazines and protect communications with the utmost vigilance; yet in one respect Wellesley found himself at a great disadvantage in entering upon a campaign against them. His magazines had to be filled by material purchased and paid for; his transport was conducted by animals disembarked or hired: at no time did his force enjoy the superior mobility secured by the French armies by their system of forced contributions. Wellesley drew his stores of bread-stuff from England; the French Generals ate up all the corn in a district, and then moved somewhere else. The British system was the more laborious and costly, and threw vastly more labour and anxiety upon the Commander-in-chief; nevertheless, Wellesley, when he had once established the system, derived from it these advantages, that it made him independent of seasons, and rendered him exempt from the obligation to shift his ground owing to the failure of local resources.

In deciding whether to attack Soult or Victor, or either of them, Sir Arthur well understood the importance of initial success. The divided state of public opinion in England was reflected in the Cabinet. A reverse to British arms would infallibly turn into a majority that partly factious, partly conscientious minority in Parliament which protested that Napoleon was invincible by land; the expedition would be recalled, and the policy to which Wellesley had pledged his professional credit would be abandoned. Intelligence which reached him of serious disaffection among Soult's officers,

Ær. 39. added to the importance of recovering the harbour of Oporto and the fertile province of Douro, decided him in favour of a northward movement. Detaching a division of infantry under General Mackenzie, and a brigade of heavy cavalry under General Fane, to guard the passages of the Tagus against any attempt by Victor, and directing detachments from the garrisons of Elvas and Badajos to act as corps of observation in that quarter, he desired General Cuesta to follow Victor in any forward movement he might make while the British army was engaged on the Douro. Concentrating the remainder at Coimbra, he found at his own disposal on 5th May 25,000 of all arms, namely, 13,000 British, 3,000 Germans, and 9,000 Portuguese.

Wellesley  
advances  
against  
Soult.

Incident  
of Captain  
d'Argen-  
ton.

Here the French Adjutant-Major d'Argenton, a ringleader in the conspiracy against Soult,\* sought a secret interview with Sir Arthur, who directed that he should be brought before him in such a manner as would give him the least favourable idea of the numbers, condition, and quality of the allied troops.† The prudence of this precaution became manifest in the end. D'Argenton, on returning to Oporto, was denounced by General Lefebvre, whom he reckoned on as a fellow-conspirator. On being brought before Marshal Soult, the culprit was offered a free pardon if he would reveal the names of his accomplices, and describe what he had seen in the British camp. The first he stoutly refused to do; the second he did willingly enough, but, thanks to Sir Arthur's foresight, the information was worthless—worse, it was misleading.‡

\* Many of his officers suspected Soult of a design to seize the crown of Portugal.

† *Despatches*, iv. 289.

‡ It would be curious if this traitor d'Argenton was akin in blood to the Norman Sir Giles d'Argentin who rode, with Pembroke, at Edward II.'s rein at Bannockburn. When the King and Pembroke turned to fly, he preferred to die, and, shouting—"Argentin! Argentin!" charged into the thick of Edward de Brus's column, and so perished. The modern d'Argenton escaped during Soult's retreat from Oporto and galloped into the British lines. Wellesley

The defeat on 27th April of Silveira's Portuguese on the Tamega, and the seizure by the French of the bridge at Amarante, interfered with Wellesley's project of strengthening that officer in order to intercept the line of Soult's retreat. The French army at this time was extended in detachments over a front of nearly forty miles between the Vouga and the Tamega, the wings being at an angle to each other, separated by the Douro, their only means of communication being the bridge of boats at Oporto. Soult, fully aware of the weakness of such a disposition, especially as Lapisse, by drawing southward to connect with Victor, had caused a break in the communication, made preparations to secure his retreat into Leon. He ordered every boat to be collected and brought across to the north bank, and, having made arrangements for the destruction of the pontoon bridge, calculated that his enemy advancing from the south would have to cross the estuary in his ships—a slow process which would allow him to evacuate at leisure. This he intended to do on the 12th, but the French Marshal fatally underrated the resources and vigour of him with whom he had to deal. Perhaps his vigilance had been lulled by the incapacity of Spanish Generals—perhaps he had not studied the incidents of Indian warfare. Had he done so he might have placed less reliance on the Douro as a defence against him who once had forced the passage of the Kaitna in the face of 50,000 Marhattás.

ANN. 1809.  
—  
Soult prepares to retreat.

sent him to England, where he was well treated and pensioned; but having crossed to France in disguise to fetch his wife, he was recognised, taken, and shot (*de Ros MS.*).

The Duke of Wellington bore high testimony in after years to the general integrity of French officers. Speaking on the subject to Lord Mahon in 1836, he said, "During the many years I was opposite to them, I never knew one engage in treacherous correspondence with us or sell us information." When Mahon reminded him of d'Argenton: "That was quite different. It was a conspiracy, not with the enemy, but as against his own form of government. When he came to me I told him that I should not alter my plans for his. I said, 'I shall attack you on such a day if I find you still in Oporto'" (*Stanhope*, 94).

Æt. 40. On 6th May Sir Arthur detached Beresford with 9,000 men to move by Viseu to Lamego, about forty miles above Oporto. The officer who had been entrusted with the conduct to and fro of the traitor d'Argenton, had kept his eyes open, and had noticed that the lake of Ovar, an inlet from the sea reaching twenty miles behind the French right, was left unguarded. Wellesley was prompt to seize this advantage. On the evening of 9th May, when Beresford had been given time to secure the passage of the Upper Douro, General Hill's division embarked in fishing-boats on the lake, and landed at daybreak on its northern shore, thus turning the French right. On the same day, the 10th, Marshal Beresford encountered General Loison, and, driving him back to Amarante, turned the French; while Sir Arthur, advancing by Albergaria, forced General Franceschi out of that place, and rested there that night, with his advanced guard at Oliveira. Advancing again on the 11th, Wellesley attacked Franceschi at Grijo, where he had formed a junction with General Mernet. The French retired, crossed the Douro in the night, and destroyed the pontoons behind them.

Soult, unaware of Loison's reverse, sent him urgent orders to hold the Tamega at all hazards, and continued to send off his baggage and heavy artillery to Amarante. With the deep and rapid Douro rolling between him and the British, he felt secure from danger in that quarter, although greatly disquieted by d'Argenton's conspiracy which had been discovered to him on the 9th.

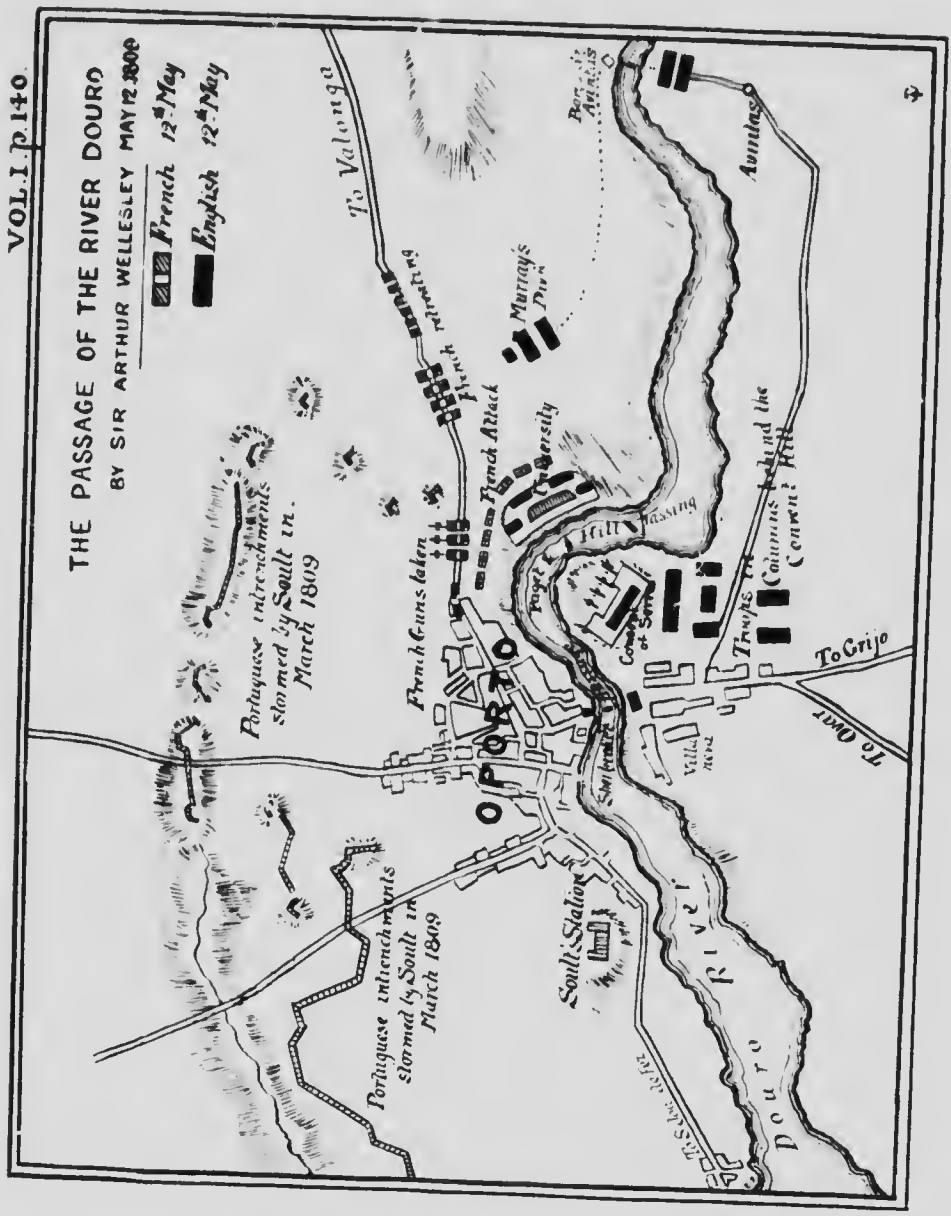
Passage of  
the Douro  
by the  
British.

On the morning of 12th May, Sir Arthur Wellesley, ascending to the convent on the height of Serra, surveyed the city of Oporto on the further bank, and beheld the road to Vallonga covered with horses, baggage, and troops leaving the gates.\* Had one of the French sentries, lounging on the

\* The Duke of Wellington used to speak of the advantage which the excellence of Dollond's field-glasses gave him over French Generals, who were supplied with very inferior instruments. He was always restless till he could ascend some eminence and examine the country round. J. W. Croker relates

THE PASSAGE OF THE RIVER DOURO  
BY SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY MAY 12, 1809

▨ French 12<sup>th</sup> May  
■ English 12<sup>th</sup> May





ramparts, raised his eyes to the eminence on the south of the river, he might have recognised the uniform of British staff officers; but he scarcely could have divined that behind that hill lay the centre of the British line. Even had he done so, their presence on the far side of that bridgeless, boatless flood would not have been considered a serious menace; all Soult's attention was directed towards the river mouth, where he thought it not unlikely the British would arrive in ships.

Immediately opposite his position on the convent hill Wellesley saw on the further bank a large unfinished building called the Seminary, commanding all the ground near, and enclosed on three sides with a high wall, the fourth side being open to the river. Here, if he could only find boats, was the place to effect a landing, for the Seminary was left unguarded, and the approach from the south to the river at this point was screened by the height of Serra. Wings or boats—one seemed as easy to command as the other, for Soult had caused all the boats to be drawn to his own shore, although, either because his orders were disobeyed by disaffected subordinates, or neglected in the bustle of retreat, that shore lay without a guard.

The greatest Generals sometimes owe much to the humblest instruments; on this occasion—for ever memorable in military history—the instrument was a certain barber of Oporto who had escaped from the town in the night and sculled himself across the river. Of this the prior of Amarante seems to have informed Colonel Waters,\* a staff officer, who discerned the golden opportunity; straightway this curious trio—the colonel, the prior, and the barber—were voyaging back to how, posting one day with the Duke along the north road, they amused themselves by guessing what sort of country lay behind each successive hill they approached. Croker remarked that the Duke's guesses were much more accurate than his own, on which he replied, "Why, all my life I have been trying to guess what lay on the other side of the hill!" And again: "All the business of war, and indeed all the business of life, is to endeavour to find out what you don't know by what you do" (*Croker*, iii. 275).

\* Afterwards Lieut.-General Sir John Waters, K.C.B.

ÆT. 40. the enemy's shore. Nobody was on the outlook; by ten o'clock they had towed three empty barges across, in one of which an officer and five-and-twenty men of the 3rd Buffs embarked, and were safely landed in the Seminary. A second barge-load followed, and a third; then—strange to say not till then—the alarm was given, the drums beat to arms, and in a few minutes French troops of all arms were swarming round the Seminary, under command of Soult himself. The rattle of musketry on both sides was followed by the roar of guns directed against the enclosure. General Paget, commanding the party, fell severely wounded, to be replaced by General Hill \*—Daddy Hill, as his devoted soldiers used to call him. While the Buffs were stiffly maintaining their lodgment, the barges plied merrily to and fro; soon the 48th, the 66th, a Portuguese battalion, and a battalion of detachments joined the first-comers—more than the enclosure would hold. Fourteen British guns on the south bank kept the left face of the Seminary clear of assailants, but ever Wellesley cast impatient glances up stream, whither early that morning he had sent Major-General John Murray † to seek for boats, and, if possible, to cross the river at Avintas. At last Murray's column appeared on the enemy's left flank, and, at the same moment, Lieut.-General Sherbrooke showed on the French left, having received the willing aid of the townspeople to carry his brigade of Guards over the ferry in the middle of the town. Upon this the French abandoned the attack on the Seminary and fled in disorder towards Amarante, pursued by two squadrons of light cavalry.‡ With the loss

Combat  
at the  
Seminary.

\* Afterwards Field Marshal Viscount Hill.

† Not to be confounded with Major-General George Murray, quartermaster-general. Sir John Murray was tried by court-martial in 1813 for his abandonment of Tarragona.

‡ Napier (vol. ii. pp. 286 and 300) blames Murray severely for not having fallen upon the disorderly crowd flying across his front. "It was an opportunity that would have tempted a blind man to strike: the neglect of it argued want of military talent and hardihood." Lord Roberts, also (*Rise of Wellington*, p. 74), observes that Murray "failed to attack the French flank in conformity





LT.-GENERAL ROWLAND HILL,  
AFTERWARDS FIELD-MARSHAL VISCOUNT HILL, G.C.B. *Vol. I, p. 112.*



of 23 men killed, 17 officers and 115 men wounded, Sir Arthur had recovered possession of the second city in Portugal, and captured 58 of the enemy's guns. At four o'clock he sat down to eat the dinner which had been cooked for Marshal Soult. A fairly spirited performance—this famous *coup-de-main*—for a commander whom the French historian, Thiers, has described as "calculated only for the stolid operations of defensive war."

ANN. 1809.  
—  
Capture  
of Oporto.

To reach the Douro before Soult escaped from Oporto Wellesley's troops had marched eighty miles in four days, far outstripping their baggage and supplies. On the afternoon of the 12th, part of the army still lay on the south side of the river; moreover, Sir Arthur was unaware that at the very time he had been engaged at Oporto, Beresford had been handling his Portuguese levies to such good purpose that Loison's outposts at Amarante had been driven in, and that the French were on the point of evacuating that important position without attempting to defend it. The British, therefore, remained in Oporto during the 13th, General Murray being detached with the German Legion to hang on the rear of the French.

Soult, finding that Loison had failed to hold the Tamega at Amarante, and that his passage to the east was barred by Beresford, was forced into the mountain passes to the north. Unable to carry with him his guns and ammunition, he destroyed them at Penafiel, abandoned his baggage, and, guided by a Spanish pedlar, led his shattered forces through the Sierra Catalina to Pombeira. His retreat was one of terrible

Sufferings  
of the  
retreating  
French.

with his instructions." Wellesley, however, seems to have been well content with Murray, for he mentioned him in despatches and thanked him in general orders for his "able movement which relieved the pressure on the British right at a critical moment." Again, in a private letter to the Duke of York, who was no longer Commander-in-chief, he says, "The movement of General Murray upon the flank was decisive of the whole position" (*Despatches*, iv. 305). Further, in writing to Murray on 10th September, Wellesley said, "I regret that you were not with us at Talavera; your presence would have been most useful" (*Ibid.*, v. 138).

Æt. 40 suffering. A storm of wind and rain began on the 13th and lasted several days; numbers of his stragglers and wounded were murdered by the country people. Six months had not run since he entered Portugal with 25,000 men in pursuit of Sir John Moore; of these not more than 19,500 mustered at Pombreira; of fifty-eight guns he had lost or destroyed every one.

The  
British  
advance.

On 14th May Wellesley moved forward in two columns upon Braga; on the 16th he touched Soult's rear-guard at Salamonde; but the enemy travelled light without guns or baggage, and on the 18th Wellesley turned southward, having information that Lاپisse had driven the Portuguese garrison out of Alcantara, and crossed the Tagus. Arriving at Coimbra on the 26th, he found that Lاپisse had withdrawn once more into Estremadura, and the British moved by easy marches to Abrantes, where they arrived in the second week in June. Their condition at this time was far short of satisfactory. The weather continued very inclement and wet; the shoes of the infantry had worn off their feet; meat was plentiful, but bread was scarcely to be had; no money had arrived, pay was heavily in arrear, and insubordination began to show itself among the troops. Their General had nothing but praise for the conduct of his soldiers in action: "I cannot say too much in favour of the officers and troops,"\* he had written to Castlereagh after the capture of Oporto; but a few days later he was complaining bitterly to the same minister of their behaviour:--

"The army behave terribly ill. They are a rabble who cannot bear success any more than Sir John Moore's army could bear failure. I am endeavouring to tame them; but if I should not succeed, I must make an official complaint of them, and send one or two corps home in disgrace. They plunder in all directions."†

General orders were frequent on the subject of straggling and plundering. To check these practices Sir Arthur ordered

\* *Despatches*, iv. 300.

† *Ibid.*, iv. 352.

that an officer of each company should visit his men in their quarters four times a day, commanded the roll to be called in each regiment once an hour, or caused the men to be kept under arms from sunrise to sunset. ANN. 1809.

"The people of Portugal deserve well of the army; they have in every instance treated the soldiers well; and there never was an army so well supplied, or which had so little excuse for plunder, if any excuse can in any case exist. But if the Commander of the Forces should not by these and other measures be enabled to get the better of these practices, he is determined to report to his Majesty, and send into garrison those corps who shall continue them; as he prefers a small, but disciplined and well ordered, body of troops to a rabble, however numerous; and he is resolved not to be the instrument of inflicting upon the people of this country the miseries which result from the operations of such a body."

Sir Arthur Wellesley's real difficulties began when he attempted to combine operations with Cuesta. The Spanish Commander-in-chief by the beginning of June had not less than 38,000 men, including 7,000 cavalry. When Victor had withdrawn from Estremadura, Cuesta had occupied Merida, and Vanegas had increased his force in the province of Toledo to 18,000. The Marquis of Romana, whom Napoleon had been careful in his early dealings with Charles IV. to get away from Spain with the best troops in the army, and canton them in Holstein, was back in Galicia with 15,000 men. The moment seemed favourable to a combined movement upon Spanish territory, but every suggestion of Wellesley's was objected to by Cuesta, who had impracticable ideas of his own. Other circumstances, however, rendered the British army immovable at Abrantes. No money had arrived, and horses were deficient. On 11th June the troops were nearly two months in arrear of pay, and half the cavalry were dismounted. "When horses," Wellesley wrote to Castlereagh, "as well as men, are new in

Difficulty  
with the  
Spanish  
general-  
lissimo.

Æt. 40. war, I believe that they are generally the sacrifice of their mutual inexperience."

The  
British  
advance  
resumed.

Forces  
opposed  
to the  
advance of  
the Allies.

On 27th June, money having at last come to hand and reinforcements having been reported in the offing, the British army broke up from Abrantes, Sir Arthur having fallen in with Cuesta's plan for an advance on Madrid by the valley of the Tagus. General Vanegas, reinforced to 25,000 strong, was directed to co-operate by moving north to Arganda by 22nd July, the day appointed for the arrival of the allied forces at Talavera. Napoleon was deeply engaged at this time in the war with Austria; nevertheless he kept a watchful eye on affairs in the Peninsula, for on 12th June he wrote from Schönbrunn to Marshal Soult, who had reorganised his corps far sooner than Wellesley was aware or had believed possible, directing him to concentrate the 2nd, 5th, and 6th Corps, and, passing the mountains, to fall on Wellesley's flank and rear as he moved up the Tagus, and destroy him. These three corps contained 48,662 effective infantry and artillery, and 5,203 cavalry; the 1st and 4th Corps, General Desolle's division and the King's French Guards, amounting to 49,235 foot and 8,900 horse, covered Madrid under command of King Joseph. In Aragon was the 3rd Corps under General Suchet—15,226 foot and 2,604 horse; in Catalonia Marshal Augerau had the 7th Corps—30,000 infantry and 2,500 cavalry. Add to these 5,200 infantry and 2,200 cavalry on independent detachments, and the total effective force in front of the Allies, not including sick, stragglers, garrisons, and lines of correspondence, consisted of 144,706 infantry and 29,207 cavalry.\* Against this formidable host the allied Generals had decided to advance with 23,000 British and 56,000 Spanish troops, Marshal Beresford's Portuguese having been detached to guard the north frontier of Portugal. When Wellesley, however, decided to expose his left flank by marching up the Tagus to join Cuesta at Plasencia, he reckoned on Soult's beaten army being behind the mountains

\* Figures supplied to Sir W. Napier by Marshal Soult.

to the north, and relied for protection against it upon Beresford and the Duque del Parque, who had 20,000 Portuguese between them. He was not aware that the 6th Corps lay at Astorga under Marshal Ney, nor that the 5th Corps was at Valladolid. ANN. 1809.

## APPENDIX A.

*The Marquis Romana.*

The Duke of Wellington gave the following interesting account of the escape from Denmark of the Marquis Romana, for whom he always entertained a very kindly feeling:—

“The French had taken good care as soon as they were masters of the Government in Spain, to march off the best of the troops under the Marquis of Romana, and canton them in Holstein. It was a great object, of course, to recover this army from them after the Spaniards had thrown off their yoke, and, Admiral — having been duly warned to give his prompt assistance for their escape, when called upon, a plot was laid accordingly. There was a certain Scotch priest named Robertson, whom I had found very useful to me while Secretary in Ireland for procuring intelligence, and this man appeared to me so well fitted by his discretion and courage for such an enterprise, that I recommended the Government to employ him to communicate with Romana, which accordingly he undertook. Great difficulties were, however, to be expected. Robertson was quite unknown personally to Romana, and to carry any written credentials would have been far too great a risk, because the French had organised a most severe system of police towards strangers in the north of Germany, and had besides surrounded Romana with spies and observers, who necessarily watched all his proceedings. After much discussion upon this matter, a method was at length discovered for enabling Robertson to convince Romana that he was charged with a political mission to him, without its being necessary for him to incur the danger of carrying written credentials. It

Æt. 40. — occurred to the recollection of Mr. Frere, our Minister to Spain, that in former days of intimacy with Romana at Madrid, he being a great admirer of Spanish poetry, for which Romana had also a passion, they used sometimes to write verses to each other in a sort of literary correspondence.

“ Mr. Frere perfectly recollected one favourite composition in this way to which each had contributed his share, and felt sure that Romana would also have retained it equally well in his memory. He immediately committed this piece of poetry to paper, and made Robertson learn it accurately by heart. He also was made to learn by heart the whole of his instructions, with the order for Romana to return to Spain, and the directions for communicating with the English Admiral who was to bring away the Spanish troops under his command.

“ Being perfect in his lesson, Robertson was privately landed on the Continent, and made his way without much difficulty to Romana's quarters in Holstein; but here he found himself absolutely at a loss how to obtain an interview private enough to enable him with any safety to open upon his business. He at length contrived to get some very fine chocolate, for which he knew the fondness of all Spaniards. Introducing himself gradually among Romana's servants and staff as a vendor of this article, so that he had frequent access to his house, before many days he had the luck to meet Romana alone in a corridor of the hotel. He instantly made up to him, and in a low voice repeated the verses he had learned. The General could not at first conceive what the stranger meant, but presently perceiving by his manner that there was more in it than appeared, and recollecting at the same time the circumstances connected with the verses he repeated, he hastily dismissed him with an appointment for next day in a more safe and private place. At this appointment Robertson laid open his mission, which Romana received with joy; and, so well did Robertson contrive his communications for him with the British Admiral, within a very short time the Spanish army suddenly broke up from their quarters with such secrecy and good order that they all got on board the fleet without losing a man. Robertson received the fair reward of his courage and discretion, and was well provided for by the British Government.



As for Romana, he was an excellent, honourable man, but had no ANN. 1809. military skill" (*de Ros MS.*).

"Romana," the Duke told Lord Mahon, "was a good-natured, excellent man, most easy to live with, and very clever, too—knew all about the literature and poetry of his country more than any Spaniard I ever knew, but he knew nothing of troops at all. I never in my whole life saw a man who had acted with troops at all understand so little about them. I liked him very much—he died in my arms—at least I was in the room at the time; but as to his generalship——!"\*

\* *Stanhope*, 10, 23.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE CAMPAIGN OF TALAVERA—(continued).

1809.

1809. The expeditions to Walcheren and Southern Italy.		Steadiness of the 48th Regiment.
Lavish expenditure on the war by the British Government.		Retreat of the French.
June 27 . . . . The British army advances from Abrantes.	July 29 . . . .	Forced march of the Light Brigade.
Difficulties of the British.	August 1 . . . .	Dangerous situation of the Allies.
July 27 . . . . Narrow escape of the Commander of the Forces.	.. 3 . . . .	The British and Spanish armies separate.
.. 27, 28 . . . . Battle of Talavera. King Joseph holds a council of war.	.. 4 . . . .	Wellesley crosses the Tagus, and commences his retreat.
The Marshals disagree.	.. 11 . . . .	Defeat of Wilson at Puerto de Baños, and of Venegas by Sebastiani.
Renewal of the combat.	September . . . .	The British go into cantonments at Badajos.
Fine charge of 23rd Light Dragoons.	.. 4 . . . .	Sir Arthur Wellesley receives a peirage.
Impetuosity of the Guards.		<i>Appendix B.</i> "The conduct of the Spanish armies."

**K**ING GEORGE'S Cabinet abated none of the ardour with which they had embarked on the mortal struggle with Napoleon. When one reflects on the avidity shown by most ministries for popular applause, when one considers how sensitive they usually are to public displeasure or the

murmurs of their own followers, one can only admire the ANN. 1809. constancy with which the Duke of Portland's colleagues, when once Canning and Castlereagh had persuaded them to adopt the great project bequeathed by Pitt to his countrymen, adhered to it, in spite of vehement and unscrupulous opposition. They had been slow and hesitating at first—

"Beware  
Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,  
Bear 't that the opposed may beware of thee;"

ner were they all of one mind about the best means of exerting their power. The Convention of Cintra had left a root of bitterness between the heads of the Foreign Office and the War Office—Canning and Castlereagh. The first was for concentrating the whole military force of the nation upon the Peninsula; \* the other was for creating diversions at other extremities of the French empire.

Castlereagh had his way. The most powerful expedition that had ever left the shores of England—40,000 troops and a magnificent fleet with as many seamen and marines—was despatched to attack Antwerp; and, simultaneously, a force of 12,000 British were withdrawn from Sicily and landed in Southern Italy, which Napoleon had stripped of troops in order to operate on the Austrian frontier. Liberal expenditure by Britain on the war.

The Italian expedition was no worse than fruitless; the invasion of Holland proved a lamentable, disastrous failure.

Historians, in wearisome iteration, with the irresponsible sagacity born of elbow-chair retrospect or the contracted view of professional prepossession, have denounced the policy and the measures which proved so fatally void of fulfilment. They have ransacked their vocabulary to find terms forcible enough to describe the "direful, ministerial incapacity," the "military foolery," the "glaring proofs of improvidence," † which wasted men and money which might have been applied to better purpose. The Sicilian contingent certainly might have been used in the south of Spain to better effect than

\* Stapleton, 172.

† Napier, ii. 351, et passim.

Æt. 40. in Italy; but the invasion of Holland was well designed to embarrass Napoleon in his war with Austria. Castlereagh erred, not in his conception, but in his choice of a General. They were not all embryo Wellingtons, in those days, who wore cocked hats; and, as the result proved, the lustre of Lord Chatham's historic name was sadly tarnished by the incapacity he displayed in the inglorious but deadly inaction of Walcheren.

The ex-  
peditions  
to Wal-  
cheren and  
Southern  
Italy.

All Castlereagh's critics have assumed that, at the time Lord Chatham's army sailed for Antwerp, Wellesley was in dire straits for reinforcements. He was nothing of the kind. Of money, indeed, he stood badly in need at times, but not because of the parsimony of Parliament; of that vice, at least, the British Government must be freely acquitted. Besides maintaining her own forces by sea and land, Great Britain, in accordance with Wellesley's repeated advice, was heavily subsidising the Juntas, besides supplying them with arms, stores, and clothing to the value of many millions sterling. Remittances to the army in Portugal were inconveniently unpunctual, but they always were sufficient in the end to defray all liabilities.

As for troops—God knows there were enough troops in the Peninsula, aided by a population hostile to the French, to have cleared the country of invaders in a single season. Had the quality of Spanish troops proved anything in proportion to their quantity, Wellesley would have had no weakness to fear in point of numbers. His own opinion on this subject seems to have been overlooked hitherto; yet, seeing how largely the Peninsula expedition was the outcome of his advice to ministers, that opinion is not unworthy of consideration.

*To Viscount Castlereagh.*

“Merida, 25th August, 1809.

“It may be satisfactory to you to know that I do not think matters would have been much better if you had sent your large expedition to Spain instead of to the Scheldt. You could not

have equipped it in Galicia or anywhere in the north of Spain. ANN. 1809.  
If we had had 60,000 men instead of 20,000, in all probability we should not have got to Talavera to fight the battle, for want of means and provisions. . . . Besides, you will observe that your 40,000 men, supposing them to be equipped and means to exist of feeding them, would not compensate for the deficiency of numbers, of composition and of efficiency in the Spanish armies; and that if they had been able to remove the French from Madrid, they could not have removed them from the Peninsula, even in the existing state of the French force." \*

It is true that in 1810, when Wellington was driving Masséna before him, he did feel the want of more reinforcements than could be sent to him, and it is natural that Sir William Napier, from an exclusively military standpoint, should have employed harsh terms against a Government to which, in party politics, he was bitterly opposed because it could not produce these reinforcements exactly at the right moment. But it is inexcusable in historians who have, or ought to have, a clear view of the difficulties surrounding ministers, to repeat in servile monotony these charges of weakness and apathy against men whose resolute courage sustained them under the invective of the Opposition and the distrust of many of the people. Blunders! of course they blundered; so did Wellington in some of his combinations; but nobody recognised more cordially than he the support he received from the British Cabinet.

"I have always," he wrote to Lord Mahon in 1836, "in public as well as in private, declared my obligations to the Government for the encouragement and support they gave me, and the confidence with which they treated me. . . . There was a formidable

\* Many years later the Duke of Wellington told C. Greville that he considered the Walcheren expedition well planned as a diversion, but wretchedly executed (*Greville*, part i. vol. iii. 271). Ministers did their part, but Castlereagh erred in his choice of a General. Lord Chatham was the only member of the Government who was dissatisfied that Sir Arthur was not brought to a trial (*Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 402).

ÆT. 40. Opposition in Parliament, which opposed itself particularly to the war in the Peninsula. . . . I was not *the* Government, as the Duke of Marlborough was. . . . It would not be fair to compare the conduct of the Government of the Regency in the war which I conducted with the conduct of the Government in the reign of Queen Anne. I cannot and never have complained of them; and I should not like to say [he had been quoted as having said so] that I 'supported the Government more than they supported me.' In one sense it is true. It is quite certain that my opinion alone was the cause of the continuance of war in the Peninsula. My letters show that I encouraged, nay forced the Government to persevere in it. The successes of the operations of the army supported them in power; but it is not true that they did not, in every way in their power—as individuals—as ministers—and as a Government—support me." \*

Frank testimony like that ought to silence the stupid clamour against the Portland and Perceval administrations for the conduct of their heroic enterprise.†

Still, it may be urged, reinforcements did *not* arrive when they were most needed in 1810. Let Lord Liverpool, who succeeded Castlereagh at the War Office in that year, speak in his own defence.

*The Earl of Liverpool to Viscount Wellington.*

"2nd August, 1810.

" . . . Now with respect to reinforcements to your army, I am under the painful necessity of informing you that the effects of the fever contracted by our army last year at Walcheren are still of that nature that, by a late inspection, we have not at this time a single battalion of infantry in Great Britain and Ireland reported fit for service in the field, with the exception of the infantry of the Duke of Brunswick's corps. This circumstance is rendered the more distressing from the situation in Ireland, which is more

\* *Stanhope*, p. 82.

† Napier reserves his harshest invective for Perceval: the Duke of Wellington told Greville that he always thought Napier unfair to that minister (*Greville*, part i. vol. iii. 271).

alarming, as far as respects internal discontent, than I have ever ANN. 1809.  
 yet recollected it; and not a mail arrives from thence which does  
 not bring requisitions from the Duke of Richmond and Pole for  
 reinforcements of troops. Notwithstanding these difficulties we  
 are, however, determined to send you the infantry of the Duke  
 of Brunswick's corps, which are at present in Ireland, as soon as  
 they can be relieved by regiments from hence. There are actually  
 on passage, or embarked, about 1,300 men as drafts for the regi-  
 ments now in Portugal; and there can be no doubt that by this  
 time the 7th Regiment from Halifax, consisting of 920 men, is  
 arrived at Lisbon." \*

A few months later, 21st March, 1811, Wellington wrote to ask Lord Liverpool whether he wished regiments sent back to England in consequence of the enemy's retreat, † to which Lord Liverpool replied by asking Wellington's opinion about what was required for future operations. ‡

This is somewhat of anticipation, but not immaterial to the right understanding of Wellesley's position in the Peninsula in 1809. Returning to the summer of that year:—on  
 27th June Wellesley marched from Abrantes with 21,000 Advance of the British army into Spain.  
 men, having intelligence that 8,000 more lay off the Rock of Lisbon. § Moving by the north bank of the Tagus, the army reassembled at Plasencia on 10th July, by which time General Cuesta had crossed the Tagus at Almaraz, and Marshal Victor, in obedience to King Joseph's orders, had fallen back to Talavera, distant from Plasencia about sixty — from

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 568.

† *Despatches*, vii. 375.

‡ *Suppl. Despatches*, vii. 104.

§ Thus Napier (ii. 356): but on 30th June Wellesley wrote from Castello Branco to Castlereagh: "Nothing is more fallacious than a return such as you have sent me. It contains an enumeration of no less than eleven battalions not arrived, of two gone to Gibraltar, and of two (the detachments) ordered home, and of the 20th Light Dragoons, ordered and gone by this time to Sicily; and it omits, on the other hand, two battalions, the 48th and 61st, gone to Gibraltar. . . . According to your account I have 35,000 men; according to my own I have 18,000, and the public will not be satisfied either with you or me, if I do not effect all that 35,000 men are expected to do" (*Despatches*, iv. 449).

**Æt. 40.** Almaraz about forty—miles. At the same time Joseph, nervous for the safety of Madrid, took away one of Victor's divisions of infantry and his light cavalry, and deprived him of the support of the 5th Corps, by ordering it to Avila instead of Salamanca, whither Napoleon had directed it to proceed. Victor was thus left exposed with no more than 14,000 men; while Cuesta, with 38,000, advanced to Oropesa, within a day's march of his flank. Victor's safety, however, was found in Cuesta's ignorance; for, on a demonstration by the enemy's cavalry, the Spanish army withdrew to Almaraz without striking a blow.\*

Although Sir Arthur Wellesley had been appointed generalissimo of the Portuguese army, he had no authority over the forces of Spain, and Cuesta's assent to a plan of campaign had to be obtained. This was done on 11th July, when Cuesta agreed to order General Venegas, before whom Sebastiani was retiring, to move from the south with 18,000 men by Ocaña to Arganda near Madrid, while the allied forces advanced to Talavera. Marshal Beresford was to act in the neighbourhood of Salamanca with his 15,000 Portuguese, while Sir Robert Wilson, with the Lusitanian Legion, observed the line of Victor's retreat from the neighbourhood of Escalona. Of this programme, as will be seen, Venegas failed to perform the important part allotted to him.

Difficulties  
of the  
British.

Meanwhile, the difficulties of the British force had become exceedingly serious. As long as they were on Portuguese territory, transport and provisions were forthcoming readily enough, and the inhabitants were friendly and helpful. But the Portuguese drivers would not leave their own country, and in Spain, despite the profuse assurances of the Juntas, not only did the alcaldes fail to fulfil contracts for provisions, but neither horses, mules, nor carts were forthcoming, although all services were to be liberally paid for. On 16th July, therefore, Sir Arthur wrote to the Spanish Quartermaster-General O'Donaju, announcing his resolution to undertake

\* Napier, ii. 359.



no further operations in Spain after the work immediately ANN. 1809. in hand should have been completed—namely, the defeat of Marshal Victor.\* As Sir Arthur afterwards explained, he felt that he ought probably to have determined to suspend all operations till the army should be supplied with the means it required; but loyalty to Cuesta, and anxiety not to compromise Venegas, induced him to persevere beyond the limits of prudence.

By 21st July, when the Allies lay between Oropesa and Velada, Victor had been reinforced to the strength of 25,000, and lay on the river Alberche with outposts in Talavera-de-la-Reyna. On the 22nd Cuesta touched the enemy's rear-guard at Gamonal, which afforded Sir Arthur his first experience of the quality of his ally. Two thousand French cavalry sufficed to arrest the advance of 15,000 Spanish infantry, with artillery and 3,000 cavalry, while the French main body took up a strong position on rising ground beyond the Alberche. That afternoon some British officers crossed the Tagus, and from the mountains on the south bank, took accurate note of the disposition and strength of the enemy. Wellesley desired to attack next morning (23rd), and his troops were under arms at 3 a.m., but the Spaniards were not afoot till seven, when Cuesta declined to do anything that day.† Later, however, when the French were withdrawing their guns and appeared about to move, he consented to go

\* *Despatches*, iv. 486, 499, 500, et passim. Victor was distinguished by a round and very red face, which earned for him from the army the nickname of *Beau Soleil*. When Napoleon created him Duc de Bellune, the wags approved, saying, "D'un beau soleil l'empereur a fait une belle lune."

† Not because it was Sunday. In 1833 the Duke told Lord Mahon that this story, told by Brialmont and Napier, and repeated by almost every English writer who has described the battle of Talavera, was not true. "Cuesta," said Wellington, "made many other foolish excuses, but that was not one of them." He went on to say that Cuesta "did not want courage nor sense either, but was an obstinate old man and had no military genius—none of them have. If he would have fought when I wanted him at Talavera, I have no hesitation in saying it would have been as great a battle as Waterloo, and would have cleared Spain of the French for that time" (*Stanhope*, pp. 46, 47).

Æt. 40. with Sir Arthur to examine the enemy's position. A strange group they must have made—the British General mounted—his aged ally in a *coche de vrollera* drawn by six horses! \* There intercourse was rendered unsatisfactory by General Cuesta's patriotic objection to speak French, while Wellington, though he understood it, could not converse in Spanish. †

Cuesta, after his survey, agreed to attack early next morning; but this intention, like every other project of the Allies at this time, was promptly disclosed to the enemy, who withdrew in the night to Torrijos, being uneasy about the movements of Sir Robert Wilson's legion on his rear.

Every day thus gained to the French by Victor's skilful movements, by Cuesta's inveterate slowness, and by Wellesley's deficiency in transport, was of enormous moment—had Sir Arthur known what was brewing he must have retraced his steps to Portugal without delay. He was not aware that Soult had received orders from King Joseph to advance from Salamanca on 24th July with the 2nd, 5th, and 6th Corps, so as to arrive at Plasencia on the 29th, thus cutting off the British from their base, while troops were being hurried up from Madrid to support Victor. Neither did he know that the Supreme Junta, who disliked Cuesta, had countermanded Venegas's advance from the south. What Wellesley did know was that 250,000 rations contracted for with the *alcaldes* of Plasencia and other villages had not been delivered, that his troops were already on half rations, that the sum of profuse apologies and flowery promises spelled something perilously like starvation. Accordingly, he informed Cuesta that, until supplies were forthcoming, the British could undertake no active operations.

As soon as he heard this, Cuesta, whom no persuasion could stir from his camp on Sunday, was all impetuosity on

\* The Duke told Mahon that Cuesta always moved in a coach and six, except when actually engaged with the enemy, when he mounted a horse. Places where his coach could not go he simply left unviewed (*Stanhope*, p. 46).

† *Despatches*, iv. 478.

Tuesday, and moved out against the enemy. Wellesley, to ANN. 1809. keep his communication, threw two infantry divisions and a brigade of cavalry, under General Sherbrooke, across the Alberche. The Spaniards, however, did not go far. Pursuit of Napoleon's Marshals was a venture at no time other than hazardous. The French cavalry attacked Zaya's division, which retired in confusion; and although a general panic was averted by an effective charge of Albuquerque's horse, and by the steadiness of Sherbrooke's brigades, the Spaniards lost about 4,000 men.

Wellesley now besought Cuesta to resume his position about Talavera. The Spaniard was obdurate, but when Sir Arthur, who knew the disadvantages of the position his Allies had taken up, ordered Sherbrooke to retire, and the French cavalry began to show at the same time, Cuesta sullenly consented, declaring to his staff that "he had made the Englishman go on his knees for it," and surrendered the chief command to Wellesley.

The very existence of the allied forces was now at stake. The Supreme Junta had forbidden Venegas to comply with his superior's orders to advance to Arganda.\* King Joseph, therefore, was able to concentrate his whole forces against Wellesley and Cuesta, and need only have waited for Soult to have appeared on their rear to ensure their destruction. He must have been in some degree, at least, aware of the increasing scarcity in the British lines, and that every day's delay impaired the strength of the *Rubios*; † yet he was overruled by the impatience of Marshal Victor, and advanced against the allied position on the 27th July.

Wellesley, having assumed supreme command, placed the Battle of Spanish army in two lines, its right resting in front of Talavera

\* The Duke of Wellington refused to confirm and, apparently, did not believe, the stories current about Cuesta's treachery; nor did he remember the incident related with so much detail by Napier (ii. 395).—*Stanhope*, p. 11.

† The name given by the Spaniards to their allies, because of the red uniform; scarcely complimentary, however, inasmuch as Rubio is also a synonym for Judas Iscariot.

ÆT. 40. the town of Talavera, which stood along the right bank of the Tagus. The ground in front of the Spanish position was covered with olive trees, and much broken with banks and ditches. All the approaches to the town were defended by batteries, and the Spanish left rested on an eminence, where a redoubt was in process of construction, forming a point of appui for both armies. Beyond that, to the left, where the ground was of an open character, extended the British line, covered by a ravine in front—General Campbell's division first, supported by General Cotton's \* cavalry brigade; General Sherbrooke's stood next, including the brigade of Guards; then came the German Legion, and, on the extreme left, General Hill's division, in echelon of brigades, occupying a round height, which formed the key of the whole position. Beyond this hill to the left again, between it and the mountains, was a level plain intersected here and there by ravines, where some cavalry were stationed. General Mackenzie's division, with a brigade of cavalry, occupied an advance post in a wood on the bank of the Alberche. Altogether there were in line of battle 20,641 British (reckoning the German Legion as British),† 34,000 Spanish, and 100 guns, extended on a front of two miles. The French had 80 guns and about 50,000 men.

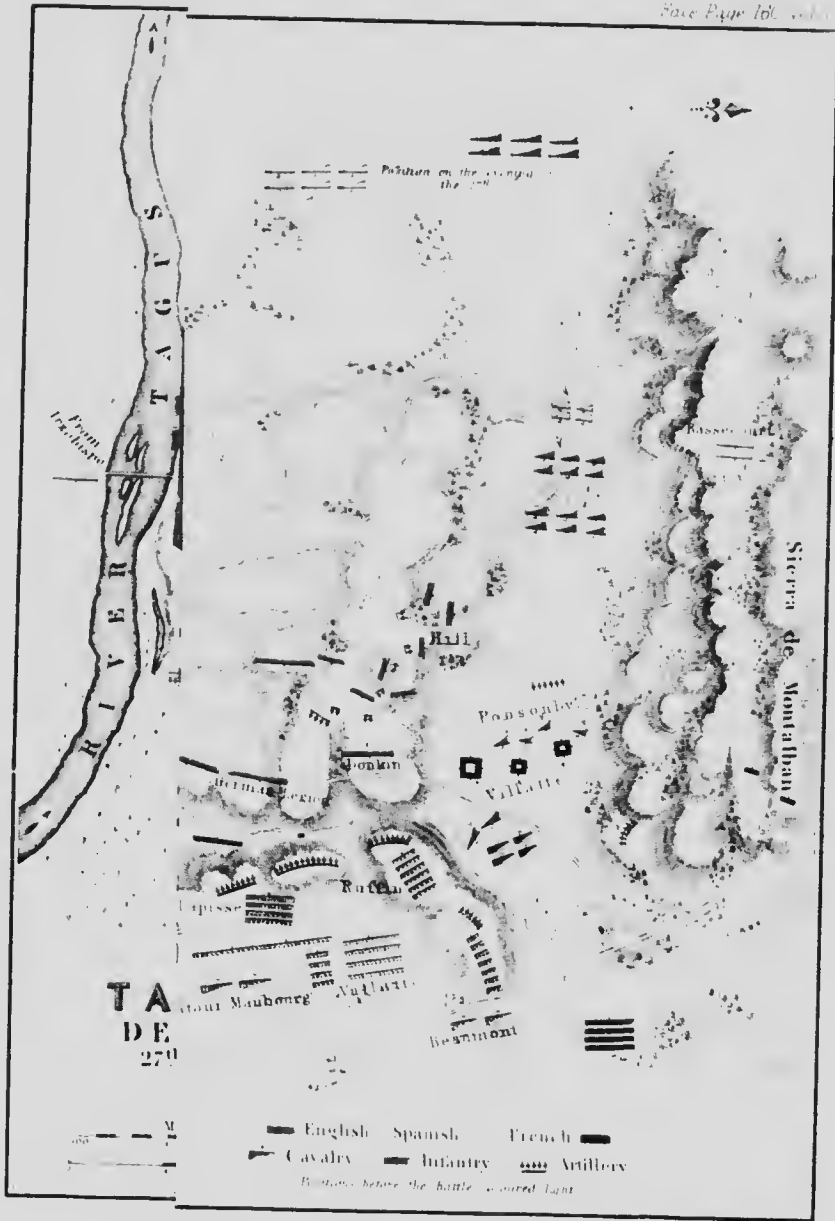
Narrow  
escape of  
the Com-  
mander of  
the Forces.

On the afternoon of the 27th Wellesley rode out to Mackenzie's advanced post, intending to withdraw that division and place it as a second line behind Sherbrooke's. Mackenzie had no patrols out to the front, a neglect which nearly led to the capture of Sir Arthur himself. From the roof of the ruinous Casa de Salinas, where a picket was posted, he was watching the enemy, who was showing in strength on the further side of the Alberche, when the house was suddenly surrounded by a cloud of *tirailleurs*, and Sir Arthur had barely time to mount and make good his escape.‡

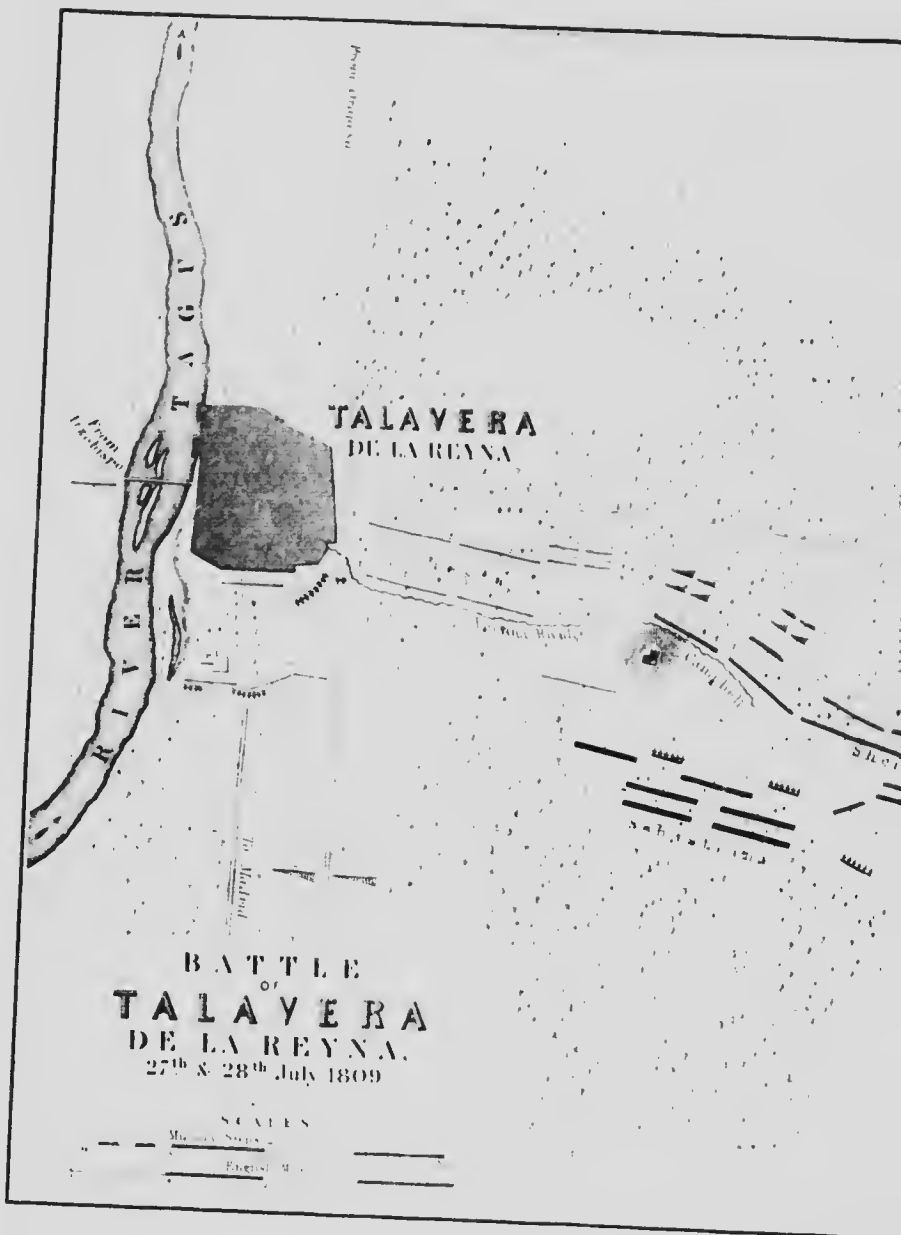
\* Afterwards Field Marshal Viscount Combermere.

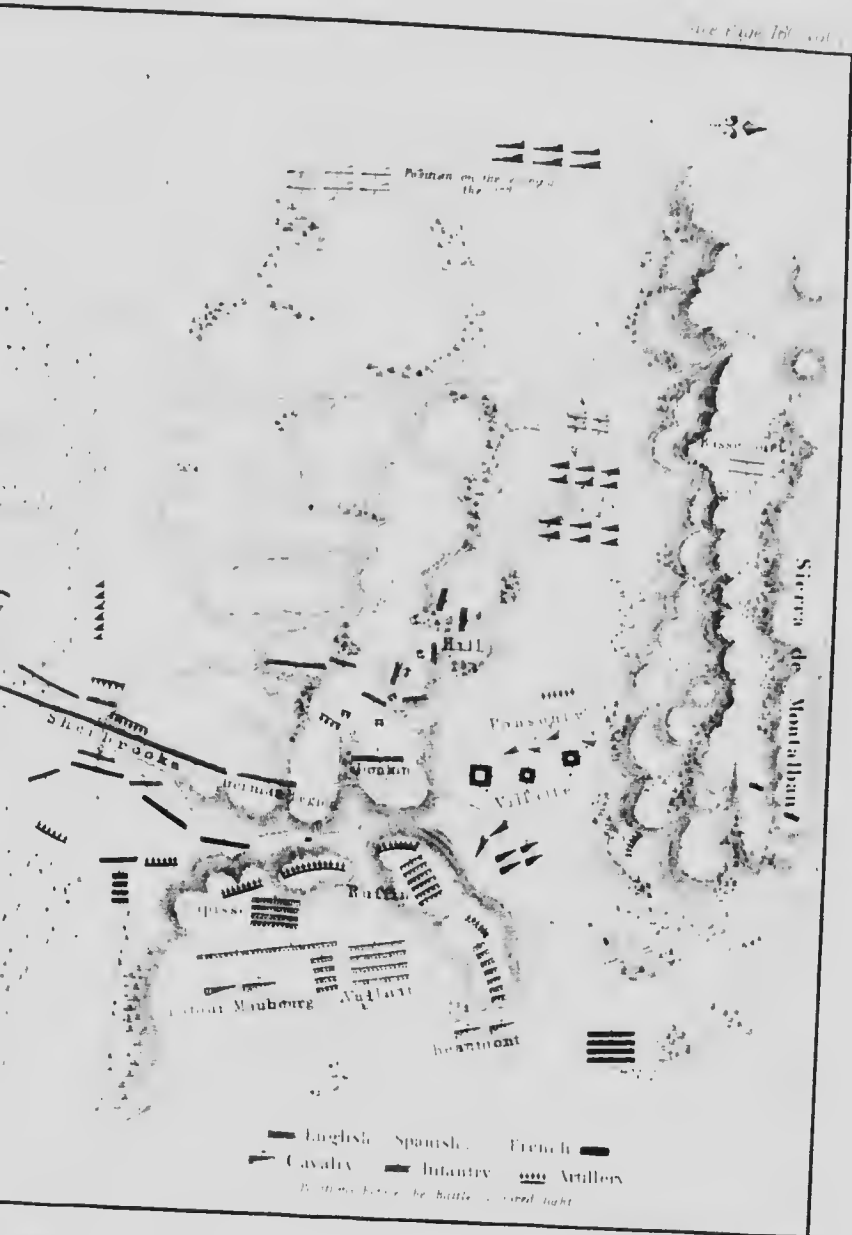
† *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 481.

‡ He told C. Greville that, if he had not been young and active, he must have been taken, for he had to leap from the ruins (*Greville*, part ii. vol. i. 41).



ONDON.









The French columns of Lapisse and Ruffin now crossed the ANN. 1809. Alberche; the 2nd battalion of H.M. 31st, and the 2nd battalion of H.M. 87th, chiefly young recruits and militiamen, fell into confusion under their attack, and sustained severe loss, partly, it is stated, from each other's fire. But the 45th, that "stubborn old regiment," as Napier calls it, and the 5th battalion 60th Rifles, remained in admirable order, and the division, Wellesley with them, fell back slowly towards the British left, and took their place in the general line, having lost about 400 men. The French continued to advance, sending forward light cavalry under Milhaud to reconnoitre the position of the Spaniards. At their approach Cuesta's men gave way to panic, the artillerymen deserting their guns, and 10,000 infantry, flying along the road to Oropesa, spread the report that the Allies were totally defeated.\* Cuesta exerted himself with his cavalry to stop the flight of his infantry, but 6,000 men left the field never to return; and the battery in the central redoubt, instead of playing on the French cavalry, was silent for want of gunners.

Wellesley's prudence in placing the Spaniards where their front was protected by olive-yards was now apparent. Repulse of Ruffin's attack. Victor, choosing the more favourable ground, sent Ruffin's division, supported by Villatte's, to attack that part of the British line where Donkin's brigade, coming in from the front with Mackenzie's divisions, had filled the interval between the German Legion and General Hill. Lapisse at the same time flung himself on the Germans. The shade of a summer night was closing on the scene. Ruffin's attack failed through some of his battalions losing their way in a ravine which ran before the British position, and were repulsed after some sharp bayonet practice, on perceiving which Lapisse also drew off in the dark.

After a night broken by many alarms, the battle was Battle renewed on 28th. renewed at daybreak on the 28th. Covered by a heavy artillery fire from batteries posted on a hill opposite to that

\* See Appendix B, p. 172.

Æt. 40. on the British left, Ruffin's battalions advanced in column, supported, as before, by Villatte, and a fierce hand-to-hand encounter took place. Often have Britons and Frenchmen met at the point of the bayonet; never have they separated before bloody work was done. Though Ruffin's grenadiers forced their way to the top of the hill, though General Hill himself fell wounded, yet the attack failed—the blue columns wavered, broke, and fled, leaving 1,500 of their number on the trampled slopes.

The appearance of some light troops on the side of the mountain beyond the plain caused Wellesley to mass his cavalry behind his left, and to send General de Bassecourt with a division of Spaniards up the mountain to keep the French in check.

King  
Joseph  
holds a  
council  
of war.

Joseph Buonaparte, having carefully scanned the field of battle, called the Marshals Jourdan and Victor into council. His position as King of Spain gave him nominal authority over the Marshals of his dreaded younger brother; nevertheless, these Marshals held office directly from Napoleon, received orders from him as well as from Joseph, and were as independent of each other as they were in some respects of the King. On this occasion the Marshals neutralised each other's influence by holding different opinions. The decision lay with the King. Jourdan declared that the British position was impregnable, and advised taking up a position of observation to await the appearance of Soult on the enemy's rear. Victor was of another mind. He vowed that if a general attack failed, it was time to give up making war altogether.

Seldom, perhaps, have greater issues trembled in the balance of one man's judgment. The British army already was within calculable distance of starvation: the only rations served out that morning had been a few ounces of flour, or even of *wheat in the grain*,\* to each man. Had time been allowed for Soult to come up, it is difficult to see how

\* Napier, ii. 395.



MARÉCHAL JOURDAN, AUTHOR OF THE CONSCRIPTION.

*(After a drawing by Ambroise Tardieu.)*

[Vol. i, p. 162.]



Wellesley could have extricated himself; it is *not* difficult ANN. 1809 to imagine the effect of the loss of his army upon the policy of Great Britain, or to believe that she would have withdrawn from the contest which had already cost her so dear.

While the French commanders were conferring, the soldiers The combat suspended, of both armies broke their ranks and wandered down to drink at the brook which ran between the two positions. Frenchmen and English mingled in frank good fellowship, seeking shelter together under the mulberry trees from the burning heat. Wellesley and Cuesta had arranged to meet at the central redoubt between their armies; Cuesta failing to appear, Wellesley dismounted, lay down in his cloak, and slept calmly till he should appear.\*

He slept so till noon—"what time the gray fly winds his and resumed. sultry horn." At that drowsy hour the French drums began to roll, announcing that the King of Spain and of the Indies had made up his mind; the battalions stood to arms, the cavalry mounted; half an hour later the roar of artillery proclaimed that the enemy had resumed the offensive. General Campbell's division received the onset of Sebastiani's 4th Corps, and, supported by Mackenzie's brigade and two Spanish battalions, repulsed them and captured ten guns. A brilliant and well-timed charge of Spanish cavalry completed their rout.

On the British left, Villatte's division advanced up the plain against General Hill, and Ruffin was seen to be moving against Bassecourt's Spanish division on the mountain. Sir Arthur ordered up General Anson's cavalry brigade, the 23rd Light Dragoons riding on the right, and the 1st German Hussars on the left. They advanced at the gallop as far as the so-called ravine,† which in front of the Germans was impracticable; at least so thought their colonel, Arentschild,

\* *Croker*, ii. 312.

† Lord William Russell refers to this as "a very small ditch, which threw most of the rear rank down, the front rank passing it without difficulty" (*Suppl. Despatches*, xiv. 718).

Æt. 40. who reined up, exclaiming, "I will not kill my young mans!"

Fine  
charge  
of the  
23rd Light  
Dragoons.

But on the left the banks were not so steep; the fox-hunting instinct was strong in Colonel Ponsonby\* and his light dragoons; they negotiated the obstacle with a scramble that broke all their order. Quickly reforming, they charged the French columns, which received them in square. Staggering under a terrible fire, they sustained the charge of two regiments of light cavalry which Villatte sent up at the right moment, and, leaving half their number on the ground, the remainder sought shelter with Bassecourt's Spaniards beyond the valley. Their charge, however, had been effective in stopping the execution of the enemy's turning movement on the British left.†

Impetu-  
osity of the  
Guards.

Lapisse's columns recoiled under a well-directed fire from Sherbrooke's division; their defeat was completed by a magnificent bayonet charge; but the impetuosity of the brigade of Guards went near to losing the day for the Allies. They followed so far as to come in contact with the enemy's supports, and, falling into disorder under a charge of dragoons, left a dangerous gap in the British line. At the same critical moment the Germans on the left of the Guards gave way; but Wellesley had his eye on the weak spot: no sooner did he see the Guards pressing on too far, than he sent for the 48th Regiment from the hill on the left, and ordered up Cotton's light cavalry brigade. Then was seen a beautiful display of discipline. Deploying in rear of the broken line, this fine corps advanced, halted, broke into column to allow the beaten Guardsmen and Germans to pass through, wheeled up into line again, and poured a destructive fire upon the pursuing columns. Brave General Lapisse fell mortally wounded; Cotton's dragoons came up at the trot and

Steadiness  
of the 48th  
Regiment.

\* Afterwards Major-General Sir Frederick C. Ponsonby, Governor of Malta. He received seven wounds at Waterloo.

† *Despatches*, iv. 507, where Wellesley lays more stress on the effect of this picturesque charge than Napier does, who was not present at Talavera. Brialmont does not mention it.

charged; the Guards and Germans rallied and reformed ANN. 1809 steadily on the 48th; the French halted, wavered, and retired, suffering heavily from artillery as they crossed the plateau.

The 48th had won the day.

"The advance of the Guards to the extent to which it was carried was nearly fatal to us, and the battle was certainly saved by the advance, position, and steady conduct of the 48th Regiment." \*

The whole of Victor's line was in retreat by six o'clock. Three hours of daylight remained, yet, although Joseph's reserves had not been engaged, the combat was not renewed. † Wellesley's half-starved army was not in a condition to undertake pursuit. They had been fighting more or less continuously for thirty hours, and their losses had been very severe—5,422 killed, wounded, and missing on the 28th added to 846 on the previous day, made the total casualties 6,268. Two Generals (Mackenzie and Langworth) and 31 other officers, with 767 non-commissioned and privates, perished on the field. The French, therefore, were allowed to retreat in good order, and reoccupied the ground they had held in the morning, leaving behind them, however, twenty guns with ammunition and tumbrils. At daybreak on the 29th they retired across the Alberche. ‡ Of course this

Retreat  
of the  
French.

\* *Despatches*, iv. 510.

† "Every officer I have seen and spoken to about the matter has told me the same story, viz. that the battle of Talavera was lost if the French had made one more attack; and that the whole army expected to be beaten next day" (*Life and Opinions*, vol. i. p. 126). Writing to Major Barclay, one of his old officers in India, Wellesley said, "The battle of Talavera was the hardest fought of modern times. The fire at Assaye was heavier while it lasted; but the battle of Talavera lasted for two days and a night. Each party engaged lost a fourth of their numbers!!!" (*Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 431).

‡ "Give Monsieur de Metternich the news that, in Spain, General Wellesley, with 30,000 English, has been thoroughly beaten, about three days' journey from Madrid, and that, as a consequence, the English will be driven into the sea" (*Emperor Napoleon to the Comte de Champagne, Minister for Foreign Affairs: Letters inédites*, p. 152).

Æt. 40. defeat might have been rendered much more fruitful had the British General been able to send forward the Spanish army which had not been engaged on the 28th. But to do so would have been to court inevitable disaster. Cuesta was busy all day inflicting punishment on the battalions which had misbehaved on the 27th, of which he caused to be shot some fifty officers and men. His army might, as Wellesley observed, have done good service by acting on the enemy's flank during the attack on the British position; but, he added, "they were not in a state of discipline to manœuvre in olive grounds, etc., and if they had got into a state of confusion all would have been lost." \*

Forced  
march of  
the Light  
Brigade.

On the 29th General Robert Craufurd marched into camp with his Light Brigade (afterwards to become so famous as the Light Division), † consisting of the 43rd, 52nd, a battalion of the 95th Regiment, and the "chestnut troop" of Horse Artillery. They had encountered in their march from Lisbon, some of the runaways from Talavera — "not all Spaniards," as Napier observes with sinister significance — who told them that Wellesley was killed, the army destroyed, and that the French were only a few miles off in pursuit. Craufurd, an officer of stern nature and unflinching resolution, at once drafted fifty weak men from his brigade, and started to reach the field of battle. In twenty-six hours he reported himself to his chief, having brought his brigade, it is said, sixty-two English miles in that time, losing only seventeen stragglers on the way. "This march," says Alison, "deserves to be noted as the most rapid made by any foot-soldiers during the whole war." ‡

\* *Despatches*, iv. 510.

† The infantry of the Light Division was formed in 1810 of two brigades consisting of: (1) the 43rd Regiment, 3rd Caçadores, and four companies of the 95th Rifles; (2) the 52nd Regiment, 1st Caçadores, and four companies of the 95th.

‡ He might have added "or any other war," if it is accurately reported. Military men of experience are divided in opinion about it; many deny that it was possible. Admiral Sir John Dalrymple Hay informs me that, when a boy,



Up to this point Sir Arthur Wellesley had made too light of the danger to the Allies from Soult's approach. He had relied too much on Beresford, and on four battalions which Cuesta had sent to guard the pass of Baños. These last abandoned their post without firing a shot on the appearance of the French advanced guard, and on 1st August Wellesley received advices that Marshal Soult had occupied Plasencia. Still he could not believe that Soult had more than 15,000 men, and, after consultation with Cuesta, he decided to give battle at Oropesa, while the Spanish army remained in Talavera guarding the hospitals in which were 1,500 sick and wounded British. Cuesta undertook, on Wellesley's advice, to strengthen his position with redoubts and abattis,\* which would have rendered it almost impregnable; but the Spanish General's performance bore unvarying relation to his promises—not a spade was put in the ground nor an axe to a tree.

ANN. 1809.  
—  
Dangerous  
situation of  
the Allies.

The British force marched at daylight on 3rd August, overtaking Bassecourt's Spanish division at Centinello and reaching Oropesa that night. What was Sir Arthur's concern when, the following morning, General Cuesta arrived with his whole army behind him, having abandoned Talavera and the British wounded upon a rumour that Victor was returning to attack him! In truth Victor, overrating the strength of Sir Robert Wilson at Escalona, and believing Wellesley to have 25,000 British troops, was still retiring on Madrid, just as Wellesley, underrating the numbers with Soult, was pressing on to attack 53,000 of the enemy at Plasencia. In warfare the science and skill of the players are affected by infinite chances; but Cuesta, with neither science nor

Wellesley  
leaves  
Cuesta at  
Talavera.

he was drilled by one Serjeant-Major Lawson, who marched in the Light Brigade to Talavera. Lawson taught his pupil the quick step invented by Sir John Moore—three paces walking, alternating with three paces running—and told him that the Light Brigade used it on this march whenever the track was suitable, and that by this means they covered six miles an hour. I have tried the step, and certainly it enables one to travel very quickly without getting blown. Troops constantly practised in it might be regarded as accelerated infantry.

\* Trees felled and laid with the branches outwards, strongly interlaced.

Æt. 40. skill, invariably, in gambler's phrase, "disappointed his luck."

Wellesley  
crosses the  
Tagus.

Soult had advanced as far as Naval Moral, about fifteen miles from Oropesa, before Wellesley realised the formidable strength of the enemy and the serious character of his own position. He had lost his base at Talavera; Soult lay between him and the bridge of boats at Almaraz; there remained but one means of escape, and he seized it. Cuesta, who invariably disagreed with any proposal by his ally, was for waiting to give battle at Oropesa; Wellesley, telling him to do as he pleased, marched at daybreak on the 4th, crossed the Tagus by the bridge at Arzobispo, and on 7th August established his headquarters at Deleytosa. Craufurd, with his Light Brigade, pushed on to guard the bridge at Almaraz from the left bank. On the 7th Victor re-occupied Talavera, all the British wounded, except those able to accompany the army in its retreat, falling into his hands, but receiving most humane treatment, in accord with the chivalrous relations which always prevailed between the soldiers of King George and the Emperor.

Removal  
of Cuesta  
from his  
command.

Cuesta followed Wellesley's army over the bridge of Arzobispo, General Bassecourt's division being left to defend it. Soult, still advancing, was in communication with Victor before he realised that his enemy had given him the slip. At noon on the 8th the French surprised Bassecourt, whose division was only saved from complete destruction by the Duke of Albuquerque's cavalry, which were well handled. The main body of the Spanish army, which lay not far off, immediately began to retire pell-mell upon the strong ground of the Meza d'Ibor, leaving thirty guns to be picked up by the French. This was Cuesta's last exploit. He was superseded by the Junta on 12th August, and General Eguia was given command of the army of Estremadura.

On 11th August Sir Robert Wilson, having withdrawn from Escalona, was attacked by the French in the Puerto de Baños, and completely defeated. On the same day, General

Venegas, whose corps, for equipment and discipline, was the best in Spain, was engaged by Sebastiani, and, after a conflict of nine hours, was driven back on the Sierra Morena. Wellesley retired to Jaraceijo. Victor had thrown some troops across the Tagus by the bridge of Talavera; Soult, having ascertained the existence of a ford below Almaraz, directed Ney to cross the Tagus at that point and intercept the British retreat from Deleytosa. Nothing interfered to prevent the concentration of 85,000 French in pursuit of the Allies—nothing, at least, except the difficulty of feeding such a host, disagreement between Jourdan, Soult, and Ney about a plan of operations, and, finally, instructions received from Napoleon that no operations of magnitude should be undertaken until the arrival of reinforcements, which the defeat of Austria at Wagram (5th July), and the armistice following, enabled him to detach from Germany.

Sir Arthur, thoroughly convinced that all his future operations against the French must be independent of co-operation with Spain, announced to Lord Wellesley, the British Minister at Seville, his intention of returning to Portugal. The very existence of his army was endangered by the indolence of the local authorities in furnishing supplies, or their malevolence in withholding them. While the Spanish soldiers lived in abundance, the British, between 20th July and 20th August, had received whole rations on ten days only. Privation of the very necessaries of life, long continued, demoralises the steadiest troops. Sir Arthur's general orders at this time contain painful evidence of disorder and pillage which no amount of punishment availed to prevent. Let any "gentleman of England who lives at home at ease" declare, if he can, that he is able to encounter the difficulties of life with the same equanimity before breakfast as he can command after it!

"A starving army," wrote Sir Arthur on 8th August, "is actually worse than none. The soldiers lose their discipline and their spirit. They plunder even in the presence of their officers.

Æt. 40. The officers are discontented and are almost as bad as the men; and with an army which a fortnight ago beat double their number, I should now hesitate to meet a French corps half their strength." \*

The British go into cantonments at Badajoz.

Sir Arthur's intention of withdrawing into Portugal threw the Junta of Seville into such a violent consternation that, on the representation of Lord Wellesley, he modified his dispositions, and went into cantonments at Badajoz. Writing thence on 13th September to the Secretary of State, Sir Arthur wrote: "I am more convinced than ever that if I had not taken the steps I did . . . I should have lost the army; whereas it is now acquiring strength daily."

The campaign of Talavera was at an end. Wellesley has been severely blamed by military critics for his rash advance in presence of superior numbers; but, given that degree of efficiency which he was justified in expecting in his Spanish allies, and the charge of rashness would fall to the ground. Beresford protected his left flank; Wilson threatened the rear of any force advancing to meet the allied army from Madrid; while the advance of Vengas from the south was a masterly design, only marred by the interference of the Junta of Seville. Soult's delay of three days in leaving Salamanca, and Joseph's refusal to wait for his arrival, saved the British army when the worthlessness of its allies had become apparent and the want of supplies had arrested its advance.

Napoleon severely criticised the action of his Marshals in permitting the British army to escape. He blamed Jourdan for directing Soult's march on Plasencia instead of on Madrid, and so allowing Wellesley to beat the King's forces before Soult could arrive. Ignoring, as usual, the difficulty of sustaining a large force in one district, he told Jourdan that it was a culpable blunder to divide the army into two parts, and thus afford the enemy a chance of encountering them in detail. He pointed out the folly of attacking a position

\* *Despatches*, v. 15.

without first reconnoitring it. "So surely," said he, "as one ANN. 1809. attacks such good troops as the English in a good position, without reconnoitring and being assured that it is possible to carry it, one leads men to death in pure wastefulness." Above all, and here he hit the crowning blot in the conduct of the action, he held it disgraceful to be beaten with 12,000 men in reserve who had not fired a shot.\* Had Joseph brought up this reserve, it is scarcely possible that Wellesley could have saved his army.

Due recognition was made by the British and Spanish Governments of the talents of the General who had defeated four of Napoleon's redoubtable Marshals in the space of as many months. The Central Junta conferred on him the rank of Captain-General, sent him a present of horses, which he accepted, declining, however, as he had done when receiving similar honours in Portugal, to accept the pay attached to the rank; King George made him a peer—Baron Douro Sir Arthur Wellesley receives a peerage. of Wellesley, and Viscount Wellington of Talavera; and Parliament voted him a pension of £2,000 a year for three lives, though this was vehemently resisted by the Opposition in both Houses. The Common Council of London petitioned against it, and prayed the King not to award any distinction to the General who had exhibited, "with equal rashness and ostentation, nothing but a useless valour." The whole policy of the war and the conduct of the General were made the subject of debate; Wellesley's project of holding Portugal against the armies of France was denounced as "impertinent" and "ridiculous;" nevertheless, the Government carried their bill by a majority of fifty in the Lords, and of ninety-six in the Commons.

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xiii. 358.

## APPENDIX B.

*The Conduct of the Spanish Armies.*

It is not agreeable to cast reflections on the allies of Britain in the great struggle with Napoleon, but no just idea can be formed of the difficulties Wellington had to overcome unless it is understood how completely he was deceived in the expectation formed of the Spanish troops. At first sight, his despatches after Talavera seem to show that the statements of Napier and other writers were grossly exaggerated. "I have reason to be satisfied," he wrote to the Secretary of State, "with the conduct of all the officers and troops." This might be interpreted to apply only to the troops under his immediate command; but, in writing to the British ministers at Lisbon and Seville, Lord Wellington, with more regard to diplomatic discretion than implicit accuracy, paid his allies some high compliments. Thus, to Mr. Villiers—

"The Spanish troops that were engaged behaved well; but there were very few of them engaged, as the attack was made upon us." \*

And, again, to Mr. Frere—

"I am well satisfied with the conduct of the Spanish officers and troops who had an opportunity of assisting us. Bassecourt's division was of great use to us, in covering our left flank upon a mountain. The regiment of cavalry, I think called the King's, made an excellent and well-timed charge upon our right." †

But, writing a month later to his brother, Lord Wellesley, who in the interval had been appointed Minister at Seville, in succession to Mr. Frere, further experience of his allies had convinced Wellington that the behaviour of Cuesta's Spaniards at Talavera was no accidental or exceptional manifestation, but the natural result of placing untrained masses

\* *Despatches*, iv. 510.

† *Ibid.*, 512.

of men, however brave and active individually, under the command of vain, ignorant, and undisciplined officers.

"I now come to another topic, which is one of serious consideration . . . and that is the frequent, I ought to say constant, and shameful misbehaviour of the Spanish troops before the enemy. We in England never hear of their defeats and flights; but I have heard of Spanish officers telling of nineteen and twenty actions of the description of that at the bridge of Arzobispo.\* . . . In the battle of Talavera, in which the Spanish army, with very trifling exceptions, was not engaged, whole corps threw away their arms, and ran off *in my presence*, when they were neither attacked nor threatened with an attack, but frightened, I believe, by their own fire. I refer your Excellency for evidence upon this subject to General Cuesta's orders, in which, after extolling the gallantry of his army in general, he declares his intention to decimate the runaways, an intention which he afterwards carried into execution.† When these dastardly soldiers run away, they plunder everything they meet; and in their flight from Talavera, they plundered the baggage of the British army, which was at the moment bravely engaged in their cause." ‡

In a subsequent despatch to Lord Castlereagh (25th August, 1809), he entered into greater detail.

"The Spanish cavalry are, I believe, nearly without discipline. They are in general well clothed, armed, and accoutred, and remarkably well mounted . . . but I have never heard anybody pretend that in any one instance they had behaved as soldiers should in the presence of an enemy. They make no scruple of running off, and after an action are to be found in every shady bottom within fifty miles of the field of battle. The Spanish artillery are, as far as I have seen them, unexceptionable, and the Portuguese artillery excellent. In respect to the great body

\* On 8th August, 1809.

† That is, to shoot every tenth man by lot. The intention was actually carried out to the extent of about 50 or 60 men when Wellesley succeeded in stopping the butchery.

‡ *Despatches*, v. 80.

of all armies, I mean the infantry, it is lamentable to see how bad that of the Spaniards is, and how unequal to a contest with the French. They are armed, I believe, well; they are badly accoutred, not having the means of saving their ammunition from the rain; not clothed in some instances at all, in others clothed in such a manner as to make them look like peasants, which ought, of all things, to be avoided, and their discipline appears to me to be confined to placing them in the ranks, three deep at very close order, and to the manual exercise. . . . This practice of running away, and throwing off arms, accoutrements, and clothing, is fatal to everything, excepting a re-assembly of the men in a state of nature, who as regularly perform the same manœuvre the next time an occasion offers. . . . Nothing can be worse than the officers of the Spanish army; and it is extraordinary that when a nation has devoted itself to war . . . so little progress has been made in any one branch of the military profession by any individual. . . . After this statement you (the Cabinet) will judge for yourselves whether you will employ any, and what strength of army in support of the cause in Spain. . . . I can only tell you that I feel no inclination to join in co-operation with them again."

So deeply was Lord Wellington impressed with the danger of attempting to co-operate with troops so badly commanded, that he absolutely refused to take any part in the campaign which ended with the defeat of the Duque del Parque at Alba de Tormes and that of Areyza at Ocaña.

*Lieut.-Gen. Viscount Wellington to Marquis Wellesley.*

"Badajos, 16th September, 1809.

"As long as Spanish armies are suffered to continue in the state of indiscipline and disorder in which they are at present, it will be impossible to continue in their neighbourhood; as they not only consume the provisions of the country, but will not allow the villagers to supply to the British troops those provisions which they require, and which the Spanish troops do not want."\*

\* *Despatches*, v. 156.



As a rule the Spanish infantry wore no uniform, but were clothed as peasants, picturesquely enough, no doubt, but, as Wellington perceived and reported, greatly to the detriment of their steadiness and the encouragement of desertion. It is no reproach to a peaceful peasant that he flees from the neighbourhood of a battle: Spanish soldiers had only to fling away their arms and accoutrements to be indistinguishable from ordinary country farmers and labourers.

Wellington used freely to admit that the Spanish rank and file were of fine quality; nevertheless, all that he could say of them, until a late period of the war, was that, "by putting them in third and fourth lines we made them something, or at least made the French think them something." \* "The men," wrote an officer of H.M. 9th Regiment, "are uncommonly fine; the officers like dried grasses, about the height of three penn'orth of halfpence." †

Brave to a fault, patient, wonderfully enduring, active, and temperate, how was it that this fine race, once the hardest fighters in the world, had fallen to such a state of worthlessness? The secret lay in the worthlessness of their officers. They, too, were individually brave, but they lacked the power over their men which comes of professional knowledge alone. Early in the war the Portuguese army was placed under Wellington's command: British officers, trained according to his notions of what officers should be, soon turned that army into a splendid fighting force—"the fighting-cocks of the army," as Wellington called them after the battle of Scauren. It was not till 1812 that the armies of Spain were placed under Wellington's command: a few months' rigorous application of principles—a steady and sometimes apparently harsh insistence on officers qualifying for their commands ‡—

\* *Stanhope*, 107.

† *Dumaresq MSS.*

‡ Speaking on the subject of Spanish officers to Lord de Ros, Wellington observed: "I considered General Wimpfen one of the cleverest. In general, what prevents their becoming good is their conceit and want of application.

and the result was seen in the splendid behaviour of some Spanish divisions in the Pyrenees.

The lesson can never be too diligently studied. No superior physical qualities—no innate military predisposition of race—will produce a good army; well-instructed officers will turn almost any people into good soldiers. "Nothing is so true," observed Wellington to Lady Salisbury, "than the proverb—'Better an army of stags commanded by a lion than an army of lions commanded by a stag.' Look at the troops I commanded at Vimeiro. They were the same as, but a few months before, had been surrounded under Whitelock at Buenos Ayres, and were forced by the Spanish *bourgeoisie* to lay down their arms." \* Superior social rank and wealth will add immensely to the influence of officers over their men; but if these men are to rely on and obey them in action, the officers must have gained their confidence by attention to them in quarters and camp, and by making professional efficiency a point of honour. In nothing is knowledge more truly power than in the command of men. In our own service, if the system were ever reverted to which permitted young officers the option of neglecting the study of the art of war, *nine out of ten would avail themselves of it*, and use their social and military rank as means of self-gratification. That is human nature; and the result would be that the British army might make a pretty show on a birthday parade, but would infallibly go to pieces when there was real work to be done.

Among those who were with the Generals acting in concert with me, it was curious to see how little it occurred to them to improve their judgment by observing and studying the events passing under their noses; experience therefore was scarcely of any service to them. A Spaniard thinks only of gaining a victory; but as to considering any result or for what object the effort is to be made he will not trouble himself. Thus his success loses half its value, and if he fails his defeat is a desperate one" (*de Ros MS.*).

\* Salisbury MSS., 1837.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS.

1809-1810.

<p>1809. The Marquess Wellesley is appointed British Minister to Spain. Lord Wellington acts on the defensive. Napoleon appoints Masséna to command the army of Portugal.</p>	<p>July 24 . . . . . General Craufurd disregards his orders, and jeopardises his division.</p>
<p>January 15, 1810. The British army recrosses the Tagus.</p>	<p>August 27 . . . . . Capitulation of Almeida to the French. Proclamations by Wellington and Masséna. Impatience of the Portuguese Government.</p>
<p>March . . . . . The Mon. H. Wellesley succeeds the Marquis Wellesley as Ambassador to Spain. Wellington calls the whole Portuguese population to arms. Ferocious character of the war.</p>	<p>September 16 . . Masséna invades Portugal. 27 . . . . . Battle of Busaco. Moral effect of victory on the Allies. The Allies resume their retreat. Improved discipline of the British soldiers.</p>
<p>June . . . . . Masséna invests Ciudad Rodrigo.</p>	<p>October . . . . . The Allies enter the lines of Torres Vedras.</p>
<p>July 11 . . . . . Fall of Ciudad Rodrigo.</p>	<p>November 14 . . . . The French retire upon Santarem.</p>

**T**HE appointment of the Marquis Wellesley to succeed Mr. Frere as Minister to the Junta of Seville, immediately after the battle of Talavera, once more brought the brothers into relations almost parallel to those which had

The Marquis of Wellesley appointed Ambassador to Spain.

Æt. 40. formerly connected them with such admirable results to the British empire in India.\* What effect might have been wrought on affairs in the Peninsula under the renewal of this dual control must remain matter for speculation; for the outbreak of a violent quarrel between Canning and Castlereagh, the resignation of these important ministers, and the duel between them on 21st September, 1809, brought about the recall of Lord Wellesley to take up the seals of the Foreign Office, while Lord Liverpool took Castlereagh's place at the War Office, and Mr. Perceval succeeded the Duke of Portland as Prime Minister.

Duel  
between  
Canning  
and Castle-  
reagh.

Wellington was deeply concerned about the rupture between Castlereagh and Canning, both because of his friendship for Castlereagh, and because that rupture removed him from the War Office.

*Viscount Wellington to Viscount Castlereagh.*

“Lisbon, 14th October, 1809.

“MY DEAR LORD,—I have come down here to arrange finally for the defence of Portugal. I have received your private letter of the 23rd. . . . Your brother Charles † has likewise communicated to me Cooke's letter and other papers relating to the late unfortunate transactions in England, and I cannot express to you what I feel upon them. It would appear that your friendship to me, or what I believe in the instance referred to I ought properly to call your sense of what is just to me and others, was the original cause of the dissatisfaction of your colleague; and yet I must say that in the unfortunate circumstances in which I was

\* *The Earl of Liverpool to Lieut.-Gen. Sir A. Wellesley.*

20th August, 1809.—“I trust you will be satisfied with the large discretionary powers which have been recently sent to Lord Wellesley and yourself. You on the spot can alone duly estimate the ultimate chances of success in Spain; we know you will exercise them dispassionately; and it is therefore properly left to your discretion to follow up your advantages or to extricate yourselves from your difficulties, as the aspect of affairs in the Peninsula may appear to render most prudent and advisable” (*Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 332).

† Adjutant-General to the army in the Peninsula, and afterwards third Marquess of Londonderry.

placed last year, the conduct and expressions of Mr. Canning ANN. 1809. were as kind as those of any other ministers. I recollect perfectly to have gone with him to Blackheath, immediately after my return from Portugal, purposely that he might hear the circumstances under which my name appeared in the armistice; and I do not recollect that he expressed any disapprobation of the motives which had induced me to sign that instrument. . . . I have experienced many acts of kindness and friendship from you. If I had been your brother you could not have been more careful of my interests than you have been in late instances, and on every occasion it has always appeared to me that you sought for opportunities to oblige me and to mark your friendship for me. . . . I never imagined that the line taken by the Government upon that occasion (the Court of Inquiry) could be imputed as a crime to you as calculated to screen me. It is impossible to read the accounts of what has passed without indignation at the manner in which you have been treated; and though I regret the duel, and consider it as a fatal event, I must admit that your feelings could not have been otherwise satisfied.\*

In the following spring Lord Wellesley sent his brother The Right Hon. H. Wellesley succeeds his brother as Ambassador. Henry to succeed him as Minister Plenipotentiary to the Government of Spain.

The experienced author of the *Operations of War* † has suggested that Lord Wellington drew from the sufferings of his own forces on the Tagus the idea of overcoming the mighty masses of the enemy by exposing them to similar privations. It may well be so, but there were other causes which Wellington adopts defensive action. influenced Wellington in abandoning an offensive strategy and adopting, as he now did, the Fabian policy which some of his critics have pronounced to be his chief characteristic as a commander. In the first place, by the end of 1809 the Spanish armies had almost ceased to exist. One after another they had been exposed, by the inordinate rashness of the

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 401.

† The late General Sir Edward Hamley, G.C.B., M.P. (see *Wellington's Career*, p. 30).

Æt. 40. Junta, in conflicts of which they invariably got the worst.\* The crowning disaster occurred at Ocaña on 19th November, when General Areyzaga, who had been directed by the Junta to advance on Madrid with 50,000 men, was completely defeated by 25,000 French, losing 55 cannon.†

In the second place, the "large discretionary powers" referred to in Lord Liverpool's despatch of 20th August had undergone some contraction. The shocking condition of the troops on their return from Walcheren had struck a chill into the public spirit; misgiving and boding of further disaster was rife. Lord Liverpool's tone altered; above all things, Wellington was warned against risking anything, and anxious inquiries were constantly addressed to him as to his position in the event of evacuation being decided on. On 20th October, 1809, Liverpool wrote—

As there is every reason to believe that peace has been concluded between Austria and France, and that the whole military efforts of France will probably in a short time be directed in consequence of this event against Spain . . . if a serious attack be made by the French upon Portugal, what is the prospect of successful resistance? If resistance is not likely to prove ultimately successful, how far would the British army be endangered, and its embarkation be likely to be prevented, by delaying

The Spaniards have now (19th December, 1809) no army that is complete, consisting of 100,000 men under the Duque de Albuquerque in Estramadura; and yet nothing has been done by the French after all their victories. What would have been the relative state of the two contending parties, if the Spaniards had been more prudent, and had acted as they were advised to act?" (*Despatches*, 349.)

† When Napoleon III. was editing the letters of the great Emperor he laid aside several which he did not deem it expedient to lay before the world. These have since been collected and published (*Lettres inédites de Napoléon I<sup>er</sup>*, publiées par Léon Lecestre, Paris, 1897), and will be found instructive. There is a lurid suggestion in one written to Berthier after the battle of Ocaña. "Let the Duke of Dalmatia (Soult) know that I learn with indignation that some of the prisoners taken at Ocaña have been released, and their arms restored to several. When I witness such behaviour I ask—is this treason or imbecility? Is it then only French blood that is to flow in Spain without regret and without vengeance?" (vol. i. p. 381).

to withdraw it till the French had penetrated in force into ANN. 1809  
Portugal!"\*

To these inquiries and many like them Wellington replied with unvarying calmness.

"My opinion is that the enemy ought to make the possession of Portugal their first object . . . that they would be successfully resisted . . . that when they shall receive their reinforcements, they can be successfully resisted. † . . . In respect to the embarkation of the British army in the event of failure . . . I have no doubt that we should be able in that case to embark, and bring away the British army, not including the horses of the cavalry and of the artillery. ‡ . . . I am convinced we could embark after defeat." §

Throughout this winter of 1809-10 Wellington had to find confidence for the Cabinet in London, as well as to inspire his own officers with endurance in the field. It must not, however, be understood that the Cabinet were disposed to throw up the cards, even if Portugal should have to be evacuated. Lord Liverpool constantly refers to evacuation as a contingency not improbable, even imminent, but he couples it with the idea of transferring the army under Wellington to the neighbourhood of Cadiz. || English writers are ever too prone to complaints about their own statesmen, but, in truth, there are few passages in history which reflect a more brilliant light on our rulers than the chronicle of these years of storm and stress. There were times, however, of indecision, when the Cabinet sent contradictory instructions to Wellington, and threw upon him more responsibility than even he was willing to undertake. ¶

\* *Despatches*, v. 274, note.

† *Ibid.*, 275.

‡ *Ibid.*, 273.

§ *Ibid.*, 275.

|| *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 547.

¶ *Viscount Wellington to Mr. Stuart, Minister at Lisbon.*

21st April, 1810.—"The state of public opinion in England is very unfavourable to the Peninsula. The ministers are as much alarmed as the public, or as the Opposition pretend to be. . . . Their private letters are in some

Æt. 40. For a time, then, Wellington was compelled to lay aside that intrepid strategy which, within little more than a year, had overthrown Junot at Vimiero, Soult at Oporto, Joseph, Victor, and Jourdan at Talavera, in order to try a fall with a fifth and the mightiest of Napoleon's Marshals—*l'enfant chéri de la victoire*—the indomitable André Masséna, Prince of Essling.\* Freed from his contest with Austria, but prevented by his unlovely domestic arrangements—the divorce of Josephine and his betrothal to the Austrian Archduchess—

Masséna takes command of the army of Portugal.

from taking the field himself, the Emperor committed to Masséna the task which really did seem easy this time—of driving the English into the sea. Evacuation was the word on everybody's lips—the British press teemed with it—the British Opposition insisted on it; the only doubt was lest Masséna, with 100,000 fresh troops released from Germany, should not arrive in time to inflict a defeat on Wellington before he took to his ships.

Meanwhile, at Badajos the British occupied the best position for the defence of Portugal, as long as the Duque de

degree at variance with their public instructions, and I have called for an explanation of the former. . . . Their instructions are clear enough, and I am willing to act under them; though they throw upon me the whole responsibility of bringing away the army in safety, after staying in the Peninsula till it shall be necessary to evacuate it. But it will not answer in these times to receive private hints and opinions from ministers, which, if attended to, would lead to an act directly contrary to the spirit, and even to the letter, of the public instructions; at the same time that, if not attended to, the danger of the responsibility imposed by the public instructions is increased tenfold" (*Despatches*, vi. 48).

\* The Duke always said that, after Napoleon, Masséna was the ablest of the French generals—their *meilleure tête militaire* (*Croker*, i. 339, ii. 310). "Soult," he said, "did not quite understand a field of battle: he was an excellent tactician—knew how to bring his troops to the field, but not so well how to use them when he had brought them up" (*Stanhope*, p. 20; see also *Croker*, iii. 275). Speaking of Masséna to Lord de Ros, Wellington said, "He gave me more trouble than any of them, because where I expected to find him weak, he generally contrived somehow that I should find him strong" (*de Ros MS.*). Masséna was of humble birth, his father having kept a tavern at Turbia, near Monte Carlo.



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MARÉCHAL ANDRÉ MASSÉNA, PRINCE D'ESSLING. [Vol. 4, p. 182.



Albuquerque remained in the Meza d'Ibor; but as soon as Aug. 1810 that General, by command of the restless Junta, also fell back on the Guadiana, Wellington was compelled to cross the Tagus, as much in order to maintain his communications as for the defence of northern Portugal against Masséna.\* Portugal and its defence were the first objects in Wellington's view, yet he did not neglect the defences of southern Spain. General Vanegas commanded in Cadiz at the end of the year, and "although," wrote Wellington, "I am one of those who are of opinion that the English ought to have nothing to say to Cadiz;" † yet he wrote also long and minute instructions for the defence of that city, to which he had paid a flying visit in September.

The presence of the British force on the Tagus, though it was a mere handful compared to the French armies in Spain, had an important influence on the movements of the enemy. After the battle of Ocaña in November, nothing prevented an unopposed invasion of Andalusia and, probably, the capture of Cadiz itself; instead of which, Soult withdrew into Old Castille, and postponed his movement southward for two months, until the approach of Masséna with fresh troops made his rear safe.

On 15th January Wellington moved his army across the Tagus into cantonments extending from Guarda on the right towards the Douro, with headquarters at Viseu, Craufurd's Light Division holding an advanced post on the Coa. The British strength was 2,800 cavalry and 16,700 infantry, of which 800 were in Lisbon; General Hill, with 4,400 men, being left at Abrantes to watch the line of the Tagus. The health of the troops, which had suffered severely at Badajos, improved steadily in their new cantonments.‡

Quietly, stealthily—lest an inquisitive press in England should reveal the design to the enemy §—a project was being

\* *Despatches*, v. 353, note.

† *Ibid.*, v. 375.

‡ *Ibid.*

§ Very frequent were Wellington's complaints about the advantage derived by the French from a perusal of English journals. The condition of the

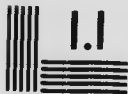
The British army re-crosses the Tagus.

Construction of the lines of Torres Vedras.



# MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

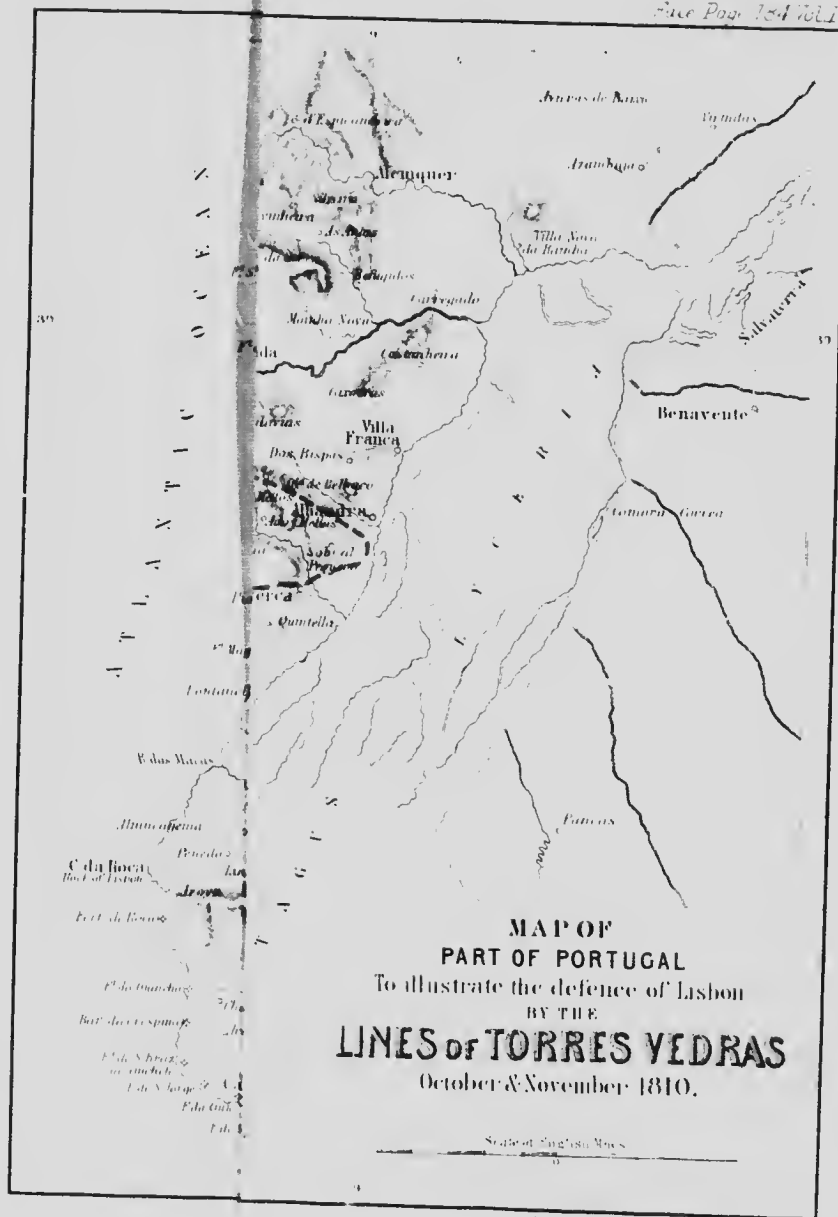


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Æt. 40 carried into effect in those winter months, conceived by Wellington for the defence of Portugal. The tenacity with which he adhered to this design, the quiet confidence with which it enabled him to allay the apprehensions of ministers, to disregard the outcry of the Opposition, and to resist the pressure of the Spanish Juntas and the Portuguese Regency, reveal the quality of his genius more distinctly, perhaps, than any other passage in his whole career. During a visit which he paid to Lisbon in October, 1809, Lord Wellington had selected positions for a series of defensive works whereby the tongue of land on which Lisbon stands should be converted into a vast fortress covering about five hundred square miles of ground. The tongue of land referred to is crossed by two lines of mountains running from the Atlantic to the Tagus. The most northerly of these Wellington directed should be fortified throughout its whole length of twenty-seven miles with a line of redoubts connected by scarps executed on the natural hill brows, and by entrenchments in the valleys. This constituted the first line of defence. The second line was drawn from six to ten miles in rear of the first, taking the range of hills between the mouth of the river San Lorenza and the Tagus—about twenty-four miles in all. Wellington directed that this should be made stronger than the first line by scarpings, retrenchments, redoubts, and works for artificial inundation. Twenty-four miles in rear of the second, the interval being plain ground, a third line of defence was planned, intended to cover a forced embarkation in the

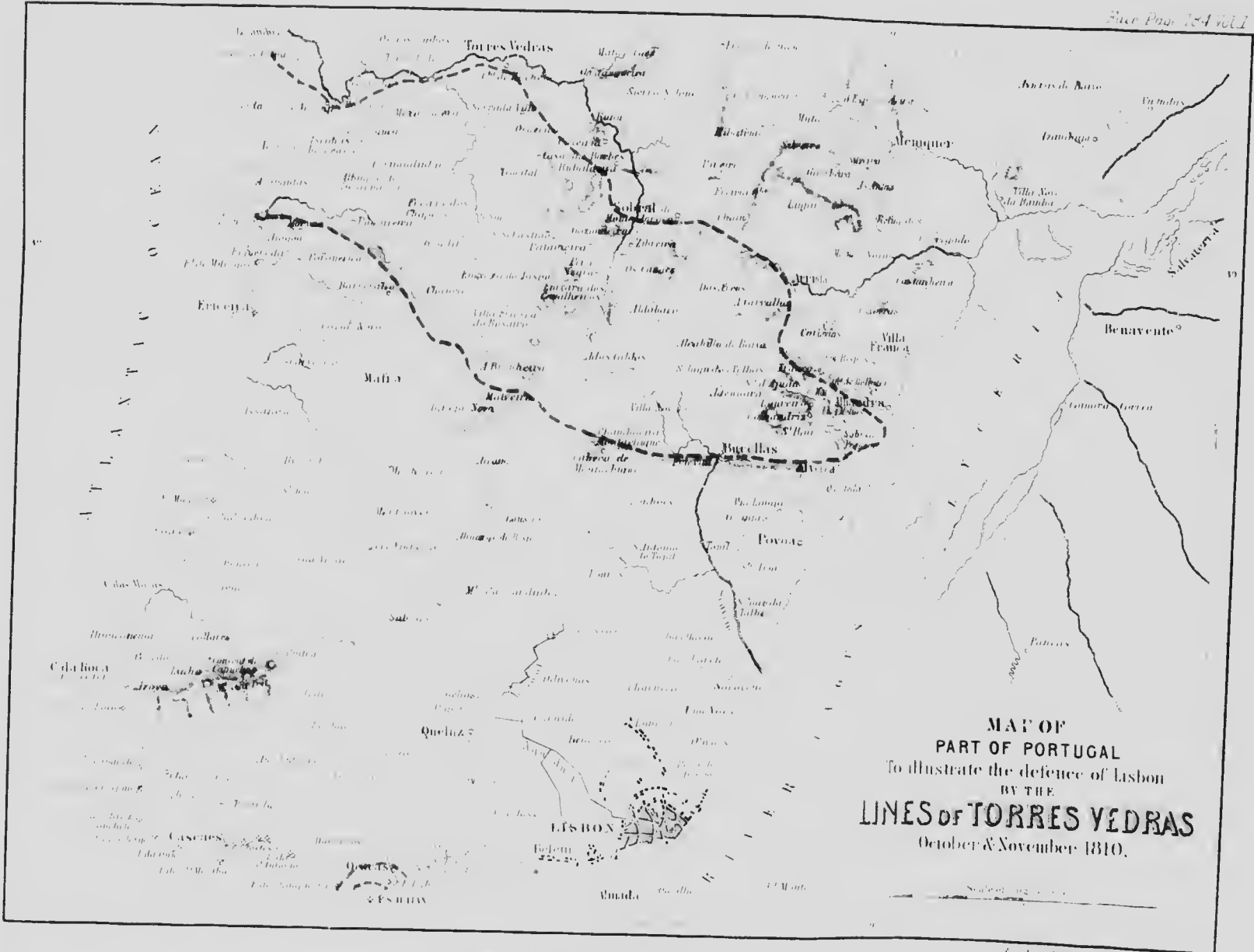
British army, its movements and dispositions, the strength of reinforcements, the intentions of the Commander-in-chief—all these were laid bare to the extent which must have delighted the French authorities as much as it embarrassed their enemies in the field. In 1811 Berthier wrote to Masséna: “. . . We are perfectly informed by the English, much better than you are. The Emperor reads the London journals, and every day a number of letters by (members of) the Opposition, of which some accuse Lord Wellington and discuss your operations in detail.” Lord Liverpool agreed with Lord Wellington about the disadvantage of publishing *everything*, and requested him to prepare duplicate despatches—one for the perusal of the Cabinet only, the other for the public press.



MAP OF  
 PART OF PORTUGAL  
 To illustrate the defence of Lisbon  
 BY THE  
**LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS**  
 October & November 1810.

Scale of English Miles

W. & A. S. 1811







unlikely event of the first two lines being carried; it extended ANN. 1810. from the tower of Junquera on the sea coast to the Passo d'Arcos on the Tagus, about 3,000 yards in all; behind it was an entrenched camp, within which stood the fort of San Julian. Having indicated the general design of these stupendous works, he left it to be carried out by Lieut.-Colonel Richard Fletcher of the Royal Engineers. How splendidly, yet how secretly, that officer performed his part was soon to be seen.\* Once only, in January, 1810, did Wellington re-visit the ground to satisfy himself that his instructions were being carried out. Neither to his Generals, nor to the Secretary of State, did he divulge his plans, so clearly did he foresee that their success depended on secrecy.†

The Hon. Charles Stewart, Adjutant-General to the British army in the Peninsula, was in England on leave at this time. Wellington wrote to him candidly but cheerfully, explaining the difficulties he had to encounter.

\* It might be supposed that the mind of a commander might have been filled with a gigantic design such as this, and with preparations for the coming struggle, to the exclusion of minor matters of discipline and regulations. It was not so. Nothing is more remarkable than the quickness with which Wellington always perceived and checked any irregularity. At the very time, for example, when he was planning the lines of Torres Vedras (11th October) he happened, when riding into Lisbon, to meet a commissariat cart drawn by four mules and escorted by a dragoon. He stopped and asked what it contained, and, on being informed that it was the baggage of an officer of dragoons, was very angry. On reaching Lisbon he sent a long despatch to General Payne, reminding him that officers were required to provide carriage of their own baggage, and that it was most improper to employ soldiers in escorting private property (*Despatches*, v. 212).

† Lord John Russell was travelling in Spain at this time, and has sketched his impressions of these famous defences: "Never was I more struck than with the physical, military, and political spectacle before me. Standing on the highest point, and looking around him on every side, was the English General, his eyes bright and searching as those of an eagle, his countenance full of hope" (*Recollections and Suggestions*, p. 10). The following autumn Lord John, being at Howick, bet Lord Ponsonby a guinea that that time next year Wellington would still hold the lines of Torres Vedras. Lord Grey thought the bet a foolish one, citing Marlborough's feat in piercing the *ne plus ultra* of Marshal Villars; but Lord Ponsonby had to pay up.

Æt. 40.

"Visen, 28th February, 1810.

" . . . There is no doubt that the task which I have undertaken is Herculean, particularly now that the Spanish armies are all annihilated, and that there is nothing in the shape of an army in the field but ourselves. I think that I am in such a situation that I can retire and embark when I please, and if that be the case I cannot but feel that the longer I stay the better for the cause and the more honourable to the country. . . . The necessity of keeping my rear open to the Tagus is a difficulty; and I should be able to effect my object with greater ease, if I was not under the necessity of effecting everything not only without loss, but without risk, or even the appearance of risk, in order to please the good people who make themselves judges of these matters in England." \*

All the  
military  
resources  
of Portugal  
called out.

These great fortifications—the celebrated lines of Torres Vedras—were intended not only to protect the capital, but for the execution of a project far more vast; one of a nature which nothing but iron necessity could justify—nothing but an iron will could carry into effect. Claiming the exercise of his full power as Marshal-General of Portugal, and, despite the opposition of the *fidalgos*, Wellington called to arms the entire male population of the kingdom; so that by the end of May, 1810, 430,000 men were numbered, and armed in one fashion or another—50,000 being reckoned as regular troops, 50,000 as militia, and the rest *ordenanças* or guerillas.† Thirty thousand of the regulars were armed, disciplined, officered, and paid by the English Government. Wellington issued a proclamation requiring all persons whose lands and houses lay in whatever district the enemy should travel through, to withdraw before them, towards the capital, and, on being ordered to do so, to destroy every kind of property that they could not carry off in their flight, to burn their mills, break down their bridges, drive off their cattle—in short, to create a desert in which the French could find no subsistence of any kind. This policy was neither punitive, like the

\* Original at Wynyard Park.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 518.

"military execution" of Bavaria by Marlborough, the desolation of the Palatinate by Turenne, or the wasting of Georgia by General Sherman; neither was it wanton and shortsighted, like the pillaging of friendly Navarre permitted by the Black Prince; it was deliberate and effective, like the devastation of his own realm by Robert Bruce in the Scottish war of Independence, and like that by which the defence of Russia was hereafter to be successfully maintained against the Emperor Napoleon.

The war in Spain lost nothing as it proceeded of its initial ferocity. Soult invaded Andalusia in January 1810; Seville, with its arsenal and enormous stores, Granada, Malaga, fell successively into the hands of the French; but always on the skirts of their armies hung bands of indomitable patriots. These, by their activity and unquenchable spirit, showed what splendid troops might have been manufactured out of the peasantry, who, in the absence of capable officers, degenerated into murderous bandits, and incurred the utmost penalty attached to brigandage. Soult issued a proclamation setting forth that, whereas no regular army could exist in Spain save that of his Catholic Majesty Joseph Napoleon, every Spaniard taken with arms in his hands should be immediately shot. It can never be known how many victims perished under this inhuman edict.\* The Spanish Government retaliated by an ordinance that for every Spaniard thus executed, and for every house burned, three Frenchmen should be hanged. Such was the character of the warfare which, while the almonds were shedding their blossoms and the song birds were building their nests, was steadily rolling towards the frontier of Portugal.

On the 26th April Wellington, apprised of the fall of

\* General Augereau's proclamation 18th December, 1809, ran as follows: "Every Catalan taken with arms in his hands, twenty-four hours after the present proclamation, shall be hanged without form of trial as a highway robber. Any house in which resistance is offered shall be burned: all shall undergo the same fate."

Æt. 40. Astorga on the 22nd, and of Marshal Ney's movement upon Ciudad Rodrigo, transferred his headquarters to Celorico, and re-arranged his divisions along the frontier, still leaving General Hill to watch the approaches of the Tagus. Masséna was advancing against the frontier with 86,000 men, having reserves at Valladolid, Benevente, and Asturias, amounting to 52,000 more—in all 138,000 effectives.\* To stem this armed torrent Wellington could only reckon on 32,000 regulars on the frontier of Beira.†

Masséna's  
advance.

There were three routes by which Masséna might advance on Lisbon: the first by Lower Beira, the second through the Alemtejo by Elvas, the third through Galicia in the north. Dismissing the last as improbable because of the difficulty offered by mountain ranges, and the second because it would lead the invaders to the wrong side of the Tagus, Wellington made his dispositions to meet Masséna on the first route. At the same time he took a very high hand with the Portuguese Regency, in consequence of their indolence in supplying the army with transport and supplies.

“If they expect that individuals of the lower orders are to relinquish the pursuit of their private interests and business to serve the public, and mean to punish them for any omission in this important duty, they must begin with the higher classes of society. These must be forced to perform their duty, and no name, however illustrious, and no protection, however powerful, should shield from punishment those who neglect the performance of their duty to the public in these times.” ‡

\* Napier, iii. 576. Extract from the Imperial Muster Rolls.

† See his own estimate (*Despatches*, vii. 292), but this left out of account between 12,000 and 13,000 men under General Hill, who was brought up in time for the battle of Busaco. On 1st June Wellington had 17,000 British and 14,000 Portuguese rank and file under his immediate command behind the Coa. There were besides 10,000 men in garrisons or unfit to be brought into the field. Napier (iii. 257) says that “the actual force at the disposition of Lord Wellington, the ordenanças being set aside, cannot be estimated higher than 80,000 men.” It is difficult to reconcile the discrepancy between Wellington's figures and Napier's, unless the former took no account of militia, which the latter did.

‡ *Despatches*, vi. 97.

Masséna began the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo early in June. ANN. 1810.  
 Already he was experiencing the difficulty of maintaining his host in a hostile country; Regnier's corps was detached to the south of the Tagus, where it might find subsistence more easily, and Ciudad Rodrigo was invested by two corps, being defended by General Herrasti with a garrison of 5,000. It was at first Wellington's intention and earnest desire to succour this place; it was a bitter trial when he realised that it must be left to its fate. The Spaniards always fought splendidly behind walls; the siege was conducted so near the British position that men on outpost duty could hear even the crackle of musketry. The Marquess Romana came up from Badajos to implore Wellington to undertake a combined movement in order to raise the siege; hardest of all to resist was the appeal of gallant old Herrasti himself, conveyed in a note smuggled through the French lines by a Spaniard—"O venir luego! luego! luego! a socorrer esta plaza;"\* and again two days later, on 1st July—"Luego! luego! luego! por ultimo vez." Men ignorant of the British commander's great design chafed at his seeming indifference to the fate of the beleaguered garrison. Masséna sent out proclamations taunting the Spaniards for relying on such a craven ally. The Spanish authorities of Castille were so furious at Wellington's apathy that they broke off all communication with him, refusing even to forward intelligence obtained by British agents. But Wellington remained firm. In his own words—

Masséna  
invests  
Ciudad  
Rodrigo.

"It was impracticable to attempt it, unless it could be supposed that we should beat an army nearly double the strength of the allied army, having nearly four times the number of cavalry, in a country admirably adapted to the use of that arm." †

Ciudad Rodrigo surrendered on 11th July, and the French moved on to attack Almeida, near which place lay General Fall of Ciudad Rodrigo.

\* "O come now! now! now! to succour this place."

† *Despatches*, vii. 293.

Æt. 41. Craufurd's division. The Spaniards, on hearing of the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo, marched off in disgust to join Romana's army, leaving Craufurd with 4,000 British infantry, 1,100 cavalry, and 6 guns. Wellington had repeatedly enjoined him not to risk an action beyond the Coa; \* nevertheless, he deliberately awaited the attack of Ney's corps in this position. His disobedience nearly caused the loss of his division, which would certainly have been fatal to the continuance of a British force in Portugal.†

General  
Craufurd  
disregards  
his orders.

At daybreak on 24th July, after a night of drenching rain, Ney drew near with 24,000 foot, 5,000 horse, and 30 guns. Craufurd most rashly sent forward his guns and cavalry, which were speedily driven in. Loison's division then charged and broke the British line, and Ney ordered Montbrun to pursue with his cavalry. Most fortunately for the Light Division, Montbrun stood on his dignity. Holding an independent command from Masséna, he declined to move except at his orders. General Picton had ridden out from Pinhel to view the fighting. Craufurd, feeling himself hard pressed, rode up to him and asked whether he would not move out something to support him. There was no love lost between the Welshman and the Scot: Picton replied bluffly that "he'd be damned if he did any such thing," on which Craufurd, making an angry retort, rode away.‡ Montbrun's aloofness gave the Light Division time to re-form; they retired fighting—and Craufurd's lads *could* fight!—to the

\* *Despatches*, v. 460, 472; vi. 222, 274; vii. 294.

† *Viscount Wellington to the Right Hon. W. W. Pole.*

"... Although I shall be hanged for them, you may be very certain that not only ' have had nothing to do with, but had positively forbidden, the foolish affairs in which Craufurd involved his outposts. . . . You will say, if this be the case, why not accuse Craufurd? I answer, because, if I am to be hanged for it, I cannot accuse a man who I believe has meant well, and whose error is one of judgment, and not of intention; and indeed I must add that . . . that is not the way in which any, much less a British army, can be commanded" (*Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 564).

‡ *Napier*, v. p. vi.

bridge, effected a crossing, and then, by sheer steadiness of fire, kept the French in check till four in the afternoon. The British and Portuguese loss was 316 killed, wounded, and missing, including 28 officers; that of the French, who suffered severely in repeated attacks on the bridge, was much heavier.

Ney then invested Almeida, which was reputed the strongest fortress in Portugal, and was expected to make a good defence; but a terrific explosion took place in the magazine, and the citadel capitulated on 27th August.

The invading and defending armies were now at last in contact, and the commander of each issued a proclamation to the Portuguese. That of Masséna set forth that the French came, not as conquerors, but as friends; that of Wellington appealed to the people whether the burning and plundering, the ravishing and murdering, which the French carried on wherever they went, had not convinced them of the true nature of the invasion. He called on them once more, on pain of punishment as traitors, to withdraw from their homes on the approach of the enemy, removing all that could be of use to the French, and destroying what could not be removed.

At this time the Portuguese Government adopted a line of conduct exceedingly harassing to Wellington. Their extreme anxiety for their country was pardonable: the extent of their confidence in the British General up to the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo had been almost pathetic. All that he had had to complain of was indolence in complying with his orders and in furnishing supplies. Now, however, under the instigation of the Principal Souza, an energetic, but ignorant and meddling person, the Regency began to interfere with the movements of armies in the field, and desired that an immediate advance should be made into Spain. Souza and his party saw in Wellington's refusal to relieve Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida a confirmation of the suspicion that his demonstration against Masséna was no more than a cloak to cover his own embarkation, and the

ANN. 1810.

Capitulation of Almeida.

Proclamations by Wellington and Masséna.

Impatience of the Portuguese Government.



Æt. 41. abandonment of Portugal to her fate. It cannot be denied that there was ground for this suspicion. Many of Wellington's own officers were not careful to conceal their desire for immediate evacuation;\* even Sir George Murray urged him strongly against trusting to the lines, which he felt sure would be forced.† English newspapers were read in Lisbon, and English merchants were leaving the city which they believed to be doomed. The populace readily listened to Souza's inflammatory harangues, and the situation in Lisbon became exceedingly uneasy. Wellington told Mr. Stuart,‡ who had succeeded Mr. Villiers as British Minister in Lisbon, that he would suffer no interference with military operations.

October 10, 1810.—“As for Principal Souza, I beg you to tell him from me . . . that being embarked in a series of military operations, of which I hope to see the successful termination, I shall continue to carry them on to their end; but that no power on earth shall induce me to remain in the Peninsula for one moment, after I shall have obtained his Majesty's leave to resign my charge, if Principal Souza is to remain either a member of the Government or to continue at Lisbon. . . . All I ask of the

\* “The temper of some of the officers of the British army gives me more concern than the folly of the Portuguese Government. I have always been accustomed to have the confidence and support of the officers of the armies which I commanded; but, for the first time, whether owing to the Opposition in England, or whether the magnitude of the concern is too much for their minds and their nerves, or whether I am mistaken, and they are right, I cannot tell; but there is a system of croaking in the army which is highly injurious to the public service. . . . Officers have a right to form their own opinions upon events and transactions, but officers of high rank or situation ought to keep their opinions to themselves: if they do not approve of the system of operations of their commander, they ought to withdraw from the army” (*Lord Wellington to Mr. Stuart*, 11th September, 1810: *Despatches*, vi. 403).

“If some of them held the command, the army would long ere now have been in the transports” (*Lord Wellington to Lord Liverpool*, 13th September, 1810: *Despatches*, vi. 411).

† *Salisbury MSS.*, 1837.

‡ Afterwards Lord Stuart de Rothesay.

Portuguese Regency is—tranquillity in the town of Lisbon and ANN. 1810.  
provisions for their own troops." \*

For nearly three weeks after the surrender of Almeida there was no movement of importance in the French army. It must be admitted that Wellington was not entitled to reckon on this inaction. Had Ney taken the offensive earlier, Hill's corps could not have been brought in to strengthen the allied army; indeed, that General anticipated orders which Wellington sent to him on the 15th September, and, as soon as he became aware of Regnier's movement to join Masséna, began a series of forced marches and arrived on the Alva on the 21st.

The French began their advance into Portugal on 16th September with 72,000 men, moving by three routes—Masséna invades Portugal. Regnier's corps marching by Guarda and Celorico, Ney's by Alverca, and Junot's by Pinhel and Trancoso. On the 21st the three columns effected a junction at Viseu; Wellington, falling back before them, was joined on the Alva by General Hill on the same day.† The total force of the Allies present at the front was then 49,000—of which 25,175 were British and the rest Portuguese.

The unsatisfactory state of public feeling in Lisbon, the neglect of the injunction to dispenish the country of supplies for the enemy, the murmurs of his own officers, and the demoralising effect of a protracted passive strategy upon his men, induced Wellington to interrupt his retreat towards the final stronghold he had prepared. Just below the confluence of the Alva with the Mondego, mountains approach

\* *Despatches*, vi. 467.

† *The Emperor Napoleon to the Minister of the Interior.*

“Fontainebleau, 13th October, 1810.

... The army of Portugal . . . has more than 70,000 men under arms. It has seized Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, and was face to face on the 24th with the English army, which it had forced to retire for ten marches, and which seemed to be falling back on its vessels. A battle was imminent, and the English were reinforcing their army, which amounted, possibly, to some 36,000 men” (*Lettres inédites*, p. 209).

Æt. 41. closely to both banks of the main river. On the right or north-west bank rises the Sierra Busaco, a precipitous ridge stretching for about eight miles at right angles to the line of Masséna's advance upon the important town of Coimbra, where Wellington had his magazine. Upon this natural fortress Wellington decided to stand at bay, the great superiority of the French cavalry being neutralised by the nature of the ground. The only doubt was whether Masséna would not attempt to turn, rather than to force, such a strong position.\*

On the 21st, General Pack, holding with his brigade an advanced post on the Criz, a tributary of the Mondego, destroyed the bridges before the French advanced guard, and fell back to Mortagoa, where he joined Craufurd's Light Division. On the two following days, Craufurd's pickets having been driven in by the enemy's skirmishers, he withdrew four miles to a very strong position in advance of the general line, whence he had clear orders from Wellington to retire in good time.† Nevertheless, on the approach of two French columns on the 25th, Craufurd, unable to restrain his impatience to be at them, moved down into the plain, and his skirmishers were actually engaged when Wellington galloped up and ordered a retreat, accompanying the division

\* Masséna would have got into disgrace if he had declined battle. On 19th September Berthier wrote: "The Emperor orders me to send you an officer to inform you of his intention that you should attack and overthrow the English. Lord Wellington has not more than 18,000 men. . . . General Hill has not more than 6,000. . . . His Majesty thinks it ridiculous that 25,000 English should balance 60,000 French, and that by falling holdly on, after carefully reconnoitring, you cannot fail to check them severely."

Three weeks later, when Masséna sent General Foy to Paris to explain his position before the lines of Torres Vedras and his urgent need of reinforcements, he represented to the Emperor that his attack on Busaco had been merely a feint to enable him to turn the position by way of the pass of Boyalva, and that it had only become a serious engagement in consequence of the ardour of the French troops. This was a deliberate deception. In Masséna's original despatch immediately after the battle, which was intercepted by the Allies, there was not a word of all this afterthought!

† *Despatches*, vi. 440.

BATT  
OF  
BUS  
27<sup>th</sup> Septemb

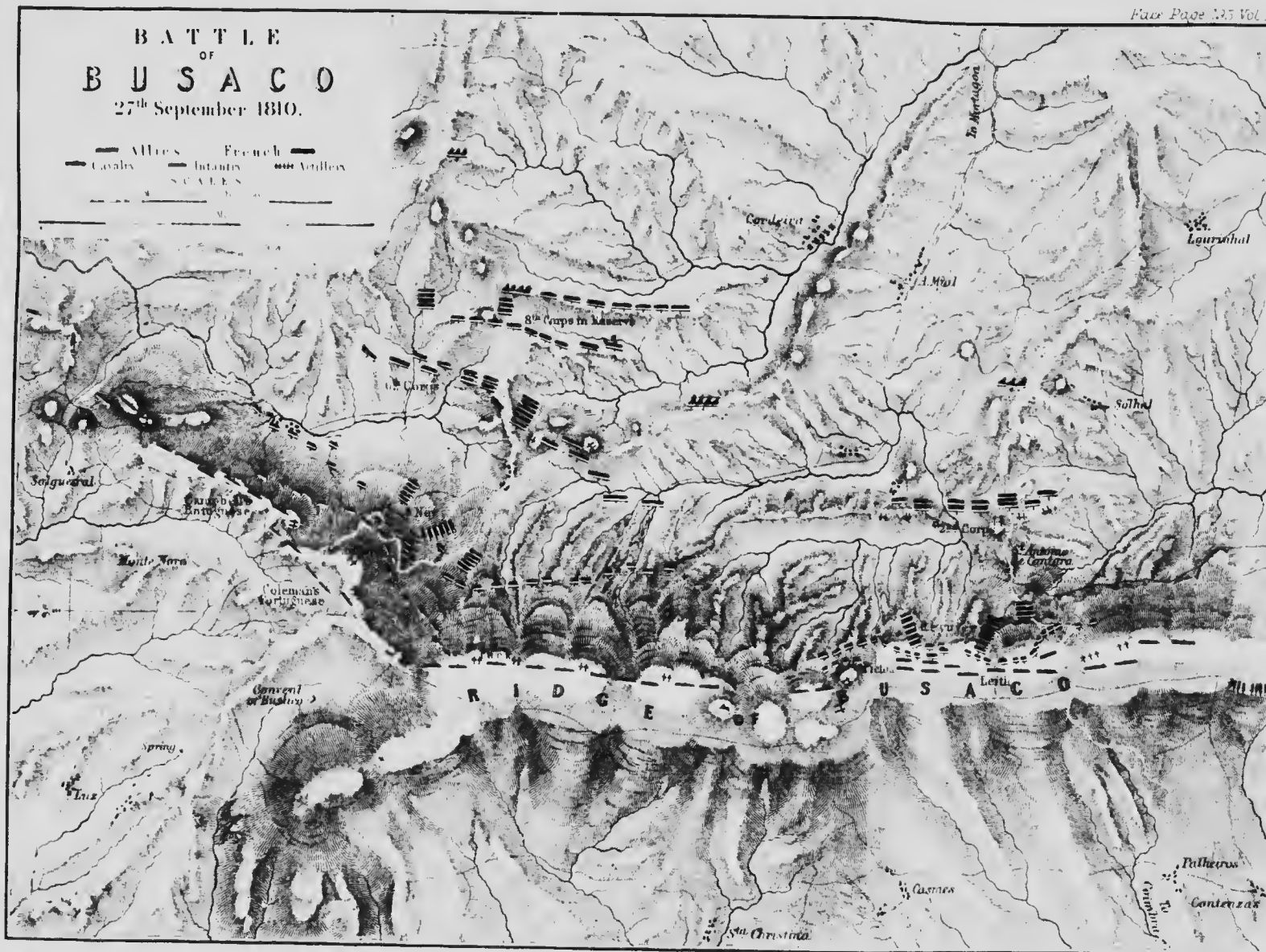
— Allies  
— Cavalry — Int  
S C A I  
Military Scale  
English



# BATTLE OF BUSACO

27<sup>th</sup> September 1810.

— Allies — French —  
 — Cavalry — Infantry — Artillery  
 SCALES  
 1/2 MILE  
 1/4 MILE





back to its proper position in the line. Well was it that he ANN. 1810. did so. Craufurd's fierce gallantry was most apt to expose the troops under his command to terrible risks, and on this occasion he was on the point of engaging the whole of the 2nd and 6th French Corps under Regnier and Ney.

On the 26th the enemy was strengthened by the arrival of Battle of Busaco. Masséna himself with the 8th Corps, and the light troops were engaged all along the line.

"My regiment," wrote an officer in Hill's division, "had no sooner piled arms than I walked to the verge of the mountain on which we lay, in the hope that I might discover something of the enemy. Little was I prepared for the magnificent scene which burst on my astonished sight. Far as the eye could stretch, the glittering of steel and clouds of dust raised by cavalry and artillery proclaimed the march of a countless army; while immediately below me, at the feet of those precipitous heights on which I stood, their pickets were already posted. Thousands of them were already halted in their bivouacks; column after column, arriving in quick succession, reposed upon the ground allotted to them, and swelled the black and enormous masses. . . . The whole country behind them seemed covered with their train, their ambulance and their commissariat." \*

At 6 a.m. on the 27th the enemy began the attack in force. The front of the Allies extended for more than five miles along the comb of the ridge, scarcely visible to the French moving below them. General Hill held the right nearest the river; General Leith lay next, with the Lusitanian Legion in reserve; the 3rd Division under Picton, supported by a Portuguese brigade, prolonged the line to the left; and on the left of Picton was Brent Spencer's division, with Lowry Cole's division, the 4th, forming the left of the line. The Light Division, with Coleman's and Pack's Portuguese brigades, were posted half a mile in advance of the left, supported by a German brigade. The ground being unsuitable for his cavalry, Wellington sent them to a position in

\* *Recollections of the Peninsula*, 107.



Æt. 41. rear of the left, where the land was more level, keeping a single regiment of heavy dragoons on the heights. The French advanced in five columns of attack, three being under Ney on the right, and two under Regnier three miles to the left. Regnier, having the easier ground, advanced more quickly than Ney, and, with astonishing speed and dash, his left column stormed the height and forced back the right of the 3rd Division. Never was there a finer display of disciplined valour than the performance of these heroes of Austerlitz. Wheeling to the right, one of the French divisions formed across Picton's broken flank. Lieut.-Colonel Waller, assistant quartermaster-general with the 2nd Division, perceiving the frightful jeopardy of the whole British position, and that the great road to Coimbra was unmasked by the disorder of the 3rd Division, galloped along to the right on the reverse side of the Sierra in search of support. The first troops he met were the head of Leith's column, then taking ground to its left.

The  
British line  
broken.

"Pray, sir, who commands this brigade?" he asked an officer riding at the head of the 9th Regiment.

"I do, sir; I am Colonel Cameron."

"Then, for God's sake, sir, move off instantly at the double quick to Picton's support. Not a moment is to be lost. The enemy have forced our right. Move on till the rear of your brigade has passed the Coimbra road; then wheel into line and you will embrace the point of attack."

Without a moment's hesitation Colonel Cameron pushed on at the double in column of sections, left in front, across two miles of very rough ground. Arriving at the point indicated by Colonel Waller, he wheeled his brigade into line and moved to the crest of the ridge. Picton, by this time, had done much to repair the evil, or at least to prevent the worst consequences of his reverse. He fired upon the French division with two guns, and then sent the 45th and 88th Regiments and the 8th Portuguese to charge them with the bayonet.



"I have never witnessed," wrote Wellington to the Secretary of State, "a more gallant attack than that made by the 88th, 45th, and 8th Portuguese regiments on the enemy's division which reached the ridge of the Serra." \* ANN. 1810.

The leading French battalions, however, still crowned the height, the left resting on a precipice in rear of the British position, which was actually lost, had these been effectively supported. A thick mist which clung to the crest, mingled with smoke, concealed them from the left of the British line, which, moreover, had become engaged by this time with Ney's attack. In the nick of time came the 9th Regiment—the "Holy Boys," as they were termed—supported by the 38th and Royal Scots. The 9th, without firing a shot, advanced under a galling fire against the French among the rocks, cleared the ground, croup and crest, and, quickly occupied it with the rest of the brigade. Next, General Hill brought in his division from the right—"a magnificent spectacle it was," said an eye-witness,† "to see his 14,000 infantry moving steadily at the double in open columns;" and thus the line was once more united and the danger past.

No sooner was this accomplished than Wellington galloped up with his staff. "Hill," said he in quick, incisive accents, but without the slightest fuss or flurry, "if they attempt this point again, you will give them a volley, and charge bayonets; but don't let your people follow them too far down the hill." † Then, wheeling round, he vanished in the smoke on his way to survey the divisions on the left. These had held their ground with greater ease than their comrades of the 3rd Division. One of Ney's columns, indeed, topped the ridge—a splendid performance in face of a crushing fire of artillery and musketry—driving in the British Rifles and Portuguese Caçadores. But behind his skirmishers, Craufurd Repulse of  
Ney's  
attack.

\* *Despatches*, vi. 447. Many witnesses, however, testified that the 8th Portuguese were utterly broken, and ran down the reverse side of the ridge.

† *Recollections*, 109.

‡ *Ibid.*, 110.

Æt. 41. held two battalions deployed in concealment under the comb of the ridge. A sharp command from him, and this thin red line moved forward; another—a long gleam flamed down the ranks as the bayonets dropped from the shoulder; a third—and, with a cheer that made the rocks ring again, the famous 43rd and 52nd swept forward to the charge, rolling back the advancing tide, overlapping its flanks, and hurling the assailants over the steep brow. Then the bugles sounded the halt; three withering volleys were poured upon the descending mass, and the hillside was strewn with hundreds of dead and dying.

Thus repulsed along his whole line Masséna did not renew the attack. His troops had shown splendid alacrity and valour; he had lost between four and five thousand officers and men, and he decided that the position of Busaco was impregnable. The battle was practically over by two o'clock, though fighting continued between the light troops till the evening, when the French retired to the ground they had occupied in the morning.

Moral  
effect of  
the victory.

The moral effects of this victory on the cause of the Allies and the spirit of their troops were immediate and invigorating. The Portuguese, hitherto despised and distrusted, had shown that they only required proper training and handling to render an excellent account of themselves: their behaviour at Busaco received high praise in Wellington's despatches. The "croakers" among the British officers, always a considerable body in numbers, were put to temporary silence.\* The British loss, owing to the excellence of their position, was comparatively trifling, amounting, in the fighting on 25th, 26th, and 27th September, only to 197 killed, 1,014 wounded, and 58 missing. "A political battle" it has been called †—a battle contrary to the general design of the campaign, fought to propitiate the Portuguese Regency and the British Cabinet and press—but "policy" were an apter term than "politics" to explain Wellington's

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 607.

† *Napier*, iii. 345.

motive in fighting. *En guerre*, some French writer has ANN. 1810. observed, *l'art ne consiste pas à frapper fort, ni à frapper souvent, mais à frapper juste.* As a fox-hunter, Wellington understood the policy of "bleeding his hounds." He saw the spirits of his soldiers drooping under inaction and retrograde movement; discipline flagged, and the temptation to plunder became irresistible. He blooded his hounds at Busaco.

Unluckily, his warnings to the Regency and his instructions to the inhabitants had been disregarded. The people of Coimbra and neighbourhood had made no attempt to withdraw their cattle and movables; hence when Masséna, foiled in his attempt to force the Sierra Busaco, penetrated the defiles of Boyalva and debouched upon the fertile district near Coimbra, he found plenty of supplies. Wellington had detached Colonel Trant with his Portuguese, foreseeing that Masséna would probably attempt to turn the British left by a flank movement through the Sierra de Caramula, to occupy the pass of Boyalva; but General Silveira, nervous for the safety of Oporto, had interfered by summoning Trant to protect that town. Masséna, therefore, passed through difficult ground unmolested, and Wellington, to preserve communications, fell back upon Coimbra. Retiring thence The Allies resume their retreat. on 1st October, skirmishing with the enemy's advanced guard, he lay for three days at Leiria, which were wasted by Masséna in plundering Coimbra, thus losing all the advantage he had gained by his flank march through Boyalva.

Wellington's one desire was to lure on his adversary to pursuit. Had Masséna made a permanent base at Coimbra, seized Oporto on his right rear and Abrantes on his left front, the advance of a corps detached by Soult from the south must have endangered the whole issue of the campaign for the Allies. All, however, went according to Wellington's plan. On the 4th October the French drove the British pickets out of Pombal, and the rear-guard out of Leiria on the 5th. The Allies steadily yielded ground, engaging in

Æt. 41. daily, but partial, encounters with the enemy. They were accompanied and preceded by the whole population of the district, who, maddened by terror at the approach of the French, afforded a scene of destitution and misery which it were hard to depict. It was the time of the vintage—the season that ought to have filled that lovely land with festival and heartsome, fruitful labour. Instead of that, the fields were silent and deserted; the purple clusters shrivelled and rotted ungathered; multitudes of birds collected, some to feed on the grapes with unwonted impunity, others, unclean and ominous, to batten on the flesh of man and beast.

“The multitude of sufferers increased as the army approached Lisbon. The wayside was strewn with articles of furniture, which the wretched fugitives were unable to carry further. Those who, in the weariness of exhausted nature, had cast themselves on the ground, started up with unnatural and convulsive energy to renew their journey, on learning that the enemy's columns were approaching. . . . By no one who bore part in that memorable retreat can it ever be forgotten. Other scenes may fade in the change of succeeding years, or perish utterly from the memory—the impression of this can only be effaced by death.” \*

Improved  
discipline  
of the  
British  
soldiers.

Of the behaviour of his own troops, however, Wellington was able to report far more favourably than during the retreat from Talavera, although he found it necessary to check sternly some disorder which took place at Condexa and Lciria. At the latter place, two men of the 4th Dragoons whom the Commander of the Forces caught in the act of plundering a chapel, were hanged, as well as a private in the 11th Foot and a Portuguese soldier.† If the sternness of Wellington's discipline inspired his officers and soldiers with dread, rather than with the affection they had borne to the gentler Moore, at least it averted the calamity of insubordination which had so grievously augmented the suffering during

\* *Annals of the Peninsular Campaigns*, by T. Hamilton, 29th Regiment.

† *Tomkinson*, 48; *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 606.

the retreat to Coruña. "You are barged," was the pregnant ANN. 1810. observation of Judge Bradfield in passing sentence on a sheep-stealer, "not for stealing a sheep, but that sheep may not be stolen." Wellington succeeded in the end; he made his army one that "could go anywhere and do anything;" but he earned more fear than love in the process.\* He was generally known among his men at this time as "Arty"—the short for Arthur—or, more descriptively, as "that long-nosed — that licks the parley-voos."

Among the French Masséna allowed, and even encouraged, in Portugal far greater license than he permitted in Spain; his troops became greatly demoralised, and the reckless waste of stores at Coimbra brought severe privations upon them. He left his hospitals at Coimbra under a weak guard. No sooner was his back turned than Colonel Trant swooped upon the town with his Portuguese militiamen, surprising and capturing it, and taking 5,000 prisoners and a large quantity of arms; while General Miller and Colonel Wilson seized hill posts both banks of the Mondego, completely severing the French communications.

Up to this moment few, if any, of the British officers were apprised of the nature of the refuge Colonel Fletcher and Captain Chapman had been preparing for the allied army and the fugitive population; friend and foe alike believed that Wellington was making for his ships.

"I believe," wrote Wellington to the Minister in Lisbon on 6th October, "you and the Government do not know where the lines are. Those round Lisbon are not those in which I shall place the army, but those extending from Torres Vedras to the Tagus. All I ask from the Government is tranquillity in the town of Lisbon and provisions for their own troops; and as God Almighty does not give 'the race to the swift or the battle to the strong,' and I have fought enough battles to know that, even

\* "There is but one way—to do as I did—to have A HAND OF IRON. The moment there was the slightest neglect in any department, I was down on them" (*Salisbury MSS.*, 1837).

Æt. 41. under the best arrangements, the result of any one is not certain, I only beg that they will adopt preparatory arrangements to take out of the enemy's way those persons who would suffer if they were to fall into his hands."\*

The secret had been kept right well: the surprise was dramatically complete. Not before the evening of 10th October, when the French drove a British detachment out of Sabral, did Masséna realise the existence of those tremendous works which received the allied columns. Among all the suffering millions of Portugal not a spy had been found to warn the invader of the existence in his line of march of fifty miles of new fortification, comprising 126 closed works and mounting 247 guns.† Let the loyalty of this devoted people never be forgotten; in the annals of patriotism there is nothing grander than their fiery, sustained refusal to submit to a foreign yoke.

It is true that Masséna had Portuguese officers in his service. The Marquis d'Alorna and General Pamplona, in particular, were high in the councils of the enemies of their country. When Masséna came before the lines of Torres Vedras he accused these gentlemen of having deceived him. They replied that the means of ascertaining what Wellington was about were at the Marshal's disposal, not at theirs. "*Que diable!*" exclaimed Masséna angrily, "*Wellington n'a pas construit ces montagnes.*" He had not been warned of the existence of the natural, still less of the artificial, impediments to his advance.‡

"Such a mass of troops intrenched in positions so formidable, having in their rear the safe and spacious harbour of Lisbon, and affording the opportunity for bringing the maritime power and wealth of England to support her soldiers in the field, offers to the attention of mankind the most wonderful combination of circumstances that can be found in the military annals of the world."§

\* *Despatches*, vi. 468

‡ *Stanhope*, 162.

† *Ibid.*, vi. 520.

§ *Belmas, Journaux des Sièges*, i. 135.

Masséna was in the trap. By the end of October 29,000 ANN. 1810 British, 24,000 Portuguese, and 5,000 Spanish troops were collected within the lines of Torres Vedras, nearly 60,000 in all, while a strong reinforcement of British marines were close at hand. Death, desertion, and sickness had reduced Masséna's army to little more than 50,000; cut off from their base they possessed, to quote Wellington's own words, no more than the ground they stood on.\* Inside the lines there was abundance of food; outside, the resources of the country soon gave out, the troops suffered severely from want, and the French foraging parties were attacked almost daily by bodies of militia outside the lines. In fact, had the grain and cattle been removed as Wellington had desired, the invading army could not have remained in its position for a week. As it was, their privations were very severe, and the suffering they inflicted on those inhabitants who had rashly remained in their homes were indescribable. There is the authority of a French military writer for the shocking statement, which has never been contradicted, that Masséna allowed detachments to go out to collect all girls between twelve and thirty years of age for the use of his soldiers. "I saw," testified an English officer present with the army, "with my own eyes, when Masséna had retired from before the lines of Torres Vedras, forty or fifty of these wretches in a state of disease, famine, and *insanity*, beyond all conception." †

General de Marbot, who was present with the French army, has placed it on record that Masséna desired to attack the entrenchments without delay; that Junot, who knew Lisbon and its environs well, supported his view, as did Montbrun, but that Ney and Regnier had no stomach for it. In fact, he says that Masséna actually issued orders for an advance, and that Ney flatly refused to obey. ‡

\* *Despatches*, vii. 298.

† *Quarterly Review*, vol. lxx. 42, note.

‡ Masséna's own correspondence, however, does not show that he had any disposition to attack the lines. On 29th October, after he had lain twelve days

ÆT. 41.  
 Masséna  
 retires to  
 Santarem.

In less than a month the French position could no longer be maintained. During the night of the 14th November, and under cover of a thick fog on the 15th, Masséna broke up and retired upon Santarem and Thomar. It was late in the day before the allied outposts perceived the movement, owing to the ruse of the French in leaving straw-stuffed figures representing sentries and videttes.\* Believing the enemy to be in full retreat from Portugal, Wellington moved out of his lines and followed him closely; but, finding supplies more plentiful near Santarem, Masséna decided to await reinforcements in his new position, which the floods rendered it impossible to attack without very heavy loss. The Allies, therefore, went into cantonments between the mountains and the Tagus, occupying a position extending from Alcoentre to Villa Franca, with headquarters at Cartaxos.

It may be asked why Wellington, whose operative force now considerably exceeded that at Masséna's disposal, did not assume the offensive before his opponent's reinforcements could arrive. His reasons are clearly explained in his despatches; the French were always able in that country of natural strongholds to take up such positions as could not be attacked without risk nor carried without loss. Warned as he had been repeatedly by the Secretary of State to incur neither risk nor unnecessary loss, the following passages from Wellington's correspondence with that minister furnish an effective defence alike against those critics who have compared his strategy unfavourably with that of Marlborough,†

before them, he wrote to Berthier: "I have not thought it right to attack entrenchments armed with a formidable artillery, and occupied by an enemy of double our numbers: that would have given him too much advantage, and I should have compromised the Emperor's army. . . . I remain in my position in hopes that the Portuguese refugees in Lisbon will make a movement against the English . . . or that Lord Wellington will come out of his entrenchments to receive or give battle."

\* *Kincaid.*

† Even Brialmont, a warm panegyrist of Wellington, blames him because he exhibited at the commencement of the French retreat some dispositions to delay,



and against those who have judged him indifferent to the Ann. 1810.  
lives and health of his soldiers.

"27th October, 1810.

". . . I think the sure game, and that in which I am likely to lose fewest men, the most consistent with my instructions and the intentions of the King's Government: and I therefore prefer to wait the attack. Besides, although I have the advantage of numbers, the enemy are in a very good position, which I could not turn with any large force, without laying open my own rear and the road to the sea. This is the worst of all these strong countries, that they afford equally good positions to both sides."\*

"3rd November, 1810.

"I cannot but be of opinion that I act in conformity with the instructions and intentions of his Majesty's Government, in waiting for the result of what is going on, and in incurring no extraordinary risk. Every day's delay at this season of the year narrows our line of defence, and consequently strengthens it; and when the winter shall have set in, no number, however formidable, can venture to attack it: and the increase of the enemy's numbers will only add to their distress, and increase the difficulties of their retreat. . . . If I should make any attack, the advantage must be very obvious before I adopt a measure which must be attended by the consequence of losing the services of my men by sickness."†

"December 21st.

". . . The question whether I should attack the enemy in the position which he now occupies has been well considered by me. I have a superior army, I think, by 10,000 men, or one-sixth, including the Spaniards; and notwithstanding some defects in its composition, I think I should succeed. But the loss must necessarily be very great in killed and wounded, and . . . exposing the troops to the weather for some days and nights

and even to hesitate, in following up Masséna's columns. Napier observes caustically that "Lord Wellington's experience in the movement of great armies was not, at this period, equal to his adversary's."

\* *Despatches*, vi. 528.

† *Ibid.*, vi. 555.

Æt. 41. — would throw a great proportion of this convalescent army into the hospital. Then what is to be gained in this action, in which failure would be the loss of the whole cause?" \*

"29th December.

" . . . Whatever may be Masséna's opinion of his chance of success in an attack upon the allied army, I am convinced he will make it if he receives the order from Paris. . . . Having such an enemy to contend with, and, knowing as I do, that there is no army in the Peninsula capable of contending with the enemy, excepting that under my command; that there are no means of repairing any large losses I may sustain . . . I have determined to persevere in the system which has hitherto saved all. . . . I entertain no doubt of the final success of the measures which I am carrying on: and, at all events, I am certain that they are the only measures which can be entirely successful." †

At the close of 1810 the army lost the services for a time of General Robert Craufurd, who, in spite of Wellington's dissuasion, † insisted on going home to England on leave. The Light Division was placed under the feeble command of Sir William Erskine, of whom Charles Napier observed in one of his letters home that he was the laughing-stock of the whole army, and especially of the Light Division. It is only fair, however, to Erskine's memory to mention that he had been mentally deranged and confined for two years, and that in 1813 he attempted to destroy himself in a frenzy by throwing himself out of a window at Freneda.

Wellington used to complain down to the very close of his active military life, at the system of appointing officers to high command, irrespectively of their professional merit, and without consulting the General under whom they were to serve in the field. Erskine's appointment was the occasion of a more vigorous remonstrance than usual.

\* *Despatches*, vii. 52.

† *Ibid.*, vii. 79.

‡ *Ibid.*, 34.

Viscount Wellington to Colonel Torrens, Military Secretary. ANN. 1810.

"Celorico, 29th August, 1810.

"I have received your letter announcing the appointment of Erskine, — and — to this army. The first I have generally understood to be a madman; I believe it is your own opinion that the second is not very wise; the third will, I believe, be a useful man. But I should be glad to get rid of a few of the same description with — and —; and there are some in this army which it is disreputable and quite unsafe to keep. Colonel —, whose memorial I enclose, who was sent away from — for incapacity, and whom I was very glad to get rid of from hence last year, has lately come out again. I have been obliged to appoint him to the Staff because he is senior to others; and I wished to keep him away and prevent him from spoiling a good regiment by joining it; and he remains at a distance till further orders as perpetual President of General Courts-Martial. Then there is —, whose conduct is really scandalous. I am not able to bring him before a court-martial, as I should wish, but he is a disgrace to the army which can have such a man as a major-general. Really when I reflect upon the characters and attainments of some of the general officers of this army, and consider that these are the persons on whom I am to rely to lead columns against the French Generals, and who are to carry my instructions into execution, I tremble. . . . — and — will be a very nice addition to this list! However, I pray God and the Horse Guards to deliver me from General — and Colonel —."\*

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 532.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE OVERTHROW OF MASSÉNA.

1810-1811.

<p>1810. Position and condition of the two armies.</p> <p>December 21. Soult moves north to support Masséna.</p> <p>January 27, 1811. He invests Badajos.</p> <p>March 5 . . . . . Masséna retreats from Santarem.</p> <p>„ 11 . . . . . Treasonable surrender of Badajos. Usefulness of Portuguese spies. Smartness of British cavalry in reconnoitring.</p> <p>„ . . . . . Soult returns to the South.</p> <p>„ 15 . . . . . Affair at Foz d'Aronce. Dissension among the French commanders.</p> <p>„ 22 . . . . . Marshal Ney removed from his command.</p> <p>„ 29 . . . . . Attack and capture of Guarda by the Allies.</p> <p>April 3 . . . . . Combat of Sabugal. Masséna is driven out of Portugal.</p> <p>„ 20 . . . . . Wellington leaves his army to visit the Alemtejo.</p> <p>May 2 . . . . . Masséna resumes the offensive.</p> <p>„ 4 . . . . . Beresford lays siege to Badajos.</p>	<p>May 5 . . . . . Battle of Fuentes de Onoro.</p> <p>„ 8 . . . . . Masséna retreats, and is removed from his command.</p> <p>„ 10 . . . . . Escape of the garrison of Almeida.</p> <p>„ 12 . . . . . Soult causes the siege of Badajos to be raised.</p> <p>„ 16 . . . . . Battle of Albuera. King Joseph leaves Madrid and renounces his crown. Marmont assumes command of the army of Portugal.</p> <p>„ 25 . . . . . Reinvestment of Badajos.</p> <p>June 12 . . . . . The siege raised a second time. The French retire from Estremadura. Wellington blockades Ciudad Rodrigo.</p> <p>September 21 . . Marmont advances to relieve Ciudad Rodrigo.</p> <p>„ 24 . . Action at El Bodon.</p> <p>„ 25 . . General retreat of the Allies. Withdrawal of the French. The blockade of Ciudad Rodrigo resumed.</p>
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THE year 1810 drew to a close without any material difference in the relative positions of the two armies. While the hatred between the French invaders and the Portuguese patriots became, if possible, more intense, the best kind of understanding prevailed between British soldiers and their enemies. War was being conducted on the grand scale; French and English had no personal quarrel—no private wrongs to avenge; their outposts and sentries established most friendly relations; their officers exchanged compliments and good-humoured raillery across the rivulet which separated their respective lines. When the greyhounds of an English officer ran a hare within the French lines, they were returned under a flag of truce with a polite message.\* Very seldom was there any fighting—only when a reconnaissance was undertaken on either side. On one of these rare occasions General Junot was badly wounded. Lord Wellington, knowing how ill-furnished were the French with comforts and hospital appliances, sent to inquire for him, offering to send anything he might require; but of course the French General would not admit the destitution of his camp by accepting any help.† Many such agreeable incidents varied the daily routine.

ANN. 1810.  
Position  
and con-  
dition of  
the two  
armies.

"5th November, 1810.

"We are here without any idea of attacking or being attacked, with our videttes close to each other, and picquets whose sentries relieve by the same road. The French have double sentries, and when you approach near them they strike the butts of their firelocks, as if to say, 'We are here, and there is no use for both of us.' This has only taken place lately; at first our sentries and the French used to drink together. Our men, of course, got drunk; one of the Buffs left his firelock, which was brought after him by one of the Frenchmen. General Hill has, however, very wisely put a stop to this, and we are now perfectly polite, and not so disgustingly familiar. I was at our outposts yesterday;

\* *Kincaid*, 37.

† *Ibid.*, 38.

Æt. 41. the French vidette saluted us, not with a shot, but by kissing his hand. Is not this civilised warfare?" \*

Every morning, an hour before daybreak, the allied troops stood to arms, and remained so till a grey horse could be seen a mile off, when they were dismissed to breakfast.

Sufferings  
of the  
French.

Widely different, however, were the circumstances of those inside and outside the great lines. Within, there was abundance and repose, plenty of leisure for dancing, flirting, shooting, and other amusements; well-filled wine-skins and regular rations. Outside, the French forces, dwindling by disease, desertion, and incessant onslaughts by Portuguese ordenanças on their convoys and foraging parties, were harassed by incessant fatigues. A despatch could not be sent along their line of communications without an escort of 200 or 300 men; subsisting entirely on plunder, the invaders soon exhausted the resources of their neighbourhood, and had to send further and ever further afield for their subsistence. "Heaven forgive me," wrote a Portuguese spy to Wellington, from Santarem, "if I wrong them in believing they have eaten my cat!" † One cannot reflect without commiseration on the waste of these troops—hitherto the most splendid and devoted in Europe—sacrificed without compunction to gratify the ambition of one man. At last Masséna realised that he could no longer hold his ground. The despised "Hindoo General" had out-manceuvred him, beaten him in a pitched battle, and finally led him into a well-designed snare. British reinforcements were on the sea; retreat was the only means of saving the French army. Masséna had sent General Foy to Paris to lay before the Emperor the urgent necessity for reinforcements, but already Napoleon had made up his mind to war with Russia; he had in contemplation the mightiest invasion recorded in military history, and could spare no more men for the Peninsula. However, he sent orders to King Joseph to advance to Alcantara, and

\* Dumaresq MSS.

† De Ros MS.

directed Soult to break up from Cadiz, in order to create a diversion by the invasion of Estremadura. Soult, though relieved by the uniform success during the winter of the French Generals against the severally gallant, but isolated and ill-advised efforts of the Spanish armies, was very unwilling to obey; nevertheless, on 21st December, 1810, he left Cadiz with 5,000 men, and, taking the 5th Corps from Seville, marched with 20,000 troops upon the south of the Tagus to open communications with Masséna. His advance, however, was slow, because, being more careful than Masséna about the safety of his rear, he undertook the reduction of Merida, Olivença, and Badajos. The Spanish Generals Mendizabal and Ballasteros held the bridges on the Guadiana, which at that season was an impassable torrent, with 12,300 men; but the Junta marched Ballasteros away to the Condado de Niebla, and Mendizabal, when he heard of Soult's advance, retreated hurriedly without blowing up the bridges as he ought in common prudence to have done, and withdrew to Badajos and Olivença. Merida was not defended; Olivença surrendered after eight days' blockade on 23rd January, 1811; and Badajos was invested on the 27th. Mendizabal had been repeatedly urged by Wellington to fortify his own very strong position at Badajos; \* but he neglected to do so, and on being attacked by 5,800 French on 19th February, his force of 11,500 Spaniards was totally destroyed as a military body.

The Governor of Badajos, Rafael Menacho, when summoned by Soult, replied that he meant to hold his trust in such sort that the siege should be written on the same page of history as the sieges of Gerona and Zaragoza. Unhappily he was slain on the ramparts: his successor, Imaz, was either a craven, a traitor, or both. On 11th March he capitulated, and just as Wellington had been censured for allowing the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo, so now the Junta of Estremadura threw upon him the blame of Mendizabal's defeat. They complained that when Mendizabal asked for British cavalry,

\* *Despatches*, vii. 249, 264.

ANN. 1811.

Soult  
advances  
to support  
Masséna.

Soult  
invests  
Badajos.

**Æt. 41.** Wellington sent Portuguese, who ran away! \* Wellington has, indeed, been severely and frequently blamed for not relieving Badajos; but the fact is that, until his reinforcements arrived from England, he could not spare the 13,000 men necessary for that object. These reinforcements arrived on the Tagus on 1st March. When Masséna broke up from Santarem on the 5th, word was sent to Governor Imaz that relief would be sent in a few days. The place was in no distress; the garrison had suffered no loss, except that of their former commander; the fire of the fortress was superior to that of the enemy, and Wellington was assured Imaz could hold out for a month. As soon as Masséna's retreat was found to be genuine, a column was detached to march to Badajos. It was recalled on the 9th in consequence of the enemy's movements rendering a general action at Pombal probable, and two days later Imaz hauled down his flag.

Badajos  
surrenders.

Soult's success, however, came too late to encourage Masséna to hold his ground. The starving and mutinous state of his troops, the dissensions and jealousy of their commanders, unfitted him to sustain the attack which the Allies would assuredly deliver as soon as the rivers should render it possible for them to assume the offensive. Having decided to retreat upon Coimbra by Pombal and Espinhal, he carried out his design in a manner so masterly as must always command the admiration of tacticians.

Masséna  
retreats.

Masséna himself lay at Santarem with the 2nd Corps. On his right at Pernes and Torres Novas was the 8th Corps, while Ney held the 6th Corps in reserve at Thomar, with

\* Lord Wellington to Hon. H. Wellesley.

"3rd March, 1811.

" . . . I believe it is more necessary for me to justify myself for having trusted General Madden's brigade to the direction of General Mendizabal, than for having omitted to reinforce General Mendizabal with British cavalry. Till it can be shown that 10,000 Spanish infantry and 1,500 cavalry, with cannon, in a good position . . . ought not to be expected to defend themselves against 4,000 French infantry and 1,800 cavalry . . . this misfortune will not be attributed to me" (*Despatches*, vii. 325).



Loison's Division holding Panhete on the Tagus to his left. ANN. 1811.  
 Having begun to send his baggage and sick to the rear, Masséna sent the 6th Corps and the cavalry to Leiria, threatening the left of the defences of the Allies, at the same time manœuvring with the 2nd and 8th Corps as if about to cross the Tagus at Panhete. But having burnt his boats and bridge apparatus on 5th March, he doubled back during the night, destroying the bridges on the Alviella, and retired the 2nd Corps upon Thomar, the 8th on Torres Novas. This movement was not discovered by Wellington till the morning of the 6th, but the advantage of the start was neutralised for Masséna by the growing insubordination of his Generals.\* Masséna desired to concentrate upon Coimbra and offer battle; Ney, on the other hand, commanding the rear-guard, was in haste to get out of Portugal altogether. Drouet, Count d'Erlon, when instructed to support Ney, maintained that he was independent in his command, and would take orders neither from Masséna nor Ney. On 6th March, therefore, the 2nd Corps moved from Thomar to Espinhal, and the rest of the French army concentrated on Pombal. Wellington was perplexed by these manœuvres, but the 3rd and 5th Divisions having pushed forward to Leiria, ascertained that Masséna was preparing to give battle at Pombal. The French Marshal's design of retreating by Coimbra was altered in consequence of intelligence sent by Montbrun, who, having gone ahead with his light cavalry and a few guns to occupy Coimbra, mistook Trant's militiamen for the British

\* *Marshal Masséna to Marshal Berthier.*

“Alfaiates, 31st March, 1811.

“ . . . I have done all that rested with me to keep the army out of Spain as long as possible . . . but I have been continually opposed, I make bold to say, by the commanders of the *corps d'armée*, who have roused such a spirit among the officers and soldiers, that it would be dangerous to retain our present positions any longer. . . . I have been the only one, I can assure you, who was willing to hold on in Portugal, and had I not been very resolute, we should not have remained there for fifteen days. In all my previous warfare I have never experienced so much opposition.”

**Æt. 41.** reinforcements which were known to have landed at Lisbon on 2nd March. Masséna, warned to that effect, changed his line of retreat to the right, directing his baggage and encumbrances to take the road to Puente de Murcella. On the 10th the British were assembled in sufficient force before Pombal; but while they were forming for attack, the enemy suddenly retired, covered by Ney's 6th Corps as rear-guard, and took up a strong position in a wooded defile in front of Redinha. Here Ney was attacked on the 12th by Sir William Erskine, commanding the Light Division.

Combat of  
Redinha.

Wellington, who had been unable to reconnoitre the enemy's position, and was unaware of the strength opposed to him, allowed Masséna time to perfect his arrangements, and when the main body of the Allies were brought into action, Ney fired the village of Redinha, and followed his chief upon Condeixa, where the French army lay that night, the 2nd Corps being still at Espinhal, and a strong detachment occupying Fonte Coberta, midway between the two places. Wellington was now able to re-establish communication with Colonel Trant's gallant garrison at Coimbra, which he effected on the 13th by sending a division across the hills to his right, which arrived in the afternoon at a point beyond the enemy's left flank. Ney immediately set fire to Condeixa, and retired upon Miranda de Corvo; the Allies followed, opened communication with Coimbra, and cut off the French divisions in Fonte Coberta. These, however, managed to get round the British during the night, and rejoined Ney on the left bank of the Deuca, before Miranda.

On the 14th Wellington detached the 4th Division by Penella to co-operate with Nightingale's troops on the Espinhal road in attacking the 2nd Corps, and, by crossing the Deuca at Espinhal to turn the position at Miranda. The 3rd Division was directed at a point nearer the enemy's flank, while the main body under Wellington attacked in front. Ney waited till his flank was turned, and while Wellington's column was in the act of deploying for attack,

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LE MARÉCHAL NEY,  
PRINCE DE LA MOSKOWA.

*Vol. 1. p. 214.*



retired once more, following Masséna through Miranda de Corvo, which he burnt, and covered the passage of the Ceira with his rear-guard. Next day, the 15th, Wellington struck a blow at Ney, who held the bridge of Foz d'Aronce and fought with more spirit than he had shown of late. The weather was very foggy, and the advanced guard did not come in sight of the enemy till 4 p.m., when Wellington ordered an immediate attack upon the rear-guard under Ney. The French left, suffering severely from the fire of horse artillery, fell into confusion; but their right remained firm, and stuffily withstood repeated attacks, while the main body crossed the bridge in safety. Then Ney, remaining at nightfall with a weak guard on the hither side, blew up the bridge, escaped along the river in the dark, and took up a position covering that of Masséna behind the Alva.

ANN. 1811.

Affair  
of Foz  
d'Aronce.

The Light Division bore the brunt of the fighting in these laborious days, and earned such high approval from the Commander-in-chief that he desired the commanding officers of the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th each to nominate a sergeant to receive an ensign's commission.

The horrors of this retreat exceeded anything that had taken place, even in these blood-boulted valleys. "Day after day," writes Napier in one of his finest passages, "Ney—the indomitable Ney—offered battle with the rear-guard, and a stream of fire ran along the wasted valleys of Portugal, from the Tagus to the Mondego, from the Mondego to the Coa." The French burnt every town and hamlet through which they passed, murdering the peasants and outraging the women; totally destroying the magnificent convent of Alcobaça,\* the bishop's palace at Leiria, and many other fine

\* "They had burnt what they could, and destroyed the remainder with an immense deal of trouble. The embalmed kings and queens were taken out of their tombs, and I saw them lying in as great preservation as the day they were interred. The fine tessellated pavement, from the entrance to the altar, was picked up, the facings to the stone pillars were destroyed nearly to the top, scaffolding having been erected for that purpose. . . . An orderly book found

Æt. 41. buildings, with the mere object of vengeance on the country to which they had come as professed friends. The country people were dying in hundreds from sheer starvation or the fell famine fever; sixty-five died in one day at Leiria. Never, in modern civilised warfare, have the common feelings of humanity been more utterly quenched. The French used to press the peasants as guides, and shoot them at the end of a day's march, lest they should give information to the British. "Yet," testifies Colonel Tomkinson, "I never heard a complaint against us . . . they are the most patient people in the world."\* Horrible sights shocked the eye in every mile of that *marche macabre*. Napier speaks of the honest wrath of his men when they came upon five hundred wretched asses which the French had abandoned when they could no longer feed them, and hamstrung because it was too much trouble to kill them. He speaks also with shuddering about acts of retaliation—how, for instance, he saw a Portuguese farmer encouraging his dog to worry wounded Frenchmen as they lay dying by the wayside.

Usefulness  
of Portu-  
guese spies.

Wellington found the Portuguese, and especially the monks, very useful in supplying information about the enemy. During almost that whole period of the war a Portuguese spy lived undetected at Yrun, counting the French troops entering Spain by that main road, and forwarding valuable information to Wellington.†

Smartness  
of the  
British  
cavalry  
in recon-  
noitring.

General de Marbot mentions with admiration the system of reconnoitring practised by British cavalry in this campaign. Officers were sent out singly to conduct observations, mounted on thoroughbred horses and hovering just out of rifle-shot on the flanks of columns.

"In vain we sent our best mounted horsemen after them. When a British officer saw them approaching, he would set his

near the place showed that regular parties had been ordered for the purpose" (Tomkinson, 77).

\* Tomkinson, 80.

† De Ros MS.

excellent charger at a gallop, easily leaping banks, hedges, and even brooks, and making off so swiftly that our men, unable to follow him, lost sight of him, till presently he would reappear a league further, on the top of some hillock where, spyglass in hand, he resumed his observations." ANN. 1811.

As a military arm, however, the British cavalry was inferior to the French, not only in numbers, but in efficiency. It was the English practice to manœuvre cavalry far more rapidly than the condition of horses on a campaign, sometimes fed entirely on green forage, rendered expedient. The men were never trained at home to disperse and re-form, and all their knowledge of outpost duty had to be picked up in the presence of the enemy.\*

Notwithstanding the fall of Badajos, the corps destined for its relief had been detached on 11th March under Marshal Beresford, in order to protect Wellington's right flank. The defeat of Marshal Victor by General Graham at Barossa on 6th March had alarmed Soult about affairs in the South, and he returned to Seville, leaving Mortier to operate against Beresford, who had been instructed to blockade Badajos, and in all probability would have taken it as easily as he did Campo Mayor, had he been able to reach it before supplies were thrown in. But he was thwarted by the neglect of the Spanish authorities to comply with instructions to send the only bridge of boats on the Guadiana to Elvas: he could not pass that river till 4th April, by which time provisions and ammunition had been conveyed into Badajos. In Portugal, however, everything was going in favour of the allied forces—everything, at least, except the failure of concert with the Spanish armies, and the inveterate neglect of its soldiers in the field by the Portuguese Government. Grievously hampered by the last-mentioned impediment, Wellington wrote again and again to remonstrate and threaten.

\* It is notorious that on the return of the troops to England after the peace no advantage was taken of the experience gained in the war. The cavalry continued to be drilled in the old routine of close column and change of position.

ÆT. 41.

To Mr. Stuart.

"18th March.

" . . . There must be a radical change in the whole system of the Government in respect to the resources carrying on the war, or I shall recommend his Majesty to withdraw his army. It is a favourite notion with some of the members of the (Portuguese) Government that Portuguese troops can do with very little or no food. Among other good qualities, they possess that of being patient under privations in an extraordinary degree. But men cannot perform the labours of soldiers without food. Three of General Pack's brigade died of famine yesterday on their march, and above one hundred and fifty have fallen out from weakness, many of whom must have died from the same cause . . . The mules of the artillery were unable to draw the guns from want of food, for any length of time : the baggage mules of the army are nearly all dead of famine. . . . I have this day told General Pack and Colonel Ashworth that if they cannot procure food for their troops with the army, they must go to Coimbra, or elsewhere where they can, as I cannot bear to see and hear of brave soldiers dying for want of common care. One consequence, therefore, of omitting to feed the troops will be to throw us again upon the defensive in this part of the country. Another consequence also, which I seriously apprehend, is that the British officers serving with the Portuguese troops will resign their situations." \*

The Regency, and even more so the persons they employed, certainly brought these campaigns more than once to the verge of failure by their dilatoriness and inattention. Two-thirds of the Portuguese army was paid and partly clothed, the whole of it was armed and officered, by the British ; the Regency had only to supply them with food and forage.† But in justice to the Portuguese it should be stated that the subsidies from England were often heavily in arrear ; the Portuguese Treasury was in a constant state of depletion,

\* *Despatches*, vii. 361.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, vi. 440, 477. Up to December, 1809, the Portuguese were in receipt of a subsidy of £600,000 a year for the pay of their troops ; which was increased in that month to £980,000 a year.



and the Regency was but an improvised Government, un- ANN. 1811.  
 practised in administration and indifferently served by its  
 officials.

To save them from perishing of famine, Wellington had to feed the Portuguese troops with rations from his own commissariat; and, although a ford across the Ceira lay open to him, he was condemned to two days of inaction after the successful affair at Foz d'Aronce, waiting the arrival of supplies. Little account of these causes of constantly recurring delay is taken by those who describe Wellington as lax in pursuit and naturally more disposed to defence than attack.

Masséna having retreated on the 15th to strong ground on the right bank of the Alva, the flooded state of the Ceira kept the Allies inactive on 16th March; but on the 17th, Wellington crossed on a raft bridge constructed in the night by the staff corps, and sent three divisions to turn the enemy's left by way of the difficult Sierra de Guiteria, while the 6th and Light Divisions threatened his front. This caused Masséna to concentrate on the Sierra de Moita; but when Wellington conformed by a similar concentration, the enemy, having destroyed more of his baggage and ammunition, fell rapidly back on Celorico and Guarda, where they lay on the 21st.

Hitherto nothing could have been more admirable or successful from a military point of view than the conduct of the retreat. Full advantage had been taken of the natural features of the ground; as often as Wellington with 40,000 men overtook Ney with 10,000, he could not attack with the head of his column, not knowing in what manner Ney was supported. He was obliged either to deploy his whole force or direct a turning movement, both of which operations allowed time for the main body of the French to be placed in safety, after which Ney lightly withdrew, and the whole labours of his adversary seemed thrown away.

Now, however, the dissension between the French  
 Marshals had arrived at a climax. Masséna was unwilling  
 Dissension among the French Generals.

ÆT. 41. to quit Portugal as a beaten General and without the Emperor's permission. He proposed to send his sisk to Almeida, to march his army to Coria, in order to open communication with Soult (of whose return to Andalusia he was not aware) and with King Joseph. Thus reinforced, he intended to resume the invasion of Portugal, or at least to cover the garrisons in the captured towns of Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajos, Almeida, and Olivença. Ney, on receiving his commander's orders to march south-east, moved his corps in a north-easterly direction, whereupon Masséna removed him from his command, which he gave to General Loison.\* Masséna then determined to hold Guarda, a town strongly built on an isolated mountain in the Sierra da Estrella, whither he marched the 6th Corps with all speed, closely followed by the Allies. Regnier held Belmonte with the 2nd Corps, the 8th Corps and the cavalry remaining to the east of the Sierra.

Attack  
and cap-  
ture of  
Guarda by  
the Allies.

Reinforcements having come up from Lisbon, Wellington increased the divisions of his army from six to seven, and on the morning of the 29th March attacked the heights of Guarda with five columns simultaneously from different points. The French abandoned the position without firing a shot, retiring in some confusion to the Coa, but covered by their rear-guard in excellent order. Regnier also retired from Belmonte in the same direction, his rear-guard fighting the Light Division. It is not clear why the enemy was not more vigorously pressed in retiring from Guarda and

\* *Marshal Masséna to Marshal Berthier.*

"22nd March, 1811.

"I have been reduced to an extremity which I have strenuously endeavoured to avoid. The Marshal the Duc d'Elchingen (Ney) has arrived at the climax of disobedience. . . . I have given the command of the 6th corps to the Comte Loison, as the senior General of division. Sir, it is grievous for an old soldier who has commanded armies for so many years . . . to arrive at such a pass with one of his old comrades. The Duc d'Elchingen, since my arrival with this army, has not ceased to thwart me in my military operations. . . . His character is well known: I shall say no more."

Belmonte. It seems, at least, as if the prompt use of General ANN. 1811. Slade's cavalry, acting with the Light Division, might have cut off Regnier from joining the 6th Corps behind the Coa.

While the army of Portugal was in this rueful plight, their celebration of the birth of a son to their Emperor was not without the element of irony. One of Regnier's aides-de-camp warned one of Wellington's to be under no alarm if a cannonade was heard. Consequently, when a salute of 101 guns was fired on 2nd April in honour of the King of Rome, the British army understood and thoroughly enjoyed the joke.\*

The French having effected a concentration, took up a Combat of Sabugal. position on the right bank of the Coa, and here Masséna made a last attempt to keep his hold on Portuguese soil. His front and left flank were protected by the Coa, which flows round three sides of the heights on which his army was disposed in line of battle, the 6th Corps forming the right at Ravina, the left on a hill behind Sabugal, the 8th in support of both at Alfayates. Trant's Corps was sent round by Almeida to turn the enemy's right; the Light Division, with the cavalry on their right, were to cross by a ford opposite the French left; the 3rd Division, under General Picton, at another ford a mile above Sabugal, and the 5th Division, under General Dunlop, with the artillery at Sabugal bridge.

Effective and precise as this plan looks on paper, it broke down in execution. The morning of 3rd April was very wet and foggy, and Wellington could not regulate personally the execution of every detail in a position extending round half a wide circle. "These combinations," observed he, "do not answer unless one is on the spot to direct every trifling movement."† The Light Division moved forward prematurely: it was blind work in a heavy rainstorm. After driving in the enemy's pickets they suddenly found themselves engaged with the whole of the French 6th Corps, and were twice beaten back. They were in imminent danger of destruction

\* *Despatches*, vii. 429.

† *Ibid.*, vii. 415.

Æt. 41. — when the 5th Division, having crossed the Coa at Sabugal bridge, came up, deployed, and poured such a withering fire on the close French columns as forced them to retire with the loss of a howitzer and many men. At the same moment the head of the 3rd Division of the Allies opened fire from a wood on the French right, while Slade's cavalry appeared on his left, and Regnier, fearing to be surrounded, retired rapidly upon Rodon, followed by the British cavalry, being joined in his retreat by the 6th Corps, which had not been engaged. The whole affair was over in an hour's time.

Wellington's official despatches were always singularly reserved, and his expressions cold—almost dry; but in private correspondence he sometimes permitted himself a rare note of exultation.

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

Masséna  
evacuates  
Portugal.

The second French invasion of Portugal had come to an inglorious end. Masséna had escaped the fate which might have overtaken him, but for the excessive caution imposed by the British Cabinet on his opponent, and the neglect by the Portuguese Government to fulfil their obligations,—he had escaped, indeed, but of the magnificent host of 86,000, which he had brought across the frontier in May, 1810, only about 45,000 ragged, half-starved, sullen warriors recrossed the Agueda in April, 1811. Except the garrison of Almeida he left not a single French soldier at liberty in Portugal, though the number of his prisoners was becoming a source of anxiety to Wellington.†

The loss of the Allies during their pursuit of Masséna,

\* *Despatches*, vii. 421.

† *Ibid.*, 105, 374, 388, 428, 530.

lasting from 16th March to 7th April inclusive, was ANN. 1811. astonishingly small, considering that conflicts took place almost daily. The casualties among the British troops included 3 officers and 17 others killed, 11 officers and 136 others wounded, 1 officer and 4 men missing. The French were far more severely handled; at Sabugal alone Regnier left 300 dead on the field. This disproportion is attributable in great measure to the different field tactics of the two armies. The British infantry fought in line, being thereby exposed to much less offence from the fire of artillery and musketry. When it came to bayonet work, of course the weight of a column had its due advantage; but this was counterbalanced by the greater firing front afforded by the British formation. A single battalion deployed in line far overlapped the flanks of a close column of double companies, the usual French formation for attack. At Talavera, Busaco, and Sabugal, Wellington's confidence in the steadiness of British infantry in line had been amply vindicated, yet the French never ventured to put their soldiers to a similar test. Except when extended as skirmishers, they always handled them in column.

While Wellington was engaged in driving Masséna before him, Beresford, whom he had detached on 16th March with 22,000 men to operate on the Guadiana for the relief of Campo Mayor, had recaptured that place and Olivença. Wellington, leaving his forces to invest Almeida, arrived at Elvas on 20th April, and, having reconnoitred Badajos, directed Beresford to undertake the siege. Masséna, whose powers of recuperation under defeat were greater than Wellington seems to have realised, was busy at Salamanca repairing his disorders. The Emperor Napoleon had directed Marshal Bessières, who commanded the army of the North, to co-operate with the army of Portugal, and Masséna had repeatedly demanded his aid, an appeal to which Bessières for long turned a deaf ear.

Wellington leaves his army to visit the Alentejo.

Æt. 41.

*Marshal Masséna to Marshal Bessières.*

"Ciudad Rodrigo, 29th April, 1811.

" . . . Your letters are past understanding. By that of the 20th you tell me you can afford me no help. In that of the 22nd you say that you will join me wherever I am on the 25th or 26th, and that the head of your column will reach Salamanca on the 26th. That which I have just received informs me that your cavalry and artillery are still, on the 27th, a day's march from Salamanca; you conclude that my movement is accomplished, and you express regret that you could not co-operate in it. You must allow, my dear Maréchal, that if the army of Portugal meets with a reverse, you will have to reproach yourself very severely."

At last, towards the very end of April, Bessières grudgingly detached 1,500 cavalry and 6 guns, upon which Masséna moved his headquarters to Ciudad Rodrigo, and advanced on 2nd May to the relief of Almeida.

Masséna's forward movement brought Wellington back at speed from the Alemtejo, greatly to the relief of his army; for, as one of his officers quaintly remarked, "we would rather see his long nose in the fight than a reinforcement of ten thousand men any day."\* During his absence the Portuguese troops had suffered much from desertion, owing to the continued neglect of the Lisbon magistrates to forward supplies, and once more Wellington wrote very severely on the subject to Mr. Stuart.

"Has any magistrate been yet punished or even dismissed from his office for neglecting his duty? Has any alteration been made of any description in the old system of allowing every booby to do as he pleases, provided only that he cries Viva! . . . A fresh invasion would find us exactly where we were last year; and I do not think it would be safe to trust the King's army in this country, after such discouraging circumstances, and after the experience which the enemy have acquired of the country, its roads, etc., etc." †

\* *Kincaid*, 74.† *Despatches*, vii. 476.

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LE MARÉCHAL BESSIÈRES, DUC D'ISTRE.

*Vol. 1, p. 221.*





Deducting the troops acting with Beresford, Wellington ANN. 1811. could not oppose to Masséna's 40,000 men more than 33,000. Masséna resumes the offensive. He was especially weak in cavalry, having only 1,600 as compared with between 4,000 and 5,000 French. Nevertheless he determined to give battle, and on 2nd May, when the French army issued from Ciudad Rodrigo, falling back over the plain to the Dos Casas river, which he crossed, he placed the 1st, 3rd, and 7th Divisions on the right at Fuentes de Oñoro, supported by the Light Division, the 6th Division in the centre at the bridge of Alameda, and the 5th Division on the left at Fort Concepcion, the whole front extending to about five miles, and covering the force blockading Almeida, some six miles to the rear.

The conduct of the French armies towards the inhabitants of Portugal has been the subject of so much just and bitter opprobrium that it is no more than fair to record that the Allies, in spite of their commander's utmost efforts, were not always blameless. As a rule, property was respected, and supplies regularly paid for; but on this occasion, when the Light Division marched into the secluded village of Fuentes de Oñoro, they found that it had been pillaged and wrecked by their own comrades of the allied army. The soldiers were deeply indignant, for the Light Division had been kindly received there only a few days before. A subscription of 80,000 dollars was collected in the army as a sin-offering and handed to the alcalde.\*

On 3rd May three columns of French appeared before the allied position. Their 8th and 2nd Corps threatened Wellington's left, therefore the Light Division fell back across the Dos Casas stream and moved to the left to strengthen the 6th Division, leaving five battalions to hold Fuentes de Oñoro. These were immediately attacked by General Loison, who drove the British out of the village upon the steep ground about the chapel. Wellington, perceiving that the detachment was in considerable peril, sent

\* Napier, iii. 514.

Æt. 42. the 24th, 71st, and 79th Regiments to its support, who charged vigorously, and expelled the French from the streets. At nightfall the French retired, leaving the British in possession of the place.

Battle of  
Fuentes  
de Oñoro.

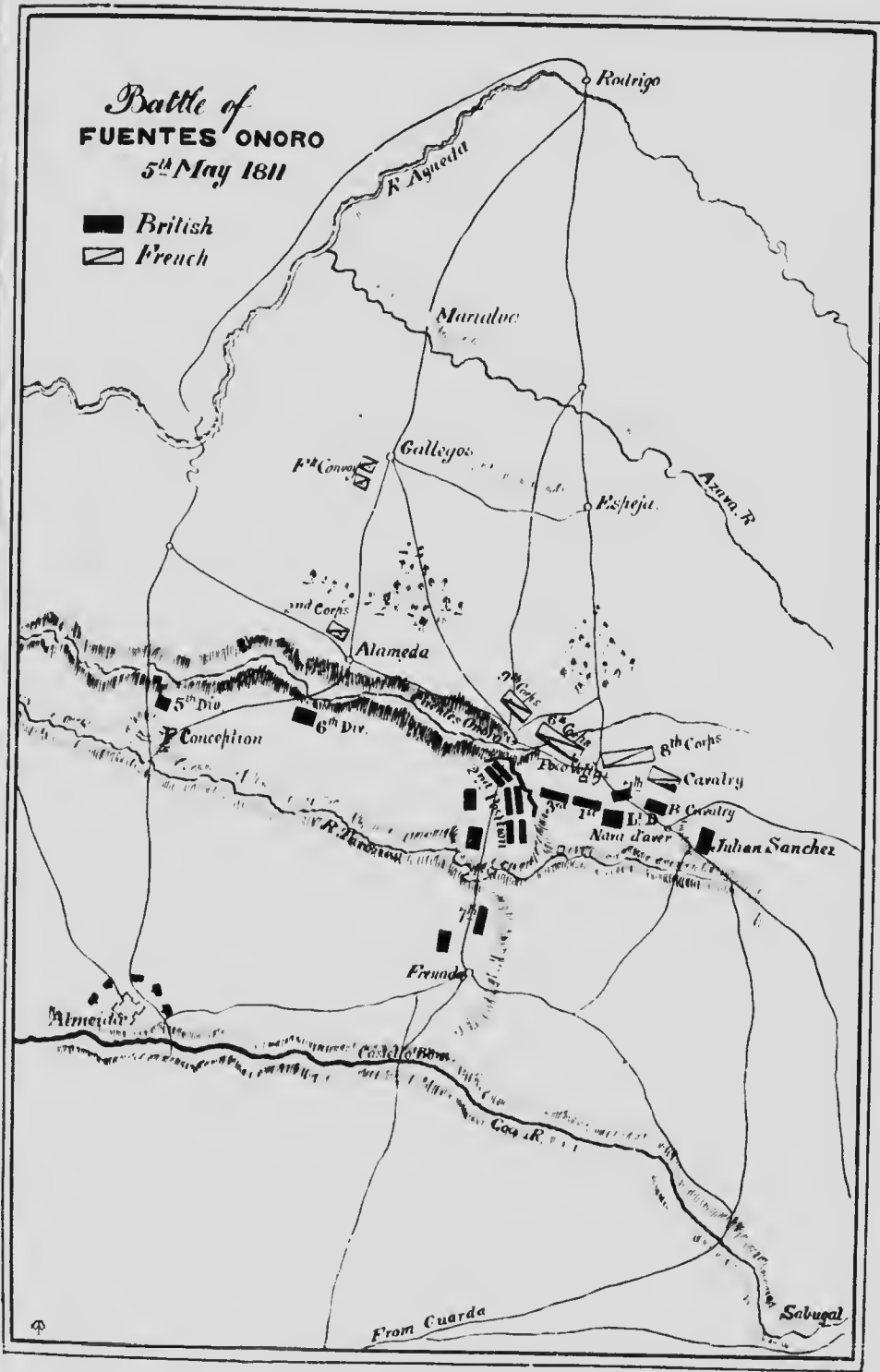
Masséna arrived on the 4th, with a detachment under Marshal Bessières, and spent the day reconnoitring. During the night a change was made in the French position, menacing the right of the Allies towards Fuentes de Oñoro, and corresponding movements took place in Wellington's divisions. The weak point in his position was his right flank; the centre and left being well protected by the ravine of the Dos Casas; but, above the village, the character of the ground altered, the banks of the stream lost their precipitous character, and the flank of the Allies was open to be turned. To remedy this Wellington had recourse to a hazardous expedient. He extended the right by sending General Houstoun to occupy Poço Velho with the left wing of the 7th Division, refusing the right wing so as to connect with the Spanish Irregulars of Julian Sanchez on the Nava d'Aver. Then the Light Division, once more under command of the fiery Craufurd, and the cavalry, under Sir Stapleton Cotton, took ground to their right to support Houstoun, the 1st and 3rd Divisions moving in touch with them.

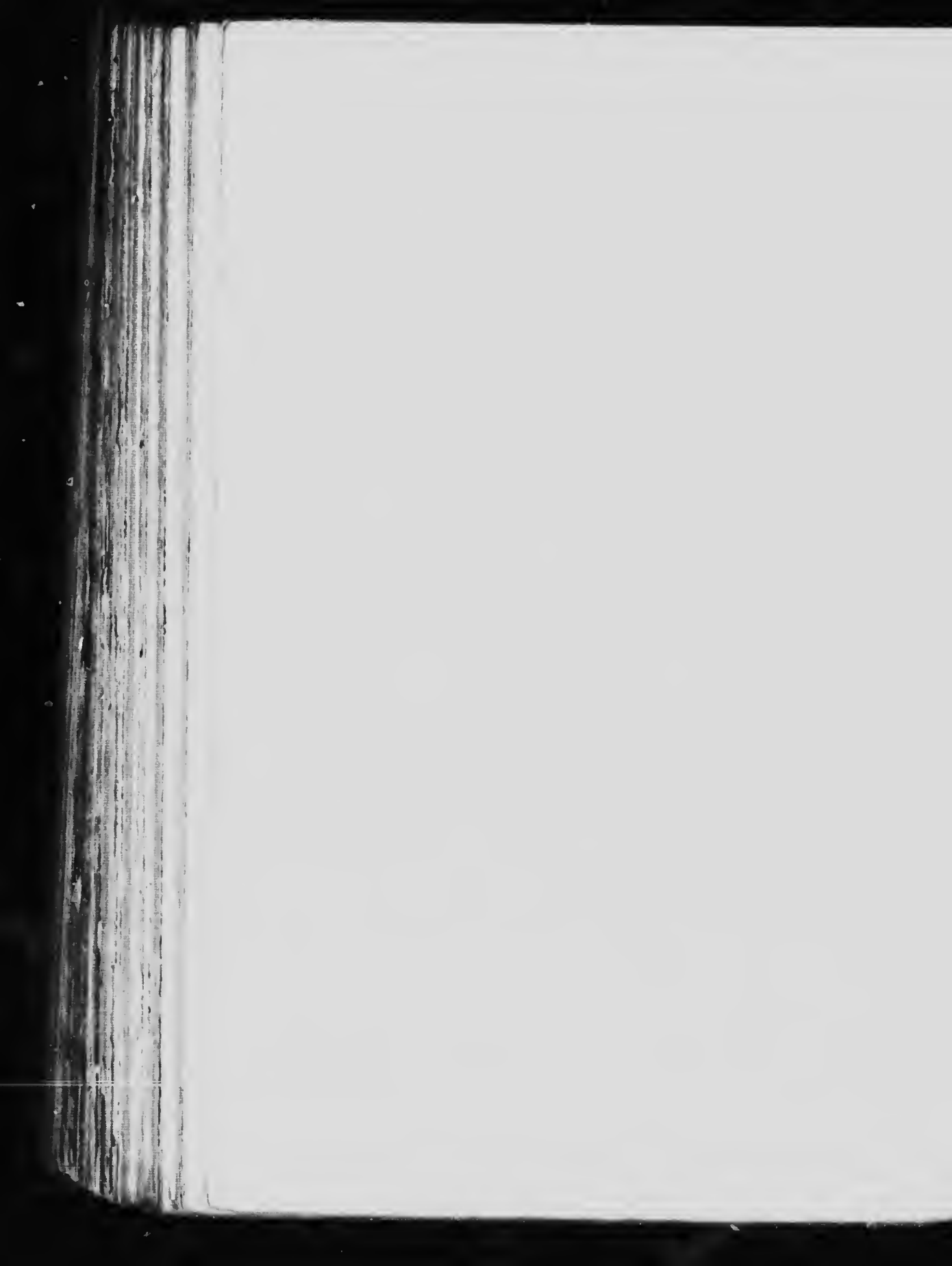
The 8th French Corps opened the ball by expelling two of Houstoun's battalions—the 85th British and 2nd Portuguese—from Poço Velho. General Fournier's advanced guard of cavalry moving out rapidly on the fine ground between Poço Velho and Nava d'Aver, forced Sanchez to abandon that important position, and turned Houstoun's right. The French squadrons swept on at the gallop, cutting off Captain Norman Ramsay's battery of Horse Artillery, but were checked by the charge of Cotton's dragoons. This gave Ramsay a chance. Fighting his way valiantly through the *meléc*, he brought off all his guns—an exploit famous for ever in the annals of the Royal Artillery.\*

\* Captain Ramsay was killed at Waterloo.

*Battle of*  
**FUENTES ONORO**  
*5<sup>th</sup> May 1811*

■ *British*  
 ▨ *French*





Montbrun, however, bringing up the main body of cavalry, swept down on the 7th and Light Divisions: the latter received them in squares—the former in line, partly protected by a stone wall. Affairs were exceedingly critical: Wellington's right was not only turned but broken; he saw that he must give up the idea of covering his communication with the Coa by way of Sabugal. Accordingly, he ordered the 1st, 3rd, and Light Divisions to fall back and occupy a ridge connecting the streams of Dos Casas and Turones, while the 7th Division crossed the last-named stream and formed the right of the new position near Freneda. A change of front in presence of 5,000 excellent cavalry supported by fifteen guns, is a more serious matter than a birthday parade; "there was not," observes Napier, "during the war a more dangerous hour for England." But the movement was executed with admirable steadiness, the French cavalry hovering round, but not venturing to charge, the squares, although they captured Colonel Hill's detachment of the Guards. The new position was secured, nearly at right angles to the old one, and the French cavalry being powerless without the support of infantry, the combat on the right resolved itself into an artillery duel.

While affairs were thus critical on the right of the line, the village of Fuentes de Oñoro had been vigorously attacked by the whole of the 6th Corps. Colonel Cameron, commanding the 1st Brigade, was mortally wounded, and the lower part of the village was carried. The 24th, 71st, and 79th Regiments, however, held the higher streets till reinforcements came up, and in the evening the French desisted from the attack, leaving the Allies in possession of the upper part of the village. The battle was entirely confined to the ground between Fuentes de Oñoro and Nava d'Aver; the divisions on the allied left never having been engaged. The result, though indecisive, must be accounted extremely fortunate for the Allies. Their position was a very faulty one, dangerously extended, and had Montbrun's cavalry, after

ANN. 1811.

The allied  
flank  
turned  
and  
broken.

Æt. 42. the British change of front, pushed on by Sabugal bridge, they would have cut Wellington's communications, and might have destroyed his magazines at Guarda and Celorico. Again, had Masséna made full use of his advantages, had he occupied with artillery the wooded ridge commanding Fuentes de Oñoro from the south, or even had Drouet supported more promptly the 6th Corps in its attack on the village; had the attack by the 6th Corps been made earlier, while the British right was retiring, and before supports could be sent to Colonel Cameron; lastly, had Masséna not had to contend with the disaffection and actual insubordination of Bessières, Junot, Regnier, and even Loison, and the refusal of the Imperial Guard to receive orders direct from him, it must have gone very hard with the Allies, who, if forced to retreat with the garrison of Almeida in their rear, must have fought a difficult way to the Coa at Castel Bom. Wellington's expressions in official despatches were always extremely guarded, knowing as he did how sensitive the British public were to alarm or discouragement; but in his private letters he admitted that his army had been in considerable jeopardy.

*Viscount Wellington to the Right Hon. W. Wellesley Pole.*

"Quinta de S. João, 2nd July, 1811.

" . . . Lord Liverpool was quite right not to move thanks for the battle of Fuentes, though it was the most difficult I was ever concerned in, and against the greatest odds. We had very nearly three to one against us engaged; above four to one of cavalry; and, moreover, our cavalry had not a gallop in them, while some of that of the enemy was fresh, and in excellent order. If Bony had been there we should have been beaten."\*

On the evening of the 5th the French pickets and sentries occupied the right bank of the Dos Casas stream; those of the Light Division the left. The customary courtesies were exchanged between them.

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, vii. 176.

"I am glad to see you here," called out the French field-officer, as he posted his pickets, to a captain of the 52nd on the other bank. "We shall now understand each other. When you want water, and our sentries challenge, call out 'aqua,' and you shall have it. Have the goodness to give your boys (*vos enfants*) similar orders." \* ANN. 1811.

After dusk, however, a French soldier, a sergeant, was taken within the British lines, and brought as a prisoner before Captain Love of the 52nd. He explained that he had come into the village to bid adieu to his Spanish sweetheart.

"C'est l'amour qui m'a fait votre prisonnier, mon capitaine."

"Eh bien," was Captain Love's reply, "pour cetto fois-ci nous ne serons pas trop exigeants. Retournez chez votre capitaine, et dites-lui que si l'amour vous a joué un mauvais tour, l'amour vous a dédommagé. Je m'appelle Love; vous ne m'oublierez de sitôt." \*

Throughout the night of the 5th working parties had been busy strengthening the position of the Allies with entrenchments, in preparation for the expected renewal of the attack next morning, but the 6th and 7th were passed in inaction by the French. On the morning of the 8th May, Lord Aylmer, Deputy Adjutant-General, came in to Lord Wellington's room when he was shaving, to tell him "the French had all moved off in the night, and the last of the cavalry were mounting to be gone." "Ay," said Wellington, stopping his operations for a minute, "gone, are they? I thought they meant to be off. Very well;" and set to work again with his razor.† So little emotion did he allow himself to show at what was, in truth, the turning-point of the campaign. Retreat  
of the  
French.

Indeed, the Allies came remarkably well out of this affair. Wellington succeeded in covering the blockade of Almeida, and the movement of the French reported to him on the morning of the 8th proved to be a regular retreat. To

\* From the 52nd *Record*.

† *Tarpent*, i. 108.

Æt. 42. account for it there is abundant evidence in the correspondence of Napoleon with his commanders in Spain.

Napoleon  
rebukes his  
Marshals.

*Marshal Marmont to Marshal Berthier.*

“Salamanca, 14th May, 1811.

“ . . . It is evident to me about the campaign in Portugal, that the present situation is the result of the unwillingness of the Prince of Essling (Masséna) to give battle either during the retreat or during his operations upon Almeida, although he was offered battle several times, which he would certainly have won, and so altered the whole fortune of the campaign.”

*Marshal Berthier to Marshal Bessières.*

Rambouillet, 19th May, 1811.

“The Emperor is dissatisfied at your not having furnished the Prince of Essling (Masséna) the necessary assistance. You ought to have [here follow an infinite number of criticisms on the Marshal's movements]. The Emperor, M. le Maréchal, finds that you have been useless to the army of Portugal. . . . What is the use of all this reluctance to unite and employ your forces in presence of the English, our implacable foes? What is the use of keeping Palencia, Lerma, and all these other posts, which scatter your army? . . . The Emperor, M. le Maréchal, hopes that you will retrieve the enormous blunder which you have committed. You have under your command about 50,000 men; what a splendid opportunity of concentrating them immediately to support the Prince of Essling and crush the English!”

*Marshal Bessières to Marshal Berthier.*

“Valladolid, 6th June, 1811.

“ . . . Whatever may be the reports made to the Emperor about the different parts of Spain, it is not the less positive that I tell you the truth, and that things are everywhere the same. . . . Monseigneur, talk of Spain! people are deluding the Emperor. . . . Everybody perceives the vicious system of our operations. Everybody agrees that we are too much scattered. We occupy too much country; we use up our means without profit or



necessity ; we indulge in dreams. . . . If I deceive myself in my calculations and appear to be a craven, you must remember that I am in the habit of calculating chances . . . the consequence of all this may prove irreparable if the present system is not changed." ANN. 1811.

Stung by the Emperor's reproaches, Bessières vented his irritation upon the unfortunate inhabitants of the country. On 11th June he issued an inhumane *arrêté*, of which the tenor may be gathered from the following extracts :—

"1. There shall be made out lists of all persons who have quitted their dwellings.

"2. Every such person shall return within a month, and, if they do not, they shall be reputed to have joined the insurgents—their property shall be confiscated, and their tenants or debtors shall pay the amount of their respective debts into the hands of the Government.

"3. The fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, children and nephews of any such person shall be held responsible in property and person for any act of violence by such person committed.

"4. If any inhabitant be carried off from his residence, all the relatives, in the aforesaid degrees, of any known insurgent shall be arrested forthwith as hostages; and if any inhabitant so carried off is put to death by the insurgents, these hostages shall be shot to death on the spot without any form of trial. . . .

"The parson of every parish, the alcalde, the magistrates, and the clergy in general are to be held responsible for the payment of all contributions and for the supply of the French army with equipments, goods, merchandise, and means of transport. Any village which shall not immediately fulfil any order it shall have received shall be subjected to military execution."

Masséna's position had become intolerable; nominal command over officers who claimed to be independent, and over troops which would take no orders except through these officers, had brought about a state of matters under which he could not operate against a General whose ability he had

Retreat  
of the  
French.

**ÆT. 42.** learnt to respect. Having sent orders to General Brennier, Governor of Almeida, to blow up his fortifications and make his escape as best he could, Masséna put his army in motion on the 8th May, and retired across the Agueda on the 10th. The Allies were ordered into cantonments in the neighbourhood of Fuentes de Oñoro, the Light Division leading the way off the battlefield with their bands playing the "British Grenadiers." \* The loss of the Allies in the fighting on 3rd and 5th May was 11 officers killed, 81 wounded, and 7 prisoners; 224 sergeants and men killed, 1,153 wounded, and 310 prisoners.† That of the French was 308 killed, 2,147 wounded, and 210 prisoners.

Masséna is  
superceded. The qualities of a commander are never fully tested till he is obliged to conduct a retreat. The manner in which Masséna led his army from Santarem to the frontier, weakened as it was by disease and dispirited by ill success and dissension, through a bitterly hostile population and before an eager and watchful enemy, have earned for him the highest admiration; but Masséna served a master who never pardoned want of success. The anger of the Emperor, which had already fallen upon Soult, was now poured on *l'enfant chéri de la victoire*; no remembrance of past service tempered the harshness of rebuke. The veteran was removed from his command in disgrace, and to Marshal Marmont, Duc de Raguse, was committed the long-deferred object of driving the English into the sea.

Escape  
of the  
garrison of  
Almeida. Nothing now seemed to interfere with the speedy surrender of Almeida, but as Wellington afterwards wrote to Mr. Pole—

"I begin to be of opinion with you that there is nothing so stupid as a gallant officer. They (the blockading force) had about 13,000 men to watch 1,400; and in the night of the 10th, to the infinite surprise of the enemy, they allowed the garrison to slip through their fingers and to escape, after blowing up some of the

\* *Life and Opinions*, i. 172.

† *Despatches*, vii. 520.

works of the place! There they were—sleeping in their spurs, ANN. 1811.  
even; but the French got off.” \*

The garrison escaped by the bridge of Barba del Puerco, which Wellington had sent orders should be occupied by the 4th Regiment under Colonel Bevan. Brennier, however, found the bridge unguarded, and the result was what Wellington described as “the most disgraceful military event that has yet happened to us.” † In this matter the vexation of the Commander of the Forces seems to have overborne his sense of fairness. He would allow no inquiry into Colonel Bevan’s conduct, nor listen to his explanation. It is said that the order for the 4th Regiment to occupy Barba del Puerco was sent to Sir William Erskine, who received it at 2 p.m., but did not send it on to Bevan till midnight. Bevan had been ordered to watch the passes over the Agueda; hearing the firing at the Barba, he made his battalion fall in at once to march to that point, and at that moment received the belated order. Erskine, either to escape the blame that was his due, or because he was not at all times responsible for his actions, reported that the 4th Regiment had lost its way; and gallant Bevan, unable to endure the unmerited disgrace, shot himself at Portabayre. ‡

While these things were passing in Beira, Beresford <sup>Beresford</sup> <sup>lays siege</sup> <sup>to Badajoz.</sup> began, on 4th May, the first serious siege of the campaign, although almost destitute of the material for such an undertaking, and having no trained sappers. But the return of

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, vii. 123.

† *Despatches*, vii. 533.

‡ *Tomkinson*. General Brennier had a private motive for his anxiety not to fall into Wellington’s hands. Made prisoner at Vimeiro, after some months’ residence in London on parole, his exchange was effected. When leaving London he told Sir Arthur Wellesley (then in England) that he had got into debt and asked for a loan in order to pay his bills. Wellesley at once gave him a cheque for £500, which Brennier assured him would be repaid directly he reached Paris. Brennier reached Paris safe enough, but to the end of his life the Duke of Wellington never received repayment of his loan.

ÆT. 42.  
 Battle of  
 Albuera.

Soult from the south, with 15,000 infantry, 3,000 cavalry, and 40 guns, obliged him to raise the siege on the 12th, and take up a position at Albuera, where he formed a junction with the Spanish corps of Blake and Ballasteros. On the 16th was fought the battle of Albuera, one of the most terrible of the whole war, which cost the Allies not less than 7,000 killed and wounded, and their opponents an even larger number.\* Both armies remained on the field, but on the 18th Soult retired to Solano,† and Beresford detached General Hamilton to resume operations against Badajos. It was Wellington's opinion that if he had not been delayed by the escape of Brennier from Almeida, and had arrived in time for the battle of Albuera, he would have made a great thing of it. Beresford was a brave and good soldier, but he had not the iron nerve to enable him to resist despondency under the frightful slaughter of his troops.

\* "That which was most conspicuous in the battle of Albuera was the want of discipline of the Spaniards. These troops behaved with the utmost gallantry, but it was hopeless to think of moving them. In the morning the enemy gained an eminence which commanded the whole extent of the line of the Allies, which either was occupied, or was intended to be occupied by Spanish troops. The natural operation would have been to re-occupy this ground by means of Spanish troops; but that was impossible. The British troops were consequently moved there; and all the loss sustained by those troops was incurred in regaining a height which ought never for a moment to have been in possession of the enemy" (Lord Wellington's Memorandum, *Despatches*, viii. 487).

"The battle of Albuera was a strange concern. They were never determined to fight it; they did not occupy the ground as they ought; they were ready to run away at every moment from the time it commenced till the French retired; and, if it had not been for me, who am now suffering from the loss and disorganisation caused by that battle, they would have written a whining report upon it, which would have driven the people in England mad. However, I prevented that" (Lord Wellington to Right Hon. W. W. Pole, *Suppl. Despatches*, vii. 176).

† Soult claimed Albuera as *une victoire signalée* for the French, but the official account of the action by M. Belmas shows that the Marshal never succeeded in persuading the French War Department to share his illusion.

"The two armies," says he, "remained in presence of each other the next day, the 17th; but in the night, Marshal Soult, who could no longer hope to face the Allies, made his retreat. . . . He remained in observation at Llerena to re-organise his army, which was greatly demoralised by the losses it had suffered" (*Belmas*, i. 184).

Fortune was certainly smiling on the cause of the Allies ANN. 1811 at this time. Not only had Wellington and Beresford each been saved by the errors of their opponents from the penalty for faulty tactics, but political forces were telling adversely upon the French. King Joseph's conduct had not been in accord with Napoleon's conception of a puppet King. His Spanish ministers had been frequently at issue with the French Generals; Joseph represented that he had been made a King against his desire, and was unable to raise money to keep up what he conceived to be proper royal state; Napoleon retorted by scolding him roundly for personal extravagance. At last, weary of the parade of royalty with none of the power or dignity, Joseph, who certainly possessed many amiable, and even statesmanlike, qualities, made formal renunciation of his crown, and, leaving Madrid with an escort of 5,000 men, went to Paris with the intention of retiring into private life.

King Joseph leaves Madrid and renounces his crown.

Marmont, on assuming the command vacated by Masséna, went into cantonments at Salamanca, which enabled Wellington to detach his 3rd and 7th Divisions to strengthen Beresford on the Guadiana. Leaving Sir Brent Spencer at Sabugal with 18,000 men, and instructions to act only on the defensive against Marmont, he arrived at Elvas on 19th May, and caused Beresford to follow the French cautiously in their retreat. Soult, falling back about four marches in a south-easterly direction, established himself at Llerena, in the Sierra Morena, where he awaited Drouet with reinforcements from the army of Portugal.

Marmont takes command of the army of Portugal.

The question presented itself whether Soult should be attacked before he was reinforced, or whether Badajos might not be carried before he was strong enough to return to its relief. Wellington's decision has been pronounced faulty, and the criticism has been justified by his failure to carry his design into effect. No doubt he was right, knowing the qualities of his Spanish contingent, to refrain from following Soult; he could not leave such strong places as Badajos and

Æt. 42. Ciudad Rodrigo on his rear; he had not enough troops to blockade them, and at the same time to advance into Spain; but to attempt a regular siege with the appliances at his disposal, and without a corps of trained engineers, was to ensure discomfiture, except at enormous sacrifice of life. The discomfiture came early; the price of success—for Wellington's armies always succeeded in the end—had to be paid later. The blame for all this has, as usual among military writers, been thrown on the British Government, because they had not furnished siege material; but, in fact, Wellington had made no demand for such. He relied on what he could get from Elvas, and it is best to admit frankly that this was one of the rare occasions on which he exhibited want of foresight.\* But the weakest point in Wellington's scheme for the capture of Badajos was that of time. Unless he could take it before Soult received reinforcements, he knew he must be disturbed. The place was invested on 25th May, and fire was opened on 2nd June from an improvised train of fifty-two pieces, made up of ancient ordnance, some of it dating from the sixteenth century, brass guns with shot that did not fit the bore, and Portuguese ship cannon brought from the coast. These were served, however, with as much diligence and spirit as if they had been the latest masterpieces of military science. The outwork of San Christoval, commanding the castle, was the most important of the defences, and this was pronounced ready for storm on the 6th. A company of grenadiers were told off as an escalading party under Major Mackintosh of the 85th, and at midnight these were led by a forlorn hope under Ensign Dyas of the 51st, who volunteered for the service. They reached the foot of the breach unperceived, but the besiegers having neglected or being unable to crown the glacis,† the

Re-invest-  
ment of  
Badajos.

\* He himself confessed that he was mistaken in estimating the quality of the guns and appliances to be supplied from the garrison of Elvas (*Despatches*, viii. 13).

† An inclined plane sloping towards the country from the crest of the counterscarp or parapet of the covered way.

defenders had been able to work without being exposed to fire, and had cleared away all the rubbish; the wall was seven feet high, the ladders too short; the British were repulsed with the loss of a hundred men. ANN. 1811.

The bombardment was resumed, with such effect as might be expected from 24-pound shot thrown by guns of a larger calibre; \* a second attempt at escalado, the forlorn hope being again led by the brave Dyas, fared even worse than the first, and was withdrawn after losing 140 men; their commander, Major M'Gechy, being among the killed, as well as two out of the eleven engineer officers present with the army.

Next morning Wellington received information that Marmont was on the move for Estremadura, to co-operate with Soult. Anxious, accordingly, for the security of his magazines, he raised the siege of Badajos on 12th June, and took measures for the defence of Elvas. The loss of the Allies during the siege was 34 officers and 451 men killed, wounded, and missing. Marmont was in communication with Soult at Merida on 15th June, their united forces amounting to 60,000 men, of which 7,000 were cavalry. General Hill, who had been watching Soult at Llerena, fell back on Albuera, where the allied army was concentrated on the 24th, numbering 28,320 British and 20,126 Portuguese, exclusive of artillery. † An attempt was made to induce General Blake to co-operate with the Allies; but he, heartily disliking the English, preferred to make an independent attempt upon Seville, and crossed the Guadiana on 22nd June. Instead of moving at once on his objective, where he had a good chance of success, he made an unsuccessful attempt upon Niebla on the 30th, thus affording Soult time to move to the relief of Seville. When Soult did draw near, Blake embarked his army at the mouth of the Guadiana, and, making sail for the coast of Murcia, removed himself from the sphere of active operations. The siege again raised.

For nearly three weeks the forces of Wellington and

\* *Despatches*, viii. 13.

† *Ibid.*, viii. 490.



Æt. 42. Marmont lay opposite one another; Wellington, ready to give battle if attacked, yet contented himself with a position covering Campo Mayor and Elvas, while the enemy, though reconnoitring occasionally, remained inactive, till, on 14th July, Marmont retired into cantonments north of the Tagus, Drouet moved the 5th Corps to Zafra, and Soult withdrew, as above mentioned, to Andalusia. Brialmont observes that "the situation of Wellington had seldom been more critical" than during this period; but certainly Wellington himself was under no apprehensions at the time. On 18th July he wrote to Lord Liverpool—

"With the fine and well-equipped army which we have, and with our cavalry in such good order as it is, and with the prospect of the renewal of hostilities in the north of Europe, I am most anxious not to allow this moment of the enemy's comparative weakness to pass by without making an effort to improve the situation of the Allies in the Peninsula." \*

The  
French  
retire from  
Estre-  
madura.

No doubt the French might have attacked the Allies in their position on the Caya with advantage, for they had the superiority in numbers, especially in cavalry, for which the ground was well suited. But Wellington had caused British soldiers to earn that quality in which they had been wholly deficient at the beginning of the war—namely, prestige—and Soult might well pause before leading against them troops which had so lately tasted British steel and lead at Busaco, Fuentes de Oñoro, Albuera, and a hundred minor conflicts. There was another reason nearly as strong: Marmont could not brook taking orders from Soult, and once again Wellington derived favour from the inconvenience arising from two Marshals in one camp—rival suns in the same hemisphere. Besides, the French Government in Spain was dislocated by King Joseph's abdication and his abandonment, for the second time, of his capital. This was an instance of Wellington's luck, of which some people assert he had more than his due share. On the other hand, let it be remembered

\* *Despatches*, viii. 111.



that the plans he had provided for timely action by the Spanish Generals were not carried out. Blake ought to have forced Soult to attend to the safety of Seville, instead of which he fled to his ships at Ayamonte, leaving Ballesteros unsupported in the Condado—a golden opportunity was allowed to slip, and nothing took place, except such isolated actions as the surprise of Rovira by Figueras, and the defence of Taragona which kept Suchet occupied. With ordinary luck, the British commander might have received more substantial support from the nation he was labouring to liberate. The only commander he could rely on was Julian Sanchez, the guerilla chief, who well maintained the blockade of Ciudad Rodrigo till his arrival on the Coa. ANN. 1811.

Estremadura having been cleared of the enemy, Wellington had to decide on a fresh course of action. To make another attempt on Badajos in the dog days was out of the question, the climate of that neighbourhood being notoriously unhealthy; to carry the war into Andalusia would be to sacrifice his admirable base and communications. Like one with his back to the wall, he could meet successive assailants with confidence, well knowing that, while he drew his own supplies securely from Lisbon, no prolonged concentration of his opponent's forces could be maintained owing to the difficulties of subsistence. Desiring, however, to deceive the enemy into believing that he intended a movement towards the south, Wellington caused the siege-train and artillery recently landed from England to be re-embarked at Lisbon, and the transports carrying them to sail for the south in open day as if making for Cadiz and Gibraltar. Then, under cover of night, the material was transferred to smaller vessels which made all speed to the Douro, while the rest of the fleet continued their deceptive course. By this ruse the siege equipment was landed at Lamego and dragged across the mountains to Celorico, while the allied army, breaking up from the Caya on 21st July, crossed the Tagus at Villa Velha, arrived on the Coa on 8th August, and at once took up the blockade of

**Æt. 42.** Ciudad Rodrigo. Unluckily, he had been greatly misinformed as to the strength of the army of the North under Marshal Bessières; it amounted to 60,000 men with 6,000 cavalry, against which Wellington could only show 40,000, after detaching General Hill to keep Marmont in check on the Tagus; moreover, supplies had recently been thrown into Ciudad Rodrigo. Under these circumstances it was deemed wiser not to bring forward the siege equipment, and to limit operations to blockading the fortress.

The Allies  
blockade  
Ciudad  
Rodrigo.

Reinforce-  
ments  
arrive from  
France.

During the comparative inaction which always prevailed on both sides in the dog days, 40,000 reinforcements arrived in the north of Spain from France, and intercepted letters indicated the intention of Napoleon to proceed to the Peninsula in person. Whether this was his genuine intention is doubtful, but the prospect caused Wellington to repair and strengthen the lines of Torres Vedras, in view of a possible retreat. On the other hand, the presence of the Allied army on the Coa had the effect which Wellington contemplated and desired. It caused Marmont to recall Dorsenne from Galicia at a critical moment for the safety of that province, with its important harbours of Coruña and Vigo; but it also exposed the Allies to a concentrated attack from far more numerous forces than had been calculated on—and concentration was most feasible immediately after harvest, when supplies were most abundant. Marmont, reinforced by Dorsenne's corps to the number of 60,000, advanced to the relief of Ciudad Rodrigo, which Wellington blockaded with 40,000.

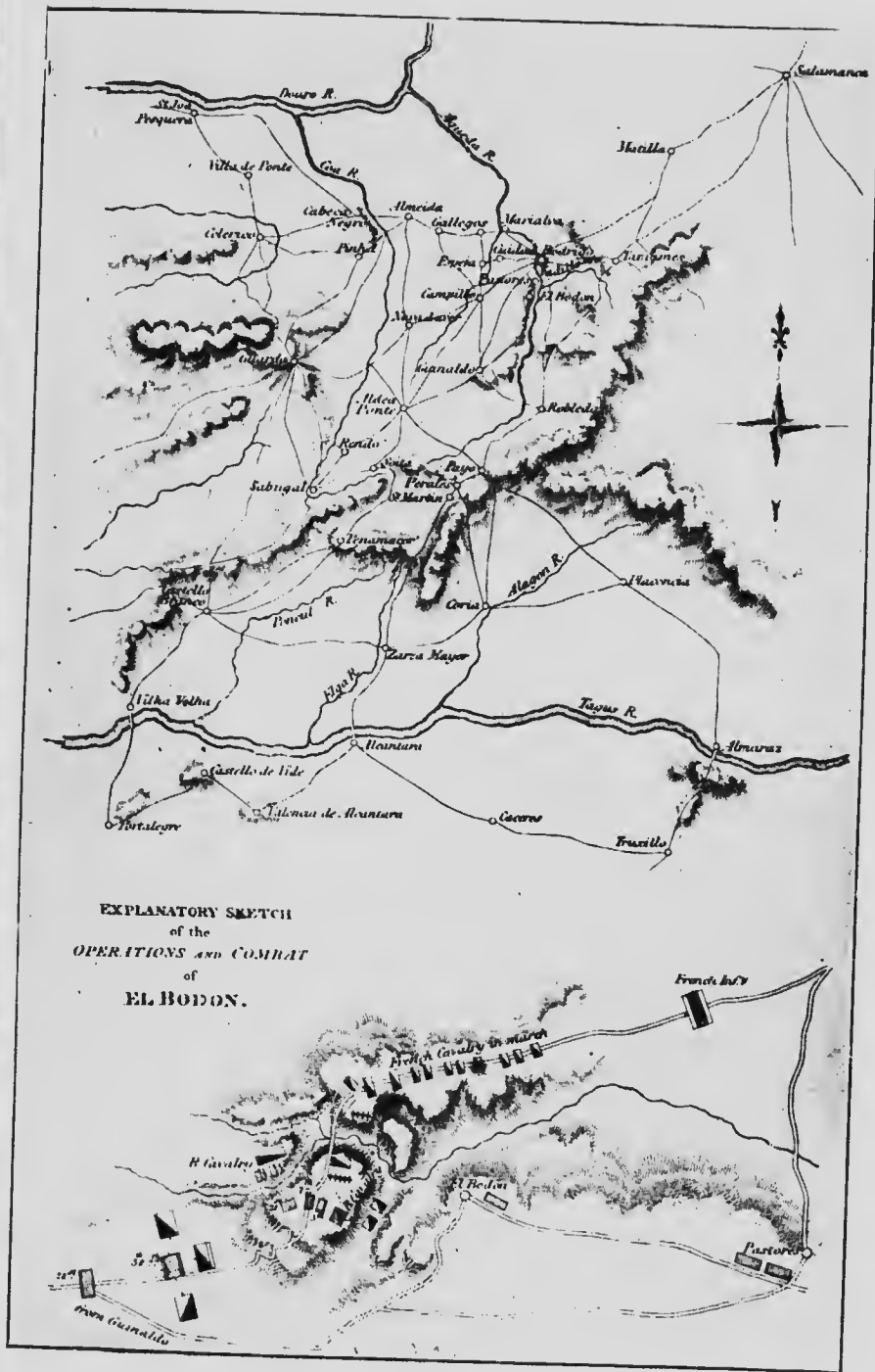
Marmont  
advances  
to relieve  
Ciudad  
Rodrigo.

On the approach of the enemy on 21st September, the Allies were concentrated on a position on the left bank of the Agueda; Wellington's object was, not to fight a battle, but to force the enemy to show his real strength, inasmuch as the country people, believing and reporting that the French were far inferior in strength to the Allies, would have formed an unfavourable opinion of the British commander had he allowed them to relieve Ciudad Rodrigo.

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On the 23rd September the enemy's columns were seen Ann. 1811. approaching from Tamames, on the north-east of Ciudad Rodrigo. A strong detachment reconnoitred the position of the Allies and communicated with the fortress. Wellington's position was dangerously extended. The 3rd Division, with three squadrons of the 1st Hussars and 11th Light Dragoons, lay on the heights above the village of El Bodon, with its advanced guard at Pastores, about three miles from Ciudad Rodrigo. On their right, and beyond the Agueda, were the Light Division, with some cavalry and six guns; on their left, at Espeja, was the 6th Division, under General Graham,\* and Anson's brigade and cavalry, with advanced posts at Marialva and Carpio, about eight miles through Rodrigo. Beyond Graham, Don Julian Sanchez, the bold and able guerilla chief, lined the river-banks with his *partidas*, horse and foot. Sir Stapleton Cotton's cavalry division was stationed between the 3rd and 6th Divisions, while the 4th Division held an entrenched position at Guinaldo behind the first line. The 7th Division was in reserve at Alamedilla, the 1st at Nava d'Aver, and the 5th in observation of General Foy at the Pass of Perales, several miles in rear of Guinaldo.

Action of  
El Bodon.

On the 24th September Marmont introduced a convoy into Ciudad Rodrigo, protected by 6,000 cavalry and four divisions of infantry. On the 25th, at sunrise, the cavalry of the Imperial Guard drove in the outposts of the Light Division, and at the same time Montbrun brought thirty or forty squadrons of cavalry with his guns, supported by fourteen battalions of infantry, across the Agueda and marched upon Guinaldo, actually turning the position occupied by the allied centre and showing at the very outset the exceeding weakness of Wellington's disposition. Fortunately, the Allies were posted so high above El Bodon that Marmont could not, or at least did not, make out their real strength: he hesitated to risk his infantry in assaulting the height, and employed cavalry and artillery only. Strange to say, it was

\* Afterwards Lord Lynedoch.

**Æt. 42.** not the British infantry that repelled the attack of these fine horsemen, but the three squadrons of the 1st Hussars and 11th Light Dragoons (the "Cherubims"), which charged them repeatedly as often as they touched the brow of the hill. The struggle went on for an hour: the ground favoured the British, but it was too much extended for their numbers, and at last Montbrun got his artillery forward and the cavalry captured four guns, cutting down the Portuguese gunners at their posts. Then was to be seen a strange, almost unprecedented spectacle. The 2nd battalion 5th Regiment of the Line under Major Ridge,\* charged the French cavalry with the bayonet and retook the guns; the 77th British and 21st Portuguese at the same time driving back the cavalry on the left.

The position, however, had become too warm to be longer held. Wellington ordered Picton, who had three regiments in the village below the hill, to retire and unite with Colville's brigade in the plain between El Bodon and Guinaldo. Forming battalion squares (the 5th and 77th being weak formed a single square), this magnificent infantry retired in that formation, halting from time to time to repel charges of the French cavalry,† till they joined the rest of the 3rd Division, also in squares, and continued the retreat upon the entrenchments of Fuente Guinaldo, six miles in rear of El Bodon. It was a trying ordeal for the steadiness of our troops, closely followed by the enemy's cavalry, and exposed from time to time to the fire of horse artillery, but they bore it splendidly. Wellington, perceiving that the position could not be held in the presence of forces stronger than his own by one-third, now ordered a general retreat. The Light Division was most

General  
retreat of  
the Allies.

\* Now the Northumberland Fusiliers. Major Ridge was killed in the assault on Badajos not long after.

† In a general order of unusual length and detail, Wellington made acknowledgment of the behaviour of these battalions as "a memorable example of what can be effected by steadiness, discipline and confidence. It is impossible that any troops can, at any time, be exposed to the attack of numbers relatively

critically exposed on the further bank of the Agueda, and General Craufurd, always disinclined to retire before an enemy, was very dilatory in obeying the order. The 6th Division being directed to combine with the 1st at Nava d'Aver, left a wide interval between the two wings of the army, and on the morning of the 26th, the whole of Marmont's force, 60,000 strong with 100 cannon, was arrayed in line of battle before the entrenchments of Fuente Guinaldo, where Wellington had only 15,000 men. An attack appeared imminent, and could have had but one result—fatal to the Allies; yet Marmont wasted his opportunity in a series of parade movements in the plain, ignorant of the real weakness of his enemy.

The Light Division marched in under their headstrong commander at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and during the night Wellington resumed his retreat, concentrating his scattered divisions on a new position nine miles in rear of Guinaldo, between Aldea Velha on the right and Bismula on the left, covering all the roads to the fords and bridges across the Coa. A partial engagement took place in the afternoon between the 4th Division and a French Division with fourteen squadrons of cavalry, resulting in the capture by the enemy of the village Aldea da Ponte. On the night of the 27th the Allies resumed their retreat, halting once more on strong ground extending from Rendo on the Coa, by Soita to the mountains on their right. Here an attack might have been received with confidence, but Marmont, failing to obtain provisions for his men, retired the same day, and his army separated, he himself resuming his position near Talavera, and Dorsenne marching off to Salamanca. The French withdraw.

greater than those which attacked the troops under Major-General Colville and Major-General V. Alten on the 25th September, and the Commander of the Forces recommends the conduct of those troops to the particular attention of the officers and soldiers of the army, as an example to be followed in all such circumstances." He then proceeds to thank the generals and other officers by name (*Suppl. Despatches*, vii. 223).

ÆT. 42. Although it is easy to point out the weakness of Wellington's dispositions to receive Marmont at Ciudad Rodrigo, the ability with which he remedied them can scarcely be questioned. It was Craufurd's delay in returning across the Agueda which chiefly imperilled the whole army. Had Wellington listened to some of his Generals he would have abandoned the Light Division to the fate incurred by its commander's disregard of orders; but to that he would not consent. The only alternative was a piece of bravado, which completely imposed on the French Marshal. Once free to leave Guinaldo, and there was an end to the danger of awaiting in an extended position attack by an enemy of overpowering strength. Wellington then concentrated his divisions in a masterly manner, and could choose his own positions in a country which he knew as well as any English county. On the whole, however, it must be admitted that, seeing that the centre of the Allies was broken on the 25th, as the Scots say they owed "mair to luck than gude guidance" in the neglect of their adversary to press such an advantage.

After Marmont's retreat, Wellington resumed the strategy whereby he desired to keep a large body of the enemy occupied on the frontier, thus encouraging the Spaniards to undertake operations elsewhere. The blockade of Ciudad Rodrigo was renewed, the main body of the army going into cantonments on the Coa with headquarters at Freneda. It would have been impossible to conduct active operations at this period, owing to the prevalence of fever among the British troops, especially those who had served in the ill-fated Walcheren expedition.



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NAPOLEON I., AGED 43. 1812.  
(From a Drawing by Girodet-Trioson.)

[Vol. i. p. 245.]



## CHAPTER X.

### SIEGES OF CIUDAD RODRIGO AND BADAJOS.

1812.

<p>January, 1812. Appointment of a new Regency in Spain. Changes in the British Cabinet.</p> <p>„ 8 . . The Allies besiege Ciudad Rodrigo.</p> <p>„ 19 . Assault and storm of Ciudad Rodrigo. Disorderly scenes after the capture.</p> <p>February 28 . Lord Wellington receives a British earldom and a Spanish dukedom. He prepares to attack Badajoz.</p> <p>March 16 . . . Third siege of Badajoz.</p>	<p>March 25 . . . The Picurina carried by storm.</p> <p>April 6 . . . . General assault on Badajoz. Escalade and capture of the castle. Failure of assault on the breaches. Escalade and capture of the San Vincente Bastion.</p> <p>„ 7 . . . . Surrender of the garrison. Discontent of Napoleon with his Marshals.</p>
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AFTER the retreat of Masséna from Portugal, the presence of the Allies on the frontier in greater force, and, owing to the admirable state to which Beresford had brought the Portuguese troops of all arms, in far greater efficiency, than they had hitherto attained, gave a splendid opportunity to the Spanish authorities for operations corresponding to those which kept Marmont and Soult occupied in Estremadura and Salamanca. It is impossible within the limits of this memoir to follow the abundant correspondence conducted by Lord Wellington with his brother Henry at Cadiz and with the Spanish Generals in various provinces.

Æt. 42. With these last, indeed, he had found it impossible to operate in the field; but he never ceased to watch their movements, to avoid wounding their self-respect, and to recommend the measures which, with wide view, he perceived were essential to the success of the common cause.\* That he failed to make them share his views, or, when they shared them, to act on them with ordinary energy and foresight, diminished in no degree the patience with which Wellington continued to advise, exhort, and warn. As it was, he summed up the results of the campaign in Portugal of 1811 with a degree of bitterness but without despondency.

“If the Spaniards had behaved with common prudence, or if their conduct had been even tolerably good, the result of Masséna’s campaign in Portugal must have been the relief of the south of the Peninsula. We had to contend with the consequences of the faults of some, the treachery of others, the folly and vanity of all. But although our success has not been what it might and ought, we have lost no ground, and, with a handful of British troops fit for service, we have kept the enemy in check in all quarters since the month of March. Till now they have gained nothing, and have made no progress on any side.”

Slender grounds for congratulation, it might be thought, at the end of four years’ incessant warfare, yet Wellington was more full of confidence in ultimate success than ever. There was now no talk of Napoleon coming to the Peninsula; even the mighty engine of the conscription which he wielded over nearly the whole of Western Europe must be strained when, to the drafts of men for the Spanish war, should be added that of 400,000 more for the invasion of Russia.

\* *Lt.-Gen. Viscount Wellington to Hon. Sir H. Wellesley.*

“. . . I am very ready to state, upon all occasions, how my plans of operations can be aided by the Spanish troops; but it must be obvious that these plans must be founded on my own views of the state of affairs. I cannot adopt plans to forward the operations of such a corps as that of Ballasteros, or even of that of Galicia.”

At the beginning of 1812 a new Regency of five members was appointed in Spain, which at first gave tokens of better administration. Henry O'Donnell, reputed the best General in the Spanish service, and very friendly to the British alliance, was a member of it, and began a series of much-needed financial and military reforms. Of the last, one effect was to strike off the pay-list all officers except those actually serving with the army, a measure which affected no fewer than five thousand gentlemen! A new constitution was promulgated, abolishing autocratic power and centralising authority in a national assembly. It is vain, however, to devise schemes of government for a people who will not act except at the dictation of their priests. In spite of all the mediatory efforts of the British Cabinet and their minister at Cadiz, Sir Henry Wellesley, the new Government persisted in the conflict with the Spanish-American colonies, and actually diverted to that purpose some of the means which Great Britain had furnished for the defence of the Peninsula.\*

ANN. 1812.  
Appointment of a new Regency in Spain.

In the British Cabinet, also, important changes began to take place during the month of January. Lord Wellesley, who had disagreed with some of his colleagues, especially with the Prime Minister, Mr. Perceval, on questions of foreign policy, but had refrained from expressing dissent to any of their measures,† now resigned the seals of the Foreign Office, and was replaced by Lord Castlereagh. George III. having become hopelessly insane, it was expected that the Prince Regent would make this the opportunity for causing his Whig friends to form an administration; instead of which he proposed that some of them should serve under Mr. Perceval. This course was declined by the Opposition

Changes in the British Cabinet.

\* The long conflict waged between Spain and her colonies seems to have been brought to a close at last. In January, 1899, after the cession of Cuba and the Philippines to the United States, the Spanish Ministry of the Colonies was abolished, on the ground that there was no longer any use for it.

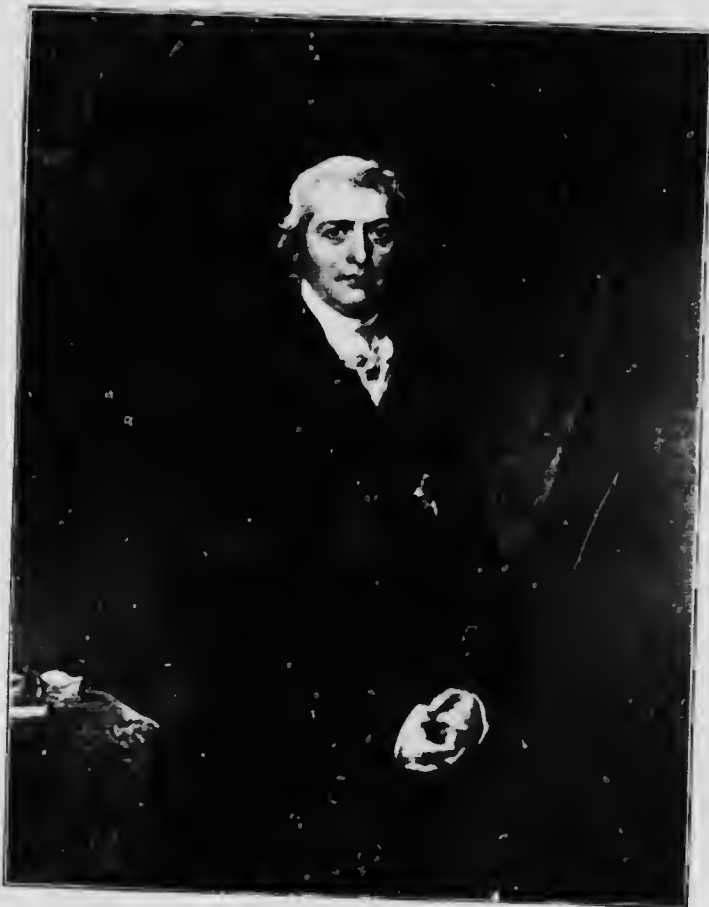
† See Lord Liverpool's letter to Lord Wellington on the subject, *Suppl. Despatches*, vii. 257.

**Æt. 42.** — leaders, and Perceval continued in office till his assassination by a maniac on the 11th May in the lobby of the House of Commons. Lord Liverpool then becoming Prime Minister, was followed at the War Office by Lord Bathurst, to whom Wellington's official despatches continued to be addressed till the end of the war.\*

Wellington's position on the Coa had become dangerously scattered by the end of 1811, owing to the failure of the Portuguese authorities to furnish transport for supplies from Lisbon. Many of his troops had to be sent into the valleys of the Mondego and the Douro, but General Hill's movements in the district of Badajos diverted the attention of the enemy in that direction, and Marmont, on receiving the Emperor's orders to detach Montbrun to operate with two divisions in Valencia, had concentrated the rest of his force in the neighbourhood of Toledo. The defences of Almeida were repaired by the Allies; an efficient battering train was brought to that place, where a trestle bridge was secretly constructed for the passage of the Agueda; the soldiers were employed in making fascines and gabions, and all means were taken to prepare for the project Wellington had in view, namely, to snatch the prize of Ciudad Rodrigo in the very face of his foes. He took every precaution to lull the suspicions, not only of the enemy, but of his own officers, that any enterprise was in contemplation before the spring: he even allowed his Quartermaster-General, Murray, to go to England on leave.

\* "If the Whigs had come into power on the Regency," said the Duke of Wellington to Lord de Ros, "they meant to have sent out Lord Hastings to me as a sort of commissioner. I am confident he would very soon have had the sense to perceive that he knew nothing of the case and that I had it at my fingers' ends. Whether the Whigs would have entered into the spirit of the general resistance of Europe, I can't pretend to say; but I could have answered any objections Lord Hastings might have made to my own part of the business, and convinced him and his employers that by the prosecution of the war much good would ensue, but neither danger nor harm need be apprehended" (*de Ros MS.*).

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ROBERT BANKS JENKINSON, 2ND EARL OF LIVERPOOL.

*(After a Painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence.)*

*Vol. 3, p. 248*

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The new year opened in bitter cold; snow covered hill and valley, and a strong frost prevailed; but the health of the troops had greatly improved since the cessation of the rains. On 1st January the trestle bridge was begun at Marialva, and 35,000 Allies moved forward to the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo. The garrison of that fortress was no more than 1,800 men, notwithstanding that early in December Napoleon had directed that it should be strengthened. Marmont, however, aware how much the Allies had suffered from sickness, and confident that they would not move from their cantonments during the severe weather, had neglected to do anything, and the garrison had provisions only for one month.

It was unwise to neglect anything in dealing with Wellington. On 8th January, 1812, the Light Division crossed the Agueda, partly by a ford, partly by the new bridge, and took up ground on the side of the Great Teson hill, where the French had constructed a redoubt detached from the fortress. The garrison, mistaking the Light Division for a reconnoitring party, saluted and bantered the English with good humour. Soon after nightfall they learnt their mistake, when Lieut.-Colonel Colborne of the 52nd\* took ten companies to assault the redoubt. Covering the escalading party with a strong musketry fire from the glacis, Colborne sent Lieutenant Gurwood† with his company to scale the gorge of the redoubt. A French sergeant of artillery was shot dead in the act of throwing a live shell on this storming party; the shell rolled to the foot of the gate, exploded, and burst it open. Gurwood's party rushed in and the place was taken. Colborne earned great praise for this admirably planned and executed assault; a permanent lodgment was effected, and ground was broken under

ANN. 1812.  
—  
Siege of  
Ciudad  
Rodrigo.

\* Afterwards Field Marshal Lord Seaton. It was he who, at Waterloo, made the decisive charge with his regiment on the flank of the Imperial Guard, when these were engaged with the British Guards.

† Editor of the *Wellington Despatches*.

ÆT. 42. cover of night within 600 yards of the *enceinte*. Finding that the approaches, continued night and day, were badly galled by the fire of two fortified convents to the right and left of the outwork, Wellington ordered that they should be taken. That on the right was surprised on the night of the 13th by a German regiment; the other was captured on the following night by H.M. 40th Regiment; whereby both flanks of the parallels were secured. In order to spare his troops as much as possible from exposure, Wellington ordered that each of the divisions of the army should relieve another in the trenches every twenty-four hours. But as each division had to ford the half-frozen river going and coming, there was a considerate allowance of double rations of spirits for the working divisions,\* for "every man carried a pair of iced breeches into the trenches with him." † The siege was pushed with great vigour, for the British commander knew not when Marmont or Drouet might not appear to interrupt it; but General Hill was giving Drouet plenty of occupation near Badajos and Merida, and Marmont had moved north to Valladolid, to look after the revenues of that province and Salamanca, of which the Emperor had appointed him governor. On the 16th the defences had suffered so much under the fire of the besiegers that the place was summoned. General Barrie having replied that "he was ready to bury himself and his garrison in the ruins," the bombardment was resumed.

Wellington had calculated that not less "than 24 or 25 days would be required for the reduction of Ciudad Rodrigo," ‡ but on the 19th, Major Sturgeon of the Staff Corps § having reported practicable two breaches in the *fausse braie* ¶ and

\* *Despatches*, viii. 516.

† *Kincaid*, 104.

‡ *Despatches*, viii. 514.

§ Killed in action in 1813.

¶ A platform rising to half the height of the revêtement, or wall of the rampart facing the ditch. It was used as a position whence fire might be directed against the assailants, but it has been pronounced dangerous, because of the aid it affords to the escalade.



LT. GENERAL SIR THOMAS PICTON, C.B.  
[Vol. I, p. 250]



**P.L.**  
**OF THE FORT**  
**OF**  
**CIUDAD R.**  
Explanatory of  
July 1810 &

The field works refer to

S.C.A.

French Batteries

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SIEGES OF CIUDAD RODRIGO AND BADAJOS. 251

body of the place, the assault was ordered for that evening, although the approaches had not reached the crest of the glacis, and the counterscarp\* of the ditch was still entire. Five columns were detailed for the assault, composed of the 3rd and Light Divisions and General Paek's Portuguese, the Light Division having been brought across the river out of their regular turn. The right attack was committed to Colonel O'Toole's caçadores and the light company of the 83rd Regiment, who were instructed to cross the bridge and scale an outwork below the castle, the 5th and 94th Regiments, with the 77th in reserve co-operating from behind the convent of Santa Cruz. In the centre, the 3rd Division—the Fighting Third, as they had come to be called—were to issue from the second parallel and attack the great breach; while, on the left, the Light Division was to come from behind the convent of San Francisco against the lesser breach and the gate of Salamanca. The fifth column, consisting of Paek's Portuguese, was sent round to the south-east of the town to make a false attack on the gate of Santiago.

It was five o'clock and falling dark, when strains of peculiarly soft music rose on the air. They came from the band of the 43rd Regiment without drums, preceding the Light Division *without their cruel leathern stocks*, on the way to its position in the attack. At the opposite side of the town, old General Pieton spoke a few words to each of his battalions as they passed him. Battlefield orations have frequently been recorded, although, as reported, they probably retain faint resemblance to the originals; but Pieton's speech to the 88th that evening was pithy enough to be borne in many a stout fellow's remembrance. "Connaught Rangers!" he cried, as the well-loved yellow facings caught his eye, "I don't mean to spend any powder this evening. We'll do this business with the *could iron*."

The storming party of the 3rd Division consisted of 500

\* The side of the ditch nearest the country, and opposite the *escarp*, which is nearest the place.

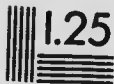
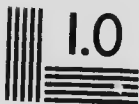
ANN. 1812.

Assault on  
Ciudad  
Rodrigo.



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ÆT. 42. — volunteers under Major Manners of the 74th, with a forlorn hope led by Ensign Maekie of the Connaught Rangers; that of the Light Division of 300 volunteers led by Major George Napier\* of the 52nd, and a forlorn hope under Mr. Gurwood.

The storm. The attack began prematurely on the right, and the storming parties of the 5th, 77th, and 94th had carried the *fausse braie* and were already at the great breach before those of the 3rd Division could reach the works. The parties of the Light Division, hearing the din, would not wait for the hay-bags which were to be thrown into the ditch before them, but dashed furiously to the storm of the lesser breach. Major Napier's arm was shattered by a cannon-shot; he had not allowed his men to load, bidding them trust to the bayonet; they were jammed in the narrow breach, falling fast under the fire of the defenders, but Napier called on them to press on; the 43rd and the rest of the 52nd came to their support, and in a few minutes the breach was carried, though with heavy loss. The 43rd, passing along the inside of the works, now made a flank attack on the defenders of the great breach, which, unlike the lesser one, had been protected by retrenchments, and offered a stronger resistance to the 3rd Division. The brave garrison, thus attacked in flank and front, were driven back fighting hard, but at last broke and made for the castle. By this time the town was full of the Allies, for Paek's Portuguese, albeit their attack had been intended only as a feint, had effected an entrance at the Santiago gate, and Colonel O'Toole also had entered the town from the west.

\* Brother of Charles and of William, the historian, who both served in the Peninsula. George lost an arm in the assault on Ciudad Rodrigo, and, in writing to announce it to his mother, Lady Sarah Napier, Wellington said: "Having *such* sons, I am sure that you expect to hear of their misfortunes, which I have more than once had to communicate to you; and notwithstanding your affection for them, you have so just a notion of the value of the distinction they are daily acquiring for themselves, by their gallantry and good conduct, that their misfortunes do not make so great an impression on you."

Ciudad Rodrigo was won: the fine paid by Marmont for ANN. 1812. his culpable negligence in leaving it with so weak a garrison The cap- being some 1,500 prisoners, 150 guns, great store of ammu- ture. nition, and an entire battering train. The loss of the Allies, however, was deplorably heavy in the assault—9 officers and 169 soldiers killed, 70 officers and 748 soldiers wounded. There perished Robert Craufurd, the chivalrous, dauntless commander of the Light Division; an officer who, in spite of occasional indiscretion caused by his daring, had perhaps done more than any other General of division to re-establish the prestige of the British infantry.\* He was buried on the ramparts of the captured fortress.

Well was it for the conquerors that Marmont was not at Disorderly hand to take advantage of their disorder on the morrow of conduct of the storm. Drink, so often and so deeply cursed by Wel- the troops. lington as the bane of the British soldier, wrecked the discipline which had ensured victory; wine and spirit stores were broken open; the whole town was turned into a hell of drunkenness and insubordination. Officers had profited much by their experience in warfare, but they were still far from perfect in that which Wellington constantly tried to convince them was as necessary as gallantry in the field—careful and patient control of their men in quarters and after an action.

\* Craufurd, in spite of his brilliant qualities, was not an easy man to get on with, and it is well known that he was not only sometimes disobedient, but also disloyal to his chief. "Charles Stewart (Adjutant-General in the Peninsula, and afterwards third Marquis of Londonderry) intrigued in the army against me, and, with the assistance of Robert Craufurd, had turned every one of the general officers against me, except Beresford, who, like a good fellow and honest soldier as he is, discountenanced all these petty intrigues. . . . Poor Craufurd was a dissatisfied, troublesome kind of man, who fell quite naturally into this sort of intrigue, and I believe he pushed it to a very blameable extent; for when he was mortally wounded he sent for me, and there, in the way one has read of in romances, he solemnly asked my forgiveness for injuries of that kind which he had done, or endeavoured to do me" (*Croker*, i. 346). When a commissary of the Light Division once complained to Lord Wellington that Craufurd had threatened to hang him if the supplies were not more punctually delivered, the chief replied dryly, "Then I advise you to have them up in time, for Craufurd is just the man to keep his word" (*Tomkinson*, 30).

Æt. 42.  
Punish-  
ment of  
deserters.

When order was at length restored, there remained some painful duties to be discharged. It is difficult to understand what motives could have induced men besieging this town to desert by joining the beleaguered garrison. Perhaps a common cause was the fear of corporal punishment which these individuals may have incurred; \* at all events, many deserters from the allied army were taken in Ciudad Rodrigo. To every one who could obtain a fair character from his commanding officer, Wellington showed mercy, but six men, who could not do so, were shot. Carlos d'España, also, ordered the execution of certain of the Spanish townspeople, who were proved to have been employed by the French.

Want of  
harmony  
among the  
French  
command-  
ers.

Marmont at this period displayed a degree of hesitancy for which he was not greatly to blame, considering the intrigue and corruption which prevailed at the Spanish capital, though it afforded Wellington greater leisure than he had any reason to reckon on. Napoleon had forced Joseph to cancel his abdication and return to Madrid in July, 1811, and, desirous of concentrating his own energies in the struggle with Russia, had re-committed to his brother the chief control of the armies in the Peninsula. The Marshals, jealous as they were of each other, were at least united in despising the authority of the King of Spain, and the King's part was rendered doubly difficult by Napoleon's practice of sending instructions from Paris direct to the various Marshals in the field. All this was greatly in

\* Wellington described to Lady Salisbury the extraordinary propensity to desert in the English army, especially from the besieging force into the besieged place. "They knew," said he, "they must be taken, for, when we lay our bloody hands on a place, we are sure to take it sooner or later; but they liked being dry and under cover, and then that extraordinary caprice which always pervades the English character! Our deserters were very badly treated by the enemy; those who deserted in France were treated as the lowest of mortals—slaves and scavengers. Nothing but English caprice can account for it; just what make our noblemen associate with stage-coach drivers, and become stage-coach drivers themselves" (*Salisbury MSS.*, 1837).

Wellington's favour; nor did he neglect to take full advantage thereof. Moreover, affairs in the South had taken a turn more favourable to the Spanish arms. During the autumn of 1811 Ballasteros had scored several successes against Soult's divisions in Andalusia; at Tarifa, Colonel Skerret had maintained such a stout defence that General Hill's movements in Estremadura had obliged Soult to raise the siege on 4th January, in order to protect Seville. On the other hand, Blake, after a siege of eight days, had surrendered to Suchet the town of Valencia with 18,000 regular troops and 400 guns, whereby the richest province in Spain passed into the hands of the French, and the armies of Aragon and Catalonia were set free to co-operate with Soult.

Having repaired the breaches and outworks of Ciudad Rodrigo, and levelled his own trenches, Lord Wellington handed the place over to Castaños, Captain-General of Estremadura and Galicia; for the Cortes had not yet conferred any authority upon the Commander of the allied forces; he was not even an ally, in a military sense, only a friendly intruder. They awarded him, however, an enthusiastic vote of thanks, made him a grandee of the first rank, and created him Duque de Ciudad Rodrigo; while the Prince Regent advanced him to the dignity of an Earl in the British peerage, and Parliament granted him a further pension of £2,000 a year.

Wellington is created a British Earl and a Spanish Duke.

Encouraged by the inaction of Marmont, who seemed to be paralysed by the loss of Ciudad Rodrigo, Wellington lost not an hour in preparing for a similar dash at Badajos. The seasonal flooding of the rivers would shortly render the invasion of Beira impossible to the French, which would justify him in moving the greater part of the allied forces into the Alentejo, if he got the opportunity of doing so. The opportunity came as neatly as if he had been able to arrange it himself. Marmont had been desirous of protecting Badajos; the Emperor told him sharply to mind his

Er. 42. own business, which was to draw Wellington northwards by making an offensive movement upon the Mondego. Though Wellington's movements, owing to their suddenness and the secrecy of his preparations, appeared to be precipitate, they had been thought out long before.\*

Wellington prepares to attack Badajos.

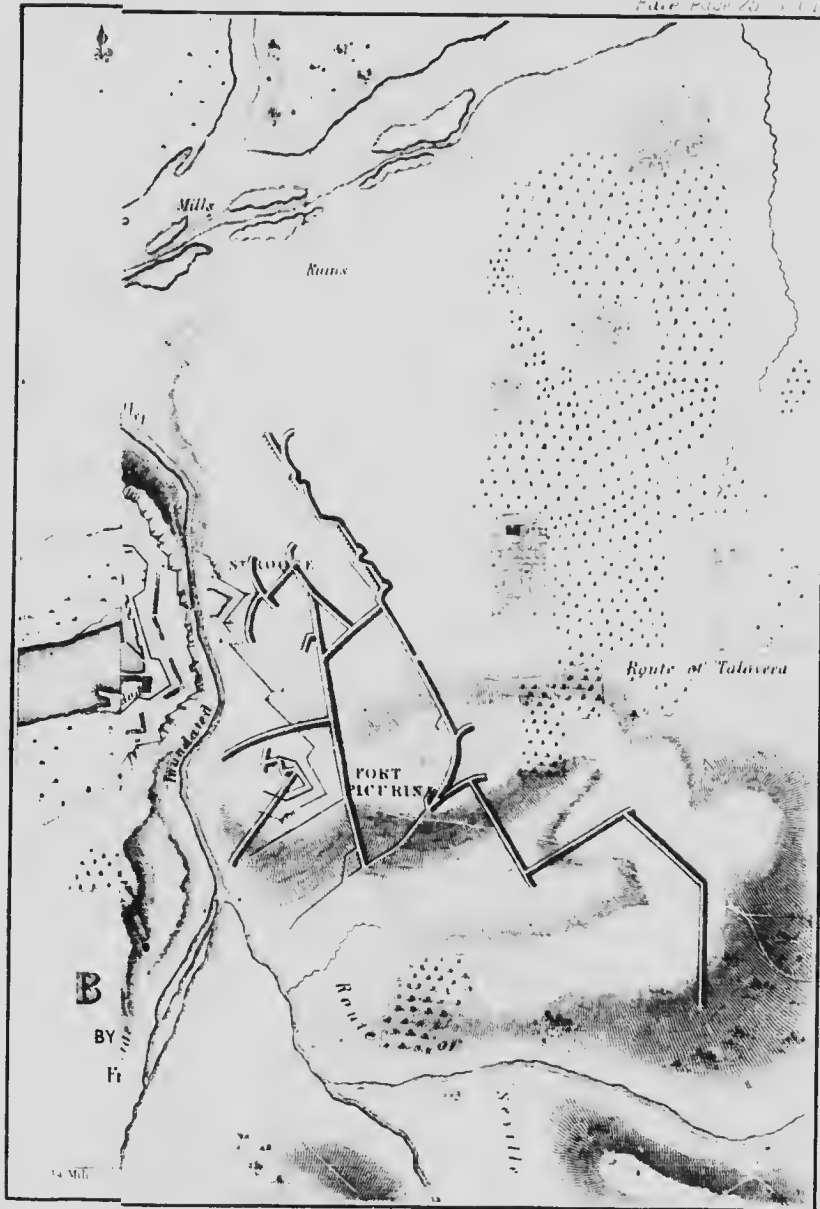
Early in December he had ordered a pontoon bridge to be brought up the Tagus to Abrantes, and draft oxen to be collected there for its transport by land, while 2,000 men were employed preparing siege material at Elvas. The usual delays about transport prevented the pontoons being laid over the Guadiana till the 15th March. On the 16th Beresford, who had rejoined the army, crossed the river and began the third siege of Badajos with 15,000 men of the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and Light Divisions and Hamilton's Portuguese. At the same time General Hill advanced from Albuquerque by Merida upon Almendralejos, to keep in check Drouet, who lay with 5,000 men at Villafranca; while General Graham, crossing the Guadiana with the 1st, 6th, and 7th Divisions, and two brigades of cavalry, moved forward to Llerena to observe Soult. The 5th Division remained in reserve at Campo Mayor. Altogether the allied forces in Estremadura at this time amounted to 51,000, of which 31,000 were British.

Third siege of Badajos.

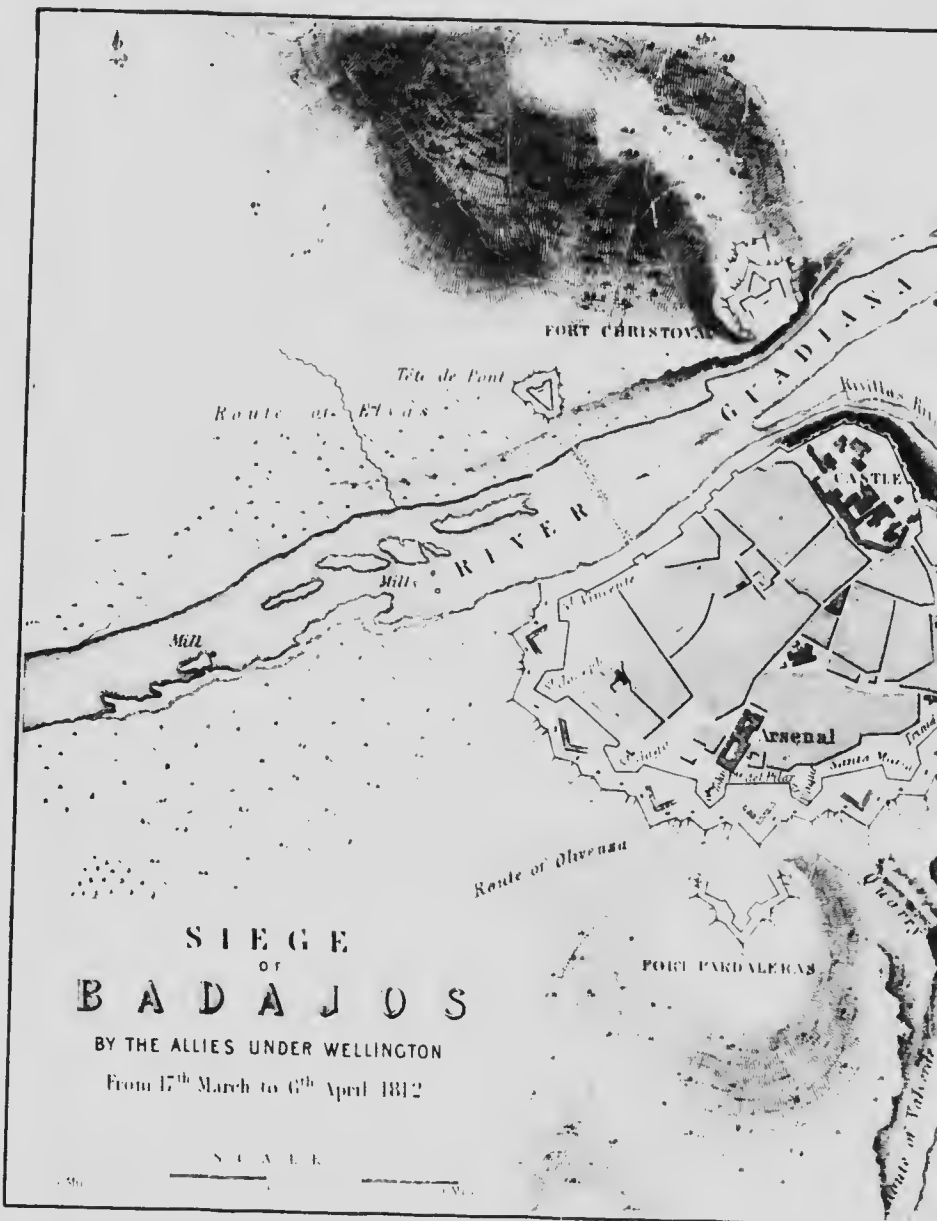
The defences of Badajos had been greatly strengthened and extended since the last attempt on it by the British, the exposed bastions had been mined, the place was well-provisioned, and General Philippon's garrison was 5,000

\* It might be supposed that Wellington had his hands and head full enough at this time without being called on for advice on other subjects. Nevertheless on 12th and 13th March he found time to write two long letters to Lord Melville, who had asked his opinion on certain points connected with the civil and military administration of India. Wellington's reply is expressed with his usual clearness and attention to detail; and it is interesting to find that, in his opinion, the chief objection to the assumption by the Crown of the administrative functions of the Company, would be found in the difficulty of keeping the Indian army officered by competent men, if the control of it were taken from the Company. But he warmly advocated the permission of exchange between officers of the King's and the Company's service (*Despatches*, viii. 614-619).





LTD LONDON



SIEGE  
OF  
**BADAJOS**

BY THE ALLIES UNDER WELLINGTON

From 17<sup>th</sup> March to 6<sup>th</sup> April 1812

SCALE





strong. Yet there was no time to spare on orthodox means ANN. 1812 of reduction; here, as at Ciudad Rodrigo, affairs must be conducted *brevi manu*, or not undertaken at all.

Ground was broken on the stormy night of 17th March, St. Patrick's Day, which the British soldiers considered a propitious circumstance. A parallel was opened against the Fort Picurina, which occupied an eminence outside and opposite the bastion of Trinidad. Colonel Fletcher, of Torres Vedras fame, directed the works, but was wounded in the groin during a sortie on the night of the 19th; a bullet striking some dollars in his pocket, which probably saved his life.\* Rain fell incessantly, raising the Guadiana to such a height as to sink the pontoons. Provisions, guns, and siege material still lay on the north bank; the "croakers" declared, not without good reason, that the siege must be abandoned; indeed, the situation was a serious one. However, in a few days the river began to fall, some Portuguese boats were brought up to make a new bridge; on the 24th the investment was completed by the 5th Division occupying the right bank, and the batteries were armed. Fire was opened on the 25th; that night 500 men of the 3rd Division stormed The Picurina carried by storm. the Picurina redoubt after an hour's desperate fighting, in which 4 British officers and 50 men perished, and 15 officers and 250 men were wounded.

The loss of the Picurina was a serious one for General Philippon, because, although the fire from the town rendered it untenable by the Allies, they constructed new batteries on its flanks, and a brisk artillery duel continued during several days. It was not, however, till 1st April that the fire of the besiegers began to tell on the Trinidad and Santa Maria bastions. On the 3rd April the breaches were pronounced practicable. The *lunette* † San Roque contained a dam which inundated the hollow between the Picurina and the

\* *Dumaresq MSS.*

† *Lunette*: a small work strengthening a ravelin or bastion, with one face at right angles to it.

Apr. 12. town, entirely precluding a front attack, and Wellington, after ordering an attack for the evening of the 3rd, countermanded it, and directed that a breach should be made in the curtain between the Santa Maria and Trinidad bastions.

Threat-  
ened ap-  
proach of  
Soult and  
Marmont.

At the last moment it seemed as if the siege must be raised, for Soult, having marched from Seville on 1st April, had advanced to Llerena, only three marches distant, and Marmont was about to move from Salamanca. Graham fell back upon Albuera, and Hill passed through Merida, destroying two of the sixty-four arches of the fine Roman bridge there.

It was good to hear on the morning of the 5th that Soult was still at Llerena. The curtain was effectually breached on the 6th, and Wellington, who had been about to reinforce Graham at Albuera, decided to hold his ground, and ordered 18,000 men for the assault that night. He omitted the customary formality of summoning Philippon to surrender, which has been the foundation of reproaches not altogether easy to answer. The omission is the more difficult to explain because Wellington always maintained that, by the laws of war, a garrison which had been summoned after a practicable breach had been rendered in the body of the place defended, was entitled to no quarter after standing a storm. He disapproved of any modification of this rule, believing it to be merciful in the end, as tending to discourage commanders allowing a storm—of all forms of combat the most costly in human lives.

The storm. After dark, therefore, on 6th April, the troops fell in for the assault. General Picton's 3rd Division was to attempt the escalade of the castle and the ravelin of San Roque. On the extreme left the 5th Division, under General Leith, was to make a feint on the Pardaleras redoubt, and a real attack on the bastion of San Vincente. To the Light Division, commanded by Colonel Barnard,\* an able substitute for the

\* Afterwards Lieut.-Gen. Sir Andrew Barnard, K.C.B.: wounded at Waterloo in command of 1st battalion 95th.

lost Craufurd, was committed the attack on the breach in ANN. 1812.  
 the Santa Maria bastion, while General the Hon. C. Colville \*  
 directed the 4th Division against the breaches in the curtain  
 and the bastion of Trinidad. The Portuguese brigade of  
 General Power, on the right bank of the Guadiana, were  
 commissioned to perform false attacks on the tête-du-pont  
 and Fort San Christoval. Each division of course was  
 preceded by its forlorn hope and storming party.

About half-past nine on that still and profoundly dark  
 night the columns stood under arms ready for the attack,  
 which was to take place on all sides at 10 o'clock. Modern  
 search-lights there were none, but the garrison having dis-  
 covered by means of fireballs the positions of the 3rd Division,  
 Picton directed the assault on the castle before the prescribed  
 hour, and the other columns then hurried forward to the  
 ditch. The first troops to obtain a footing were 200 men  
 under Major Wilson of the 48th, who carried the ravelin † of  
 San Roque, and established themselves within the work.  
 This was mere child's play compared to the task of Picton's  
 escalading party, before whom the castle rose—a sheer cliff  
 of masonry—to the height of eighteen or twenty feet.  
 Under a shattering musketry fire these dauntless fellows  
 forded the Rivillas, crept along the foot of the wall, and  
 reared their long ladders, only to have them thrown down by  
 the defenders. The assault was repulsed once; but Lieut.-  
 Colonel Ridge of the 5th Foot, who had well won his  
 promotion at El Bodon, rushed forward, and directed his men  
 to place two unbroken ladders to the right of where the first  
 attack had failed. He himself set the first foot on the  
 rampart, and, closely followed by a handful of his fusiliers,  
 actually drove the garrison before him into the town, and  
 won the castle before half-past eleven. He did not live to  
 enjoy his triumph, but fell in repelling an unsuccessful

Escalade  
 and cap-  
 ture of the  
 castle.

\* Father of the present Lord Colville of Culros.

† *Ravelin*: a detached work of two faces at salient angles, in front of the  
 counterscarp.

ÆT. 42. attempt by a detachment from the garrison to re-enter the gate.

On the side of the fortifications furthest from the castle terrific carnage was taking place. All remained silent within that part of the works while the storming parties of the 4th and Light Divisions crossed the glacis, though the uproar at the castle could be heard plainly across the town. Throwing their hay-packs into the ditch before them, the men leapt down into the dark gulf. In a moment, with deafening roar, it became one chasm of flame. Nearly every soldier in the head of that column perished by the explosion of materials laid by the defenders; powder barrels, live shells, and fire-balls thundered down from the rampart; still the columns behind pressed on furiously to the breaches. The tumult was bewildering, the confusion hopeless. The head of the 4th Division, turning darkly to the right, became involved in the inundation from the Rivillas; many perished by drowning; water, fire, cold steel, and solid masonry seemed to be combined on that dreadful night for the destruction of the flower of the British army. The two divisions were inextricably mixed; officers and men of each swarmed pell-mell up the debris under the breaches, only to find the passages barred from side to side by a dense hedge of sword blades, ground on both edges to the keenness of razors, fixed in heavy beams built into the masonry. For two hours the fruitless attempt was maintained; reckless of life, heedless of wounds and death, braving the fiery tempest poured on them, and the stinging jeers of the defendants, they persevered till midnight, when Wellington, from his station in the quarry opposite the Santa Maria bastion, ordered their recall.\*

Failure of  
the assault  
on the  
breaches.

\* Colonel Jones, the chief British authority on the sieges of the Peninsular war, has stated that the breaches would have been readily carried, had they been properly assaulted by strong columns, but denies that at any time there were more than fifty men ascending either breach in compact order. In the prevailing darkness, chief cause of the confusion, it must have been difficult to estimate the numbers attacking the breaches at any one time during these





MAJOR-GENERAL SIR JAMES LEITH, K.C.B.

*Vol. i, p. 261.*



SIEGES OF CIUDAD RODRIGO AND BADAJOS. 261

Meanwhile, it had fared better with General Leith's division on the extreme left. While Leith himself made a false attack on the Pardaleras, he sent forward General Walker's brigade to attempt the escalade of the San Vincente bastion. The ladders were too short by several feet, yet, profiting by the diversion caused by the assault on the castle, the forlorn hope struggled man by man over the parapet, and the bastion was gained. General Leith then brought in the 38th Regiment and 15th Caçadores, and occupied the town.

ANN. 1812.  
Escalade  
and capture  
of the  
San Vincente  
bastion.

The shattered ranks of the 4th and Light Divisions had been re-formed, and were about to advance once more to attack the breaches in the grey dawn. Mercifully they were spared the sacrifice: General Philippon, who was wounded, having retired across the river to fort Christoval, surrendered at daylight with his whole garrison.

Surrender  
of the  
garrison.

	Officers.	Sergeants.	Rank and File.	Total.
Killed ...	72	51	912	1035
Wounded ...	306	216	3265	3787
Missing ...	—	1	62	63

Such was the woeful price paid by the Allies for the possession of Badajos—a price which nothing but the absolute necessity of possession could justify. It is on record that when the particulars of the loss were laid before Wellington his habitual composure failed him and, for the first and last time in his career, he gave way to a brief storm of grief.\* The responsibility for the loss of so many of his soldiers was one, indeed, which it required an iron spirit to sustain; it

terrible two hours; at all events the account given by Colonel Jones, in a private letter written to Major Chapman the day following the storm, contains no such reflections on the conduct of the 4th and Light Divisions, and gives a vivid description of the formidable nature of the defences (*Suppl. Despatches*, vii. 311). The breach in the curtain was never assailed: in fact, the assaulting parties lost their way as soon as the Engineer officer who was to guide them was killed (*Jones*, i. 230).

\* *Napier*, iv. 433.

Æt. 42. was one of those tests which none but master minds may sustain. That Soult loitered at Llerena, instead of pressing forward to raise the siege, shows that he believed that in the siege of Badajos Wellington was undertaking that which must keep him employed for months. He did not reckon on that genius which, working, as all genius must, by approved rule in ninety-nine cases, rises superior to all rules in the hundredth, and accomplishes what mere experts pronounce to be impossible.

“Lord Wellington,” wrote General Lery, engineer-in-chief of the army of the South, to General Kellerman, “has taken the place in the presence, as it were, of two armies, amounting together to about 80,000 men. . . . I think the capture of Badajos a very extraordinary event; and I should be much at a loss to account for it in any manner consistent with probability.”\*

Horrors of  
the sack.

The shield of Badajos must reflect through all time the lustre of the allied arms of Britain and Portugal, yet candour compels that the reverse also should be shown for a moment. The storm of the works was followed by the sack of the town, of which the full horrors may scarcely be told. It may seem inconceivable that British troops should behave in the demoniac fashion of Wellington's in the hour of success; perhaps under the altered conditions of warfare they may never be submitted to a similar test. Certain it is that during forty-eight hours after the capitulation plunder, murder, and every kind of drunken violence raged in the streets of that unhappy town. The captive garrison were respected, but the Spanish inhabitants paid an awful penalty for some shots which had been fired from dwelling-houses when the British entered the streets from the San Vincente quarter. All the houses were shut, but the doors were easily forced. The inhabitants, in self-defence, lighted candles in

\* Major Jones observes that it is perhaps without parallel in the history of sieges that the assaults on three good, practicable breaches should fail, while two escalades should succeed at places where the defences remained entire.

their ground-floor rooms, set plenty of aguadente on the tables, and concealed themselves upstairs. The soldiers flew upon the spirit, and set off plundering. When Wellington rode in on the morning of the 7th, they began firing ball cartridges in his honour, and very nearly killed him.\* It was not till the 9th that order was re-established.

In the position which Wellington had secured by the capture of the two chief frontier fortresses was found full value even for the terrible price he had paid in the lives of his soldiers. True, there were three armies before him—Soult on his right, with 24,000 men; Marmont on his left, with 69,000, threatening Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo, in tardy obedience to the Emperor's orders; while the King was in the centre with 20,000, chiefly anxious to protect the approaches to his capital. British as well as foreign critics have objected to Wellington's operations against Badajoz as unmilitary, have attributed their success to fortune, and have pointed out that if Marmont had obeyed the Emperor's instructions in February, he would have successfully raised the siege. Perhaps so, but Marmont's inability to keep the army of Portugal concentrated was well known to Wellington; the difficulty arising from the French system of making an army feed itself was a constant factor in his calculations; and, in common with the other Marshals, Marmont laboured under the additional difficulty of receiving instructions from the Emperor 900 miles away, which it was impossible to reconcile either with those which he received from Soult, his superior, who wished him to cross the Tagus and combine with the army of the South, or with the physical and topographical conditions with which he had to contend. The fact is that Napoleon was attempting the impossible. It has been the persistent habit of one writer after another to extol his generalship as far superior to Wellington's, or that of any other commander during the present century, without regard to the arrogance with which he rebuked the failure of his

ANN. 1812.

Napoleon's  
displeasure  
with his  
marshals.

\* De Ros MS.; Tomkinson.

Æt. 42. officers in a distant field under circumstances he could not be aware of, the reckless inconsistency of his orders to them, and his cruel indifference to the difficulties of brave and skilful Generals and troops attempting to carry out his contradictory and impracticable instructions. Present with his troops and with the field of action under his eye, Napoleon was matchless as a commander; but seated at a distant desk he was as much subject to conditions of time and space as humbler individuals. The evidence of the following extracts, placed in parallel columns with the replies of those to whom they were addressed, would lower a lesser man from the rank of strategist to that of charlatan; they have been overlooked or condoned in the case of Napoleon because of the maze of mighty complications in which he had involved the whole of Western Europe.

*Marshal Berthier to Marshal  
Marmont.*

“Paris, 11th February, 1812.

“The Emperor regrets that, with Souham’s division and the other three divisions you had assembled, you did not return towards Salamanca to see what was going on. That would have given the English a good deal to think about, and you might have been useful to Ciudad Rodrigo.

“The way to help the army of the South in the position you are in is to place your headquarters at Salamanca, to

*Marshal Marmont to Marshal  
Berthier.*

“Valladolid, 26th February, 1812.

“The more I consider your letters of 11th February, the more firmly I am convinced that if his Majesty were in these parts he would take a totally different view of the position of the army of Portugal. Your Highness tells me that I ought to have concentrated my troops at Salamanca, but you forget that previously the Emperor’s orders were to keep three divisions beyond the mountains.

“If I were to concentrate the army on Salamanca, it could not subsist there for a fortnight. . . . If the army moved to-day

concentrate your army there, detaching one division only on the Tagus, to re-occupy the Asturias and force the enemy to remain at Almeida and in the north, from fear of invasion. You might even move detachments on Ciudad Rodrigo; if you have the necessary siege artillery take that place, for your honour is involved. Otherwise, if want of provisions or artillery oblige you to postpone that operation till harvest, you may at least make an incursion into Portugal, and move on the Douro and Almeida. . . . I repeat, therefore; the Emperor's instructions are that you do not quit Salamanca, that you cause the Asturias to be re-occupied, that your army rests in the position of Salamanca, and that you menace the English."

"Paris, 18th February.

"His Majesty is not satisfied with the direction you are giv-

on Ciudad Rodrigo, it could Ann. 1812. not cross the Agueda, because that river is unfordable at this season. The army could not remain three days before Ciudad Rodrigo, for want of provisions. . . . Your Highness talks to me of the siege of Rodrigo. If I receive means of transport and siege equipage, this may be undertaken easily after the harvest; but before it, and in the absence of means, it is not to be thought of. Your Highness tells me that my honour is involved in the recapture of this place. It will always be a matter of honour with me to do all that is useful to the Emperor's service, but I have in this matter no fault to retrieve. . . . If circumstances had permitted this frontier to be placed sooner in my charge, Rodrigo would still be ours. . . . Perhaps his Majesty will not be satisfied with my reasons . . . if he judges differently I shall urgently renew my entreaty that he will appoint a successor to my command. . . . I hope . . . that he will relieve me of a burden which is beyond my powers."

"Valladolid, 2nd March.

"The army of Portugal is quite strong enough to beat the

ÆT. 42. ing to the war ; you are stronger than the enemy, yet, instead of taking the initiative, you persist in letting him do so.

English army, but it is inferior to the English in operative power, because of the lack of means. The English army, having magazines prepared in advance and sufficient means of transport, subsists everywhere equally well. The army of Portugal, without magazines and with very weak transport, cannot subsist except by remaining dispersed.

“You march about and fatigue your troops ; that is no part of the art of war.

“Nobody is more anxious than I am to spare my troops fatigue, and I cannot think that the Emperor's observation can apply to the detachments in the valley of the Tagus, because it was not I who sent them there.

“The capture of Ciudad Rodrigo is a check to you. . . . General Hill's movement on the Tagus was made in the belief that, as soon as you heard of the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo, you would collect your troops and march rapidly on that place, and invest it, taking advantage of the breach not being repaired, and the want of time required to throw in provisions.

“Your Highness accuses me of being the cause of the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo ; I hold that I had nothing to do with it. Rodrigo was taken because the garrison was too weak, and because the Commander-in-chief of the army of the North (Dorsenne) was equally destitute of vigilance and foresight. I could not keep my eye on the place, seeing that I was separated from it by a chain of mountains and by the desert created in the valley of the Tagus by the six months' occupation by the army.

“Once a resolution is formed,

“The Emperor seems to think



you must keep to it. There is neither 'if' nor 'but.' You must choose your position near Salamanca, be the conqueror or perish with the French army on the battlefield of your choice.

"The real road to Lisbon is by the north; the enemy, having considerable magazines and his hospitals in that quarter, can only retire very slowly on the capital.

"By allowing the initiative to the enemy instead of taking it, by thinking continually of the army of the South (Soult's), which has no need of you

that I am not firm in my resolves: I cannot think what can have led his Majesty to form this opinion. When I have thought it any use to fight, I do not know that anything has ever altered my determination.

"His Majesty seems to think that Lord Wellington has his magazines not far from the northern frontier; his magazines are at Abrantes and in Estremadura; his hospitals are in Lisbon, Castello Branco and Abrantes, so he has nothing to protect on the Coa. Your Highness says that the real route to Lisbon is by the north; I believe that those who know this country are convinced of the contrary. As for myself, I am persuaded that as sure as the principal corps d'armée takes that direction, it will be exposed to every kind of disaster, and that the right road to take is that of the Alemtejo. I explained the reasons for this in a memorandum which I had the honour of addressing to you three months ago.

"Your Highness writes that the Emperor is of opinion that I occupy myself too much with the interests of others, and not enough with those specially

ÆT. 42

because it contains 80,000 of the best troops in Europe, in occupying your thoughts about districts which are not in your command, and in abandoning the Asturias and the provinces committed to you, you ensure any reverse that you may experience being *felt throughout the whole of Spain.*

“Your position is plain and simple. . . . Dispose your army so that in four marches the troops may collect at Salamanca. . . . Keep up continual skirmishing with the enemy’s outposts. . . . You ought to make prisoners every day with your advanced guards.

“The Emperor desires that, twenty-four hours after receiving this letter, you will march for Salamanca, barring unforeseen events: that you will direct an advanced guard to occupy the defiles about Ciudad Rodrigo, and another on those about Almeida.”

committed to me. Until now I regarded co-operation with the army of the South as one of the duties imposed on me by the Emperor, and this duty has been expressly enjoined in a score of your despatches, and made clear afresh by the order I received to leave three divisions in the valley of the Tagus. Now that I am relieved of it, my position becomes more simple and far better.

“His Majesty wishes that my outposts shall exchange shots every day with the English; his Majesty then is not aware that, from the nature of things and because of the absolute want of subsistence, there are always at least twenty leagues between the English advanced posts and ours, and that this interval is occupied by guerillas; so that, if I detach large bodies, they die of hunger; if small ones, they are compromised.

“His Majesty’s orders are so imperative that I consider it my duty to obey, notwithstanding the reasons which have hitherto prevented my conforming to them. . . . But as it is evident that the siege of Badajos has been postponed only because of the presence of these three divisions (in the

Tagus valley), my opinion is ANN. 1812.  
that this movement will expose  
that place to danger. I ven-  
ture to hope, at least, that if  
evil happens to Badajos, the  
blame will not be laid on me.\*  
. . . Your Highness speaks of  
occupying the defiles of Almeida  
and Rodrigo. The country be-  
tween the Agueda and the  
Tormes is an immense plain,  
practicable in every sense; I  
cannot understand, therefore,  
what is meant by these 'defiles'  
(*débouchés*)."

And so the interminable wrangle dragged on, not with Marmont alone, for similar scoldings were launched on the commanders of the other armies al. Each was told that he, and he alone, was responsible for the loss of Ciudad Rodrigo.

*Marshal Berthier to General Dorsenne, commanding the army of the North.*

"Paris, 11th February, 1812.

"The Emperor is extremely displeased with your negligence in this whole affair of Ciudad Rodrigo.

"How is it that you had not news from that place twice a week?

*General Dorsenne to Marshal Berthier.*

"Burgos, 23rd February, 1812.

"If your Excellency had been pleased to read my despatches of 15th, 16th, and 23rd January before writing yours of the 11th, you would have seen that I was in no degree to blame about Ciudad Rodrigo.

"I ordered General Barrié to send me reports, not twice a week, but every day. They were intercepted—was that my fault?

\* Badajos was stormed three weeks later.

ÆT. 42. — “This humiliating check can be attributed only to want of precaution on your part, and to the inconsiderate measures you adopted.”

“If the Emperor does not change his unfavourable opinion of me, I beg he will recall me, as I cannot remain in Spain with the conviction of having lost his confidence.”

There were, besides, constant complaints forwarded to the Emperor by the commander of each of the four armies against the others; but the only heed paid by Napoleon to these, or to the remonstrances and explanations of the unhappy Marmont, was that he directed fresh reproaches to be penned by Berthier.

*Marshal Berthier to Marshal Marmont.*

“Paris, 16th April, 1812.

“I have laid before the Emperor, M. le Maréchal, your letters of 22nd and 25th March. In my despatches of 18th and 20th February I indicated to you the measures necessary for taking the initiative and giving to the war a character worthy of the glory of the French arms, and putting an end to your persistent fumbling (*tâtonnement*) and hesitancy, which form the presage of a beaten army. But instead of trying to seize the spirit of general instructions given to you, you seem quite pleased with your failure to understand them, and to take up the exact opposite of their intention. These instructions are well considered, and have a purpose (*sont raisonnées et motivées*). Like all instructions of a Government, they have been issued at three hundred leagues distance and six weeks interval. It was assumed that you were in presence of the enemy, and they directed you to hold him in check. . . . The Emperor charges you to second the King, and, from devotion to his person and for the glory of his arms, to do everything in your power to prevent 40,000 English ruining the Peninsula, which will certainly take place unless the commanders of the various corps are animated with that zeal for glory and that patriotism which alone can surmount difficulties, and prevent the public interest suffering from private prejudice or ill temper.”

The secret of the disasters which had begun to fall thick ANN. 1812.  
and fast on the once invincible arms of France was shrewdly  
expressed in a letter to a friend from General Léry, writing  
from Seville on 20th April.

“Seville, 20th April, 1812.

“The journals, my dear —, will have apprised you of the  
unhappy end of Badajos. . . . I confess that I don't understand  
this poor resistance by a sufficient garrison, more than commonly  
well supplied. . . . All our calculations are upset. The army of  
Portugal (Marmont's) marched away from ours (Sault's) when it  
ought to have co-operated; and thus Wellington . . . has seized  
this place under the beards of two corps amounting together to  
80,000 men! That is what comes of having no supreme chief at  
hand to combine the movements of each corps.” \*

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xiv. 39.

## CHAPTER XI.

### CAMPAIGN OF SALAMANCA.

1812.

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| <p>May 18 . 1812 Destruction of the bridge at Almaraz. Position and strength of the armies.</p> <p>June 13 . . . . Advance of the Allies into Castile.</p> <p>„ 17 . . . . They enter Salamanca.</p> <p>„ 17-27 . . . Reduction of the forts.</p> <p>„ 28 . . . . Marmont resumes his retreat.</p> <p>July 20 . . . . Wellington outmanœuvred by Marmont.</p> <p>„ 22 . . . . Battle of Salamanca. Retreat of the French.</p> <p>„ 23 . . . . Fine charge of German cavalry.</p> <p>October 8 . . . . Wellington is advanced to the rank of Marquis. Napoleon's anger with Marmont. Movements of King Joseph with the army of the Centre.</p> <p>„ 30 . . . . The Allies enter Valladolid.</p> <p>August 10 . . . . King Joseph flies from Madrid.</p> <p>„ 12 . . . . The Allies enter Madrid.</p> <p>September 1 . . . Wellington marches from Madrid against Clausel.</p> <p>„ 19 . . . . Siege of Burgos begun.</p> | <p>September 22 . Lord Wellington appointed Commander-in-chief of the Spanish armies. Resentment of Ballesteros and consequent advance of Soult.</p> <p>October 18 . . . Souham, superseding Clausel, advances to relieve Burgos.</p> <p>„ 21 . . . . Siege of Burgos raised: the Allies begin their retreat to the Douro. Wellington's fox hounds.</p> <p>November 13 . . Wellington awaits attack on the Arapiles.</p> <p>„ 15 . . . . Retreat resumed.</p> <p>„ 17 . . . . Lieut.-General Sir E. Paget taken prisoner. The Allies go into winter quarters on the frontier. Disorders and losses of the retreat. Wellington rebukes his officers.</p> <p>March 13, 1813. Festivities at Ciudad Rodrigo Wellington's extraordinary powers of endurance.</p> |
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DON MIGUEL RICARDO D'ALAVA  
*From a Portrait at Apsley House.*

Vol. i. p. 273.





AFTER the fall of Badajos, Soult returned into Andalusia ANN. 1812. to maintain the blockade of Cadiz. It was Wellington's purpose to have followed him there with 40,000 men, while Lord William Bentinck created a diversion in his favour by landing in Catalonia with 10,000 British from Sicily and 6,000 natives of Majorca enrolled and maintained at British charges. The idea, however, had to be abandoned, because of the neglect of the Spanish officers to repair the defensive works of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, and to convey into these places the provisions which, seven weeks previously, Wellington had placed in their hands.\* Marmont having advanced as far as Sabugal, Wellington was obliged to move northward to protect the fortresses; when Marmont retired before him, General Hill was sent out to remove the bridge of boats at Almaraz, the only remaining effective communication between the south of Spain and the frontier of Portugal. This piece of work was well accomplished on 18th May, Destruction of the bridge at Almaraz. the garrisons being surprised, the forts defending the bridge being taken by assault, and eighteen guns captured. Lord Wellington, therefore, feeling his right secure from attack, directed his efforts to a forward movement into Castile, endeavouring to bring Marmont to a general action before he should be reinforced after harvest. "We have a better chance of success now than we have ever had," he wrote to Lord Liverpool, although he added—"with all these prospects I cannot reflect without shuddering upon the probability that we shall be distressed, nor upon the consequence which may result from our wanting money in the interior of Spain." †

Before following the allied forces in the forward movement which was to prove the turning-point of the whole Peninsular campaign, it is necessary to recapitulate once more the strength and position of the forces on either side.

At the beginning of June, Wellington had at his disposal Position and strength of the armies. an army more numerous and effective than at any previous

\* *Despatches*, ix. 57, 173.

† *Ibid.*, ix. 177.

ÆT. 43. period of his service. Under his immediate command were 75,328 Allies of all ranks (including 3,500 Spaniards under Carlos de España), of which 5,533 were cavalry, and 59 guns; but of this number no less than 16,958 *rank and file* were returned as sick on 11th July. Making allowance, therefore, for sick officers and non-commissioned officers, the effectives present on that day could not be reckoned at more than 56,000.\* General Hill's force in Estremadura on the same date consisted of 25,146, sick included. Of these 2,574 were cavalry, 14,192 were Portuguese infantry, and he had 24 guns. Hill had destroyed the bridge at Almaraz, but was in communication with his chief by the bridge at Alcantara, which Wellington had caused to be repaired.

Besides these troops, there was a British garrison of 6,000 in Cadiz; and Bentinck, having sailed from Sicily with 10,000 men, was expected daily to land in Catalonia or Valencia. Silveira's Portuguese militia, also, lay in Tras-os-monte, threatening Marmont's right flank and communications.

Of the number of Spanish troops in the field it is impossible to give an estimate, so constantly did it fluctuate, nor could any reliance be placed on them under their own Generals, further than that their presence kept the enemy occupied. Castaños was to undertake the siege of Astorga in Leon; while further north, in Asturias, the 7th Spanish army was to keep Caffarelli employed. In the south, Ballasteros might be relied on for a while to detain Soult; while the army of Murcia, co-operating with Bentinck's expedition, occupied the attention of Suchet.

The official general state of the French armies in the Peninsula on 15th May, 1812, show that the army of the South, under Soult, comprised 64,360 of all arms and ranks; the army of Portugal, under Marmont, 69,037; the army of the Centre, under the King and Jourdan, 19,916; the army of the North, under Souham, 53,276; while the armies of

\* Official return, *Suppl. Despatches*, xiv. 61.

the Ebro, Aragon, and Catalonia, commanded by Souchet, ANN. 1812. amounted to 74,851, making a grand total of 281,440 French troops, to which may be added, for what they were worth, 40,707 Spanish troops in the service of King Joseph. Twelve thousand men were on their march from France to reinforce Marmont, but not many more could be expected from that quarter, because, on 9th May, the Emperor had marched at the head of 600,000 troops to invade Russia.

Although Lord Wellington knew that Spain was held against his advance by forces vastly superior to those of the Allies, yet he felt confident in his power to deal singly with any one of the armies opposed to him. He was deceived, however, in regard to their actual strength, which he greatly underrated until, when on the point of crossing the Agueda, he learnt the truth from certain intercepted papers.\* Having requested the Spanish General Villemur to strengthen General Hill against probable movements by Soult,† and having replenished the magazines at Elvas, Badajos, Ciudad Rodrigo, and Almeida,‡ the Commander of the Forces ordered a general advance, and the army crossed the Agueda on 13th June in three columns, the Spanish troops of Don Carlos forming a fourth. The enemy fell back before them till, on the 16th, they arrived on the brook Valmusa, about six miles from Salamanca. That night Marmont evacuated the town, leaving a garrison of 800 in three forts constructed on the ruins of convents and colleges. These forts covered by their fire the bridge over the Tormes; but the Allies, crossing by two fords in the neighbourhood, entered Salamanca on the 17th, amid the tumultuous rejoicing of the inhabitants. They crowded round the columns with frantic shouts of *viva!* The women embraced the soldiers, even Wellington, whom they

Lord Wel-  
lington  
advances  
into  
Castile.

The Allies  
enter  
Salamanca.

\* "I did not calculate that the enemy's army of Portugal was so strong when I determined on this expedition, and I had certainly reason to believe that Marshal Marmont would not evacuate the Asturias" (*Despatches*, ix. 243. See also pp. 221, 232, 239).

† *Despatches*, ix. 221.

‡ *Ibid.*, 207, 219.

ÆT. 43. — nearly pulled off his horse as he sat writing orders on his sabretasche.\* Good reason, indeed, had they to rejoice at their deliverance from the French, for, of all the towns in Spain, none had suffered more grievously than this famous seat of learning. Of twenty-five convents thirteen lay in ruins, and of twenty-five colleges only three remained standing.

Reduction  
of the  
forts.

Wellington had miscalculated the importance and strength of the forts. He had been informed vaguely that some convents had been strengthened; but the French engineers had been at work on them for three years, and it was found necessary to undertake their reduction in regular form. Ammunition ran out before the breaches were practicable; Major-General Bowes† and a number of others lost their lives in an attempt at escalade on the 23rd. Marmont had moved up to the relief of his garrison on the 20th, but Wellington received timely notice of his approach, and the French Marshal, having reconnoitred the position of the Allies, declined the attack, and fell back on the 23rd to Aldea Rubia, commanding the ford of Huerta on the Tormes.

Marmont  
resumes  
his retreat.

Ammunition and siege material having been brought up on the 26th, the attack on the forts was renewed; two of them were stormed by detachments of the 6th Division on the 27th, and the third capitulated. The garrisons to the number of 700 were made prisoners, 30 guns and a great store of provisions and ammunition were taken, and the passage of the Tormes secured to the victors. Marmont, who had intended to offer battle on the 28th, as soon as the forts had fallen retired towards the Douro, anxiously looking for reinforcements from General Caffarelli.‡ Wellington has been blamed for having allowed him to do so,

\* Tomkinson.

† General Bowes went forward with the storming party of his brigade and was wounded. He went to the rear to have his wound dressed, but returning a second time to the attack, was killed.

‡ See Marmont's despatch, 31st July, *Suppl. Despatches*, xiv. 77.

seeing that he had a good opportunity of attacking him ANN. 1812 between 20th and 22nd June; but as long as the guns of the forts commanded the bridge, the passage of the Tormes, in the event of failure in a general action, would have been attended with much danger, and he wisely decided to await attack in the strong position he held.\* Nevertheless, in reaching the Douro, Marmont greatly improved his position. The possession of bridges strongly defended secured his retreat, while the general bend of the river enabled him to threaten the flanks of the Allies as they followed him. Wellington, therefore, maintained an attitude of observation, confident that the ever-recurring difficulty of subsistence would force his adversary either to evacuate southern Castile altogether or return to give him battle. Affairs took exactly the course he anticipated. Marmont having received reinforcements, and increased his cavalry by dismounting his infantry officers, whereby he obtained 700 horses, skilfully manœuvred, but in vain, to draw the Allies after him in his feigned retreat behind the Douro. The movements of the two armies during the first three weeks of July were of that description which is the glory of the tactician, but the despair of the historian. There was occasional sharp fighting—an affair on the 2nd, when Sir Stapleton Cotton's cavalry came up with the French rear-guard at Rueda, and drove them across the Douro; another, of more importance, on the 18th at Castrejon, when two British divisions and Cotton's cavalry had to retire through Torrecilla de la Orden upon the Guareña before the main body of the French. On the same day the enemy were repulsed in an attempt to turn the left of Wellington's position on the Guareña.

At the very moment when Marmont, having received some reinforcements from the North, and having been informed by Jourdan that he was not to expect help from the army of the Centre, assumed a bolder front, the British commander found himself on the very verge of paralysis for want of

\* *Despatches*, ix. 251.

ÆT. 43. money, the pay of both officers and men being many months in arrear.

"I have never been in such distress as at the present, and some serious misfortune must happen if the Government do not attend seriously to the subject and adopt some measures to supply us regularly with money." \*

This was bad enough, but his concern was even greater when news arrived that Lord William Bentinck, instead of landing on the east coast of Spain, had altered his destination to Italy. Wellington had delayed his advance into Castile until he had intelligence of Bentinck's departure from Sicily; the whole operations of the Allies had been planned to hinge on the diversion he should cause in Valencia, and now—

"Lord William's decision is fatal to the campaign, at least at present. If he should land *anywhere* in Italy, he will, as usual, be obliged to re-embark; and we shall have lost a golden opportunity here." †

Wellington decides on retreat.

Wellington, hitherto desirous to give his adversary battle, was now chiefly concerned to secure his own retreat into Portugal. Bitterly disappointed in the abandonment of Bentinck's diversion, he viewed the King's approach with the army of the Centre as putting an end to the campaign of 1812. Hearing that General Clausel had arrived at Pollos with the cava'ry and artillery of the army of the North, he decided on retiring to Ciudad Rodrigo with all the speed that Marmont would permit him. ‡

But Marmont's new-born eagerness seemed to forbid the avoidance of battle. On the 15th and 16th July he moved suddenly forward upon Toro and made a feint of crossing the Douro; Wellington conformed on the night of the 16th by concentrating his centre and left upon Canizal; nevertheless he had allowed his left to be turned, and the enemy had the shorter road open to Salamanca and the

\* 15th July, *Despatches*, ix. 290.

† *Ibid.*, ix. 289.

‡ *Ibid.*, 301.

British communication. The two armies were now facing each other on fronts parallel with the lines connecting them with their bases, a position which made the contingency of defeat a far more serious consideration to each than when the front of both lay across its line of communications. Marmont was far too cautious to risk an attack by Wellington which might throw him off his communications and drive him into the hungry region of *Tras-os-montes*. Having by his movement on *Toro* forced the British commander to change his front to his left, he retired through *Toro* on the 17th, crossed the *Douro* higher up at *Pollos* and *Tordesillas*, and concentrated upon *Nava del Rey*, threatening the British right on the *Trabaneos*. This swift change from a turning movement on the British left to one upon their right was an exceedingly skilful manœuvre, and very nearly successful. Wellington, however, at day-break on the 18th managed to withdraw his right upon the *Guareña*, where it joined the rest of his army, and successfully resisted the French in their attempt to cross that river. The two armies moved in parallel lines, often within musket-shot of each other, the regularity of the parade being interrupted from time to time by a battery opening fire on either side. The weather was unusually cold for the time of year, a bitter wind sweeping down from the *Sierra Estrella*. Wellington used afterwards to declare that he never suffered so much from cold in any of his campaigns as during these anxious days.\*

On 19th July both armies occupied positions on the plain of *Vallesa*, and Wellington prepared for the battle which he believed to be inevitable next day.† Marmont, however, was determined not to allow him the choice of ground, but resolved to take advantage of the superiority which the French army always claimed in manœuvring.

"This class of operations," he wrote to King Joseph, "is the only one to adopt with the English, who display peculiar talent

\* *Stanhope*, 51.

† *Despatches*, ix. 297.

Æt. 43. in taking up positions, which it is necessary to thwart as much as possible by preventing them establishing themselves before giving them battle." \*

Therefore at daylight on the 20th the French were seen to be in movement again to their left along the heights of the Guareña, and once more the Allies marched abreast of them. Marmont, however, kept his lead, crossed the Guareña at Cantalapiedra, and encamped that night at Babilafuente and Villoruela, covering the ford of Huerta on the Tormes. Wellington, seeing he was outflanked and outmanœuvred, bivouacked at Cabeza Velloso, with a corps of observation on the Tormes at Aldea Lengua.

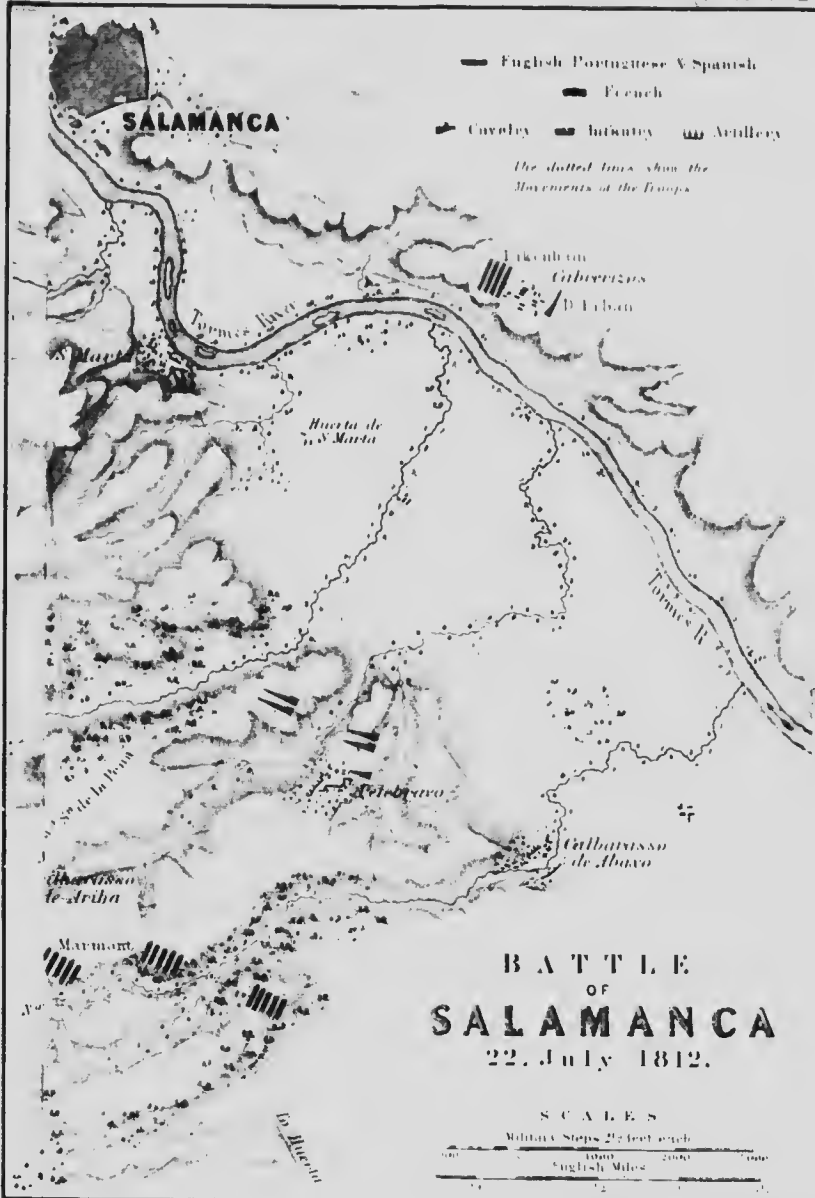
"I have determined," he wrote to the Secretary of State next day, "to cross the Tormes if the enemy should; to cover Salamanca as long as I can; and, above all, not to give up our communication with Ciudad Rodrigo; and not to fight an action, unless under very advantageous circumstances, or it should become absolutely necessary."

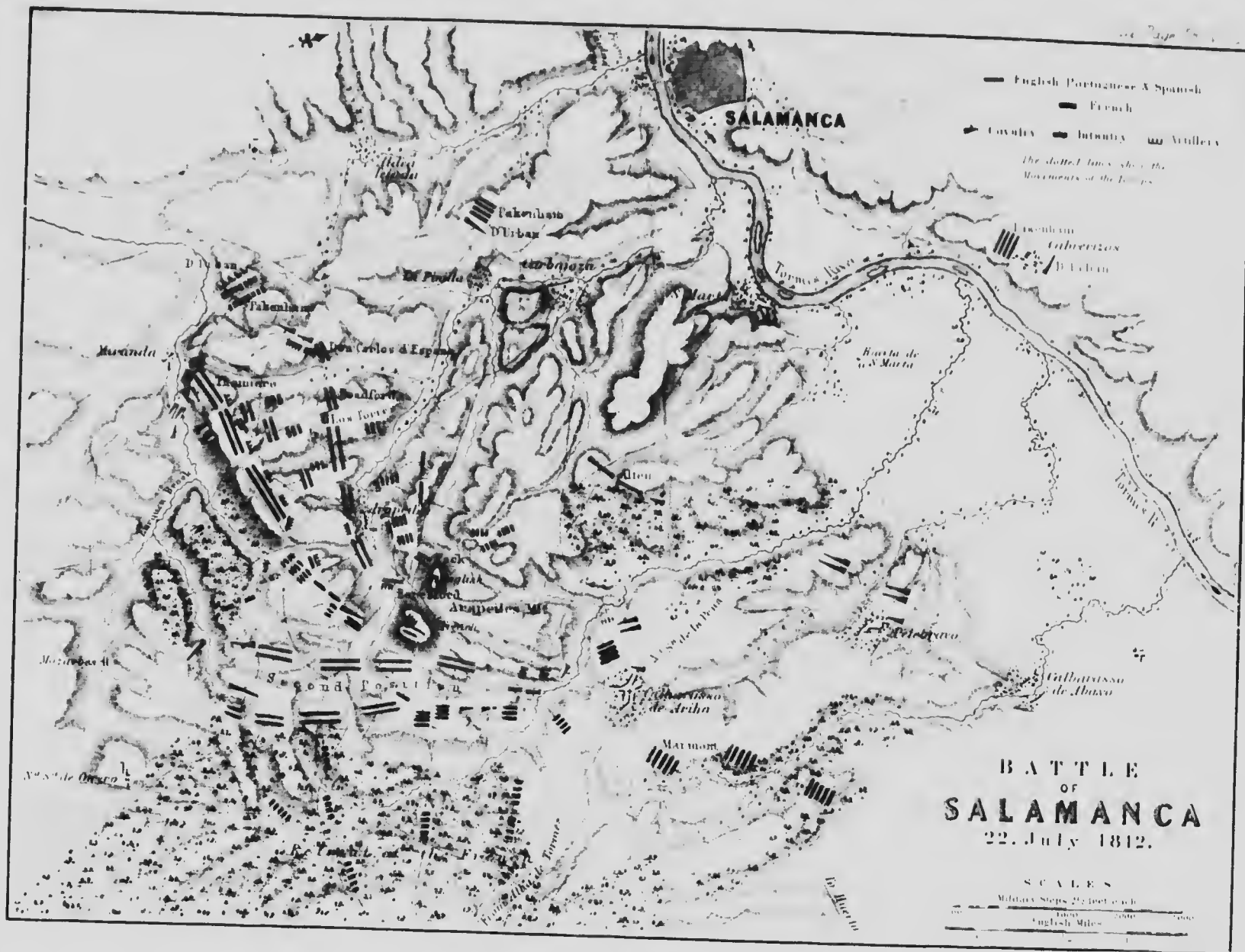
The  
French  
cross the  
Tormes.

On the afternoon of the 21st the French crossed the Tormes between Huerta and Alba, and, always moving by their left, threatened the road to Ciudad Rodrigo. A little later, Wellington, crossing by the bridge and fords of Salamanca, took up a position with his left resting on the Tormes, a couple of miles above Salamanca, and his right just short of two steep isolated hills called Los Arapiles. It was late at night, and a fearful thunderstorm raged with torrents of rain. The importance of the Arapiles to the position of the Allies was not seen till the morning of the 22nd broke, still and clear, with delicious freshness after the storm. Then the mistake was partly rectified by the seizure of the nearer Arapile; for the further one a race took place between detachments from both armies, which was won by the

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xiv. 73.









French, greatly to the detriment of their adversary, for the height commanded the line which must have been taken by the Allies had the fortune of the day gone against them. ANN. 1812.

Nearer than the Arapiles to the centre of the Allies was a hill called Nostra Señora de la Peña, to possess which the light troops of the 7th Division and the 4th Caçadores disputed with the enemy, both sides remaining upon it till the close of the action. The forenoon passed in suspense, Marmont's design not being apparent—indeed he had not fully decided whether to await or to give battle.\* Two of his divisions only were in position on Calvarasa de Arriba, the rest were moving up through the forest from Babila Fuente. Wellington's object was to secure his retreat, which he intended to resume as soon as darkness should render it safe to attempt it. His baggage was already some hours on the road to Ciudad Rodrigo. Early in the day he extended his right *en potence*† to the village of Arapiles, which he occupied with the 4th Division, and placed the 3rd Division at Aldea Tejada, while between these two divisions Bradford's Portuguese Brigade and the Spaniards of Don Carlos held Las Torres. Battle of Salamanca.

Shortly after midday Wellington descended the Arapile, and entered a farmyard where some breakfast had been prepared for him and his staff. The shot was falling so fast around that the viands had to be moved behind the buildings, Lord Wellington "stumping about, munching," and taking continual peeps through his glass at the enemy. Presently an aide-de-camp brought word that an important movement was taking place in the French position. Wellington took another peep. "By God!" he exclaimed with his mouth full, "that'll do!"‡ Mounting in haste, he galloped back to his post of observation on the Arapile, and eagerly examined Flank movement of Marmont.

\* Marmont to the King of Spain, 25th July, *Suppl. Despatches*, xiv. 73.

† *En potence*: like the arm of a gallows—at right angles.

‡ Greville, 2nd series, ii. 39.

Æt. 43. the enemy. Closing his spy-glass with a snap, and turning to his Spanish *attaché*, he exclaimed—

“Mon cher Alava, Marmont est perdu!”

The French Marshal, perceiving that the Allies had no intention of attacking him, had turned his attention to securing command of the line of their retreat. Opening a cannonade from fifty guns, he moved General Thomières' division to seize the height of Miranda, nearly two miles on his left. Wellington's practised eye detected the serious error of this evolution, which separated the left wing of the French from their centre.

His opportunity had come.\*

He formed Leith's 5th Division on the right of the 4th, thus uniting them in line of battle with Bradford's Portuguese, while he held the 6th and 7th Divisions in reserve. Then he dashed off to the 3rd Division, commanded by his brother-in-law Pakenham.

“Ned,” said he, pointing to Thomières' columns moving along the heights, “d'ye see those fellows on the hill? Throw your division into column; at them! and drive them to the devil.”

The perspective of a battlefield is a difficult subject to present on a printed page. Space and time—elements of supreme moment to a commander in the field—are hard to realise as the eye travels from paragraph to paragraph; sometimes a subordinate incident illustrates them better than elaborate description. Having sent Pakenham to out-flank Thomières, Wellington returned at speed to his position

\* “Marmont ought to have given me a *pont d'or*, and he would have made a handsome operation of it. But instead of that, after manœuvring all morning in the usual French style, nobody knew with what object, he at last pressed on my right in such a manner, at the same time without engaging, that he would have either carried our Arapiles, or he would have confined us entirely to our position. This was not to be endured, and we fell upon him, turning his left flank: and I never saw an army receive such a beating” (private letter from Lord Wellington to General Graham, who had returned to England on sick leave, *Despatches*, ix. 309).

on the Arapile. His battle-front was ready, but Marmont's ANN. 1812 attack was still two miles distant.

"Watch the French through your glass, Fitzroy," he said to his aide-de-camp Lord Fitzroy Somerset.\* "I am going to take a rest: when they reach that copse, near the gap in the hills, wake me."

Then he lay down in his cloak on the heath, among the sweet gum-cistus flowers, and was fast asleep in a minute.

They wakened him between three and four; the French were within striking range; he advanced the 4th and 5th Divisions to the attack, with the Portuguese and Cotton's cavalry, strongly supported on the left by the 1st and Light Divisions. At the same moment Pack's brigade assailed the French Arapile, where Marmont and his staff sat only half a cannon-shot distant from the British commander. Marmont, although Pakenham's movement was still hidden from his view, at once sent orders to recall Thomières to his former position and to hasten the march of his reserve divisions, which were coming up through the forest. The onslaught in front he received with a destructive fire from his centre, strongly posted on the slopes of Calvarasa. Not till five Pakenham's flank attack o'clock, when the head of Pakenham's column came in view and he perceived the 3rd Division deploy as a wall across his left flank, did Marmont realise the awful peril his rash movement had incurred. Spurring furiously to the point of danger, he was struck by the fragments of a shell, which broke his arm and tore open his side. It was in merey that he was spared the sight of the shattering which Pakenham inflicted on Thomières' columns, rolling them up and driving them before him upon the 4th and 5th Divisions and Bradford's brigade, who by this time were driving their opponents from height to height. Upon the French, thus penned between two foes, swept down Sir Stapleton Cotton's cavalry, completing their disastrous rout and utterly destroying all semblance of their formation.

\* Afterwards Lord Raglan.

Æt. 43. General le Marchant was killed, yet the squadrons rode on till they came upon a fresh column still in good order. This also they broke and dispersed, capturing five guns. General Bonet, who succeeded to Marmont's command, fell wounded, Thomières was killed, and now upon Clausel, newly arrived from the rear, devolved the conduct of the fight. The French right, continually reinforced by troops arriving from the rear, still fought stubbornly; and Clausel, not content with covering a retreat, and encouraged by a gleam of success which shone on the eagles of the right, ably and gallantly strove to restore the fortune of the day. The French Arapile was still strongly held, showing what the British had missed in not occupying it overnight. Pack's Portuguese met with a severe handling in attempting to carry it, and immediately afterwards the 4th Division, wearied with long fighting, sustained a serious reverse from one of Clausel's fresh columns. Their General, the Hon. Lowry Cole,\* was disabled by a wound. Driven off the southern ridge which they had gained, they endured a damaging charge from Boyer's dragoons; while on their right the first line of the 5th Division yielded to the stress of General Brennier's attack. General Leith, commanding the 5th Division, fell wounded; to him succeeded the veteran Beresford, who had scarcely brought up Spry's Portuguese brigade from the second line when he, too, was struck down and borne off the field.

The combat in the amphitheatre between the northern and southern ridges was a terrible one; officers and men were falling fast on both sides; so deadly was the fire, so nearly matched were British and French in courage and endurance, that it seemed as if none would survive to claim supremacy. Victory waited to declare for that commander who could bring up the stronger reserve. Wellington's faculty of being present where his presence was most necessary was never more conspicuous than at this crisis. Ordering

\* Second son of the first Earl of Eaniskillen.

up the 6th Division, he launched it upon the fray: the scale ANN. 1812. turned slowly; foot by foot Clausel's grenadiers were forced back across the flat, up the hill beyond, till the British cheers rang out once more from the southern height.

The French divisions of Foy and Maucune stood firm, Retreat of the French. covering the disordered retreat of the main army. Foy, on the right, held the road to the fords at Huerta, Maucune that to Alba de Tormes; but Wellington still had something in hand. He brought up the Light Division, and rode with it while it advanced in two lines against Foy, supported by the 1st Division and two brigades of the 4th Division in battalion columns, and followed by the 7th Division and Don Carlos's Spaniards in reserve. It was now dusk. Foy retired for three miles by alternate wings, maintaining a heavy fire of artillery and small arms, until in the darkness he found safety in the dense forest. With steadiness not less admirable than his comrade Foy's, Maucune, on his left, conducted his retreat towards Alba before the 6th Division, supported by the 3rd and 5th, until the shroud of night and the friendly forest saved him also from pursuit. Still Wellington pressed on in the moonlight at the head of his Light Division, confident that, the passage at Alba de Tormes being barred by the Spanish garrison, he would inflict a crowning blow on the fugitives at the fords.

He was deceived. Don Carlos had disobeyed him, having in the morning withdrawn the garrison of Alba de Tormes, and thus left the bridge free for the passage of the enemy.

"On the morning of the battle of Salamanca I received a message from Don Carlos de España, asking if he might withdraw the garrison from the Castle at Alba de Tormes which commanded the bridge over the Tormes at that town. I answered 'By no means,' because I knew if the French beat us they would follow us and that the garrison would have no difficulty in getting away along the bank of the river towards the south; whereas in the event of our beating them, the garrison at Alba would prevent



ÆT. 43. — their retreat by that bridge, and cause them great loss. Considering, therefore, that passage as secured, I directed our march upon the Tormes after the victory to some fords, where I supposed the French would chiefly betake themselves for retreat, and which were considerably to the north of Alba. I was surprised, however, when I found that the French had retreated through Alba unopposed. It turned out that Don Carlos had actually withdrawn the garrison from Alba first, and asked leave afterwards. When refused he probably thought it too late to countermand them, and, rather than own his shameful conduct, said nothing more about it. This enabled the French to bring off about 9,000 or 10,000 men equipped, etc., which we must have captured if the garrison had been left at Alba." \*

On arriving at the fords of Huerta, therefore, Wellington found no enemy; Foy had drawn off in the direction of Alba, where he and Maucune, and the main body of the French army, made good their escape across the Tormes to Peñeranda.

The pursuit was renewed next day, and continued as far as the Adaja, fully sixty miles east of the battlefield. Doubtless Wellington, whose left wing was comparatively fresh, might have made it more effective had he been without anxiety for his communications; moreover, his commissariat had to be brought back from the direction of Ciudad Rodrigo, whither it had been sent on the morning of the battle. However, at midday on the 23rd, the enemy's rear-guard was overtaken at the village of La Serna, by the heavy dragoon of the King's German Legion under General Bock, which gave occasion for what the French General Foy declared was the boldest charge of cavalry in the whole war. The French cavalry made off, leaving three battalions of infantry to their fate. These were strongly posted in squares; the Hanoverian cavalry charged them, broke the squares, and took the whole of them prisoners.

Fine  
charge  
of the  
German  
cavalry.

Clausel was now reinforced by the cavalry and artillery of

\* *De Ros MS.*

the army of the North, who covered his disorderly retreat to the Douro. The great victory of Salamanca was shorn of some of the fruits which would have been reaped by the Allies had Don Carlos not withdrawn the garrison of Alba de Tormes on the morning of the 22nd; as it was they took 11 guns, 2 eagles, 6 stand of colours, and 7,000 prisoners, including one General and 136 officers of inferior rank. Their own losses were reckoned at 41 officers and 658 soldiers killed, 253 officers and 4273 soldiers wounded and missing.\* One British General, Le Marchant, was killed, and Generals Beresford, Cole, Leith, Alten, and Stapleton Cotton wounded, the last-named by a Portuguese sentry, whose challenge Cotton disregarded when returning from the ford at Huerta in the dark. Wellington himself, who as usual exposed himself in the hottest of the field, when riding with the 43rd Regiment in the pursuit, was struck in the thigh by a musket-ball, which happily had expended its force by passing through his holster.

Of the French Generals, Ferey, Thomières, and Desgraviers perished; Marmont, Bonet, Maine, and Clausel were wounded. Marmont admitted a loss of 6,000 of his troops, besides prisoners.†

There was no longer any question of the quality of the allied army or the capacity of its General. Wellington's success was acknowledged by the Prince Regent on behalf of his own country in his advancement to the rank of marquess—by the Spanish Cortes on behalf of theirs in his admission to the sacred order of the *Toison d'Or*.

From the heart of Russia Napoleon launched his wrath against Marmont the unlucky, repeating the unjust accusa-

\* *Despatches*, ix. 309. The 61st Regiment paraded in the morning with 27 officers and 420 soldiers. In the evening only 3 officers and 78 men were present; 24 officers and 342 soldiers were killed or wounded. It is worth reflecting whether our nerves to-day are strong enough to endure an announcement to similar effect in the morning papers. It were well, in such an event, that Parliament should *not* be in session.

† Marmont's despatch to the Duc de Feltre, 31st July, 1812.

ANN. 1812.

Wellington made marquis.

Napoleon's anger against Marmont.

Æt. 43. tion which King Joseph had made against him to the Emperor of having forced a battle in order to reap his laurels before Joseph and Jourdan should arrive to share them. Now Jourdan, as we know, had warned Marmont not to rely on support or reinforcements from the army of the Centre; this did not serve in the least to mitigate the Emperor's cruel reproaches.

*The Emperor Napoleon to the Duc de Feltre.*

"Ghiart, 2nd September, 1812.

"I have received the report of the Duke of Ragusa (Marmont) upon the battle of the 22nd. It is impossible to imagine anything more senseless: it contains more rubbish (*fatras*) and more wheelwork (*rouages*) than a clock, and not a word to explain the real state of affairs. . . . Wait till the Duke of Ragusa arrives and is recovered from his wound. You will then request him to reply categorically to these questions. Why did he give battle without orders from his Commander-in-chief? Why did he not take orders as to the part he was to follow, subject to the general system of operations in Spain? Here we have *the crime of insubordination*, which is the cause of all our misfortune in this affair."

Napoleon, who never pardoned want of success, was less indulgent even than usual, when so many circumstances combined in favour of the conquest of Spain. He could feel no doubt that had he himself been on the spot victory would have been restored to the arms of France by his one supreme, undisputed authority.

The occasion had been very critical for the Allies. The United States had declared war against Great Britain on 18th June, interfering seriously with the concentration of her energy on the struggle in the Peninsula, and Wellington's whole scheme in that struggle had been compromised by the miscarriage of Bentinck's expedition from Sicily. Happily for Wellington—happily for the fortunes of the Allies—Napoleon was so far away that it took six weeks for the swiftest couriers

to travel to and from his armies in Spain; while, among his ANN. 1812  
 lieutenants, the relations were becoming daily more critical.  
 Four days before the battle of Salamanca, King Joseph had  
 written to the Minister of War in Paris:—

“If the Emperor cannot find means to compel the Generals of  
 the armies of the North, of Aragon, and of the South to obey me,  
 Spain is lost, and the French army with it. . . . I have already  
 demanded, and I now repeat the demand, because the situation  
 becomes daily more serious, that those Generals who have no  
 thought for anything except their provinces, and show themselves  
 indifferent to combinations, may be deprived of all command as  
 an example to their successors; that they may receive no  
 instructions except from me; or else that the Emperor shall no  
 longer condemn me to be an impotent witness of the dishonour  
 of his arms and the loss of this country.” \*

After the battle, the King, instead of moving a few hours'  
 march to support the beaten army of Portugal at Arevalo  
 with his corps of 14,000 men and 20 guns, fell back to the  
 Guadarama, and desired Clausel to form a junction with him  
 at Madrid. But Clausel was in no condition to obey him.  
 The army of Portugal was disorganised by defeat, and in dire  
 straits for subsistence. To restore anything like discipline  
 harsh measures had to be employed; upwards of fifty of  
 Clausel's soldiers were executed.† He replied to the King  
 that, in order to save the magazines at Valladolid, and form  
 communications with the army of the North, he must cross  
 the Douro, and urged instead that the King should form a  
 junction with the army of Portugal; but Joseph turned  
 a deaf ear to this proposal. Clausel sent his right wing  
 over the Douro on the 26th, and followed with the left on  
 the 29th, from which it may be inferred that the pursuit was  
 not very brisk. Clausel, by his management of a beaten  
 army in retreat, earned Wellington's cordial admiration.

Move-  
 ments of  
 the army  
 of the  
 Centre.

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xiv. 72.

† *Ibid.*, xiv. 104.

Æt. 43. "During the five weeks of this retreat, he held every position till turned, and then drew off in splendid order."\*

The Allies enter Valladolid. Following Clausel with as much diligence as the state of their commissariat would allow, the Allies entered Valladolid on 30th July, capturing 17 guns, a quantity of stores, and 800 sick and wounded French. Next day, Tordesillas surrendered to 8,000 Galicians, whom Wellington had brought down from the north; Clausel continued his retreat to Burgos, which rendered complete the separation of the armies of the North and the Centre.

They advance upon Madrid.

Lord Wellington was now free to turn his attention to the army of the Centre, which, on 1st August, was in full retreat on Madrid. Leaving General Clinton at Cuellar with 8,000 men to watch Marmont, besides the Galicians and a couple of thousand Partidas, he changed foxes, to use a hunting metaphor, and marched with 30,000 troops on the tracks of King Joseph. That unfortunate monarch, having 20,000 troops in his immediate command, might have made a formidable stand in the passes of the Sierra de Guadarama; but such was far from his intention.

Soult, instead of complying with the King's commands to evacuate Andalusia and move into communication with him at Toledo, had remonstrated vigorously, and suggested instead that the King should evacuate Madrid and concentrate all his armies in Andalusia. "Qu'importe à votre Majesté de conserver Madrid si elle perd la royaume?" † Suchet, on the other hand, urged the King to make a French Portugal of Catalonia, and draw behind the Elbro all the troops with eagle

King Joseph leaves Madrid.

The Allies passed through the Guadarama on 10th August without meeting any opposition. The King, repeating his orders to Soult to evacuate Andalusia, left Madrid with his whole court—an enormous convoy of 20,000 non-combatants, and 2,000 or 3,000 carriages—and, passing south with the disordered array by Valdemoro, crossed the Tagus

\* De Ros MS.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, xiv. 98.

at Aranjuez. No satisfactory explanation has been offered ANN. 1812. for Wellington's reasons in refraining from capturing this convoy, as he might easily have done. It has been supposed that the presence of so many women and children in the flying throng induced him to hold his hand; but it is curious that he does not allude to the circumstance in his despatches.

When King Joseph arrived on the south side of the Tagus he received Soult's refusal to move from Andalusia to meet him at Toledo; he also heard from Suchet, announcing the landing of 5,000 British and 8,000 Spaniards under General Maitland at Alicante; he therefore changed his course and hurried on towards Valencia, directing Soult to move thither also.

Wellington refrained from following the King. Gratified by hearing that at last the Sicilian expedition had landed, although it was far inferior in number and quality to that originally intended, he turned aside from his pursuit in order to enter Madrid, for besides immense military stores contained in the Retiro—no inconsiderable prize—the moral effect of the appearance of the victorious Allies in the streets of the capital was one not to be under-valued. The entry took place on the 12th August amid scenes of affecting emotion. The inhabitants had suffered too long and too sorely under the invader to emulate the tumultuous exultation of the people of Salamanca, but they wept and knelt and blessed their deliverers aloud.

The French garrison of 2,000 left in the Retiro capitulated on the 13th, and were sent as prisoners to Portugal. Unhappily, their escort consisted of Portuguese troops, and these, yielding to the rancorous hatred of race, were false to their trust, maltreating, robbing, and even murdering, many of their prisoners. Twenty thousand stand of arms, one hundred and eighty guns, and two eagles were delivered with the Retiro into the hands of the conquerors.

Soult, yielding tardy obedience to the King, raised the

The Allies  
enter  
Madrid.

Æt. 43.  
Dissension  
between  
King  
Joseph and  
Soult.

siege of Cadiz on 25th August, although at the very moment that Joseph was expressing doubts to the Emperor of Soult's fidelity to the cause of France, and demanding his imprisonment, Soult was warning him, with equal injustice, that the King was about to sacrifice French interests by separately treating for the peaceful possession of Spain by himself. Soult even went so far as to cause the letters of the King, his military superior, to be intercepted and opened, a proceeding which speedily brought the relations between these two commanders to a crisis. Napoleon treated the complaints of both of them with impatience. Soult's representations, he said, had reached him already through another channel; he could not be expected "to pay attention to such trivialities at a moment when, at the head of 500,000 men, he was engaged in tremendous operations." \* As for the King's accusation of Soult, Soult was *la seule tête militaire qu'il eût en Espagne*, and could not be removed without compromising the army.

Appoint-  
ment of a  
Judge-  
Advocate-  
General.

During the autumn of 1812 Wellington, who had frequently complained of the enormous labour thrown upon him by the personal direction of judicial proceedings by court-martial, received timely assistance and relief by the appointment of Mr. S. Larpent as Judge-Advocate-General. The extent of this relief may be estimated from some passages in Larpent's interesting journal.

February 7, 1813.—"I really scarcely know where to turn, and my fingers are quite fatigued, as well as my brains, with the arrangements and difficulties as to witnesses, etc. I sent out seventeen letters yesterday; and to-day I have one case of thirteen prisoners who have been committing every sort of outrage on their march here. Lord Wellington . . . yesterday . . . said, 'If your friends knew what was going on here, they would think you had no sinecure. And how do you suppose I was plagued when I had to do it nearly all myself?'" †

\* Report by Colonel Desprez to the King of Spain.

† Larpent, i. 88.

It is amusing to read a correspondence at this period ANN. 1812 between the Secretary of State and Lord Wellington. Lord Lord Wel-  
lington's  
armorial  
bearings Wellesley, it seems, had suggested that the splendour of his brother's success should be marked by the addition of a French eagle to his arms as an honourable augmentation. Lord Bathurst hesitated at first, because Marlborough's services had not been acknowledged in a similar way. Finally, he told Wellington, he rejected the idea of the eagle because "many have had eagles given them, our friend John Villiers among the rest" (the allusion is to the third Earl of Clarendon), and submitted instead to the Prince Regent a proposal that the Union Jack should be borne by Lord Wellington on an escutcheon of pretence, which was approved. Wellington's acknowledgment is brief; probably the archaic symbolism of heraldry at no time would occupy his thoughts very fully, least of all in presence of five French armies. "I shall receive with gratitude any honour which His Royal Highness may think proper to confer upon me; but the addition proposed to my arms is the last which would have occurred to me. It carries with it an appearance of ostentation, of which I hope I am not guilty, and it will scarcely be credited that I did not apply for it." \*

Lord Wellington's position in Madrid, though it gave rapturous satisfaction to the Spaniards, failed to rouse them to the exertion necessary to the deliverance of their country.

"18th August.

"I don't expect much from the exertion of the Spaniards, notwithstanding all we have done for them. They cry *Viva!* 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 I have known; the most vain, and at the same time the most ignorant, especially of military affairs in their own country." †

The British commander was much embarrassed by the

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, vii. 414.

† *Despatches*, ix. 366.



ÆT. 43. failure of money consignments. His soldiers had received pay only up to the middle of April—his staff to the beginning of February—it was now the end of August! \* Clausel, moreover, admirably patient and industrious, had restored the efficiency of the army of Portugal with astonishing rapidity, and was concentrating on the Douro, threatening Wellington's communications. Therefore on 1st September, General Hill having moved to Aranjuez to watch Soult and co-operate with Ballesteros so far as co-operation with any Spanish General was possible, Lord Wellington marched northward on 1st September with four divisions, leaving two divisions in Madrid. He crossed the Douro on the 7th and established himself at Valladolid, Clausel falling back before him through Burgos on the 17th, where the Allies, strengthened by the junction of 12,000 Spaniards of the army of Galicia, established themselves and prepared for the siege of the castle.

Wellington  
marches  
from  
Madrid.

This stronghold, which contained the principal magazines of the French in the north of Spain, was held by a garrison of 2,000 under General Dubreton within three lines of *enceinte*, the outer one being of masonry, the two inner ones of earthwork. There was also the detached hornwork of San Michele, commanding the castle from the north. On the evening of 19th September the outwork was carried by assault after a murderous conflict, the garrison cutting their way out and escaping to the castle. The assailants lost 80 men killed and 334 wounded. Although encouraged by this initial success, Wellington soon found that he had undertaken something far beyond the powers of his equipment. With only three 18-pounder guns, five 24-pounder howitzers, and a very small store of ammunition, he could make no impression on the defences. On the 22nd an escalade, attempted before the place had been breached, resulted in failure. For this Lord Wellington blamed the field officer commanding

Siege of  
Burgos.

\* The French army was even worse off, having received no pay for a whole year.







the assault, Major Lawrie of the 79th, who was killed at the ANN. 1812 head of his party.

"He paid no attention to his orders, notwithstanding the pains I took in writing them, and in reading and explaining them to him twice over. He made none of the dispositions ordered; and, instead of regulating the attack as he ought, he rushed on as if he had been the leader of a forlorn hope, and fell. . . . He had my instructions in his pocket, and as the French got possession of his body, and were made acquainted with the plan, the attack could never be repeated. When he fell, nobody having received orders what to do, nobody could give any to the troops. I was in the trenches, however, and ordered them to withdraw." \*

Work in the trenches having been resumed, a mine was pushed under the outer line of defence, and a fresh assault ordered on the 28th. The mine exploded at midnight, and a sergeant and four men forced their way through the breach it created. They were not supported as they ought to have been: the officer leading the forlorn hope missed the breach in the darkness, reported that the wall was unbroken, and the whole storming party returned to the trenches.

The moral effect of this second failure was very bad. Men and officers alike became dispirited; a dangerous degree of insubordination showed itself in certain regiments. Soon, however, a second mine was driven forward, and was fired with tremendous effect on the evening of 4th October; the breach was carried; a lodgment effected, and the arrival of much-needed stores of ammunition landed from Popham's squadron on the north coast (for Wellington now enjoyed the advantage of a supplementary base) lent an energy to the attack against the inner works of which defective means had hitherto deprived it. Nevertheless, so resourceful was the French commander Dubreton, so vigilant his garrison and so active in sorties, that although the explosion of a third mine on the 18th enabled the Guards and the Germans

\* *Despatches*, ix. 566.

Æt. 43. to storm the breaches in the second line, they could not hold them, and were driven out with loss.

"I do not know what to say of this damned place," wrote Wellington to Beresford. "Our success of yesterday evening has opened a new scene to us; but our final success is still doubtful. Luckily the French give me more time than I had a right to expect."\*

Souham  
advances  
to relieve  
Burgos.

They did not give him time enough. The weeks had been well spent by the French Generals. Masséna had been restored to favour, and appointed to the chief command in the northern provinces; it was expected that he would hasten in person to wipe away the cloud which Wellington had cast on his arms; but age had begun to quench the veteran's ardour, and he committed the task to another. Clausel, by the skill with which he had conducted the retreat from Salamanca and by his success in repairing the evils of Marmont's defeat, had earned a claim to continue in command of the army of Portugal. The King pinned his faith upon Drouet, Count d'Erlon; but Masséna set aside both, and, superseding Clausel, commissioned General Souham to march to the relief of Burgos. The army of Portugal, reinforced with 12,000 fresh troops from France, amounted at the end of September to 35,000 effectives, and Caffarelli was at Vitoria with 8,000 infantry and 1,000 cavalry. Wellington had 31,000 round Burgos, but 11,000 of these were Galicians, on which he could not rely. General Hill had occupied Toledo, and lay along the Tagus between that place and Aranjuez. Souham arrived on 3rd October to take command of the army of Portugal. Over-estimating the strength of the Allies, he delayed his advance till the 18th, driving in their outposts at Monasterio on the 19th. On the night of the 21st Wellington, with a heavy heart, raised the siege of Burgos, which had cost his army upwards of 2,000 killed and wounded, and began a retreat towards

\* *Despatches*, ix. 466.

the Douro, ordering General Hill to conform by retiring along the valley of the Tagus. ANN. 1812.

It might be supposed, from the frequency and violence with which Napier and others denounced the Cabinet for their supposed neglect of the war, that ministers were to blame for the wretchedly inadequate means with which Wellington undertook this siege. In the House of Lords Lord Wellesley vehemently accused Lord Bathurst with responsibility for its failure; but Wellington himself gave the true reason in his despatches to the Secretary of State. Wellington raises the siege and retreats to the Douro.

“There were ample means both at Madrid and Santander for the siege of the strongest fortress. That which was wanting at both places was means of transporting ordnance and military stores. . . . The people of England, so happy as they are in every respect, so rich in resources . . . having the use of such excellent roads, will not readily believe that important results here frequently depend upon fifty or sixty mules more or less, or a few bundles of straw to feed them. . . . I could not find means of moving even one gun from Madrid.”\*

It is still more difficult now, when railroads run in all directions, to realise the condition of Spanish roads, of which it was remarked by a cavalry officer at the time that it was “much easier to march up an English staircase than to ascend them.”† On one occasion during this retreat Wellington actually lost his army. Clinton, Stewart, and Dalhousie had been ordered to move their divisions in three columns by a certain route. Finding the rivers flooded, they feared to attempt the fords, and moved upon a certain bridge which had been assigned to the Spaniards. Consequently, when the Commander-in-chief reached the spot where he was to rejoin them, he found himself alone with his staff, several miles in advance. “What did he say?” asked Greville when Fitzroy Somerset told him this story.

\* *Despatches*, ix. 566.

† *Tomkinson*, 232.

Æt. 43. "Oh, by God!" replied Somerset, "it was far too serious to say anything."\*

Wellington's fox-hounds.

Amid all the anxieties which pressed on him from the beginning of the siego of Burgos, Wellington yet had thoughts to spare for lighter matters. Always a keen fox-hunter, he encouraged his officers to follow the hounds which he kept during this campaign. On 14th October, writing to his Adjutant-General, Charles Stewart, who had gone home on sick leave—

"Goodman is now doing the duty of the office, poor Waters being very ill. . . . I hope we shall soon have Waters again, particularly as the hunting season is coming on apace, the hounds are on the road, and I shall want Waters for the earth stopping business, if not for that of the A.G." †

Again, on 3rd November, when he was in full retreat before Souham, and Hill was falling back before Soult, he wrote to Hill: "If you should be pressed by the enemy . . . if you should move from the Adaja, take care that all our stores and people (including my hounds at Arevalo) move off." ‡

Lord Wellington kept eight good hunters, besides seven chargers, and both stables were kept in full work. His fox-hounds, about sixteen couple, were an uneven lot, carried no head, and seldom killed a fox, owing to the difficulty Colonel Waters found in stopping the country effectively. The going was bad, light gravel and rocks alternating with wet, unrideable bottoms; but Wellington, who cared little for scientific hunting, and only wanted lots of exercise, was quite content with the character of the sport. §

Wellington appointed Spanish Generalissimo.

Before he raised the fruitless siege of Burgos, Lord Wellington was appointed by the Cortes Commander-in-chief of

\* *Greville*, 2nd series, i. 137.

† *Despatches*, ix. 486. Waters was the officer who distinguished himself at the passage of the Douro in 1809.

‡ *Ibid.*, 526.

§ *Larpernt*, i. 78.



the armies of Spain—a step which, had it been taken immediately after the overthrow of Masséna, might have had a weighty influence on the war, but one which came too late to do much except add to the anxieties of Wellington and disgust of one, at least, of the Spanish Generals. Ballesteros, whose duty it was to oppose the march of Soult upon Madrid, allowed him to pass unmolested, and published a violent protest denying the power of the Government and the Cortes to appoint a foreigner Commander-in-chief without the consent of the Spanish Generals. For this act he was deprived of his command and imprisoned, the Duque del Parque replacing him at the head of the fourth army.

Wellington continued his retreat, his rear-guard having a sharp encounter with the enemy's cavalry on the 23rd October in the passage of the Hormaza. Another affair took place on the Pisuerga on the 25th, where the Allies were compelled to halt for a day, because of the difficulty of transporting the sick and wounded. The retreat was resumed, for the behaviour of the Galician troops on the Pisuerga convinced the Commander of the Forces that he must rely only on his British and Portuguese. "The Spanish troops," he wrote to his brother Henry, "have invariably manifested a disposition to engage with the enemy . . . the truth, however, ought to be known to the (Spanish) Government . . . in the affair at Villamuriel they could neither advance or retreat in order. Their movements were made *à la débâdada*." He estimated the numbers under Souham at not less than 40,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry, to oppose which he had not more than 20,000 British and Portuguese and 12,600 Galicians. Owing to the misconduct of Ballesteros, Soult, with 50,000 men, was able to press on Sir Rowland Hill, who was falling back to effect a junction with the Commander-in-chief. On the 29th Wellington crossed the Douro at Tudela and Puente del Duero, blowing up the bridges behind him, forming his junction with Hill's corps on the Adaja on the 3rd, and thus, as he wrote to the Hon. C.

ANN. 1812.

The Allies  
re-cross  
the Douro.

Æt. 43. Stewart, "I have got clear, in a handsome manner, of the worst scrape I ever was in."

On reaching the Douro, Souham refrained from further pursuit, awaiting the arrival of Soult and the King with the armies of the South and the Centre, which would bring the combined French forces up to 80,000 infantry, 12,000 cavalry, and 120 guns. On 10th November Souham established himself on the right bank of the Tormes. Two days previously the Allies, numbering, since Hill had rejoined his chief, 52,000 and 12,000 Galicians, with 70 guns, took up a strong, though extended position, reaching from San Cristoval on the right bank of the Tormes to the left bank opposite Alba, where the bridge was destroyed and a garrison placed in the castle. Here Wellington expected and desired to be attacked. The King and Jourdan were eager to gratify him, and to avenge Marmont's defeat on the very ground where it had been inflicted. Soult, however, was of other counsel. He was for crossing the Tormes seven miles above Alba, thereby threatening the flank and rear of the Allies; and the King, though suspicious of Soult's political integrity, respected his military genius and yielded to his opinion.

Soult  
crosses the  
Tormes.

Wellington suffered this crossing to take place on 14th November, nor is it easy to explain why he offered no opposition and allowed Soult to post himself strongly between Mozarves and the height of Nostra Señora de Utiero. Reconnoitring this position under cover of a cannonade, Wellington found it so strong that he fell back on his old ground about the Arapiles. Souham, finding the bridge at Alba broken, crossed the Tormes higher up, and ranged himself on Soult's flank on Señora de Utiero. Soult, who had begun fortifying Mozarves, now attempted to gain command of the road to Ciudad Rodrigo by an extension of his left similar to that executed, with the same object and with such disastrous result, by Marmont on 22nd July. Yet, in order to avoid interruption, he moved at a greater distance from the enemy, on a range of heights east of those chosen by Marmont. His

movements were slow, for incessant rain had made the ground very heavy and swelled every rivulet into a torrent; this, and a thick fog, afforded Wellington the chance of avoiding battle, which he was now as fain to do as previously he had been to seek it; for the army before him was the strongest in numbers that was ever concentrated against him in the whole war. Under cover of the fog he moved his army in three columns across the Turguen, right round Soult's left flank, and so on without molestation to the Salamanca. During the retreat, which continued on the 16th and three following days, Lieut.-General Sir Edward Paget, who had been sent out as senior in command under Wellington, fell into the enemy's hands by a strange mishap. Commanding the central column of the army, he rode back alone to correct an interval which had occurred between the 5th and 7th Divisions; being very short-sighted, he missed his way in returning and, mistaking a detachment of French cavalry for British, was taken prisoner.

ANN. 1812.  
Wellington retires past the French left.

After cannonading the Light Division which formed the rear-guard during the passage of the Huebra on the 17th, Soult desisted from pursuit and recrossed the Tormes. The Allies thereupon went in cantonments for the winter, holding a wide and scattered front. Hill's Division on the right held Plasencia and Coria, with an advanced detachment at Bejar, while the left extended as far as Lamego on Portuguese soil.

The Allies go into winter quarters.

This retreat from Burgos was the severest trial that British troops had been called on to endure since Moore's campaign in 1809, and it was marked by disorders scarcely less flagrant than those which brought the former expedition so near destruction. Incessant rain and rough weather rendered the lot of the soldiers miserable; they continually broke away from the columns to plunder, the numerous droves of swine proving an irresistible temptation to some of them; many hundreds of stragglers fell into the enemy's hands. This cause, added to the casualties in action with the enemy,

Irregularities during the retreat.

**Æt. 43.** brought up the total loss of the Allies during their retreat to a very formidable figure—not less than 7,000 men. Wellington, never very patient of irregularities, showed himself less so than usual on this occasion, being chagrined, no doubt, at the result of a campaign which had opened so auspiciously and would have been conducted to a brilliant close, but for the failure of Ballesteros to interrupt the march of Soult. He allowed his vexation to appear in a long circular letter of indiscriminate censure addressed to his Generals of divisions and brigades.

Wellington rebukes his officers.

“ . . . The discipline of every army after a long and active campaign becomes in some degree relaxed . . . but I am concerned to have to observe that the army under my command has fallen off in this respect in the late campaign to a greater degree than any army with which I have ever served or of which I have ever read. Yet this army has met with no disasters, it has suffered no privations which but trifling attention on the part of the officers could have prevented . . . nor has it suffered any hardship excepting those resulting from the necessity of being exposed to the inclemency of the weather at the moment when it was most severe. . . . I have no hesitation in attributing these evils to the habitual inattention of the officers of regiments to their duty as prescribed by the regulations of the service and by the orders of the army. I am far from questioning the zeal, still less the gallantry and spirit of the officers of the army, and I am quite certain that if their minds can be convinced of the necessity of minute and constant attention . . . they will in future give their attention to these points.”

This letter, which was intended to be addressed to the general officers only, and to be regarded as confidential by them, unluckily found its way into the regimental order books, and thence into London papers. Lord Wellington, it is said, was much displeased with this; many good officers, conscious of having done their duty well, were deeply indignant because no distinction seemed to be drawn between

the behaviour of well-disciplined regiments and disorderly ones; and all alike felt the injustice of the Commander of the Forces' reference to the absence of hardship. Exposure to weather of all sorts, by night and day, without tents and at all seasons, was in itself a pretty stiff test of endurance; and when he compared the slowness of British troops in preparing their meals with "the facility and celerity with which the French soldiers cooked," Lord Wellington seemed to have overlooked the advantage which the French enjoyed in being allowed to make fuel of doors, shutters, and roofs wherever they bivouacked, whereas his own soldiers were severely punished if they did so, and their fatigue parties often had to march several miles to cut wood.

Lord Wellington took occasion of the investment of the Hon. Lowry Cole as a Knight of the Bath to give a fête in Ciudad Rodrigo. Sixty-five of the principal officials sat down at the Commander-in-chief's table; a ball followed in a saloon of which the temperature was rather low for complete enjoyment, for it was hard frost at the time, and several yards of the roof, knocked off during the siege, had not been replaced. Wellington, detained by business in Freneda till half-past three, rode the seventeen miles to Rodrigo in two hours, dined, danced, supped, was in the saddle again at half-past three in the morning, galloped back to Freneda by six o'clock, and was despatching business again at noon.\* His only companion in this moonlight ride was the Hon. Alexander Gordon.†

Wellington's extraordinary powers of endurance astonished many of his officers, and Mr. Larpent mentions many instances of it at this period. For example, on 8th May he started, on horseback of course, at 7 a.m. for Castel Rodriguez, eight-and-twenty miles distant, reviewed there General Cole's division, and was back in his quarters at Freneda for dinner between four and five in the afternoon.‡ Again, on the 15th of the

ANN. 1812

Festivities  
at Ciudad  
Rodrigo.Wellington's  
extraordinary  
physical  
endurance.

\* Larpent, i. 114.

† Killed at Waterloo.

‡ Larpent, i. 168

ÆT. 43. same month, hearing of damage to the pontoon train at Sabugal, off he galloped twenty-six miles and back, to satisfy his own eyes as to what was necessary. On the 17th, he rode to the front and inspected the Light Division under General Anson, gave a large dinner in the evening, and next morning rode eighteen miles to Friexada to inspect the cavalry division.\*

It was this marvellous union of resolution and physical energy which rendered so felicitous and so imperishable the sobriquet conferred on Wellington of the "Iron Duke." †

His daily routine, though liable to interruption by the enemy's movements, remained the same throughout his campaigns. Rising each morning at six, he used to write till nine, when he had breakfast. The forenoon he spent with the quartermaster- and adjutant-generals, commissary-general, and other heads of departments—business which generally lasted till 2 or 3 p.m. Then he would mount and ride till six, return to dinner, and write again from nine till midnight, which was his regular hour for going to bed. ‡

\* *Larpen*, i. 179-181.

† It is true it came to him in a roundabout way. An iron steamship, a novelty at the time, was launched in the Mersey and named the *Duke of Wellington*. The vessel came to be known as the *Iron Duke*, and the transition from the subject to the eponymus was too easy and obvious not to be effected.

‡ *Tomkinson*, 108.



GENERAL VISCOUNT WELLINGTON, 43.  
(From a Drawing in Chalk by the Spanish artist Goya. Original in the British Museum.)  
[Vol. i. p. 304.]





## CHAPTER XII.

### CAMPAIGN OF VITORIA.

1813.

<p>Discontent in England at the progress of the war.</p> <p>January, 1813. Wellington visits Cadiz.</p> <p>March . . . . . Position and strength of the armies.</p> <p>May 18 . . . . . Advance of the left wing from Lamego.</p> <p>„ 22 . . . . . Advance of the centre and left from Fre-neda and Bejar.</p> <p>„ 29 . . . . . Retreat of the French. Junction of Graham with Wellington at Miranda de Douro.</p> <p>Evacuation of Burgos.</p> <p>June 14, 15. . . . . Passage of the Ebro.</p>	<p>June 21 . . . . . Battle of Vitoria. Decisive defeat of the French. Wellington is made a Field Marshal.</p> <p>„ 22 . . . . . Disorderly conduct of the Allies.</p> <p>July 1 . . . . . The French are driven across their frontier.</p> <p>„ 13 . . . . . Soult resumes command of the French armies.</p> <p>„ 25 . . . . . He forces the passes of Maya and Roncesvalles.</p> <p>Assault on San Sebastian repulsed.</p>
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THE effect on public opinion and feeling in England of the third retreat of Wellington before the French Marshals was the reverse of favourable. Those whom the flush of victory had rallied to the moral support of the army in the field and of the ministers responsible for the conduct of the war relapsed into gloomy foreboding and angry reproach. The contest, they complained, was now entering its fifth year, and the French gripped Spain as hard as ever; blood and treasure had been lavished in vain, and if the nation was to

Public dis-  
content in  
England at  
the course  
of the war.

Æt. 43. be spared further sacrifice, the army must be recalled before Napoleon should return victorious from Moscow to sweep the remains of it into the sea. In truth, the strain on the country had neared the limits of endurance; war prices had brought upon many families at home privations more severe, in some respects, than these encountered by the troops in the field; the national debt was rolling up to an appalling volume; most serious of all, the difficulty of manning the fleet and recruiting the army had been greatly aggravated by the war with the United States—itself the result of the raids of British pressgangs on American citizens. Nevertheless, the courage of ministers had been screwed to the sticking point; there was no more talk of evacuation; the despatches of Lord Liverpool and Lord Bathurst breathed unabated confidence in the Commander of the Forces. Then, to confirm their courage and brighten their hopes, towards the end of the year came tidings of Napoleon's awful disasters in Russia. On 18th December the Emperor was back in Paris, having sacrificed the whole of his magnificent army of invasion.

During the winter months, British reinforcements, especially of cavalry, the arm in which Wellington had most complained of weakness, arrived in Lisbon on a scale which, though it bore no comparison with the mighty resources of a national conscription, was certainly astonishing as the results of voluntary enlistment.\* In the spring of 1813 Wellington had under his command in Spain nearly 200,000 allied troops—including 55,000 British and 31,750 Portuguese on the frontier of Portugal, and Sir John Murray's Anglo-Sicilian force near Alicante, which had been augmented to 16,000. Murray's operations, although lacking in vigour and success, were of important service in respect of the attention they demanded from Suchet's army. One very important element

\* Twenty-five thousand volunteers were obtained from the militia, each of them receiving a bounty of twelve or fourteen guineas. Tents were supplied for the first time during the war for the troops, but they proved of doubtful advantage on the advance, owing to the difficulty of transport.

in the strength of the Allies was the presence of the British fleet, which supplied a movable base whence supplies could be drawn from almost any point on the Spanish and Portuguese coasts. ANN. 1813.

In January Lord Wellington paid a visit to Cadiz, in order to lay before the Cortes his measures for the reorganization of the Spanish forces. He met with a splendid reception: the Cortes, who, immediately before the battle of Salamanca, had been on the point of rendering submission to King Joseph, had drawn fresh courage from that victory; hatred of the French and the signs of failure in Napoleon's ascendancy combined to induce even the anti-British party to sink their dislike of the *Rubios*,\* and suspend their intrigues. Nevertheless, the task undertaken by Wellington in the command of the armies of Spain brought very little additional strength at first to compensate for the increase of labour devolving on himself. Wellington visits Cadiz.

Such as they were, the Spanish armies were disposed as follows: the first army, under Copons, in Catalonia, said to number 10,000; the second, under Elio, in Murcia, 20,000; the third, under Del Parque, in the Sierra Morena, about 12,000, with a reserve under the Conde d'Abispa, in Andalusia, numbering 15,000; and the fourth, under Castaños, in Estremadura and the North, estimated at 40,000. Besides these, the *partidas* and *guerillas* were growing in numbers and daring, especially in the North, constantly interrupting the communications of the French and harassing their detachments. Position and number of Spanish forces.

On the other hand, the French armies, though still numerically superior to the Allies, had undergone considerable deterioration during the winter. Napoleon had begun to withdraw some of his best troops, replacing them with newly enrolled conscripts; and, to crown all, King Joseph informed the Emperor that he could no longer serve with Soult, and if that Marshal remained in Spain he himself must leave it.

\* The red-coats.

ÆT. 49. — Soult, accordingly, was recalled to Paris, but not in disgrace: the Emperor, conscious of the quality of this well-trying servant, put him in command of the Imperial Guard in Germany.

Position  
and num-  
ber of  
French  
forces.

King Joseph was now in a position to display his qualities in the disposal of 231,486 men, for such, on 15th March, 1813, was the total strength of the French armies in Spain, 29,422 being cavalry.\* Of these 68,000 were in Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia, 10,000 were in Madrid, and the remainder scattered on a line extending from the Tormes to Bayonne. Joseph, albeit nominally Generalissimo, was subject to constant instructions from the Emperor as to the conduct of the campaign, and the Generals of the different armies were appointed directly by the Emperor himself. Repeatedly and urgently Napoleon wrote in January and February, directing the King to make Valladolid his headquarters, keeping but a single division in Madrid, and to concentrate his forces for the pacification of the northern provinces. In reply to Joseph's supplications for money, Napoleon advised him to restore order in the rich and fertile provinces of which he was King, and they would prove amply able to sustain the forces quartered in them. The insurrection in the north had passed out of Caffarelli's control; Navarre and Biscay were in the hands of the Spanish chiefs by the end of February; the Emperor, dissatisfied with Caffarelli's conduct, recalled him, and appointed the abler Clausel to command the army of the North in his place. General Gazan succeeded Soult in the army of the South; General Reille, a resolute and skilful officer, took over the army of Portugal, and Marshal Jourdan remained as lieutenant to the King with the army of the Centre.

Wellington's plan  
of cam-  
paign.

Now, the winter months, though they brought repose to the troops, were no period of inaction for their commander. Constant exercise was as natural to that iron frame as it was habitual to the sleepless will and intellect within it.

\* Extract from Imperial Muster Rolls (*Napier*, v. 618).

On hunting days he seemed to throw all business to the winds; none but those who had affairs that would not wait dared to interfere with his delight in the chase and the work of his hounds. Yet none may say how that busy brain was working while hounds were drawing the cistus scrub or pressing a sinking fox. War in the Peninsula could not be carried on through an indefinite number of campaigns: there must be a term to the patience of England, to the endurance of her soldiers, to advance and retreat, to reconnoitring and counter-marching. When next the vines began to shoot and the wheat was ankle-deep, British drums and bugles must sound a long farewell to Portugal. Wellington no longer had to consider the southern provinces of Spain: they were freed from the invader, and the French armies were gathered, no more for invasion, but to repel an advance towards the frontier of France itself.

The question Wellington had to decide was on what line he should make that advance. Hitherto the route had lain either by Salamanca or Talavera, and the winter was spent by the French in strengthening the great natural barrier of the Douro, whence they would threaten the enemy's left flank when the season should tempt him to move along either of those well-known ways. But how if he were to turn that great line of defence? That was the problem round which his thoughts constantly revolved—the idea which neither the accumulation of administrative detail nor the excitement of field sports could ever obscure. At the very moment when Napoleon was urging vainly upon his elder brother the precept that “to command an army rightly, a General must think of *nothing else*,” Wellington was carrying it into effect.

Sir Thomas Graham, his senior General of division (Wellington always protested against the term “second in command” as conveying an idea which he could not admit as having any reality in it), had been absent in England on sick-leave throughout the campaign of Salamanca; so

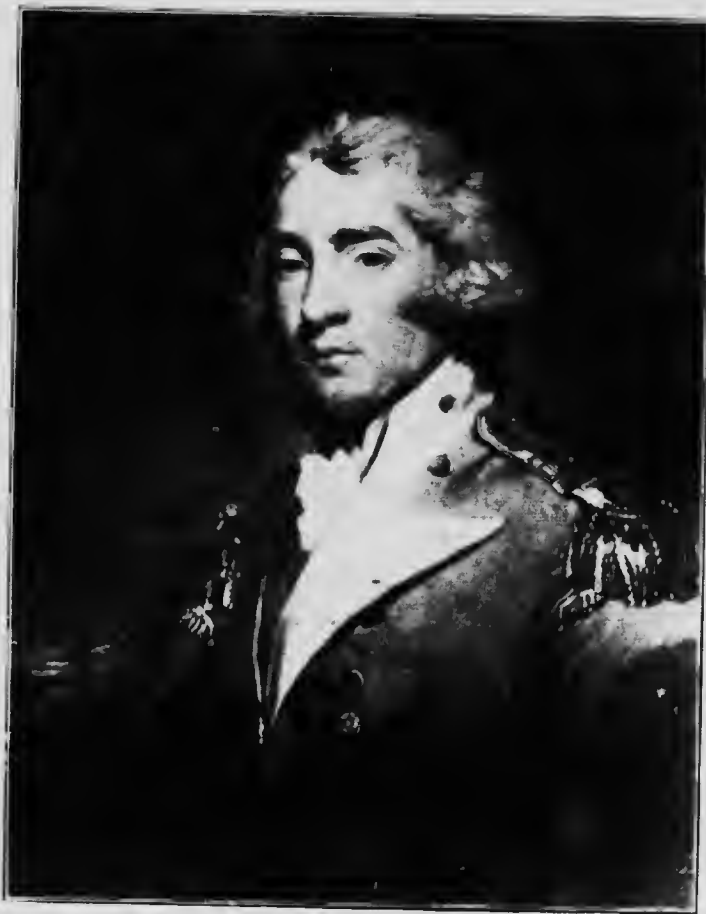
Æt. 44. had his Quartermaster-General, Sir George Murray—the two Generals upon whom he relied most for combined resolution and discretion in conducting the war in the Peninsula. Beresford he liked, and could trust thoroughly, within certain limits of emergency; Hill—"Daddy" Hill—he loved, and put larger confidence in his military talent than in Beresford's; but Graham and Murray were less fearful of responsibility than any others. These, beyond all others, Wellington recognised as kindred in command to himself.

Opening  
of the  
campaign  
of 1813.

The Allies  
advance.

To Sir Thomas Graham was entrusted the execution of the design which had been matured in his chief's mind; it was his fortune to make the first move in what all hoped—what Wellington himself believed—was to prove the final departure of the British from the confines of Portugal.\* On 18th May he received orders to cross the Douro with the left wing of the army, consisting of the 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Divisions, with Pack's and Bradford's Portuguese brigades, and a large force of cavalry, to advance through Tras-os-Montes to Zamora, and thereafter effect a junction with the right of the army at Valladolid. On the 22nd Wellington broke up from his headquarters at Freneda, moving forward on the road to Salamanca with the Light and 2nd Divisions, Amirante's Spanish Division, and cavalry; while on the same day Sir Rowland Hill put his corps in motion from Bejar to form a junction with the Commander of the Forces at Alba de Tormes. Once again the converging streams of war were pouring inland, and the French, seeing their flank on the Douro turned, began falling back before Wellington's formidable array. General Villatte, desirous of forcing the Allies to display their real strength, lingered too long with

\* "Picton told me a strange story. He was riding with Lord W. at the head of the advanced guard, when they crossed a rivulet which was the boundary of Portugal; on which Wellington turned round his horse, took off his hat, and said 'Farewell, Portugal! I shall never see you again.' This was so theatrical—so unlike Wellington—that I should say at once it *cannot* be true; but Picton, who told it me, was truth itself" (unpublished letter from Sir R. Donkin to Col. William Napier).



LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR THOMAS GRAHAM,  
AFTERWARDS GENERAL LORD LYNEDOCH, K.B.  
*(From a Painting by Raeburn.)*

[Vol. i. p. 310.]





his division in Salamanca, and received chastisement from ANN. 1813. the cavalry of Fane and Victor Alten. It had been more severe but for the magnificent behaviour of his men, who moved steadily in their squares in the direction of Babila Fuente, keeping the horsemen at bay, notwithstanding that scores of men perished in the ranks from sheer heat and exhaustion. The cavalry, however, captured seven guns and 200 prisoners.

Having regained the line of the Tormes, Wellington, leaving his right and centre encamped between Miranda de Duero and Toro under Hill's command, was slung across the Douro in a basket suspended from the cliffs of Miranda, and went off on the 28th to satisfy his anxiety as to Graham's progress. Graham, although his march through the wild Junction of Wellington and Graham at Miranda de Douro. Tras-os-Montes had been one of incessant difficulty, was true to trust. His instructions had been to be ready to force the passage of the Esla on the 29th, and Wellington found him on the right bank of that river, with his left at Tarvara, in touch with the Galician troops about Benavente. The enemy, whose whole attention had been concentrated upon the advance of the Allies south of the Douro, was taken by surprise by their appearance on the Esla, and fell back before Graham through Zamora to Toro on 1st June. Blowing up the bridges behind them, the French continued to retreat, their rear-guard receiving a severe handling at Morales from the newly formed British Hussar Brigade.\* On 3rd June Sir Rowland Hill brought the centre and right of the army across the Douro at Toro, and the united army continued its march towards Valladolid, having carried almost without bloodshed the line of the Douro which the French had spent so many months in strengthening.

Now was vindicated the rightness of Napoleon's judgment. Could Joseph have brought himself to forget the empty shell of Madrid, had he resolutely quelled the insurrection in the

\* The 7th, 10th, and 15th were converted about this period from Light Dragoons into Hussars.

Art. 44. north and defended Valladolid by holding strongly the line of the Tormes and the Esla, his flanks would have remained secure, and Wellington must have carried a series of highly defensible positions before he could establish communications with the fleet in the Bay of Biscay. Joseph perceived his error too late. Fearing lest the army of the Centre should be cut off from support, this luckless monarch, leaving his capital for the last time in his brief and troubled reign, marched with all speed by Puente de Duero, and effected a junction with the army of Portugal in its retreat upon Burgos. Swiftly 90,000 Allies, with 100 guns, pressed after their retreating foe, on whose flanks the partidas of the North and of Castile gathered more thickly every day. Never was there a country better planned by nature for defensive war. Assuredly, had Masséna or Clausel commanded in this retreat, every league of mountain had been held and fought for; the Douro, the Tormes, the Esla, the Pisuerga had run with blood, instead of offering, one after another, almost as peaceful a passage as the Red Sea did to the Israelites.

On 7th June Joseph crossed the Carrion at Palencia; surely a stand would be made at Burgos, where, a few months before, the tricolor had flaunted defiance in the teeth of the English leopards. Not so; Burgos was untenable. Who could have foreseen that the Allies would return so quickly and in such strength? The new works were not half finished, and, as they commanded the old ones, the place could not be held for a single day. It was evacuated without an attempt at defence, yet not without bloodshed, for one of the mines made by the French for the destruction of the fortress exploded outwards, throwing down a wall which fell on a column of infantry in the act of passing, and killing three hundred of them. Still retreating, the French gained the line of the Ebro, and at last the tide of war, which for five years had roared among the western valleys, was about to roll over upon the eastern watershed. It is said that during this period of the march Wellington avoided going

The  
French  
abandon  
Burgos.

near his infantry columns, so greatly he dreaded to see that ANN. 1813. the men were footsore, and thus the blow he burned to strike would have to be deferred. But the soldiers endured splendidly; the longer the march, the harder they swore that "the Frenchies" should pay dearly for bringing them so far.

The base which had served the British so long was now five hundred miles behind them, and Wellington established a new one within easy reach of his left flank, directing stores of all kinds to be sent round to Santander. At the same time he summoned, though in vain, the civil and military authorities of Spain to resume their functions in the capital. Up to this point, Joseph had still cherished the idea of resuming the offensive; frequent and urgent had been his messages to Foy and Clausel to come to his support, that he might drive the Allies back behind the Douro. But on reaching the Ebro the scales fell from the King's eyes. Here, at last, he realised that he must make a stand if he was not to be swept out of his kingdom altogether, or, which would be equally ruinous, if the Allies were not to interrupt the French lines of communication between Bayonne and Seville, by way of Madrid. Leaving General Gazan with a strong advanced guard to hold the scarcely accessible defiles of Pancorbo, he occupied the line of the river from Haro upwards, as far to the right as Armiñon and Espejo. Clausel was approaching from the direction of Zaragoza with 14,000 men to reinforce the King, and the whole of the vast convoys and encumbrances accompanying the French army was sent to the rear at Vitoria.

Powerful as he was, and confident as he felt, Wellington was too prudent to risk the difficult passage of the Ebro in face of a foe so strongly posted. Intelligence had been received of the armistice signed at Plesswig on 4th June between Napoleon and the Allies in Germany; all Wellington's staff, including Graham, Hill, and George Murray, believing that this armistice would enable Napoleon to

Æt. 44. reinforced his armies in Spain, were opposed to further advance.\* Enough, they urged, had been achieved; a good defensive position had been secured, and Wellington himself admitted that more had been accomplished than he had thought possible in such a short time. "But," said he afterwards, "I looked beyond the limits of Spain. I had in view the impression my advance would make upon the Allies in Germany, and I determined to push on."† Nevertheless he neglected no rules. Burgos, had it held out, was to be reduced before the army moved forward; there was no other danger in his rear, he therefore resumed the tactics of constantly working round the enemy's right. With a sweeping movement of his whole force to the left, he circled round the French flank, and, crossing the head waters of the Ebro on 14th and 15th June, passed into the mountainous region between Santander and Guiposcoa. Six days of vehement labour were spent in this wilderness, through which the Spanish Generals and engineers assured Wellington it was impossible to move artillery or even cavalry. He listened respectfully enough to what they had to say, but lost patience with them at last, begging them to mind their own affairs, because his guns had all passed the mountains the day before, and would join him immediately.‡

The Allies  
cross the  
Ebro.

Thrice during this operation did some of the allied divisions come into conflict with bodies of the enemy hastening from the position of Pancorbo, which had been turned, to the rendezvous at Vitoria. On 19th June the heads of the various columns debouched in the valley of the Bayas, a confluent of the Zadora, threatening the French right and rear. Reille barred the passage of the Bayas with the army of Portugal, and although he was forced from his position, and driven back across the Zadora by the 4th and Light Divisions, the time spent in this operation enabled the armies of the South and the Centre to combine in a position

\* *Croker*, i. 335; *Salisbury MS.*

† *De Ros MS.*

‡ Unpublished letter from Sir R. Donkin to Col. W. Napier.



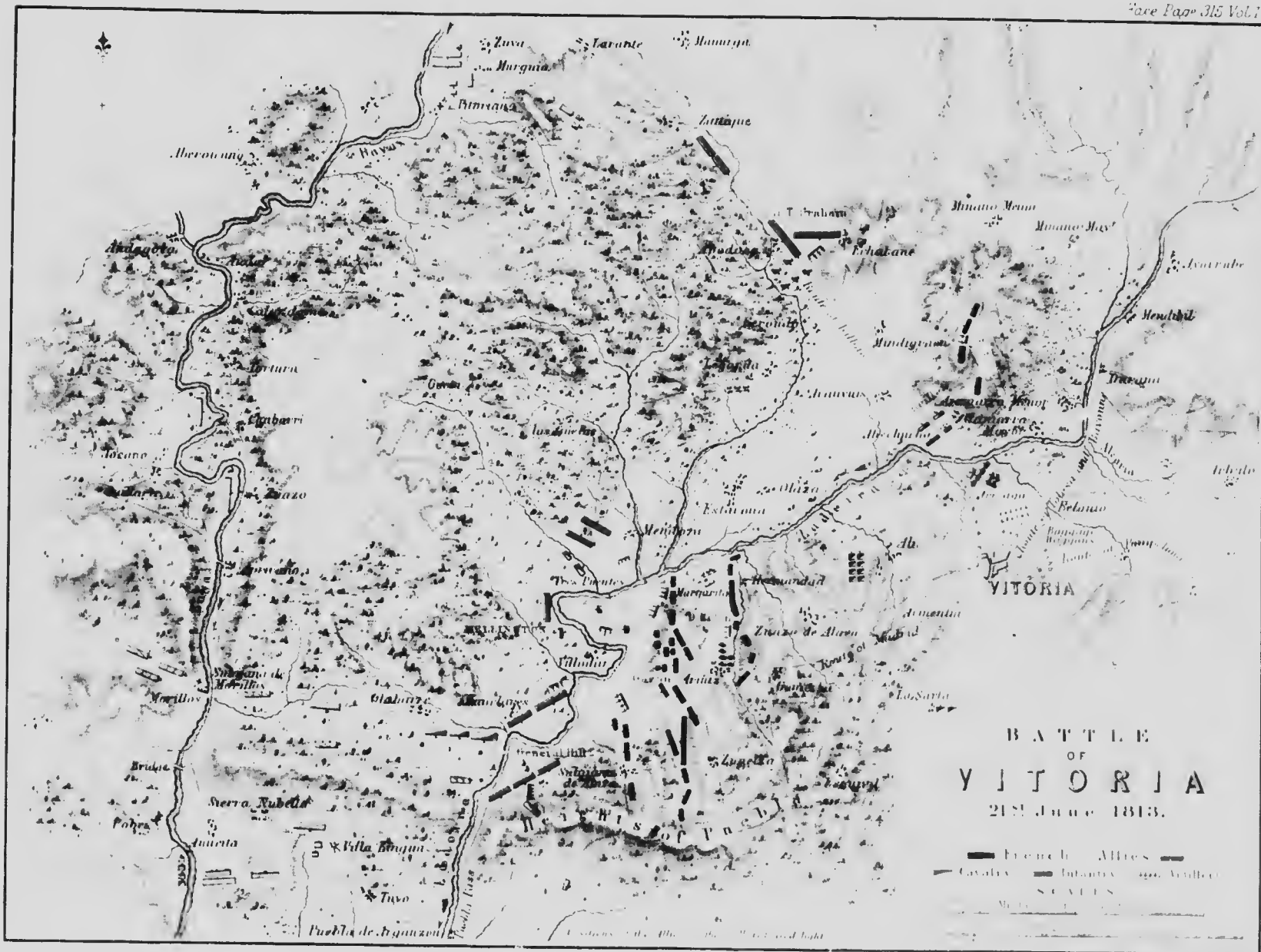
BATTLE  
OF  
**VITORIA**  
21st June 1813.

— French — Allies —  
 Cavalry Infantry Artillery  
 SCALES

1/250000 Scale

English

L. LONDON





covering Vitoria. That evening the allied army encamped on the Bayas, and the following day, 20th June, was spent in resting the troops, while each side reconnoitred the position of the other

ANN. 1813.

General Pakenham having been left with the 6th Division at Medina de Pomar to guard the baggage and communications, the battle strength of the Allies was reduced to 80,000 men with 90 guns, while King Joseph had diminished his force to about 65,000 by sending off two convoys into France, each guarded by 3,000 men, and by detaching General Foy to obtain subsistence from Bilbao. The French, however, enjoyed an immense preponderance of artillery, having upwards of 150 pieces.

The position taken up by King Joseph was a peculiar and very faulty one, presenting two fronts, in conformity with the course of the Zadora, which, though difficult to ford, was crossed by several bridges. On the right Reille had disposed the army of Portugal with its front to the north, to defend the bridges of Gamara Mayor and Ariago, where the Bilbao and Durango roads cross the river. The army of the Centre lay at a distance of about seven miles from the army of Portugal, nearly at right angles to it, in front of Arinez, facing to the west, and covering the royal road to Vitoria; while Gazan, with the army of the South prolonged the line to the left on the mountain slopes facing the defile of La Puebla. Most of the French cavalry, with the King's Guards, were held in reserve about the village of Gomecha. The vices of this position were manifold. The Zadora, indeed, protected both sides of the front, but it was crossed by no fewer than seven bridges—two on the French right opposite Vitoria, two in front of their left at La Puebla, and three opposite their right centre—yet not one of these had been either destroyed or fortified. The line of battle occupied one side of an irregularly oval amphitheatre, at one end of which was the defile of La Puebla, at the other, Vitoria; passing through the whole length of the position was the royal road,

King  
Joseph  
offers  
battle.



Æt. 41. — roughly parallel to the Zadora, which was nearly unfordable, with steep rocky banks. A gap of several miles separated the right of the army from the centre; and the arrangement of fronts was such that if the right were forced to retire, the rear of the centre and left would be uncovered; and likewise, if the centre and left were driven back, the retreat of the right wing would be compromised.

Battle of  
Vitoria.

Lord Wellington, having on the 20th thoroughly examined and appreciated the peculiarities of the King's position, formed his attack in three independent columns, which marched from the encampment on the Bayas early on 21st June. Each column was directed to make its way across the rugged promontory between the Bayas and the Zadora, winding through narrow glens and crossing steep ridges, its departure being timed to bring all three in a nearly simultaneous attack upon the enemy. Sir Thomas Graham, commanding the left column of 20,000 men and 18 guns, was to force the bridges in front of Vitoria defended by Reille; Hill, on the right, also with 20,000 men, was to attack the bridges and defile of La Puebla; while Wellington in person directed the centre, consisting of 30,000 troops, including all the cavalry, except two brigades which rode with Graham.

The British, by this time, were nearly as good at mountaineering as the Spaniards themselves: all went well, though the weather was very thick and wet. By trusting to the regularity with which his distantly separated columns would arrive at the several points of attack, Wellington gained the time which an inferior tactician might have lost, by advancing to the Zadora in a single mass, and then extending right and left to form line of battle. Nevertheless, there was a period when Wellington felt and betrayed exceeding anxiety and not a little impatience. The commanders of the three columns had been instructed to attack in succession from the right, and Sir Rowland Hill had made a good start at midday, carrying the heights of La Puebla on

the enemy's extreme left, and, having forced the defile, by one o'clock was engaged in a severe conflict for the village of Subijana de Alava. In front of Wellington was the bridge of Nanclares, which he intended to force with the Light and 4th Divisions as soon as Hill got to work; but the 3rd and 7th Divisions, under Picton and Lord Dalhousie, which were to form his left centre, had not appeared at the right time, having been delayed by rougher ground than the rest. Wellington could not attack without their support; Graham, on the far left, waited to attack Reille till he should hear his commander at work, and thus the general assault was delayed, and some strong language was used.

A Spanish countryman told Wellington that the bridge of Tres Puentes on the left of the Light Division was absolutely unguarded, and offered to show the way to it. Kempt's riflemen were detached to seize it, and succeeded so well that they not only dashed across the high and narrow arch, but, ascending the height beyond, ensconced themselves under the crest actually in rear of the French advanced post. They were not unobserved, but the only attempt to dislodge them consisted in firing a couple of round shot among them, one of which, by a strange fatality, killed the brave peasant who had conferred such valuable service on the Allies. The report of these guns served as a signal to Graham, and presently the sound of his battle was heard far on the French right; Hill's attack on Subijana threatened their left, and King Joseph, seeing both his flanks in jeopardy, ordered Gazan to retire by alternate masses, and sent his reserve along the road to Vitoria.

Still Wellington's attack remained incomplete, when, in the very article of time, appeared "old Picton, riding at the head of the 3rd Division, dressed in a blue coat and a round hat, swearing as roundly all the way as if he wore two cocked ones."\* The 7th Division under Lord Dalhousie came up at the same time, having also been delayed by the

Advance of  
the allied  
centre.

\* Kincaid, 222.

Æt. 44. difficulties of the ground. While they were deploying into their places in the line of battle, the enemy opened upon them with artillery and musketry from the opposite bank; Kempt's riflemen, springing from their shelter, took the batteries and skirmishers in flank, and this enabled a brigade of the 3rd Division to cross the bridge of Mendoza without opposition. The dark uniforms of the riflemen deceived the British artillerymen, who plied them with round shot, till Picton's men, joining in the attack, showed them they were punishing their own comrades.\* The 7th Division now managed to ford the river, and the whole of the French centre and left began to give way. In vain the enemy threw out clouds of skirmishers to protect his retreat. The British horse artillery was brought up to reply, and, amid terrific din, the French columns fell back till they reached the village of

\* Wellington was indifferent to ornamental considerations in the clothing of soldiers, but he had warned the Horse Guards of the necessity of keeping the uniforms of British troops distinct from those of the enemy.

*General Viscount Wellington to the Military Secretary.*

“Freneda, 6th November, 1811.

“I hear that measures are in contemplation to alter the clothing, caps, etc., of the army. There is no subject of which I understand so little; and, abstractedly speaking, I think it indifferent how a soldier is clothed, provided it is in an uniform manner; and that he is forced to keep himself clean and smart, as a soldier ought to be. But there is one thing I deprecate, and that is any imitations of the French in any manner. It is impossible to form an idea of the inconvenience and injury which result from having anything like them, either on horseback or on foot. Lutyens and his piquet were taken in June because the 3rd Hussars had the same caps as the French *chasseurs à cheval* and some of their hussars; and I was near being taken on the 25th September from the same cause. At a distance or in an action colours are nothing; the profile and shape of a man's cap, and his general appearance, are what guide us; and why should we make our people look like the French? A *cock-tailed* horse is a good mark for a dragoon, if you can get a side view of him: but there is no such mark as an English helmet, and, as far as I can judge, it is the best cover a dragoon can have for his head. I mention this because, in all probability, you may have something to say to these alterations; and I only beg that *we* may be as different as possible from the French in everything. The narrow tops of our infantry, as opposed to their broad top caps, are a great advantage to those who are to look at long lines of posts opposed to each other.”

Arinez, where their reserve had been in the morning. Here ANW. 1813.  
 a determined stand was made; the village was taken and  
 lost and retaken again; be the faults of the French General  
 what they might, none were committed by his officers and  
 soldiers. Their valour availed not: Picton's division, with  
 Kempt's rifle brigade fighting before it, and Dalhousie's divi-  
 sion on its left, swept the enemy from the streets and drove  
 them, still keeping their order, along the highway to Vitoria.

While Joseph's centre and left were thus hopelessly broken Joseph's  
centre and  
left broken.  
 and driven back, General Reille held a firm front against  
 Graham. General Oswald, with the 5th Division, Longa's  
 Spaniards, and Pack's Portuguese, had driven the French  
 advanced guard under General Sarrut out of Arangues and  
 off the heights on the right bank covering the bridges.  
 Longa occupied the northern road, whereupon Sarrut retired  
 steadily and disposed his brigades for the defence of the  
 bridges. He also occupied the village of Gamara Mayor  
 on the right bank, where was one of these bridges. From  
 this they were expelled by a brigade of the 5th Division  
 under General Robinson, which forced the bridge behind  
 the village and captured a gun; but Reille opened fire on  
 them with twelve guns, under cover of which La Martinière  
 reformed his battalions and recaptured the bridge. Oswald  
 sent down another brigade to support Robinson; once more  
 the British possessed the bridge, and once again were driven  
 from it.

Very similar was the result of Graham's attack on Abe-  
 chuco, which covered the bridge of Ariaga. Repeatedly  
 carried by the British, it was as often retaken by the French,  
 until at both bridges the combat resolved itself into a duel  
 of cannon and small arms, many hundreds of tons of iron  
 and lead being hurled to and fro across the stream that  
 afternoon.

Vain, however, were the efforts of the skilful and valorous Total  
defeat of  
the French.  
 Reille. It has been explained how his front lay at right  
 angles to that of the French centre and left; when, therefore,

Æt. 44. towards evening the approaching din of combat announced to him that the King's line of battle was being forced back from the west, he perceived that his left flank and rear would be laid bare. Thereupon he formed a reserve of infantry at Betoño, to the east of Vitoria, and upon this, when it was clear that the battle was lost and the Allies were in possession of Vitoria on his rear, he withdrew his fighting line, leaving General Sarrut dead at Ariaga bridge. He continued his retreat towards Metanco in fairly good order, but soon his columns were involved in the wreckage of the armies of the Centre and the South. *Sauve qui peut!* Far as the eye could range, fields and hillsides were covered with a flying multitude, not of soldiers only, but of camp-followers and many, many women; \* the streets of Vitoria and the roads around were blocked with carriages, wagons, and tumbrils; the guns were abandoned by the waysides, sacrificed by the French officers, as was afterwards said, to save their mistresses.†

Flight of  
the King.

The King, finding that General Graham had thrown a column across the royal road to Bayonne, directed his flight to the east by the route leading by Salvatierra to Pamplona. Just after his carriage left Vitoria the 10th Hussars came clattering down the main street; Captain Wyndham started with a squadron in pursuit, and overtook the carriage; but Joseph had saved himself by mounting a horse and galloping off with an escort of dragoons, leaving behind, however, all his private correspondence and a number of most valuable pictures. The pursuit continued till nightfall, but the country was so much intersected with ditches as to interfere with the movements of cavalry, and the infantry were worn out with the exertions of a long day, wherefore the number of prisoners taken was out of all proportion to the magnitude

\* One of the French officers taken observed to Wellington after the battle. "Le fait est, monseigneur, que vous avez une armée, mais nous sommes un bordel ambulante" (*Stanhope*, 144).

† *Alison*, xvi. 339.

of the victory. Not so was the spoil: it was enormous. ANN 1813. —  
 One hundred and fifty brass guns—all but two that the French had brought upon the field—450 caissons with 14,000 rounds of ammunition, 2,000,000 musket cartridges, 40,000 lbs. of gunpowder, the baton of Marshal Jourdan, the military chest containing about £1,000,000 sterling, and the whole baggage of the army, were the chief military trophies; but besides these were found immense piles of plate and other valuables, and pictures—the plunder of Spanish churches and palaces—cut out of their frames and rolled up.\*

Considering the magnitude and decisive character of the victory, the loss of the Allies must be considered moderate—33 officers killed and 230 wounded, 707 soldiers killed and 4,210 wounded and missing, by far the greater number of casualties being among the British regiments. "I have taken more guns from these fellows," wrote Wellington to his old friend Colonel Malcolm, "in the last action than I took at Assaye, without much more loss upon about 70,000 men engaged. . . . They cannot stand us now at all." †

No tragedy is so vast, so overpowering, as that of the disruption of a splendid army—no horror so appalling as

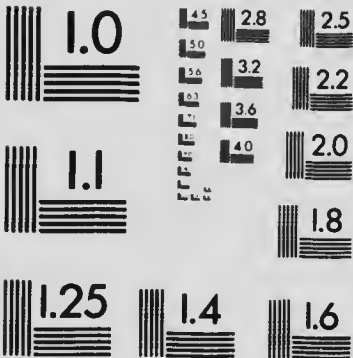
\* These pictures were carefully packed and sent to England. After the peace, Wellington caused a catalogue of them to be prepared, with the assistance of Don Miguel de Alava, which he repeatedly forwarded to the King of Spain in order that he might reclaim those which were his property. The King, however, magnanimously declined to take back what had come into Wellington's hands "in a manner so just and honourable," and made a free gift of them to the conqueror of Vitoria (*Suppl. Despatches*, ix. 500, xiv. 655). They remain in Apsley House to this day, where the public are admitted to see them on certain days. Among the most famous are Correggio's "Christ in the Garden," and Velasquez's "Aguadore" and his portrait of Pope Innocent X. The gold and silver returned in the claim for prize money amounted only to £31,276, but an immense quantity was privately plundered, both by the allied troops and by the peasantry. The French represented the amount of bullion lost at £1,000,000.

† "It is a curious circumstance," notes Wellington in a private letter to Lord Wellesley about his victory, "that the battle was fought yesterday on the ground called in the country *The English Hills*, on which the Black Prince fought a battle against the French, and gained a victory in favour of Don Pedro, called the Cruel." (See also *Stanhope*, 3, and *Croker*, i. 335 and ii. 231.) Wellington,



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Æt. 44. nightfall upon a field strewn with shattered slain and dreadful with groans of wounded men; as in all other tragedies and horrors, the misery is deepened by contrast with the inevitable comic element. One incident of that kind may be given in Lord Wellington's own words.

"After the battle of Vitoria, Madame Gazan, the wife of General Gazan, came into our quarters to look for one of her children which had been lost in the confusion of the French retreat. I ordered inquiry to be made directly; meantime she readily accepted my invitation to dine with us. At dinner she quite forgot her anxieties about the child, and rattled away about Joseph's Court and all the gossip of the French army. Another lady had been left behind, whom Madame Alava had good-naturedly taken into her lodgings. We asked Madame Gazan about her—whether she was not the wife of so-and-so. 'Ah, pour cela—non,' was the reply; 'elle est seulement sa femme de campagne.' Then, seeing Alava extremely disconcerted at his wife having taken her to her own house, she was much amused, and entered into the joke against him. Towards the end of dinner, an officer arrived and told me the child was found in the possession of a soldier, who had taken such a liking to the little boy that he would not part with him unless on a positive order. Upon this Madame Gazan merely remarked, 'Ah, je suis bien aise,' and seemed very well inclined to leave him with the soldier. However, I sent word that the child must be brought to her directly, and she left us in high good humour at her reception." \*

Wellington is made Field Marshal. In recognition of the magnitude of his victory Wellington was raised to the rank of Field Marshal,† receiving the

however, was in error. At the end of March, 1807, the Black Prince's army lay at Vitoria, where his advanced guard under Sir William Felton was cut to pieces by Don Tello. On 2nd April, however, the Prince won a decisive victory over King Henry between Najarra and Navaretta on the right bank of the Ebro, in consequence of which Don Pedro became King of Spain (*Froissart*, cap. ccxxxix. and ccxli.). The place called the English Hills is no doubt where Felton's disaster took place.

\* *De Ros MS.*

† "I will candidly confess," wrote the Duke of York, Commander-in-chief,

thanks of both Houses of Parliament; while the Spanish Cortes created him Duque de Vitoria, with the lands of Soto de Roma, in Granada, attached to the title in perpetuity. Even more flattering than either of these rewards as a tribute to his renown as a commander was a movement made before the news of Vitoria arrived at the Russian and German headquarters to obtain Wellington's services as Commander-in-chief of the allied forces in Central Europe. It was a spontaneous admission on the part of the great military powers that the victor of Salamanca was the only General in Europe able to meet Napoleon with any hope of success.

"I should be afraid," wrote Lord Bathurst on 23rd June, "that there would be so much cabal always at work as to make such a command (however flattering) hazardous for your reputation, particularly if the Emperor (of Russia) were to continue with the army. But I throw this out for your consideration in case the war on the Continent should continue another year, and you terminate the campaign this year in Spain, so as to be able to leave it with a part only of the British army to defend the front which we may occupy. For I think that if the prospects continued next year to look favourable on the Continent, we need not make a point of driving the French from every point in Spain, before we diverted our force, or part of our force, to Germany, if by doing so we could take such a leading part in the campaign as would follow from your having the chief, or even a great, command. . . . I shall be glad to have your opinion."\*

ANN. 1813

Proposal  
to remove  
him to  
command  
in Ger-  
many.

"that my apprehension of that spirit of jealousy which might possibly have been excited by unusual promotion, led me formerly to imagine that a measure of this nature would have embarrassed the public service . . . but your brilliant success is of a nature to overcome all difficulty." The rank carried with it the addition of £7,000 a year to the pay of £5,000 a year allowed to a commander in the field. This promotion lifted Wellington over the heads of many generals senior to himself, including his old chief in the Irish Office, the Duke of Richmond, who immediately volunteered to serve under the new Field Marshal during the campaign.

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, viii. 17.

ÆT. 44. Wellington's despatch to Lord Bathurst, though the terms were almost cold which he employed in describing the scale of the triumph of the allied arms, was warm in praise of the behaviour of the troops.\* Unhappily the circumstances of the following days caused a marked change in his tone.

Disorderly  
conduct of  
the allied  
army.

29th June.—“It is desirable that any reinforcements of infantry which you may send to this army may come to Santander, notwithstanding that I am very apprehensive of the consequence of marching our vagabond soldiers through the province of Biscay in that state of discipline in which they and their officers generally come out to us. . . . We started with the army in the highest order, and up to the day of battle nothing could get on better; but that event has, as usual, totally annihilated all order and discipline. The soldiers of the army have got among them about a million sterling in money, with the exception of about 100,000 dollars which were got for the military chest. The night of the battle, instead of being passed in getting rest and food to prepare them for the pursuit of the following day, was passed by the soldiers in looking for plunder. The consequence was that they were incapable of marching in pursuit of the enemy, and were totally knocked up. The rain came on, and increased their fatigue, and I am quite convinced we have now out of the ranks double the amount of our loss in the battle; and that we have lost more men in the pursuit than the enemy have; and have never in any one day made more than an ordinary march. . . . The new regiments are, as usual, the worst of all.” †

Crippled, however, as the Allies were for pursuit by their own disorderly conduct, the plight of the French could scarcely have been worse. They had lost all that secures defence, comfort, even sustenance, to an army in the field; to quote the words of General Gazan himself, “Generals and subordinate officers alike were reduced to the clothes on their backs, and most of them were barefooted.”

The pursuit was marked by an incident so painful that the

\* *Despatches*, x. 446-453.

† *Ibid.*, 472.

temptation is strong to pass it over in silence. Nevertheless it must be told, for it excited a strong feeling of indignation in the British army at the time, and, besides, illustrates even more forcibly than his treatment of Colonel Bevan at Almeida\* that infirmity which, through an exaggerated exercise of will and an incapacity of admitting that he had himself made a mistake, sometimes caused Wellington to act unjustly to other officers. Captain Norman Ramsay received orders to lead his troop of horse artillery in pursuit of the flying French. Lord Wellington spoke to him as he passed, and told him to take his troop to a neighbouring village, adding that, if necessary, he would send further orders in the course of the night. At 6 a.m. next morning an Assistant-Quartermaster-General rode up and desired Ramsay to join the brigade to which his troop belonged. Scarcely was the troop in motion before a written order came from Quartermaster-General Murray, directing Ramsay to join General Anson's brigade. Finally, Wellington himself arrived, was furious when he found Ramsay had marched without orders direct from himself, and ordered him into immediate arrest.

Now Ramsay, whose exploit at Fuentes de Oñoro † had earned him undying fame, had done good service during the battle on the 21st, and had well earned his brevet. Wellington's chief officers interceded warmly for their gallant comrade, but in vain. Wellington's well-known partiality for Ramsay seemed only to render him the more implacable about what he construed as disobedience of orders. He declared that he had forbidden Ramsay to move till *he himself* sent orders; he would listen neither to Ramsay's explanation that he did not so understand what Lord Wellington had said to him, nor to the confirmatory assurances of Lieut. Macleod, a sergeant and a corporal, who had heard what passed between the Commander-in-chief and the captain, and had put on the words a similar construction to Ramsay. The result was that Ramsay was not mentioned in despatches

\* See p. 233, *supra*.

† See p. 226, *supra*.

ANN. 1813.  
Wellington's harshness to Norman Ramsay.

Æt. 44. as he should have been, missed his brevet, and remained under arrest for three weeks.\*

King  
Joseph's  
retreat.

The indefatigable Reille rallied two divisions and some cavalry before Salvatierra on the 22nd, and acted as rear-guard to the King's hapless columns, which reached Pamplona on the 24th. Joseph here lost to the Light Division and Alten's cavalry one of the only two guns he had saved from the field of Vitoria, but he strengthened the garrison in the fortress and pushed on up the valley of Roncesvalles on the 25th.

On the 23rd Lord Wellington once more detached General Graham's column to intercept Foy's retreat from Bilbao. Foy, however, was too quick for him; for, having collected the garrisons of all the Biscayan fortresses except San Sebastian and Santona, and having recovered the escort of the convoy sent off from Vitoria on 19th June, he retired upon Tolosa, where he offered battle on the 25th. Graham, however, turning both his flanks with the Spanish divisions of Longa and Mendizabel, attacked him in front, blew open the gate of the town which constituted the strength of his centre, and drove him further towards the frontier. Having thrown a garrison of 2,600 into San Sebastian, Foy crossed the Bidassoa on 1st July, entering French territory and effecting a junction at Vera with Reille's army of Portugal, which had received artillery and stores from Bayonne. Graham then invested San Sebastian, which Mendizabel was already blockading with 7,000 Spaniards.

Invest-  
ment of  
San Sebas-  
tian.

General Clausel, meanwhile, had been hastening to Vitoria with a corps of 14,000 men in obedience to Joseph's command, and, not having heard of the battle, arrived there on the 22nd to find it occupied by the 6th Division, which had

\* It is said that Ramsay never recovered from the grievous sense of injustice caused by this affair. He was present with his troop at Waterloo, and Wellington spoke kindly to him as he rode down the line. Ramsay did not answer, merely bowed his head gravely, and was shot through the heart about 4 p.m. (See *Temple Bar Magazine*, August, 1899.)

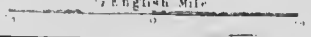
# B I S C A Y



## SIEGE OF ST. SEBASTIAN

By the Allies, under Wellington.  
From June to September 1813.

By J. G. W. & C. A. L. E.  
English Mile

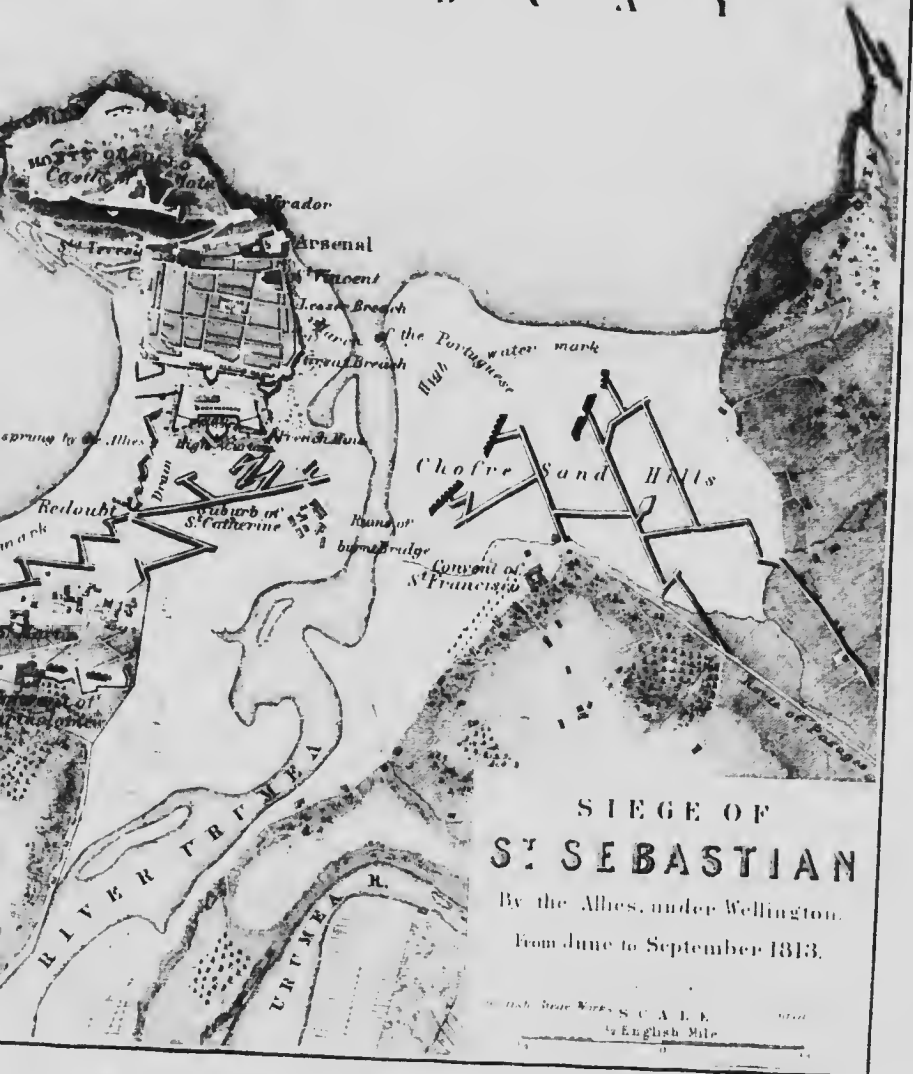


D., LONDON



Plan of the Siege

# O F B I S C A Y



## SIEGE OF ST. SEBASTIAN

By the Allies, under Wellington.  
From June to September 1813.

Scale 1/4 English Mile





been brought up from Medina de Pomar. He beat a rapid retreat to Logroño, whence he reached Tudela by forced marches late on the 27th, intending to gain the frontier by way of Olite and Tafalla. Wellington, however, anticipated him, for, leaving General Hill to invest Pamplona, he marched down the valley of the Zidaro and barred that door of escape. Clausel, warned by a friendly alcalde of the danger before him, wheeled about in his tracks and made for Zaragoza, closely followed by Mina's partidas, intending to await Suchet's arrival from the east. But Mina took care to circulate reports that the allied army was close behind him; Clausel, therefore, destroying his baggage and some of his artillery, made his escape to France through the pass of Jaca.

Of the French armies in Spain, that of Suchet alone remained, for which it was intended that Sir John Murray should find occupation. However, on the second day of the pursuit from Vitoria, an aide-de-camp, carrying despatches from Murray to England, came to Wellington's quarters and announced that Murray had raised the siege of Taragona and embarked his army.\* Wellington bade him keep his news to himself, otherwise "we were all in such triumph, he would at the very least have been turned out of the room."† Murray had failed, and incurred some of the penalty of failure; nevertheless his presence in the South had kept Suchet at a distance, which Suchet, under the circumstances, showed no inclination to diminish. But Wellington could not pursue his advantage, leaving the fortresses of San Sebastian and Pamplona in his rear. Had his rank in military history rested only on his conduct of sieges, Wellington's renown would never have exceeded that of hundreds of brave officers of mediocre attainment. From one cause or another—from miscalculation or deficiency of means, or from want of experience in the science of reducing fortified places—errors were repeatedly made, most costly

\* Murray was afterwards tried by court-martial for his conduct.

† *Stanhope*, 58.

Æt. 44. in lives, time, and money, which, had Napoleon been in personal command in the Peninsula, most assuredly would have brought about a different end to the campaign. There were very few regular engineer officers; almost any officer with a turn for drawing seems to have been eligible as a volunteer; \* the mere handful of trained sappers and miners were supplemented by fatigues from the infantry.

Siege of  
San Sebastian.

San Sebastian occupies a narrow peninsula lying between a harbour and the estuary of the river Urumea. The land front of the town was protected by a rampart 350 yards long, between which and the land ran a sandy spit, covered at half tide, while at the seaward extremity of the isthmus rises a precipitous hill nearly 400 feet high, on which stood the castle of La Mota. In its main natural features and their adaptation to defence the place bears a general resemblance to Dunbarton. In front of the protecting curtain or rampart projected a hornwork, and the flanks of the town were protected by ramparts twenty-seven feet high. The works, however, were not formidable; there were no bomb-proofs; water was carried in by an aqueduct, which Mendizabel cut as soon as he blockaded the place on 28th June, after which the garrison of 3,000, and the inhabitants, had to rely for water on some very impure wells. Altogether there seemed nothing to prevent the conquerors beginning the siege with light hearts; † but in General Rey they had to reckon with a determined and skilful defender.

On 9th July Graham's corps arrived to relieve Mendizabel's Spaniards, and siege operations were begun in earnest. As General Reille lay in the passes by Vera, threatening to interrupt the siege, Wellington drove him back on the 15th, and placed the 7th and Light Divisions there to cover Graham's operations. At the same time the Conde de la Bisbal blockaded Pamplona, covered by the bulk of the allied forces, disposed so as to guard the passes from

\* Dumaresq MSS.

† Despatches, x. 526.



LIEUT-GENERAL THE HON. SIR GALBRAITH LOWRY COLE, G.C.B.  
[Vol. 6, p. 329.]



Roncesvalles on the right to Los Alduides, in French territory, ANN. 1813  
on the left.

It had been Wellington's intention to lay siege to Pamplona as well as to San Sebastian, but the bad news about Murray warned him that Suchet might advance through Catalonia upon his right flank, and he was unwilling to lock up 15,000 or 20,000 good troops in siege operations, which, in the absence of proper appliances, must have lasted for five or six weeks.\* He contented himself, therefore, with establishing a strict blockade on Pamplona.

The calamities of the retreat from Moscow, enough to paralyse the power of any ruler of mortal mould, had roused the spirits of the Germans to combine with the Russians against their oppressor. Before the end of spring Prussia was even as Spain and Portugal had been in 1808; her people were arming and drilling, and Napoleon had no more than 150,000 troops, mostly raw conscripts, at hand to suppress the rising. In spite of this, and a serious weakness in cavalry, he won against the allied Russian and Prussian armies the victories of Lützen (2nd May) and Bautzen (20th and 21st May), which led to the armistice of Poischwitz on 4th June. Three weeks later he received the fell tidings of Vitoria and the expulsion of four of his armies from the Peninsula. With indomitable patience and courage he set himself to repair the consequences of defeat and protect the soil of France. And this at the moment when the tenour of his interview with Metternich on 28th June left Austria no alternative but to range herself on the side of his active enemies! From Dresden he despatched Soult—the slandered Soult—to replace Joseph as Imperial Lieutenant in the Peninsula, with command-in-chief of the army of Spain—a concise but melancholy term, denoting what had once been the armies of the North, the South, and the Centre.

Travelling at speed, Soult arrived in the Pyrenees on 13th July to find, in addition to the three armies named in his

\* *Despatches*, x. 506.

Napoleon  
appoints  
Soult his  
lieutenant  
in the war.

ÆT. 44. commission, the wreck of a fourth—the army of Portugal—awaiting his reorganising power. No more capable hand and head could have been applied to the task.

With 77,500 men, he assumed the offensive on 24th July, by advancing to relieve San Sebastian and Pamplona. The use of good roads along the northern flank of the Pyrenees gave him an advantage over Wellington which far outweighed the French inferiority of numbers. It enabled him to concentrate his forces rapidly at any point in the series of positions occupied by the Allies—positions isolated from lateral communication by lofty and impassable mountains. His experienced eye recognised the opportunity for swift and, as far as possible, secret action. Massing 60,000 troops at Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, he threw forward two columns simultaneously, one on the pass of Maya, the other on that of Roncesvalles. The first of these was held by Sir Rowland Hill, with part of the 2nd Division and some of Silveira's Portuguese; the other, separated from Maya by twenty miles of mountain, was defended by Byng's Brigade of the 2nd Division and Morillo's Spanish Division, supported by the 4th Division, the whole being under command of Sir Lowry Cole.

Soult forces the passes of Maya and Roncesvalles.

On the morning of the 25th Count d'Erlon led 20,000 men to attack the triple pass of Maya. Falling upon two brigades commanded by Major-General the Hon. William Stewart, he took them by surprise, for there had been a grave neglect of military precaution; Stewart himself, being some miles distant on the right, was recalled by the sound of firing.\* The Allies were driven out of the pass with the loss of four guns; † the 92nd Highlanders, especially, suffering very severely. The position had been lost straightway, but

\* *D. Ros MS.* "A surprise, occasioned by the fancy people have to attend to other matters but their own concerns, and to form opinions of what is passing in other quarters. . . . With common precaution, General Stewart had men enough to defend the pass" (*Despatches*, x. 596).

† "I was very sorry to have lost those guns, as they are the only guns that have ever been lost by troops acting under my command" (*Despatches*, xi. 107).

for the opportune arrival of a brigade of the 7th Division ANN. 1813. under General Barnes, which executed a brilliant charge, regaining enough of the heights to enable the pass to be held. Badly as the British detachment in the Maya pass had fared, matters went even worse with that in Roncesvalles. Cole's right flank, although reinforced by Picton's 3rd Division, was fairly turned by Soult in personal command of 35,000 men, and the Allies were forced to retire at night to Zubiri. Hill, accordingly, finding his right flank bare, retired also to Irurita, the passes of Maya and Roncesvalles both remaining in the hands of the French. Although the blockade of Pamplona was still covered, there can be no doubt that the position of the Allies at this time was exceedingly critical, owing to the swift vigour of their opponent, combined with the difficulty of concentrating on any point which he might choose to attack.

The 25th July was a day of misfortune for the British arms. The Allies were defending passes along a mountainous front some three-and-thirty miles in extent. While the combats in the passes were in progress, Wellington was beyond the extreme length of the line, on a visit to the siege works at San Sebastian. He arrived there on the morning of the 25th, just after an assault on the works had failed disastrously, owing to its having been undertaken a day too late. Wellington had ordered that it should be made at daybreak, as soon as the tides should be suitable, which was the case on the 24th. When attempted on the 25th, the water was too deep at the appointed hour.\* Ammunition having run short, and the condition of the defences being still good, Wellington ordered the siege to be suspended and converted into a blockade. Then, hearing that Soult's demonstration against his right was more than the feint he had believed it to be, he set off at speed for the point of danger, realising, as he afterwards admitted, that to have undertaken simultaneous operations against two places separated so far by such a difficult country, was "one of the greatest faults he ever committed in war." †

\* *De Ros MS.*

† *Ibid.*



## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE PYRENEES.

1813.

July 28, 1813. First battle of Sorau- ren.		Soult attempts to force the Bidassoa.
„ 30 . . . Second battle of Sorau- ren.	September 8 .	Surrender of the castle of San Sebastian.
August 2 . . . Soult is driven across the frontier.	October 7. . .	Passage of the Bidas- soa.
„ 6. . . Siege of San Sebastian renewed.		Soult assumes the de- fensive.
„ 31 . . Storm and capture of the town. Disorders of the sack.	November 10.	Battle of the Nivelle. “ Monseigneur, l'affaire est finie ! ”

ON his way back from San Sebastian, Lord Wellington received intelligence of the affairs in the passes of the east, but it was not till next morning, the 26th, that he learnt that the Allies had been forced to retire. Reaching Irurita, where General Stewart's column lay, he realised for the first time the full nature of the danger, and despatched several of his staff to direct a concentration of all the troops in the neighbourhood upon Pamplona. Then, having directed the 6th Division to follow him down the valley of the Lanz, he rode on in search of the divisions of Cole and Picton, of whose position he had no information. At Ostiz he fell in with Long's brigade of light cavalry, and, learning that Picton, who, as senior to Cole, had taken over the command, had fallen back as far as Huarte, he despatched General Murray to suspend the movement of troops upon Pamplona.



MAJOR-GENERAL LORD FITZROY SOMERSET,  
AFTERWARDS FIELD-MARSHAL LORD RAGLAN, G.C.B.  
*(From a Sketch at Apsley House.)*

[Vol. i. p. 333.]



Next, accompanied only by Lord Fitzroy Somerset, he dashed ANN. 1813.  
on for Sorauren. Observing French videttes and patrols on the elevated skyline to the north of the road, implying the presence of a heavy force on the line of march of the 6th Division, he dismounted on the bridge of Sorauren and, resting his writing-case on the parapet, wrote fresh orders to Hill, turning him off the road at Ostiz so as to avoid a collision, and desiring him to sweep round in rear of Picton's position. Hardly had Somerset galloped out along the Ostiz road, and just as Wellington rode out alone towards Huarte, when a patrol of French cavalry entered the middle of the village.\* It was one of Wellington's narrowest escapes.

He found Picton's array drawn upon the ridges in front of Huarte and Villalba; the 3rd Division on the right, the 4th on the left, with Byng's brigade of the 2nd Division and Campbell's Portuguese. Opposite to them, at no great distance across a narrow valley, the French were in the act of forming line of battle, with Soult himself correcting their position. Then ensued a dramatic scene—a veritable *coup de théâtre*. A Portuguese battalion on the left first recognised the lonely horseman; their shrill *vivas* swelled into a British hurrah, as brigade after brigade heard the welcome news. Men might grumble at their chief's stern discipline on the march, but not one of them but had learnt whose hand steered them surest in the storm of battle. Wellington, determined that the effect of his presence should not be lost upon the enemy, pulled up on an eminence in full view of them; it was then that he first set eyes on his redoubtable adversary.

“A Frenchman employed as a spy came up to me and said, ‘Monseigneur, voulez-vous voir le Maréchal Soult?’ pointing with his stick at a group of officers on the other side of the valley. I levelled my glass exactly as he pointed, and there, sure enough, I distinctly discerned Soult with his staff round him,

\* De Ros MS.

Æt. 41. several of them with their hats off and in an animated conversation. He had just finished writing an order, and was giving instructions to the aide-de-camp, who was going off with it. As I observed him pointing towards a particular direction, where I had reason to anticipate some movement, I paid much attention to his actions, and indeed I saw all that was passing so clearly with my glass that I could almost have fancied I heard the aide-de-camp say, 'Oui, Monseigneur.' The aide-de-camp presently mounted and hurried off with his order, and so convinced was I of its purport that I immediately directed a counter-movement to be made in that quarter, which the result showed was but just in time to prevent Soult's intended operation." \*

"I saw his features so distinctly that when I met him in a drawing-room in Paris for the first time, I knew him at once." †

Whether, as Napier suggests, ‡ Soult was puzzled by the cheering of the Allies, or whether he was waiting for the arrival of d'Erlon's column, he refrained that day from the general attack which seemed imminent at the moment of Wellington's arrival. He contented himself with an endeavour to seize a detached hill in front of the centre of the Allies, which was bravely and successfully defended by the 4th Portuguese and a Spanish battalion, supported by the 40th British and another Spanish regiment. The French, however, occupied the village of Sorauren, and skirmishing went on along the line till nightfall.

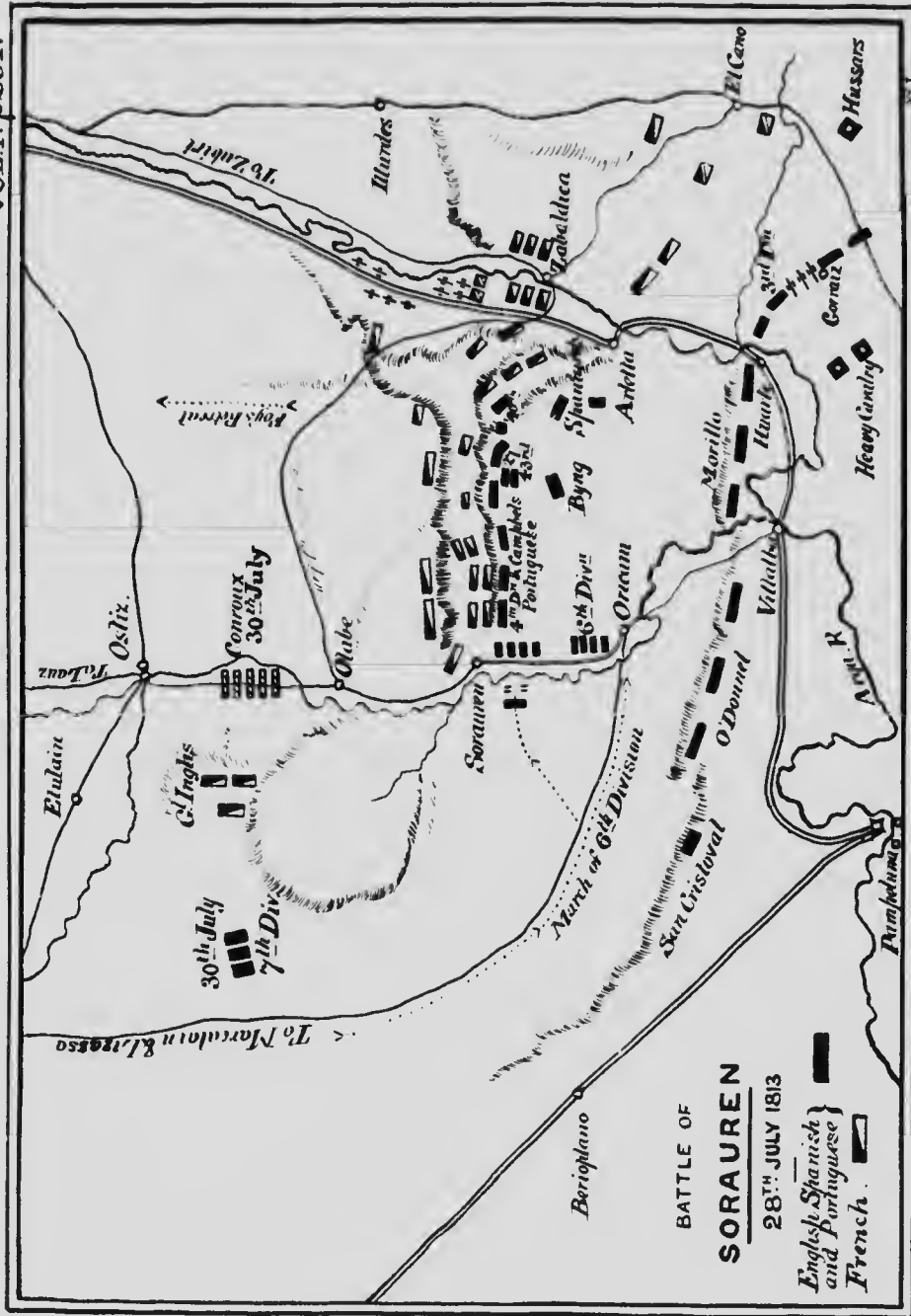
First  
battle of  
Sorauren.

Even then, Wellington did not expect that Soult desired a pitched battle. At ten o'clock the following morning he was in the act of communicating this opinion in a letter to Sir Thomas Graham, when the French advanced in force from Sorauren, threatening to turn the allied left. Soult was not aware that the 6th Division, in obedience to Wellington's hasty command written on the bridge of Sorauren, had arrived early in the morning, formed a second line in rear of the 4th Division, with a Portuguese brigade

\* *De Ros MS.*

† *Stanhope*, 19, 143.

‡ *Vol. vi. 130.*





on the heights on the right bank of the Lanz. He knew, ANN. 1813. indeed, from deserters that Wellington had taken measures of concentration; but the march of the 6th Division, though passing not far from his right flank, had been concealed from him by the hills. Clausel's column, therefore, advancing 16,000 strong from Sorauren, covered by swarms of skirmishers, had no sooner turned Cole's left, than it was entrapped. Two of Cole's brigades changing from front to the left opened fire on one flank of the attacking column, the Portuguese beyond the river pounded their other flank, while in front the 6th Division was drawn across the valley before the village of Oricain. The French retired fighting, while Clausel sent another division to clear the height beyond the river. In this they succeeded, but the Caçadores stationed there rallied, and, supported by Ross's brigade of the 4th Division, drove them down again at the point of the bayonet.

The battle then spread all along the centre and right of the Allies; a battalion of Portuguese in the 4th Division yielded to the pressure, and the French established themselves on the British line; but Wellington brought up the 27th and 48th Regiments, which dislodged them by a spirited charge. The fighting was mostly hand-to-hand, "bludgeon work," as Wellington called it, the 7th, 20th, 23rd, and 40th Regiments charging four several times; after repeated attempts to gain the heights the French drew off in the afternoon to the position they had left in the morning. In this action, out of 16,000 troops in the field, the Allies lost 2,600 killed and wounded, the French 1,800 out of their 20,000. "I never saw such fighting," wrote Wellington to Lord Liverpool, "as on the 27th and 28th of July, the anniversary of the battle of Talavera, nor such determination as our troops showed.\*"

On the 29th Soult made no fresh attempt upon the Allies, but he received the support of d'Erlon's column, 18,000 strong, coming from the pass of Maya. On the other hand,

\* *Despatches*, x. 597.



ÆT. 44. Lord Dalhousie arrived at Marelain with the 7th Division, in touch with General Hill, who still held his position, Lisarza and Arestegui, covering the blockade of San Sebastian. Second  
battle of  
Sorauren. Soult, therefore, although his own force had been increased to about 43,000, beheld his advance barred by 30,000 Allies in line of battle on strong ground, and did not relish the task of dislodging them. Sending off his artillery, his wounded and most of his baggage to recross the frontier, he moved off by his right at daybreak on the 30th, intending to join that detachment which had followed Hill from the pass of Maya, and, by dislodging him, to disengage San Sebastian. But, to mask this movement, he left Reille in the strong position of Sorauren; and Wellington, perceiving his enemy's intention, ordered Dalhousie to attack the French right beyond the Lanz, while Picton crossed the heights above the Zubiri, lately vacated by the French left. As soon as the flanking operations were in progress, Pakenham, who had succeeded to the command of the 6th Division, attacked and carried the village of Sorauren, while Cole drove straight at the centre of the enemy's line. Although Wellington pronounced the enemy's position to be "one of the strongest and most difficult of access he had ever seen occupied by troops," \* yet it was carried triumphantly; the French, at all times very nervous about movements on their flanks, abandoned both village and heights in great confusion, losing 2,000 killed and wounded and 3,000 prisoners; while the Allies lost 1,900 killed and wounded, 1,200 being Portuguese, who covered themselves with glory and received warm commendation from Wellington.† General Foy, on the French left, was cut off from the main body and retired

\* *Despatches*, x. 583.

† *Lord Wellington to Lord Liverpool*.

"25th July. 1813.

"The Portuguese are now the *fighting cocks* of the army. I believe we owe their merits more to the care we have taken of their pockets and bellies than to the instruction we have given them" (*Despatches*, x. 569).

independently with 8,000 men along the ridge between the Lanz and Zubiri valleys, while his comrades fled up the Lanz valley. Wellington continued the pursuit as far as Olague, which brought him at sunset immediately in rear of Soult's attack upon Hill at Buenza, who, though outnumbered by two to one, had held his ground stiffly all day. ANN. 1813.

Soult was now in great peril, for Hill was in his front, having just been reinforced by 5,000 Spaniards under Morillo; Wellington was in his rear with 30,000; while his own forces, by losses in battle and by Foy's exclusion, had been reduced to less than 35,000. There was no course open for him but to strike northwards for France through the difficult pass of Doña Maria, which he did on the night of the 30th. On the 31st Hill overtook the French rear-guard, and a severe conflict which ensued was rendered indecisive by a thick fog which came on, under cover of which the French withdrew. Nevertheless the pursuit continued through the mountains. The Light Division, by a march of frightful severity, intercepted Reille's column in a gorge at Yanzi, and poured death upon the helpless multitude from the summit of a precipice overhanging the narrow way.

On the 2nd August Soult rallied for a stand at Echellar. Wellington by this time had despatched all but the 4th, 7th, and Light Divisions to reoccupy Roncesvalles, Maya, and the other passes. So greatly were the French demoralized that Barnes's brigade of 1,500 dislodged 6,000 of Clausel's troops from a steep mountain, without waiting for the 4th and Light Divisions which had been sent round to turn the position for them. More fighting went on that day as the French retired from ridge to ridge along the valley of the Bidassoa, beyond which Wellington did not carry the pursuit, for his troops had well earned repose. Enough had been done: disasters such as the critics had prescribed as the meet retribution for Wellington's temerity at Talavera had fallen upon Soult for his bold attempt to regain a grasp on Spain. He had suffered the loss of between 12,000 and 15,000 men, the Allies that

*Soult is driven across the frontier.*

Æt. 44. of 7,096; nevertheless, on 31st July the effectives under Wellington's command were only 1,500 less than when Soult first attacked the passes. The stragglers and marauders who had wandered from the colours after the battle of Vitoria amounted to 12,000; many of these returned when there was more fighting to be done, to make atonement for their misdeeds by gallant behaviour against the enemy.

Having regained possession of the passes, Wellington caused them to be strengthened by entrenchments and redoubts, and re-established his headquarters at Lesaea, a little country town, usually quiet enough, but well described by Larpent at the time as intolerably noisy, in addition to the normal character imparted by dirt and vermin. It was crowded with soldiers of three nations, for Longa's Spaniards were here—Longa, "like an English butcher in a handsome hussar dress;" \* crowded with country-people selling wine, corn, sour fruit, pig's flesh, what not, to the half-boozed, weary soldiers; crowded with countless mules and muleteers. Yet there was room for pig-killing and dressing in every street; the air was elongorous with discordant noise—with the yells of expiring porkers, with the scarcely more musical wrangles between buyers and sellers, with the dull thumping in upper chambers where it was the fashion to thresh the corn.

Wellington was relieved from apprehension of Suchet's approach by the more vigorous turn given to affairs in the east of Spain by Lord William Bentinck, who had at last arrived on the coast, superseding Murray, about to be tried for his laebes at Taragona. This caused Suchet, upon General Paris evacuating Zaragoza and retiring into France, and after Daroca had surrendered to Mina on 11th August, to withdraw the whole of his troops north of the Ebro, where he fixed his headquarters at Lerida. He was cut off from all communication with Soult except through France, for the Allies were now in touch from the Bay of Biscay to the Mediterranean.

\* *Larpent*, ii. 47.

The approach of autumn rendered the speedy reduction of ANN. 1813.  
 San Sebastian of supreme importance, and siege operations  
 were resumed there by Sir Thomas Graham on 6th August, Siege  
 of San  
 Sebastian  
 renewed.  
 although the absence of a sufficient British naval force  
 rendered the blockade somewhat of a farce. This formed  
 matter for a heated correspondence between Lord Wellington  
 on one hand,\* and Lords Melville and Bathurst on the other,  
 which it would not be necessary to do more than refer to in  
 passing, were it not that Sir William Napier, becoming  
 almost inarticulate in his fury against the Tory Melville and  
 the Admiralty, has started a tune which subsequent writers,  
 one after another, have sedulously piped, and thrown  
 unmerited obloquy on the minister. No doubt Wellington  
 did feel acutely at this period the absence of British war-  
 ships of sufficient number and strength, not only to blockade  
 the sea approaches to San Sebastian, but to convoy transports  
 and supplies from Coruña and Lisbon; no doubt Napier was  
 faithfully repeating the common complaint of officers of the  
 army; but it is not right that the defence of the Government  
 should be altogether suppressed as it has been hitherto.

In the first place it should be recollected that the advance  
 of the Allies had been rapid beyond all the calculations,  
 even of their commander, who never indicated an advance  
 beyond the Ebro as within the scope of the campaign of 1813.

“Neither from you,” wrote Lord Melville in reply to Wel-  
 lington’s complaint, “nor from any other person at your suggestion,  
 did we ever receive the least intimation that more was expected  
 than the protection of your convoys along the coast, till the  
 actual arrival of Sir Thomas Graham on the coast after the battle  
 of Vitoria, and accordingly no provision was made for sieges. . . .  
 In order that there might be no mistake or misunderstanding on  
 this point, I stated distinctly to Lord Bathurst, before you  
 moved out of Portugal, that it was not in our contemplation,  
 because we did not conceive you to expect us, to give the assis-  
 tance of line-of-battle ships, troop ships, marine corps, or anything

\* *Despatches*, x. 592; xi. 17; *Suppl. Despatches*, viii. 272.

Æt. 41. but the security of your transports. . . . Do not suppose . . . that there would have been any hesitation in affording you whatever naval assistance you might require. If it could have been provided by no other means, which I have no doubt it could, it might have been a question with the Government to determine what other object, the Baltic, for instance, or a portion of the American squadron, etc., should have been given up; but *you* would have been secured in what you wanted in the first instance. . . . There are some other matters, however, which depend merely on naval opinions, on which it is indispensably necessary that you should be apprised of our sentiments and intentions. I will take your opinion in preference to any other person's as to the most effectual mode of beating a French army, but I have no confidence in your seamanship or nautical skill. Neither will I defer to the opinions on such matters of the gentlemen under your command who are employed in the siege of St. Sebastian, and which happen to be at variance with those of every naval officer in his Majesty's service. . . . You are not to expect any effectual assistance in that operation from line-of-battle ships, because, from the situation of the place and the nature of the coast, they cannot anchor without extreme risk. . . . If you will ensure them a continuance of easterly wind, they may remain with you, but not otherwise."\*

In truth, the British Admiralty showed no indolence at this time. The American war had thrown a great strain on their resources; to meet the emergency ships had been rapidly constructed of fir; there were plenty of them, but great difficulty in finding crews to man them. Additional legislative powers, to compel men to serve, were contemplated; but such a course, as Lord Melville explained to Wellington, would have checked recruiting for the army. It was no narrow departmental spirit which made him add: "In the present circumstances of the country and the nature of the campaign, I had much rather have to encounter ten times the abuse for want of naval exertion, than the evil of really cramping our army." †

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, viii. 223, 224.

† *Ibid.*, viii. 145.

On 18th August a new battering train arrived from ANN. 1813. England; batteries were constructed and fire was opened from sixty pieces on the morning of the 26th. The fortified islet of Santa Clara was captured on the morning of the 27th; on the 29th the fire from the town had been practically silenced, and two breaches were pronounced practicable. Wellington rode over from Lesaca on the 30th, and, before returning, ordered the assault to take place in daylight on the 31st. He called for volunteers to form a storming party of 850 from the 4th and Light Divisions, from the Brigade of Guards and the German Legion; but, previous to that, Robinson's brigade of the 5th Division had been put in orders as the column of attack, and General Leith was indignant at the intention to deprive them of the honour. Therefore at 11 o'clock on the forenoon of the 31st, Robinson led the way. Scarcely had the head of his column shown beyond the trenches, when Sir Richard Fletcher, commanding the Engineers here as he had, with so much renown, at Torres Vedras, was killed by a musket-shot. The storm was successful; of the town garrison 670 were taken alive, but the carnage was frightful. Between 28th July and 31st August the allied troops before San Sebastian lost 45 officers and 716 soldiers killed, 105 officers and 1592 soldiers wounded.

As at Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos, some of the troops on gaining entrance to the town gave way to considerable excesses, which were grossly exaggerated by the democratic party in Spain, and the libel was industriously circulated that Wellington had ordered the town to be burnt and sacked. These slanders having been brought officially to his notice by the Spanish Government, Wellington indignantly repudiated them. Repeatedly urged to bombard the town as the speediest means of causing its surrender, he had firmly refused to do so, as he had refused to do in all his other sieges, confining the fire of his batteries exclusively to the fortifications. The town was burnt, it is true; but that arose from certain traverses, constructed in the streets and filled with

Storm and  
capture of  
the town.

Disorders  
of the  
sack.

Æt. 41. combustibles, many of which exploded after the British had effected an entrance. In fact, the fire in the town was a serious obstacle to the assailants, who did all in their power to extinguish it.

Wellington was justly indignant at such charges made against himself and his officers. As to the behaviour of the men, it may be well to quote his own admission about their disorder, remembering that he was a commander of long experience, and, if he had a fault, it was not indifference to discipline.

“In regard to the plunder of the town by the soldiers, I am the last man who will deny it, because I know that it is true. It has fallen to my lot to take many towns by storm, and I am concerned to add that I never saw or heard of one so taken, by any troops, that it was not plundered. Notwithstanding that I am convinced it is impossible to prevent a town in such a situation being plundered, I can prove that upon this occasion particular pains were taken to prevent it. . . . If by far the greatest proportion of the officers and non-commissioned officers, particularly of the principal officers who stormed the breach, had not been killed or wounded . . . to the number of 170 out of 250, I believe that the plunder would have been in a great measure, though not entirely, prevented.”\*

Soldiers, in short, are not steam-engines or electrical machines, which can be set in violent motion one moment, and stopped the next by shutting off the motive power. They are human beings, mostly of the class least practised in self-control, whose passions, vehemently roused by the fury of hand-to-hand conflict, receive fresh fuel in the ecstasy and temptation of conquest. For this reason it is the invariable practice of experienced Generals, after the capture of a place, to replace the attacking columns by fresh troops

\* *Despatches*. xi. 173. This explanation was not written till 9th October, but there is grim evidence of Wellington's desire at the time to stop disorder. On 2nd September, at 6.40 a.m., he wrote to Sir Thomas Graham: “You had better send a provost into the town, and have a gallows erected; and the gates kept shut, and *nobody* to be allowed to go in excepting on duty” (*Ibid.*, xi. 59).

which have not been engaged; but this precaution it was not possible to adopt at San Sebastian until 2nd September, for reasons which fall to be explained presently. ANN. 1813.

In reckoning the causes and extent of the horrors perpetrated in San Sebastian, allowance should be made for the presence in every regiment of ruffianly fellows who bring discredit on the steadiest of their comrades. History preserves the chronicle of crime; the deeper the guilt, the more indelible the record. It commemorates the drunken ruffians in red coats who killed the adjutant of the 15th Portuguese regiment when he interfered with their plundering in San Sebastian; \* unhappily it makes no note of thousands of patient, steady soldiers whose reputation suffers for the misdeeds of a few. All are clothed in the same cloth, and all share alike in the common condemnation.

The conflagration of the town kept the besiegers so busy for some days that operations could not be carried forward against the castle on the rocky promontory beyond the town, whither the garrison had retired, until 8th September. On that day fire was opened upon it from 59 guns, to such effect that General Rey called together a council of war, which being unanimous for capitulation, the white flag was hung out at the moment before the Allies advanced to the assault. Sir Thomas Graham knew how to respect a gallant enemy who had maintained a defence for 73 days; he allowed the surviving garrison, 1200 in number, to march out with the honours of war, and the British officers saluted old General Rey at their head. These, of course, became prisoners of war; but 500 wounded men were sent into France. Surrender  
of the  
castle.

The bulk of the French forces had withdrawn after the actions of Sorrauren to the camp of Urogne; but Soult was not the man to leave his brave comrade-in-arms Rey to his fate. Concentrating his troops opposite Vera on 30th August, he crossed the Bidassoa at daylight on the 31st, amid a heavy rain-storm, while Graham was preparing for the assault on Soult  
attempts  
to relieve  
San  
Sebastian.

\* *Despatches*, xi. 166.



ÆT. 41. the town. Simultaneously, the veteran Count Reille crossed the river above Biriatu with two divisions, covered by artillery which Soult had disposed along the heights flanking the fords. Guarding this passage were 18,000 Spaniards under General Freyre, strongly posted on the heights of San Marcial, and supported by a raw brigade of British recruits under Lord Aylmer and by Longa's division of Spaniards. The French advanced with all the *élan* which has made them so famous in warfare; but the Spaniards nobly made amends for their misconduct in former actions, and maintained a fierce hand-to-hand conflict. Nevertheless, the old habit was strong on General Freyre; he believed he was beaten long before there was the slightest reason for it, but he dared not yield the position under Wellington's all-pervading eye.

"I was sitting," said Wellington afterwards, in describing the events of the day, "upon a rock observing the affair with my glass, about four or five miles from the position upon the road, when a Spanish aide-de-camp came galloping to the rear and earnestly entreated I would direct the English division of General Colc, placed in reserve about a mile behind the Spanish position, to advance, for they were so hard pressed they could no longer answer for repelling the French attacks. It was curious that at this instant I observed the French commencing a retreat, and, desiring him to satisfy himself by my glass that such was really the fact, I strongly urged him to withdraw his request on the part of his General, and thus to enable him to claim the whole honour of the success without any aid from us. He looked through the glass, became in a moment as much elated as he had before been downcast, took my advice with thanks, and galloped off to be in time for his share of glory and boasting."\*

Wellington was too generous—too glad, moreover, to be able to praise his Spanish allies—to make any mention of this little incident in his despatch. He gave Freyre and his men unstinted praise.

\* *De Ros MS.*

"The French were beat back, some of them even across the river, in the most gallant style by the Spanish troops, whose conduct was equal to that of any troops I have ever seen engaged, and the attack, having been frequently repeated, was upon every occasion defeated with the same gallantry and determination." \* ANN. 1813.

While this affair was going on upon the left of the Allies, General Clausel, with three divisions of infantry, crossed the river higher up opposite Vera, and drove a Portuguese brigade and Inglis's brigade of the 7th Division off the heights before Lesaca. Inglis, however, retreated to a second range of heights, where he received reinforcements, and Clausel, fearing lest his columns should be compromised by Reille's defeat, withdrew across the Bidassoa in a fearful tempest of wind and rain.

Fighting also went on that day at Echellar, for Soult was earnest in his desire to release the beleaguered garrisons of San Sebastian and Pamplona; but here the French failed to make any impression on the 7th Division under Lord Dalhousie. That evening Soult heard of the capture of the town of San Sebastian, and, although the castle still held out, he had tested too well the quality of the fence of steel that bristled before him not to be aware that henceforward all his care must be for the defence of France itself.

The fighting on 31st August and 1st September, though distinguished by no historic battle name, cost the Allies the lives of 29 officers and 371 other soldiers, besides 2,223 wounded and missing, and this exclusive of those who fell at San Sebastian. By far the heaviest loss was sustained by the Spaniards, who bore the brunt of the combat, and bore it so well that for the first time since the battle of Baylen they vindicated a claim to the respectful consideration of the enemy. Soult admitted a loss of 3,600 of all ranks, including two Generals killed and three others wounded.

It has been suggested that Wellington ought to have

\* *Despatches*, xi. 67.

ÆT. 44. directed his whole energy in these operations to turning the enemy's left and getting between him and Bayonne; and so no doubt he might, and would have done, had he considered it prudent at the time to carry the war into France. But many considerations weighed with him against what seemed to superficial critics at the time the natural corollary of his campaign against the French armies.\* In the first place, there was the manifest difference between maintaining an army among a friendly population and one that was hostile. Then Pamplona still lay armed in his rear, and the presence of Suchet in Catalonia still held that access to Spain open, of which, if the Convention of Prague should result in turning the armistice into peace between Russia, Prussia and France, Napoleon might swiftly avail himself. It was not till 5th September that Wellington received intelligence that the Emperor of Austria, taking courage from the battle of Vitoria, had emerged from his prolonged vacillation, had thrown in his lot with the foes of his son-in-law, and that hostilities were to be resumed on 16th August. Even then Wellington felt no confidence in the management of great armies by a coalition of Sovereigns, against whom Napoleon had marshalled by his magic 400,000 fresh troops. Lastly, if he dreaded taking his own soldiers into a rich and hostile country, still deeper were his misgivings about the behaviour of the Spanish army. This force was becoming under his command a valuable auxiliary in battle; but the Spanish Government, distracted with internal intrigues and penetrated with the idea habitual to them that once an army was in the field it could feed itself, had neglected all means for its subsistence.

“I entreat your Excellency (the Minister of War at Cadiz) to request the Regency to consider in what a situation they place me, who am obliged to urge these brave soldiers to exertion, and to make them meet the enemy in the field, at the very moment that I know they are starving; and that, for want of proper

\* *Despatches*, xi. 124.



LIEUT.-GENERAL THE HON. SIR JOHN HOPE, K.B.,  
AFTERWARDS 4TH EARL OF HOPLTOUN, G.C.B.

[Vol. i. p. 317.]



arrangements, there are no means of taking care of them when they are wounded." \* Jen ANN. 1813.

No movements of importance took place on either side for a month after the fall of San Sebastian. From opposite sides of the frontier, each army kept a vigilant eye on the other, diligently strengthening the positions; but the increasing cold and frequent storms exposed the allied troops to infinite discomfort in the mountain passes: they murmured at being restrained from an incursion on the fertile plains before them, and desertion—the one crime for which the soldier can expect no absolution—became terribly frequent.

These weeks, however, were no holiday-time for Wellington, as his despatches abundantly testify. Besides the constant strain of responsibility for 100,000 troops under his immediate command, and the frequent instructions he had to frame for the guidance of Bentinck's force in the south of Spain,† there were innumerable political questions—the constitution of the Spanish regency, the proposed restoration of the Bourbon monarchy in France, and many other matters, on which his counsel was repeatedly invited by the British Cabinet; nor had he left Portugal so far behind him that he could neglect the course of events in that country. Marshal Beresford had been recalled to Lisbon to attend to matters vital to the existence of the Portuguese army; of the British Generals, Graham,‡ Picton, Leith, Dalhousie were going or had gone on leave to England; while Castaños and O'Donnel, the most experienced of the Spanish Generals, had resigned or been removed from their commands. Had he been left to carry out his own views, Wellington would have made Catalonia secure first, and then entered France, if he did so

\* *Despatches*, xi. 73.

† *Ibid.*, xi. 31, et passim.

‡ When Sir Thomas Graham's failing health obliged him to leave the Peninsula a second time, he was replaced as next senior in command to Wellington by Sir John Hope (afterwards fourth Earl of Hopetoun). On being informed of this appointment, Wellington wrote to Bathurst: "I am quite certain he (Hope) is the ablest man in the army" (*Despatches*, xi. 143).

Ær. 44. at all, from that quarter; but he yielded to the pressure of European opinion. Russia, Prussia, and Austria were eager for an immediate invasion of France.

"I see," wrote Wellington to Bathurst on 19th September, "that, as usual, the newspapers on all sides are raising the public expectation, and that the Allies are very anxious that we should enter France, and that our Government have perceived that we should, *as soon as the enemy should be finally expelled from Spain*; and I think I ought, and will bend a little to the views of the Allies, if it can be done with safety to the army, notwithstanding that I acknowledge I should prefer to turn my attention to Catalonia." \*

The enemy barred the way to Bayonne by a double line of entrenched positions. The left and right of the first line had for *appui* the precipitous mass of La Rhune, which towered above the town of Vera. Wellington designed to keep his right in its position, and, by throwing forward his left, force the passage of the lower Bidassoa and seize the entrenchments on La Rhune. This would enable him to gain the commodious harbour of Fuenterrabia, and dispense with the difficult one of Los Pasages, whence his supplies had been drawn up to this time. On 1st October he made an excursion to the posts about Roncesvalles, and by causing some movements of troops in that quarter, deceived Soult into expecting an attack from the allied right and centre. Then, returning to Irun on the 6th, when the tides suited the fords at the mouth of the Bidassoa, he told off the 1st and 5th Divisions in four columns under General Graham for the left attack through the tidal fords; General Freyre's Spaniards in three columns to cross by the Biriatu fords higher up; the Light Division and Longa's Spaniards to attack the Commissari heights behind Vera; and the Spanish army of Andalusia, under General Giron, to attempt La Rhune.

All these troops were under arms before daylight on the

Passage  
of the  
Bidassoa.

\* *Despatches*, xi. 124.

ANN. 1813  
 morning of 7th October. A thunderstorm, frequent precursor of bloody work in the Peninsula, had been raging all night; but the glare of lightning disclosed to the French no suspicious movements on the part of the Allies, for the tents were left standing. The 5th Division and Lord Aylmer's brigade crossed the sands unperceived; a rocket announced that they had crossed the low-water channel and stood on French soil, upon which the batteries on San Marcial bellowed forth, and the 1st Division followed their comrades. The French were surprised and driven from their works with the loss of eight guns, the 9th Regiment winning high praise under Colonel Cameron. Higher up the river, Freyre succeeded in turning the left of the French entrenchments at Biriatu. Their right flank was then turned by the 5th Division coming up from the coast, the whole of Reille's troops abandoned their positions, and made a disorderly retreat towards Bayonne. This part of the line, then, was forced with far less effort than could have been expected; indeed, had Soult not been perplexed by a false attack made that morning by the 6th Division on d'Erlon's position as far to the east as Ainhoué and Urdax,\* and had he not been misled by Wellington's evolutions a few days before, he would surely have been more prompt to support his first line on the left. The Allies would then have been in a hazardous position, for the returning tide would have cut off their retreat. But in fact the skilful dispositions of their commander had ensured them the advantage of a surprise, and thus enabled them to carry a formidable position with a loss of not more than six hundred.

The Light Division and Longa's Spanish corps fared as well in carrying the pass of Vera, for there also they came upon the enemy unawares. And now it remains only to tell of the doings of Giron's Andalusians, to whose lot it fell to attack the great *pièce de resistance*—La Rhune itself. They carried all before them, till they arrived at the foot of a cliff

Attack on  
La Rhune

\* See Marshal Soult's intercepted report to the Duc de Feltre, *Suppl. Despatches*, xiv. 297.



ET. 44. on which stood a hermitage. Here, protected by entrenchments, Taupin's division defended themselves till nightfall. The following day the hill was shrouded in mist, but as soon as it cleared away, the brave Spaniards renewed the assault at 3 p.m. upon a different point of slightly easier access. This involved ejecting the enemy from the entrenched camp of Sarre, and here again he kept his assailants at bay till dark. When the sun rose on the third day there was not a Frenchman on the hill; the camp and hermitage had been evacuated in the night. Four officers killed and 40 wounded, 75 soldiers killed and 455 wounded, was the total loss of the Allies in two days' fighting, in which they carried a position of immense natural advantage, greatly strengthened with defensive works. The skill and forethought of their commander, the valour of his troops, and the dispirited condition of the enemy, all contributed a share to the success of these operations.

"Most people," Wellington told Lord de Ros, "consider that the carrying on of military operations in a mountainous country like the Pyrenees presents much greater difficulty than the plain. At first no doubt this is the case, but when once you become accustomed to it and acquainted with the general features of the country, I consider it easier to direct the movement of troops in mountains than in the plain country; one general rule which must be observed is to avoid small detachments such as could not maintain themselves in the valley when they might be exposed to attack." \*

Wellington, fixing his headquarters at Vera, disposed his forces in three principal commands: the right, extending from Bastan to Roncesvalles, consisted of 26,000 men and 9 guns under Sir Rowland Hill; the centre, comprising Maya, Echellar, and La Rhune, was committed to Marshal Beresford with 36,000 men and 24 guns; and the left, stretching from the Mandale mountain to the sea, was held by Sir John Hope with 19,000 men and 54 guns. Had he deemed

\* *De Ros MS.*

it expedient to press his dispirited adversary at this time, Wellington might have done so at an advantage; but still the open door of Catalonia, the prolonged resistance of Pamplona, and the undeveloped course of events in Germany combined to make him pause. As October drew to a close, however, the reports from Pamplona showed that the garrison were in the last extremity. Deserters brought word that the whole place had been mined, and that the Governor intended to destroy it. In this Wellington perceived an intention to do injury to the Spanish nation, contrary to the laws of civilised war, and he sent strict orders to Don Carlos de España, who was conducting the blockade, that if this project were carried out, the Governor, all the officers and non-commissioned officers, and every tenth man of the garrison should be put to death.\* It has been supposed that this was an empty menace, and that Wellington dared not carry it into execution. Be it remembered that the order to Don Carlos was explicit; that it was delivered on 20th October, when the Governor was treating for surrender, and that Don Carlos was not one to be squeamish about carrying it out to the letter. Happily, the threat proved enough; Pamplona was delivered unharmed into the hands of Don Carlos on 31st October.

In the meantime, news had come to hand of Napoleon's disasters at Grossbeeren (August 23rd), Katsbach (26th), Hagelburg (27th), Kulm (30th), Dennewitz (September 6th), and of the dissolution of the Confederation of the Rhine. Wellington, recognising in this the first occasion for dealing a fresh blow, issued orders to the allied army, calling upon all ranks to respect the persons and property of the inhabitants of France, to take nothing except on payment in full, and renewing the regulations for the action of Commissaries drawing supplies.† He also made proclamation to the French

\* *Despatches*, xi. 211.

† On this matter Wellington, from the very earliest period of his service, laid extraordinary stress—extraordinary, because Continental and even some British Generals had not adopted as yet the humane code of warfare, even in a friendly

ÆT. 44. people, assuring them that it was his will that no injury should be done to them, provided they abstained from acts of war.

It is fair to contrast Wellington's principles, and the way he enforced their observance, with the conduct of Masséna. Wellington came to France as an enemy—as an invader; Masséna claimed Catalonia as part of French territory.

“When the army under my command entered the French territory there can be no doubt that, according to the modern practice and laws of war introduced by the French themselves, and invariably adhered to during their invasion of Spain and Portugal, I might have required the invaded country to supply all the wants of the army without any pay whatever. I thought proper to issue a proclamation . . . in which I promised protection to the inhabitants, and pointed out the mode in which they should obtain it, provided they *should remain in their houses, and not take any part in the operations of war.*” \*

In acting thus, Wellington was following a good, though rather a distant, British precedent. In his severity towards soldiers guilty of plundering, he was but re-enacting the humane and politic conduct of Henry V. when he invaded France—echoing that King's indignation when Bardolph was caught plundering a French church.

“We would have all such offenders so cut off; and we give express charge that, in our marches through the country, there be nothing compelled from the villages, nothing taken but paid

country, still less in that of an enemy. Commenting in a letter to Lady Salisbury on the military operations in Canada in 1838, Wellington wrote: “I hear that the troops have behaved most shamefully—have plundered everybody, even their own officers and Generals! It is *their* own fault. You have read Gurwood (the Wellington despatches): so have they. What do you think of their ordering the men to take what they should think proper in the houses of the *habitans*, giving a receipt for the same? Observe—a soldier is to take (what he wants) and give a receipt! There is almost a volume of Gurwood on taking and giving receipts. Nobody is to take for himself or give a receipt, excepting the Commissary-General or those employed by him” (*Salisbury MSS.*).

\* *Civil Despatches*, i. 58.

for ; none of the French upbraided, or abused in disdainful language. For when lenity and cruelty play for a kingdom, the gentler gamester is the soonest winner." \* ANN. 1813.

Soult now occupied a front of about twelve miles, extending from Ainhoué across the Nivelle to the sea, covering Saint-Jean-de-Luz, and strengthened by a double line of entrenchments and numerous redoubts. His position was undoubtedly stronger, because more concentrated, than when he held the lower Bidassoa ; but his inaction displeased the Emperor, who, on 14th October, made the Duc de Feltre reproach him on that account. Soult fully shared the Emperor's opinion that to act on the offensive suited his troops better than on the defensive ; he had repeatedly urged Suchet to move out of Catalonia and unite forces with him in Aragon ; but that Marshal, with 50,000 or 60,000 men, continued to potter on against Bentinck's, and afterwards Clinton's, ineffective operations, until an early snowfall rendered such a combination impossible by blocking the passes of the eastern Pyrenees. Soult, accordingly, remained stiffly on the defensive, anxious because of want of money and forage—above all, because of the dispiriting effect of repeated defeats on his troops.

"A general action," he wrote on 19th October to the Duc de Feltre, "will certainly take place. . . . On my part I am doing all in my power to be able to receive the enemy. . . . Every arm of the service is severely crippled for want of funds, and we are threatened with excessive desertion. I cannot conceal from you that the situation is very embarrassing." †

The French army corresponded to that of the Allies in being thrown into three principal commands. Reille, facing Hope, commanded on the right, along the heights of Urrogne to the sea ; Clausel held the centre, against Beresford, between

\* *Henry V.*, act iii. sc. 6. Shakespeare here repeats some of the exact phrases in King Henry's order as rendered by Froissart.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, xiv. 298.

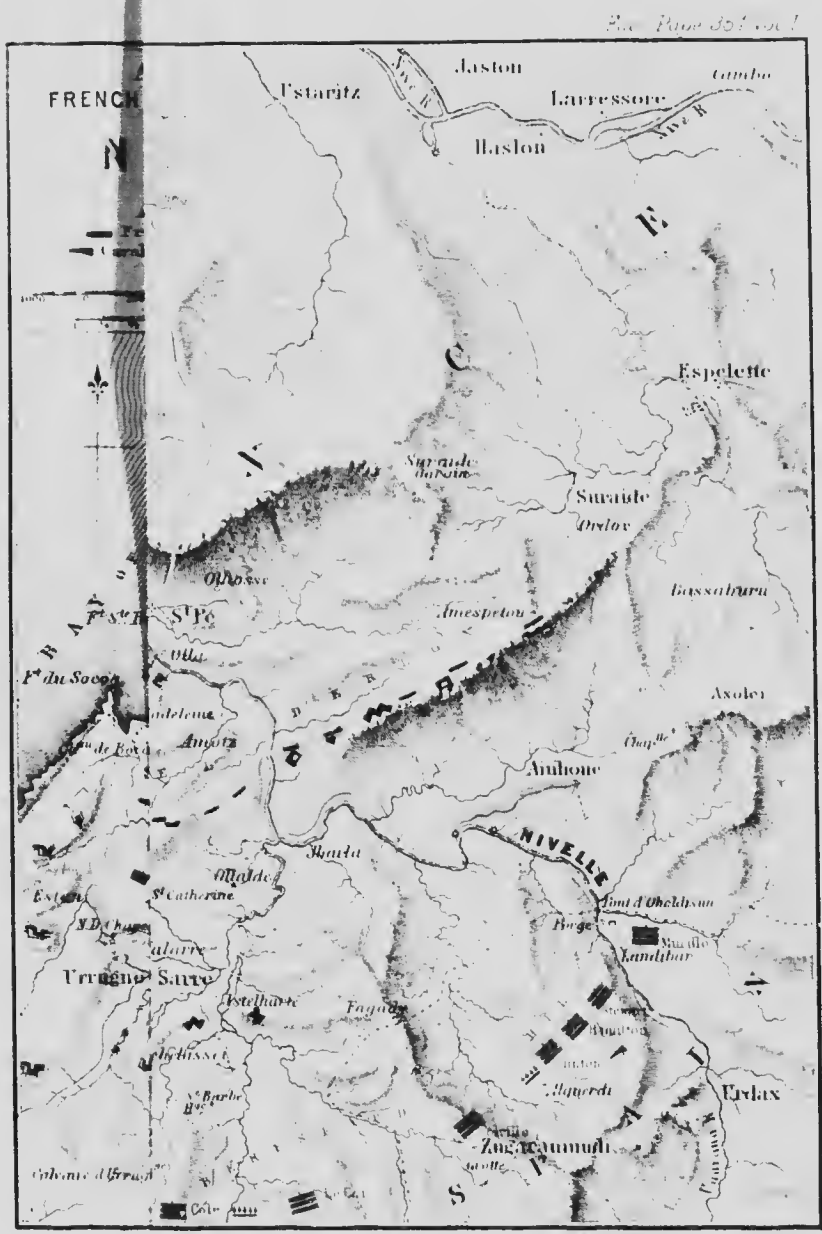
Æt. 44. — Ascain and Amotz ; while d'Erlon's position around Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port continued unchanged in front of Hill. Villatte's division was in reserve at Saint-Jean-de-Luz.

The contemplated advance of the Allies was delayed till the first week in November, first by deep snow, then by the storms and rain which swept it away, and, lastly, by the total failure of supplies to the Spanish troops, which caused Freyre to announce that he must return to his own country. The last difficulty was got round by Wellington ordering 40,000 rations of flour from his own magazines into the Spanish lines, and, in the small hours between 9th and 10th November, the whole of the forces stood to arms, moved by moonlight out of the passes down the northern slopes of the Pyrenees, and lay down on the line of the foremost out-pickets to wait for daylight. Seventy-four thousand strong was the allied line of battle that morning, with 95 cannon, to attack strongly fortified positions defended by 60,000 Frenchmen.

Battle  
of the  
Nivelle.

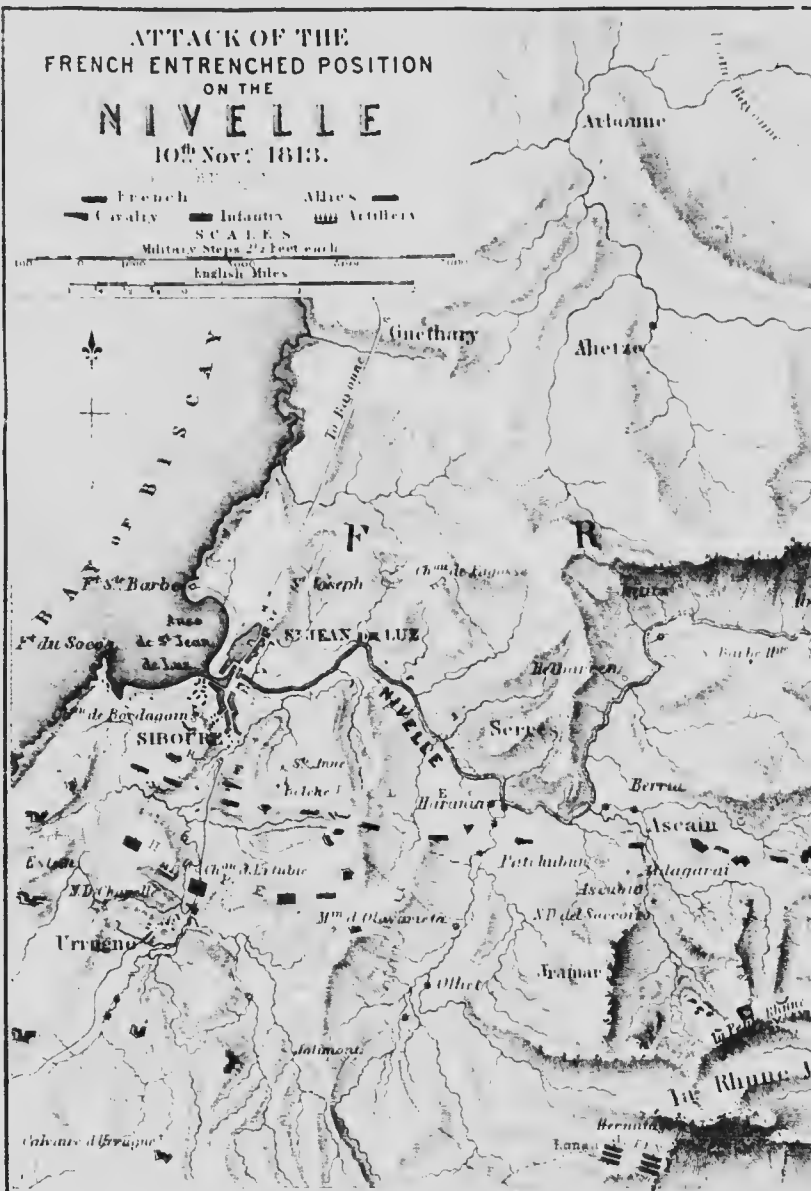
The right of Soult's line was the strongest, where Reille held command ; Wellington, therefore, designed to turn it by wheeling forward the right and centre of his army, and forcing the French left and centre from their defences. At daybreak on a serene morning the echoes reverberated to the reports of three guns fired from the summit of Atchubia. This was the preconcerted signal : the allied troops sprang to their feet ; the French hurried to their posts of defence, and the sun rose upon a conflict raging along a battle front of eight miles. An impression was first made on Clausel's position in the centre, where the brigades of the Light Division and Longa's Spaniards, echeloned by the left, flung themselves in succession against the stone forts and entrenchments with which the French had scarred the lesser Rhune. In wonderfully short space of time they cleared the hill, though not without loss ; among many others General Kempt of the Rifle Brigade fell wounded in the assault on the Star fort. To the right of the Light Division stood two redoubts,

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ATTACK OF THE  
FRENCH ENTRENCHED POSITION  
ON THE  
**NIVELLE**  
10<sup>th</sup> Nov: 1813.

French — Allies —  
Cavalry — Infantry — Artillery —  
SCALE S  
Military Steps 2 1/2 Feet each  
English Miles









protecting the approaches to the village of Sarre. Sir Lowry Cole having cannonaded these to such purpose that the troops holding them evacuated in double time, the 3rd Division turned the left of the village, Giron's Andalusians the right, while the 4th Division, which had already won for itself a name nothing second in lustre to that of the Light Division, attacked it in front and carried it. Next, the 3rd, 4th, 7th and Light Divisions, with the Andalusians, combined in a grand attack on the enemy's position behind the village; the 3rd and 7th Divisions capturing the redoubts on the left of the French centre, the Light Division those on the right; while the 4th Division and the Andalusians, attacking in front, drove the enemy out of the whole of their defences, taking prisoners the entire 1st battalion of the 88th French regiment in one of the redoubts.

While this combat was in progress, Wellington was with Sir Rowland Hill far on the right, superintending the movements of the 6th Division under Sir H. Clinton, which, supported by Hamilton's Portuguese Division, crossed the Nivelle, and stormed the enemy's entrenchments and a redoubt behind Ainhoúé. Further again to the right Sir William Stewart carried all before him, driving the French out of their entrenchments, and establishing himself with the 2nd Division upon the heights behind Ainhoúé.

On the far left of the allied line, Sir John Hope, as directing the pivot on which the grand change of front moved, had but a false attack assigned to him; nevertheless, he, too, prevailed, driving in the French outposts on the lower Nivelle, capturing a redoubt above Urrogne, and establishing himself in a commanding position on the heights. All this was effected by eight o'clock in the morning, and, during the pause which ensued after the first line of defence had been carried, from his post on the little Rhune Wellington could survey the working of the vast engine he had set in motion—a magnificent panorama of war, from Collier's squadron in the bay, standing to and off under all plain sail,

**Æt. 44.** exchanging shots with the fort of Socoa, to the heights behind Ainhoué, where the morning rays sparkled on the victorious bayonets of Hill.

There remained still intact the second line of Soult's defences, to which his beaten troops now retired, some in good order, others broken and pell-mell. Wellington sent the 3rd and 7th Divisions forward along the left bank of the Nivelles, the 6th Division along the right bank, against the fortified heights of Saint Pé. They arrived in time to intercept Clausel's divisions in an attempt to gain this stronghold; they attacked Maransin's division on the heights, and, when darkness fell on the scene at five o'clock, they remained masters of this position also, established well in rear of Soult's right. It is impossible in a few feeble paragraphs to do justice to the manner in which the three Generals—Hope, Beresford, and Hill—carried out the grand scheme of their puissant chief on this memorable field. Not an error seems to have been made in any detail; the several columns on an extended front, with varying distances to traverse, performed their allotted work at the appointed times, and a position naturally of peculiar strength, which the enemy had spent many industrious weeks in fortifying, was carried with a total loss to the Allies of 343 killed and 2,351 wounded. Fifteen hundred prisoners and fifty guns were taken from the enemy, who retired in the night along his whole line.

What spell had been cast on these once invincible soldiers that they contested a grand position so feebly? Soult was out-generalled—true—but where were those redoubtable warriors of Vimeiro, of Busaco, of Fuentes d'Oñoro? Many of them were on the heights of the Nivelles that day, no doubt; but the secret of their altered carriage in battle was not revealed till the battle was over. In the redoubt where the 88th French regiment was captured, a copy of the Imperial Gazette was found, containing the momentous news of the Emperor's total defeat at Leipsig. Lord Wellington, naturally anxious to hear the latest intelligence, directed one

of his staff to put some questions to the chief officers of the 88th; but they would communicate nothing, sullenly declaring that they had done their own duty and know nothing about what was going on elsewhere.

"On hearing this," Wellington told Lord de Ros, "I directed they should be left alone; but I sent them an invitation to dine with me, which they accepted readily. I warned my staff to ask them no questions, but to see that they were well supplied with Madeira. Gradually they became in excellent humour and far more communicative. Watching my opportunity, I turned in an offhand manner to the commanding officer and said—

"'Où était le quartier-général de l'Empereur d'après les dernières nouvelles?'"

"'Monseigneur,' he replied, 'il n'y a plus de quartier-général.'"

"'Comment plus de quartier-général?'"

"'Monseigneur, il n'y a ni quartier-général, ni armée française: l'affaire est finie!'"

"Then he went on to tell me of the battle of Hanau, of the Emperor being driven over the Rhine, and the army totally dissolved. The effect of this announcement on twenty or thirty of the principal officers of the English army round that table, may be imagined but not described." \*

\* *De Ros MS.* This incident is referred to also in Lord Wellington's letter to Sir John Hope on the day after the battle (*Despatches*, xi. 275).

## CHAPTER XIV.

### SOUTH OF FRANCE.

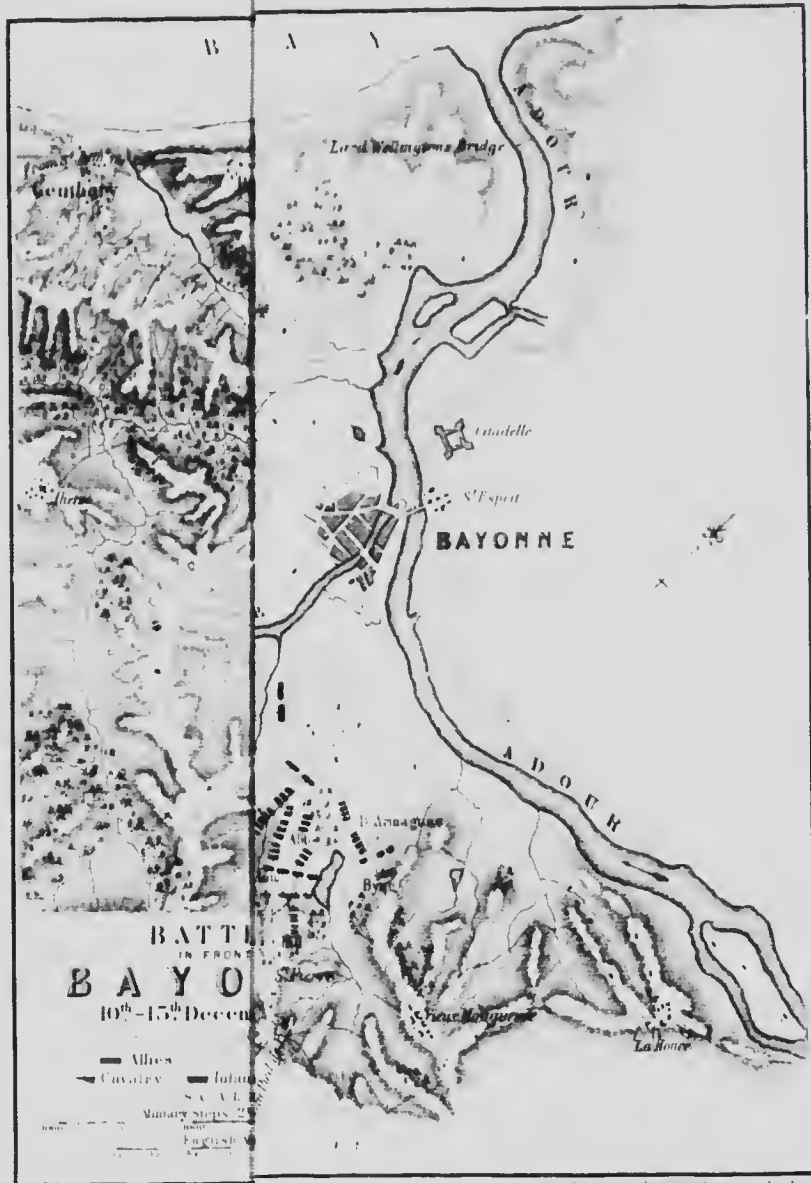
1813-1814.

Dec. 10, 1813. Passage of the Nive.	March 14 . . . And again retires.
„ 13 . . . . Battle of Saint Pierre. The Allies go into winter quarters.	„ 19 . . . Affair of Vic Bigorre. „ 20 . . . Affair of Tarbes.
Feb. 14, 1814. Resumption of the in- vasion.	April 6 and 11. Abdication of Napo- leon.
„ 23 and 24. Passage of the Adour.	„ 10 . . . . Battle of Toulouse.
„ 27 . . . . Battle of Orthes. Wellington wounded.	„ 12 . . . . Soult evacuates Tou- louse.
March 12 . . . The Allies enter Bor- deaux.	„ 14 . . . . Sortie from Bayonne. Close of the Peninsu- lar Campaign.
„ 13 . . . Soult resumes the of- fensive.	

“**M**ONSEIGNEUR, l'affaire est finie !”

The words of the French colonel at Wellington's dinner-table on 10th November, though not literally applicable to the task of the Allies in the south of France, were not far from fulfilment even there; and what remains to be told must be done in few words.

After the battle of the Nivelle, the Allies went into cantonments, while Soult established himself in an entrenched camp round Bayonne. The Spanish troops, maintained barely above starving-point by their wretched commissariat, and not unnaturally inclined to retaliate on the French people for the robbery and violence they had suffered during five years of French occupation, broke all restraint, and plundered so badly, that Wellington sent all of them, except Morillo's division,



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BATTLES  
IN FRONT OF  
**BAYONNE**  
10<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> December 1815.

— Allies — French —  
▲ Cavalry — Infantry — Artillery

SCALE

Military Staffs, 2 1/2" Feet each

English Miles



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JOHNSTON & COMPANY, LTD., LONDON





across the frontier to be stationed in their own country.\* ANN. 1813.  
 Where does military history afford another instance of a General denuding himself, in the presence and within the territory of his enemy, of a large portion of his troops (and the Spaniards lately had developed into a valuable fighting force), in order to prevent the resident population suffering from their presence? It is an instance of Wellington's scrupulous sense of justice and humanity; nevertheless, disinterested though his motives were, his action brought its own reward. The French peasantry crowded into the allied lines, bringing their cattle and goods with them for protection from their own countrymen; they supplied provisions and information, and turned Legitimist almost to a man. As for the conduct of British and Portuguese soldiers, Wellington was at last able to report to the Secretary of State that "it has been exactly what I wished." †

A glance at the map will show that the Allies occupied a much contracted position between the sea on their left, the Nivelle in their rear, and the Nive, which joins the Adour at Bayonne, in their front. For this reason, and also in order to cut Soult's communication with Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, Wellington decided to clear the tract between the Nive and Adour, and sent the pontoon train to Arauntz for that purpose on the evening of 8th December. At daybreak on the 9th, Sir John Hope advanced in three columns from Saint-Jean-de-Luz, the French retiring before him covered by skirmishers, and entering the entrenchments round Bayonne.

The French had broken both bridges at Ustaritz, but Beresford held the island between them, and the 6th Division, Passage of the Nive. passing over by means of pontoons, drove d'Armaignac's brigade before them into the marshes. Simultaneously Hill forded the river in three columns above and below Cambo, though the current was so deep and strong that several of the cavalry were drowned. Opposed to him was General Foy, who beat a rapid retreat with his left wing, leaving his

\* *Despatches*, xi. 304.

† *Ibid.*, xi. 303.

Ær. 44. right under General Berlier unsupported at Halzou. On the approach of the 6th Division Berlier, too, retired, and Soult, coming up from Bayonne shortly after midday, formed line of battle across the high-road, having his right behind Villefranque. This village was taken by Portuguese and British light infantry battalions, but they were not strong enough to do more. The roads had been so much destroyed by the rains, that it was nearly dark before Hill's corps came up, and each side remained at night in possession of its own ground. Before morning on 10th December the French withdrew into the entrenchments of Bayonne, and Hill occupied the position designed for him, with his right towards the Adour and his left at Villefranque, communicating with Beresford on the left bank of the Nive by a bridge of pontoons. The easy passage of the Nive tempted Wellington, or at least his Generals, to relax their vigilance, and Soult's sudden counter-stroke found the Allies somewhat short of prepared. Seeing his enemy divided by the Nive, the French Marshal placed the garrison of Bayonne, 8,000 strong, in the entrenchments of Mousserolles, between the rivers in front of Hill, and moving out with a force of 60,000, fell with extraordinary violence upon Sir John Hope's position at Barroilhet and Arcangues. Wellington was not in this part of the position, but had crossed the Nive, expecting that Hill would have hot work in the position of Villefranque. Hope's brigades were widely scattered, and but for the splendid behaviour of Campbell's Portuguese brigade on the left, which held the plateau of Barroilhet against General Reille's division till time was given to Robinson's brigade of the 5th Division to come to their support, the surprise would have been successful. While this critical state of affairs existed on the left, Clausel was engaged with the 5th and Light Divisions about two miles to the right; and here, also, owing to the scattered condition of the troops, the chances were all in favour of the heavy columns. But the Light Division held the village and church of Arcangues stubbornly, till, in the

afternoon, the 3rd, 4th, and 7th Divisions came in view on their right, labouring knee and ankle deep through the mire, while in another direction the Guards appeared coming up from Saint-Jean-de-Luz. This made Soult pause, and while he was making fresh dispositions, the winter's day drew to a close.

The French Marshal had come nearer success than on any former enterprise against the Allies, but chagrin from a new source lay in wait for him. Three German battalions in the French service, being the regiments of Nassau and Frankfort, marched into the British lines, having received orders from their prince to change sides, as he had done himself.\* Retaining the positions whence they had driven the pickets of the Allies on the 10th, the French renewed their attack on Sir John Hope on the 11th and 12th, but were repulsed and withdrew into the camp of Bayonne.

Soult, however, was an adroit and desperate fighter at bay. On the night of the 12th he passed 35,000 men swiftly through Bayonne, and on the morning of the 13th attacked Sir Rowland Hill between the rivers. Wellington, divining his intention, had ordered the 4th and 6th Divisions and two brigades of the 3rd to reinforce Hill; but Hill with 14,000 men had repulsed the attack, won the pitched battle of Saint Pierre, and driven the enemy back into their entrenchments before these troops could take part in the combat.

The casualties among the Allies in the severe fighting between 9th and 13th December were very heavy—upwards of 5,000—including 32 officers and 618 soldiers killed and five Generals wounded.

Napoleon was now in urgent need of all the troops he could collect. Suchet's army in Catalonia would be useful to him; therefore, making a grace of necessity, he offered to restore Ferdinand VII., whom he had held captive for five years, to the throne of Spain, and to execute a treaty, under

\* Other German regiments, with Suchet in Catalonia, would have done the same, had not the Marshal, by command of the Emperor, anticipated them by making them lay down their arms.

ANN. 1813.

Battle of  
Saint  
Pierre.

Napoleon's  
treaty  
with  
Ferdinand  
VII.

Æt 44. which both French and British troops should evacuate the Peninsula. To the credit of the Spanish Cortes, they refused the snare. While expressing their joy at the restoration of their royal house, they adhered to a wise decree they had passed, prohibiting recognition of any public act of their King so long as he was a prisoner.

The Allies  
go into  
winter  
quarters.

After Soult's defeat at Saint Pierre, the hostile armies lay in their cantonments, the Allies occupying a position from the coast at Bidart on the left to Arcangues, whence their right was thrown back to Urcuray, covering the road to Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, Wellington's headquarters being at Saint-Jean-de-Luz.\* He received there a distinguished volunteer in the person of His Royal Highness the Duc d'Angoulême, and was obliged to tell him very plainly that, in the absence of instructions from his own Government, he could not recognise the head of his house as Louis XVIII., as the Royalist party in France were burning to proclaim him.†

The right of the French army under Reille remained in the camp of Bayonne; Drouet commanded the centre, on the right bank of the Adour, and Clausel the left, on the right bank of the Bidouse, a tributary of the Adour from the south. The season was unusually inclement and stormy; occasional affairs of outposts and skirmishes of greater importance took place; but, as usual in periods of general inaction, the soldiers of both armies fraternised, and, according to their simple code of chivalry, used to warn each other's sentries off their posts when an advance was about to be made on either side. Wellington's stern repression of plunder, in spite of occasional

\* A few years ago a relative of my own, being in Saint-Jean-de-Luz, had the curiosity to visit the house occupied by Wellington in 1814. It was still in possession of the same family, and the lady of the house, on hearing that her visitor was interested in the great British general, exclaimed with emotion, "Mais oui, mademoiselle—c'était vraiment un homme très extraordinaire; *il lui fallait un bain tous les matins!*" and, in proof of such a startling statement, pointed out the balcony whence the orderly used to let down a bucket to draw water for the *bain*. She also showed a stain on the drawing-room floor, caused by Lord Wellington having upset a lamp when writing at midnight.

† *Despatches*, xi. 608.

excesses on the part of Morillo's Spaniards, had so conciliated ANN. 1814 the good-will of the Basque peasantry as to intensify the manifold difficulties of Soult's position. Nevertheless, and although his army was weakened by the Emperor withdrawing two of his divisions in February, this good soldier never flinched in his task of stemming the tide of invasion. He had with his eagles but 40,000 men, whereas Wellington could now place 100,000 British, Portuguese, and Spaniards in line of battle.

Active operations were resumed on St. Valentine's Day, Resump-  
tion of the  
campaign. 1814, when Sir Rowland Hill began several consecutive days' fighting, driving General Harispe from Hellette to Saint Palais and Garris; thence through the strong country and across the Gave d'Oleron \* at Sauveterre. Mina's Spaniards remained behind to blockade Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port. On Hill's left, Beresford engaged the French divisions at Hastings on the 23rd February, and Soult began a concentration on the right bank of the Pau at Orthes. This was exactly according to Wellington's design; he wished to divert the enemy's attention from Sir John Hope, whom he had instructed to force the passage of the Adour between Bayonne and the sea. Passage of  
the Adour. Continuous stormy weather having delayed the arrival off the bar of Admiral Penrose's squadron, Hope began operations on the 23rd without waiting for him, by driving in the French outposts, and beginning a bridge of rafts and pontoons. Soult, with his whole attention occupied in manœuvring his centre and left, was wholly unprepared for any movement below the town, where the natural difficulties of a stormy estuary, strong tides, deep sand, and marshy shores seemed effective obstacles to the passage of his army. He ought to have remembered certain events on the Douro at Oporto. On the evening of the 23rd a detachment of Guards and Rifles effected a lodgment on the north bank, and were immediately attacked by a couple of French battalions. The use of the novel Congreve rockets employed here for the first

\* Gave; the Basque term for a rapid river.

Æt. 44. time with effect,\* was too much for the nerves of these gentlemen, who soon desisted, and withdrew into the town. On the 24th a third of the infantry had passed safely over the crazy bridge, under cover of artillery. Next day the squadron arrived off the river mouth, and the blue-jackets set to work with a will. Protected by gunboats, they towed bridge-barges across the dangerous bar, and by nightfall on 26th February a strong bridge was ready for the passage of artillery and baggage.

The important position of Bayonne being thus turned, and a route provided for the passage of supplies easier than the rough one across the Gaves, Wellington prepared for further advance into France by bringing Freyre's Spaniards over the frontier again. He had returned on the 21st to the Gaves, to give his attention to Soult's position at Orthes, where the French were 40,000 strong, with 40 guns. Their left, under Harispe, rested on the town of Orthes; the right, commanded by Reille, rested on a bold hill behind the village of Saint Boës; while d'Erlon's divisions formed the centre, retired from the flanks by the course of a line of flat-topped hills, partly heath, partly woodland, on which they lay. The centre and right were protected by extensive swamps, and the flanks reposed on ground of extraordinary strength.

Battle of  
Orthes.

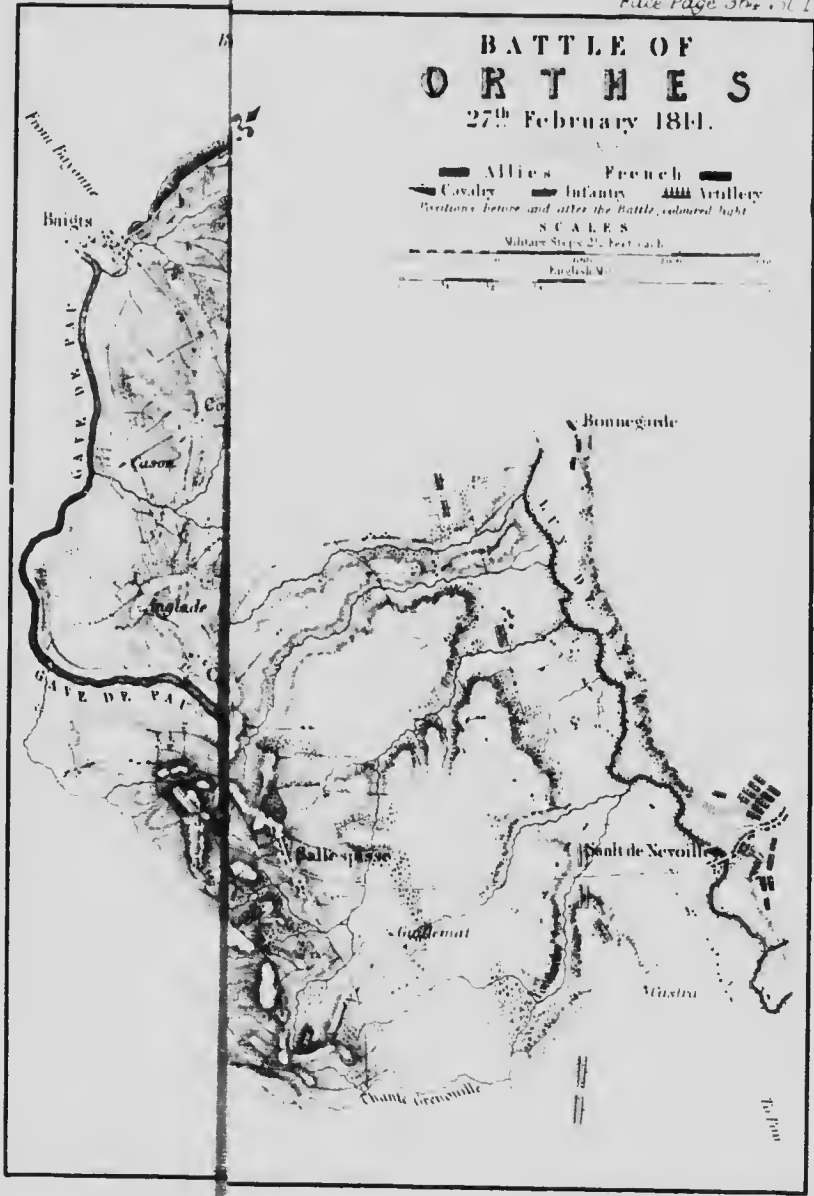
Beresford's corps now took the place of Hope's as the left wing of the army, and, crossing the Gave de Pau without opposition on the morning of the 26th below Peyrehorade, marched up the right bank upon Orthes. The 3rd Division under Picton, and Cotton's cavalry, crossed higher up at Bereux, while Hill advanced straight on the bridge of Orthes. This, however, was strongly defended, and mined also; therefore Hill, keeping the 2nd Division on the left bank, sent the 6th and Light Divisions over by a pontoon bridge at daylight

\* Wellington, when this invention was first brought under his notice, failed to see any advantage in it. "I don't want to set fire to any town, and I don't know any other use of the rockets;" but he soon changed his opinion about them, and the rocket brigade proved of great effect upon troops inured to round shot and shell.

# BATTLE OF ORTHES

27<sup>th</sup> February 1814.

— Allies — French —  
 Cavalry — Infantry — Artillery  
 Positions before and after the battle, coloured light  
 SCALES  
 Military Steps 2 1/2 feet each.  
 English Miles



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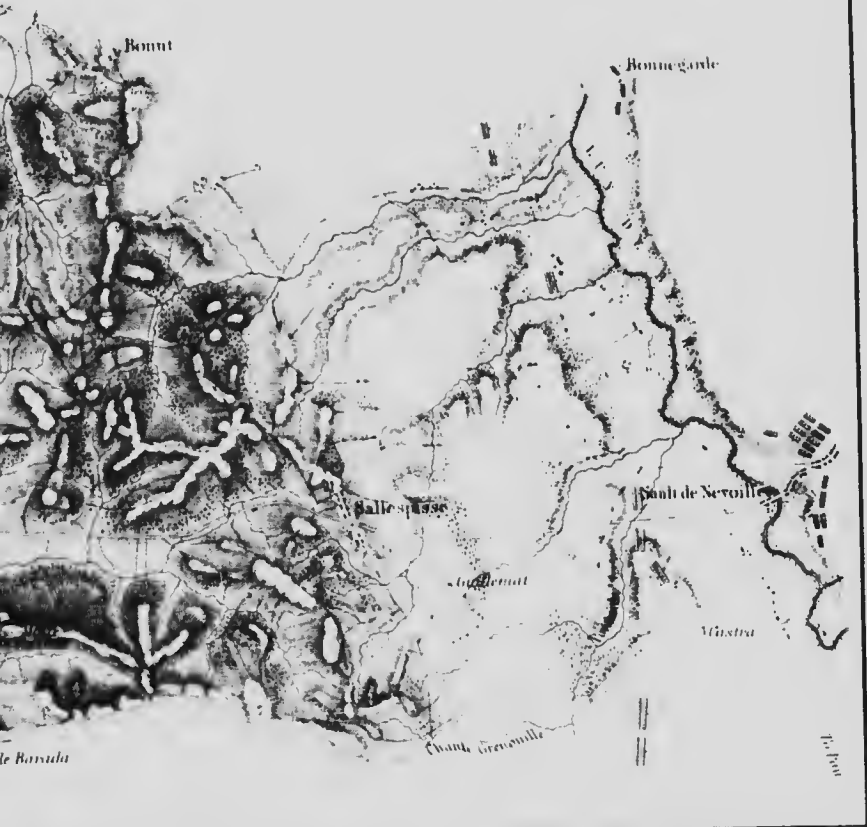




# BATTLE OF ORTHES

27<sup>th</sup> February 1814.

— Allies — French —  
Cavalry — Infantry — Artillery  
*Positions before and after the battle indicated by the*  
**SCALE**  
Military Scale 25 Feet each  
English Mile



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on the 27th to form the right of the attack. For more than ANN. 1814.  
an hour on that morning Wellington scanned his enemy's position from an abrupt hill, which, crowned by an ancient Roman camp, rose opposite, and nearly equal in height to, the centre of Soult's position. At nine o'clock he directed Beresford to advance with the 4th Division under Sir Lowry Cole, the 7th under General Walker, and Vivian's brigade of cavalry, in order to turn the enemy's right at Saint Boës; while the 3rd and 6th Divisions under Sir H. Clinton, with Lord Edward Somerset's cavalry brigade, moved along the high-road against the centre and left. These two columns being a mile and a half apart, Wellington extended the Light Division to connect them behind the hill on which he sat. Sir Rowland Hill had instructions to move the 2nd Division up the left bank of the river and cross a couple of miles behind the enemy's position.

The 4th Division carried the village of St. Boës after some heavy fighting; but the general plan of attack had thereafter to be modified, because of the failure of the assault on the hill behind Saint Boës. The only approach to this was along a ridge, swept with artillery and too narrow for the columns to deploy. Repeatedly the 4th Division were repulsed with terrible carnage; some of the regiments lost all semblance of order; the line was shattered at its most vital point. A detachment from Picton's division met with a reverse at the same time, and already Soult had set his reserves in motion to clinch the victory which seemed to be his, when a brigade of the Light Division, brought up from the reserve, altered the whole aspect of the field. Flinging this upon the inner face of the hill behind Saint Boës, the key of Soult's strength, Wellington inclined the 3rd Division to their left to support it. The approach on this side was through a marsh, waist-deep; but it wanted more than that to damp the fiery activity of the 52nd. At the head of the brigade, this noble regiment forced its way through the mire, up the acclivity beyond to its very crest, where they fixed their hold and kept it, till the 3rd Division came up to confirm the advantage. The

Æt. 44. 4th Division returned to the conflict along the fatal ridge to the left; the 6th Division attacked the heights to the right of Saint Boës, and soon the conquering cheer rang out in the intervals of a cannonade which had been opened on the yielding masses from a commanding eminence. At first the retrograde movement was slow and orderly; taking up one position after another, the French divisions dealt death among their assailants; but there was a lion in the path of their retreat. Hill, who had forced the passage of the Gave above Orthes, had drawn up the 2nd Division, 13,000 strong, across the road to Pau, and so menacing was his aspect that the dark columns of the French began to melt at the edges, then whole detachments broke off, until the stately array was lost in scurrying, scattered blotches and streaks. On their rear rode Edward Somerset's hussars, sabring and slaying, till the pursuit stopped at dusk at the Luy de Béarn, a stream which Soult crossed and destroyed the bridge behind him, continuing his retreat to Saint Sever on the Adour.

Lord Wel-  
linton  
wounded.

Lord Wellington was disabled from conducting the pursuit. During the attack on Saint Boës he had dismounted and was standing with Alava when a Portuguese soldier limped to the rear, explaining as he passed that he was *ofendido* (wounded). Wellington was laughing at the expression when a grape or musket shot struck the hilt of his sword, driving it violently against his hip. He fell to the ground, but rose to his feet immediately, smiling and saying, "By God! I am *ofendido* this time." This was the only wound he ever received in all his many engagements; he was able to remount and ride slowly, but not to leap enclosures as it was his custom to do.\* Eighteen officers and 259 soldiers were killed; 134 officers and 1,858 soldiers were wounded and missing in the allied army. Out of Soult's force of 40,000, not less than 7,000 were killed, wounded, and taken; notwithstanding which,

\* He was struck on two other occasions, in the attack on the tope of Sultanpettah and at Salamanca; but never wounded except at Orthes. When asked what was the difference between being struck and wounded, he replied, "Struck is from a spent ball, which may often be able to knock a man over, and yet do him no other injury" (*Stanhope*, 184).

and the total loss of his position, the high-spirited Marshal ANN. 1814. issued a proclamation claiming the battle as a moral victory for the Imperial arms. Next morning his injured limb was so stiff and painful that Wellington feared lest he should be unable to follow up his victory in person. Forcing himself, however, to his feet, he hobbled across the street to the quarters of Lord March, who had been dangerously, it was feared fatally, wounded, and, having assured that young officer that the enemy were in full retreat, he managed to scramble into the saddle and put his forces in motion. Still hoping for support from Suchet, Soult directed his retreat up the Adour to Tarbes, thus leaving open the road to Bordeaux, where a strong royalist reaction invited the attention of the Allies. Wellington, having called up Spanish reinforcements from the frontier, felt strong enough to take advantage of this opening. Having followed Soult as far as Saint Sever, he detached the 4th and 7th Divisions under The Allies enter Bordeaux. Marsh Beresford to enter Bordeaux, where the British were received with acclamation, the mayor publicly stripping off his tricolor scarf and donning the white cockade of the Bourbons.

Restoration, however, was no avowed part of the programme of the allied Sovereigns. On crossing the Rhine on 1st January they had proclaimed their intention to secure peace to Europe, guaranteeing to France the integrity of her ancient dominions, but offering no explicit menace to the rule of Napoleon within them. Wellington, therefore, only conformed to the instructions of Lord Liverpool's Cabinet in refusing to recognise Louis as King of France, although the whole country round him in the south resounded with the ancient cry of *Vive le roi!* Nevertheless, perhaps overrating local symptoms of loyalty to the Bourbons as significant of the sentiment of the whole nation—a nation which, more than any other, is voiced by its capital—he urged upon Lord Liverpool the expediency of declaring for the old dynasty.

“Any declaration from us would, I am convinced, raise such a flame in the country as would soon spread from one end of it to the other, and would infallibly overturn Buonaparte. I cannot

Æt. 44. discover the policy of not hitting one's enemy as hard as one can, and in the most vulnerable place. I am certain that he would not so act by us, if he had the opportunity. He would certainly overturn the British authority in Ireland if it was in his power." \*

Such being Lord Wellington's private views, it illustrates his conception of duty to note that, in carrying out the policy of the ministers he served, he was not content to fulfil the letter of his instructions, but acted consistently with their spirit also. Contrary to Wellington's injunctions, Louis "the Desired" had been proclaimed King at Bordeaux amid great rejoicings; the Legitimists fretted at the cold neutrality of the British commander; d'Angoulême waxed importunate for funds and the assistance of armed force. Wellington replied inflexibly—

"I beg your Royal Highness to tell . . . all such persons that no power on earth shall induce me to depart from what I conceive to be my duty towards the Sovereigns whom I am serving; and that I will not risk even a company of infantry to save properties and families placed in a state of danger contrary to my advice and opinion. . . . It will be very disagreeable to me to take any step which shall mark more strongly a want of understanding between your Royal Highness and me; but I cannot allow the honour and character of the allied Sovereigns, or my own, to be doubted even for a moment. . . . It is not in my power, under existing circumstances, to make your Royal Highness the advance of money you require." †

Plain speaking, this, and a good deal more in the same letter. It is not given to every man to detach so cleanly his line of duty from that to which private opinion and sympathy inclines him.

Soult  
resumes  
the offen-  
sive and  
again  
retires.

No sooner did Soult perceive that the Allies had been weakened by the detachment of Beresford than, with admirable constancy, he turned to threaten battle once more. He advanced on 13th March from Lembèye to Conchez,

\* *Despatches*, xi. 547.

† *Ibid.*, xi. 584.

and prepared to attack Hill in his position between Aire and Garlin; but on Wellington moving two divisions to strengthen his right wing, the French retired again. Marshal Beresford, with the 4th Division and Vivian's cavalry, were recalled from Bordeaux, and a general advance of the Allies took place on the 18th. On the 19th there was a sharp encounter between the 3rd Division and the French rear-guard at Vic Bigorre, which cost the British the life of one of their most able engineer officers, Colonel Sturgeon.

Again, on the 20th, a partial engagement took place at Tarbes, where Sir Rowland Hill attacked the town and bridge, while Clinton flanked the enemy's right, and the Light Division, storming the heights of Orleix, forced back his centre. Night interrupted the conflict and prevented it becoming general: on the morrow Soult's army was far on the road to Saint Gaudens, thirty miles from Tarbes, where he halted on the night of the 21st. Hardly had he begun his march on the 22nd before Fane's cavalry came up, and two squadrons of the 13th Light Dragoons scattered four of French cavalry, taking a hundred prisoners. On the 24th Soult entered Toulouse, having retarded the pursuit by blowing up every bridge behind him. The Allies reached the left bank of the Garonne, opposite Toulouse, on 27th March, and proceeded to reconnoitre its defences. These were formidable enough. The town stood within its ancient walls at the junction of the Languedoc canal with the Garonne; the canal covered the eastern and northern faces; the deep and rapid river, swollen by excessive rains, the western one. On the south was the fortified suburb of Saint Michel, and on the western bank of the Garonne, between the Allies and the stone bridge, stood the Faubourg Saint Cyprien, also fortified and strengthened by recent entrenchments, with an effective *tête de pont*. Soult, however, mistrusted the main defences of the place, which were antiquated even according to the engineering science of that day. He preferred a range of heights to the east of the town, between the canal and the

ANN. 1814.

Affair of  
Tarbes.



Æt. 44. river Ers ; and here, leaving a strong garrison in Saint Cyprien, he took up his position, increasing its natural strength by five redoubts connected by lines of entrenchment.

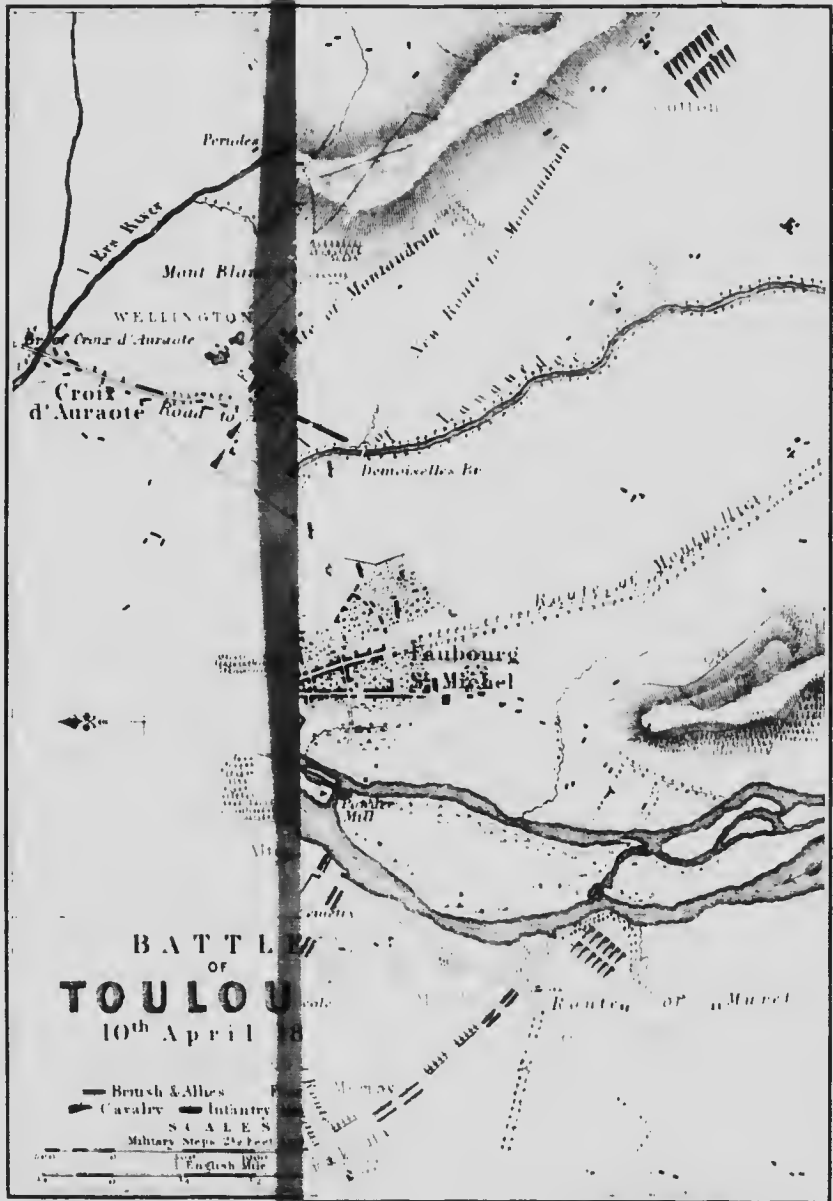
On 28th March Wellington attempted, but in vain, to throw his pontoons across the Garonne at Portel, not far above the town ; the strength of the flood-water was too great. Desirous to gain access to the south aspect of Toulouse, both because it was least strongly defended, and because it would interrupt any co-operative movement by Suchet, he renewed the attempt higher up the river on the 31st, and this time Hill's corps succeeded in reaching the other side. But the reason for Soult's apparent neglect of this approach was now revealed : the roads and country to the south of Toulouse had been rendered by the rain absolutely impassable by artillery : Hill had to return again to the left bank.

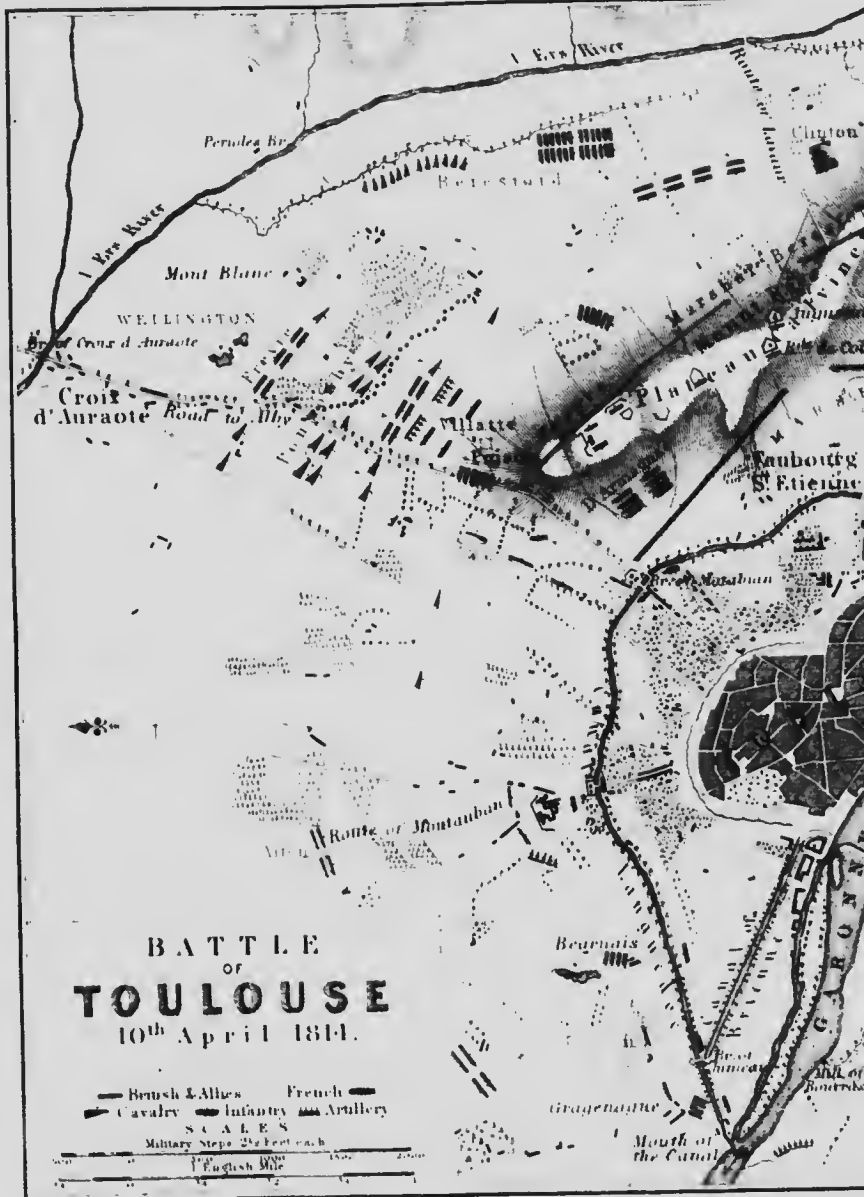
The pontoons were next taken to a point below the town, where, on 4th April, Beresford effected a crossing with the 3rd, 4th, and 6th Divisions and three brigades of cavalry. No sooner was he established there than the garrison made a skilful attempt to break the bridge. Having loaded a huge barge with stones, they sent it down the current, while Wellington and his staff looked on anxiously without the possibility of averting the disaster they saw impending. The French, however, had overdone the thing : they had overloaded the barge, so that when it struck the bridge it reeled and sank, without doing any mischief.\* But what man failed to effect, nature did for him. Two days later a sudden snow flood sent the pontoons flying, and Beresford's force of 18,000 men was left exposed for forty-eight hours to the immensely superior numbers of the enemy.† Strange to say, Soult neglected this, the best opportunity he ever had of inflicting defeat on his enemy. Hugging his stronghold on

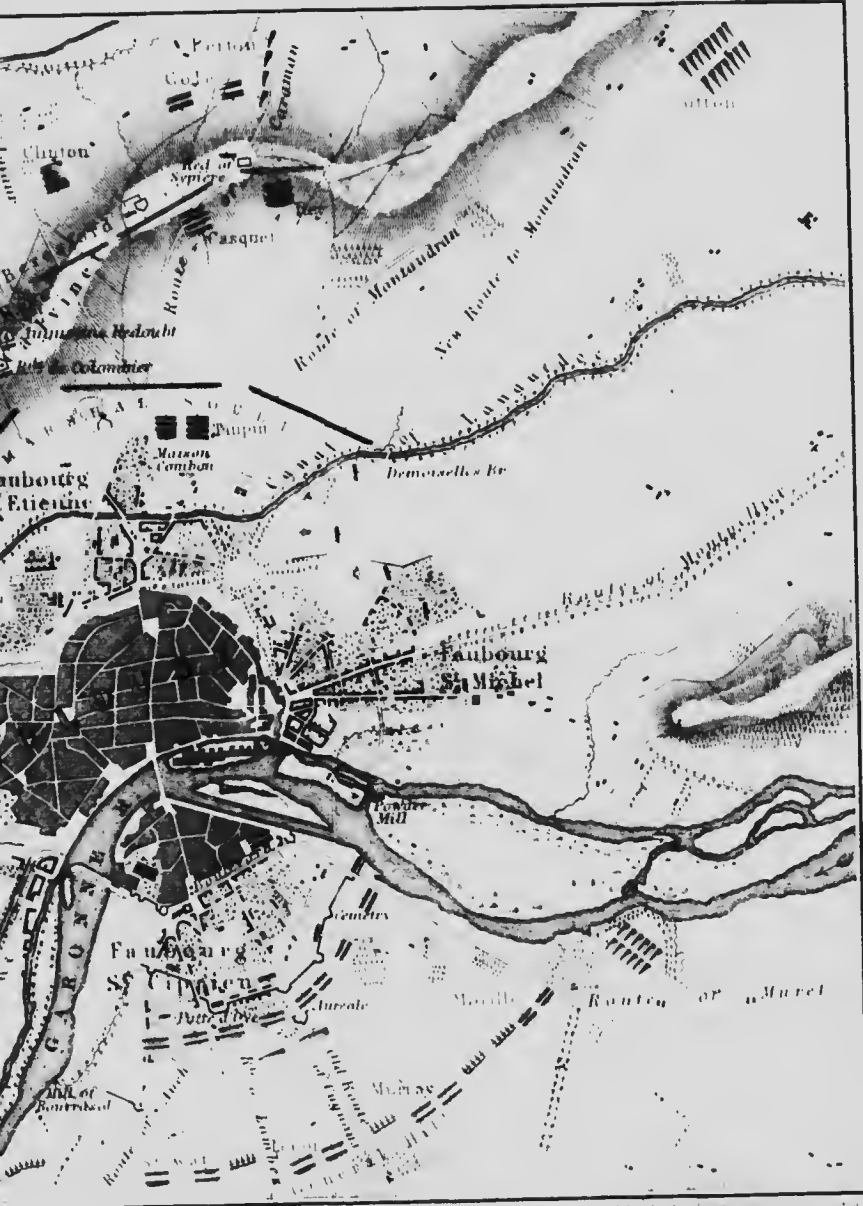
\* *De Roe MS.*

† "In this awkward situation, when the army was divided, I used to cross over every morning to the other side (where Beresford lay) and return at night. I thought the troops might be out of spirits at seeing themselves in a position so exposed ; but not a bit—they didn't mind it at all" (*Salisbury MSS., 1835*).

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the heights, he allowed the Allies to repair the bridge; ANN. 1814.  
Freyre's Spaniards crossed to Beresford's support on the 8th,  
the bridge was taken up again, and replaced higher on the  
river to communicate with Hill, whose corps lay in front of  
Saint Cyprien.

Early on the 10th April the Light Division crossed the Battle of  
Toulouse.  
Garonne and joined the 3rd Division in operations against  
the northern outworks and the *têtes de pont* over the canal.  
Freyre with his Spanish corps attacked the enemy in front  
on the heights, while Beresford moved up the left bank of  
the Ers river, with the 4th and 6th Divisions disposed in  
three columns, round the right flank of the French. Having  
gained a turning position by a march through ground so  
difficult that he had to leave his guns behind, Beresford  
formed his columns into line to the right, attacked and carried  
the redoubt covering the enemy's right, and effected a good  
lodgment. The entrenchments, however, and four other  
redoubts were still held by the French. Freyre's Spaniards,  
attacking these in front, encountered such a destructive fire  
that the whole corps, though fighting with the utmost deter-  
mination, were repulsed in considerable disorder, though they  
rallied well on the Light Division when it moved up on their  
right. Beresford, after a necessary pause, during which Soult  
rearranged his right wing, brought up his artillery and  
resumed his advance along the ridge against the central  
redoubts. The Highland Brigade, composed of the 42nd,  
71st, 79th, and 92nd Regiments, led the attack to the music  
of the pipes. Long and fierce was the fighting, but finally  
the French were overpowered. Driven from the whole line  
of his entrenchments, Soult surrendered the heights and  
withdrew his columns behind the canal of Languedoc, covered  
by the fire of the fortifications.

"In the whole of my experience," Wellington told Lord de  
Ros, "I never saw an army so strongly posted as the French  
at the battle of Toulouse. There ought to have been an  
accurate plan and description made of the whole affair as a

Æt. 44. matter of professional science. Soult's staff were of the same opinion, and drew out plans after the cessation of arms, which they sent to me. I found, however, that the usual French boasting prevailed through the descriptions—here one English brigade had been *culbuté*, there the French had *passé sur le corps* of another; so I was quite disgusted, and, rolling the plans up, returned them to Marshal Soult with a plain message of my compliments." \*

Abdication  
of Napo-  
leon.

The death and casualty roll was deplorably heavy in proportion to the troops actually engaged: 31 officers of the Allies and 564 soldiers were returned as killed, while the wounded and missing amounted to 4,054. It was a sacrifice which might well have been avoided. Unknown to the commander on either side, couriers were speeding towards them bearing the news that there was no longer an Emperor of the French; Paris had capitulated on 30th March; Napoleon Buonaparte had abdicated, and all cause of quarrel between the brave nations had ceased to exist.

In ignorance of all this, Wellington lost no time in making the investment of Toulouse complete; but whether Soult despaired of sustaining so large a force pent up within its walls, or whether he felt insecure amid a population which had become ardently Legitimist, he resolved to give the Allies the slip, and, before they could complete the circle round him, he slipped out of Toulouse on the night of 12th April without tuck of drum, and escaped along the road to Villefranche and Castelnaudary. His departure was announced at sunrise to the Allies by the *drapeau blanc* of the Bourbons being run up on the flagstaff of the citadel, and a little later Wellington rode into the town at the head of his staff. He did not yet know of the great event in Paris, but the tremendous enthusiasm of his reception could not be resisted; he could not be the only figure in that joyous

\* A similar account is given in Lord Mahon's notes (*Stanhope*, 246), and also in Lady Salisbury's journal (*Salisbury MSS.*, 1838), but in both instances the name of Suchet is given instead of Soult.

throng without the white cockade. "Je porte," he wrote ANN. 1814.  
 next day to d'Angoulême, "la cocarde blanche à présent,  
 comme tout le monde." That evening a French and an  
 English officer arrived from Paris, which they had left at  
 midnight on the 7th, to acquaint him with the Emperor's  
 abdication and the formation of a Provisional Government.

Unluckily the news did not reach Bayonne in time to Sortie  
from  
Bayonne.  
 prevent further bloodshed. On 14th April a sortie in force  
 was made from the entrenched camp at that place, which  
 was repulsed, but not without a loss to the Guards and the  
 38th Regiment of 843 officers and men. Sir John Hope  
 himself, having his horse shot under him, and being wounded  
 in two places, was taken prisoner with two of his staff.

It is well known that Soult claimed the victory in the  
 battle of Toulouse. On this point Wellington observed to  
 Lady Salisbury—

"The claim of the French to the victory was ridiculous.  
 The day after the battle, the only ground they possessed  
 beyond the town was a strip about half a mile broad between  
 the Garonne and the canal of Languedoc. I was preparing  
 to attack them there when Soult retreated. . . . If Soult had  
 succeeded in joining Suchet, I should still have been a match  
 for them both. I could have done *anything* with that army :  
 it was in such splendid order." \*

Thus fell the curtain on the Peninsular campaign, which Close of  
the Penin-  
sular war.  
 had lasted within a few weeks of six years—the mightiest  
 conflict in which Great Britain ever has borne a part, and  
 profoundly affecting the destiny of the whole human race.  
 By a singular concurrence of genius and circumstance, a  
 design, audacious in its scope, yet practical in every detail  
 of it, formed itself in the mind of one of Britain's many  
 Generals, and was entrusted to its author for execution,  
 because of the accidental friendship of a few aristocratic  
 families. No doubt Sir Arthur Wellesley's personality was  
 one to inspire confidence; when he laid his scheme before

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1838.



Æt. 44. Canning and Castlereagh he had already shown in India that he was a capable officer and administrator. But the minister whom Wellesley persuaded to entrust him with 9,000 men for Portugal in 1808 was the same who superseded him when that force was raised to 30,000, the same who chose Lord Chatham to command 40,000 troops in Walcheren in 1809. Through good report and ill, through difficulties and disappointments from random foreign Governments, headlong allies, and ill-trained officers, through sunshine and storm, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, while every throne in Europe rocked or was engulfed, alliances melted away or formed afresh for menace, this steadfast spirit maintained its purpose, this vigilant brain converted every changing circumstance to its use. Ministers at home, distraught by faction, harassed for means, weakened by wars in other regions, drew courage and constancy from their inflexible servant, who never veiled a truth and never glozed a peril. Calm, confident, resourceful, he went from strength to strength, till Europe began to recognise her true deliverer, and designed to withdraw him from the work of his choice, and set him face to face with Napoleon himself.

In the fulness of time that, too, was to come; but the time was not yet. Happily for himself, happily for the world, he was left to accomplish the task he had conceived, initiated, and so nobly sustained. The completeness of its fulfilment has raised the manner of it almost beyond criticism; yet in such an ancient and complicated art as war there will never be lack of critics. In the very last act of the great drama things would have gone differently, we are told by Wellington's great and friendly Belgian critic, if Suchet had done his duty and joined forces with Soult. "The battle of Orthez in all probability would have ended in favour of the French, in which case Wellington could not have occupied either Toulouse or Bordeaux." \* This is criticism of a very common kind—to bind a man to his actions under circumstances as they

\* *Brialmont*, ii. 228.

actually happened, and explain how these actions were unsuited ANN. 1814. to circumstances which never took place. That they *ought* to have happened may be likely enough; but it is equally likely that they would have been met by different dispositions.

It is comparatively easy, after the secrets of each camp have been laid bare in official correspondence, and the circumstances of every case explained by the testimony of eye-witnesses—it is comparatively easy, I say, to point out how this thing or the other might have been better done or left undone. Wellington would never have advanced to Talavera if he had known as much as every reader of Napier's impassioned pages knows of the crotchets of Cuesta, the indiscipline of the Spanish troops, the utter breakdown of the Anglo-Portuguese transport. He would not have attempted the storm of Burgos had he foreseen that the officer commanding the assault would have disregarded orders plainly read out to him twice by Wellington himself. Points there must be in these great operations for reflection, for inquiry, for criticism, by the military student and expert. The General has never yet worn spurs who has not erred in strategy or failed in tactics. Even the sun is not without its spots. But it has been truly said that he who never makes a mistake usually never makes anything else, and the historian who invites his audience to the contemplation of flaws is most apt to present a false impression of the work as a whole and its author. The record of the Peninsular campaign is one of a stupendous performance, conducted through all its stages to a triumphant close by the same head which conceived its design. It seems little more than pedantry to demonstrate that one who planned his campaigns to accord with his forecast of the march of events in the rest of Europe, who fought at Salamanca because Napoleon was invading Russia, and timed his invasion of France by the movements of the allied Sovereigns in Germany, might have manœuvred his army with greater dexterity or conducted his sieges with better science.

## CHAPTER XV.

### CONGRESS OF VIENNA: THE HUNDRED DAYS.

1814-1815.

<p>April 19 . . . 1814. Suspension of arms. Wellington ap- pointed British Ambassador to France.</p> <p>May 4 . . . . . Arrives in France.</p> <p>  " 10 . . . . . Goes on embassy to Madrid.</p> <p>  " 11 . . . . . Created Duke of Wellington.</p> <p>  " 24 . . . . . Arrives in Madrid.</p> <p>June 5 . . . . . Returns to France.</p> <p>  " 23 . . . . . Revisits England.</p> <p>  " 28 . . . . . Takes his seat in the House of Lords.</p> <p>July 1 . . . . . Receives and re- turns thanks of the House of Commons.</p> <p>August . . . . . Visits the Nether- lands.</p> <p>  " 22 . . . . . Proceeds to Paris as Ambassador.</p> <p>January 24, 1815. Proceeds to Vienna</p>		<p style="text-align: right;">as Plenipotentiary at the Congress.</p> <p>March 1 . . . . . Napoleon lands at Cannes.</p> <p>  " 20 . . . . . Enters Paris.</p> <p>  " 25 . . . . . The Hundred Days. The Quadruple Al- liance.</p> <p>April 5 . . . . . Wellington takes command of the army in the Netherlands.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Position of the forces of the Powers.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Strength and cha- racter of Napo- leon's forces.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">His plan of cam- paign.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">The Prussian army.</p> <p>June 13 . . . . . The Anglo-Belgian army.</p> <p>Appendix C. . . . . The Affair of Sul- tanpettah.</p>
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ON 19th April, 1814, Wellington, having received from the Marshals Soult and Suchet formal acknowledgment of the Provisional Government of France, concluded separate conventions with each for the suspension of hostilities and the total evacuation of Spain. Arrangements

Suspension  
of arms.

were made for the return of the Spanish and Portuguese ANN. 1814. armies to their respective countries, and the British army was directed to prepare for immediate embarkation. It is a melancholy reflection that this noble comradeship should have been severed, the divisions, moulded by Wellington into an army which, at last, he was able to pronounce fit "to go anywhere and do anything,"\* should be scattered, without giving the nation an opportunity of welcoming home the troops who had redeemed the martial renown of Britain, kept the horrors of war at a distance from their land, and established the liberties of unborn generations. But the fratricidal conflict in America still dragged on; fourteen thousand of the Peninsular veterans were shipped off to be squandered round New Orleans and to languish in Antigua, including the well-tryed 5th, 9th, 28th, and 29th Regiments.† Others were sent to the Mediterranean; others again to furnish Indian reliefs; some to the Netherlands, some to Ireland, the remainder going home to be reduced to a peace establishment.

As for Wellington, out of eight years of married life, more than six had been spent in active service abroad. Most of his Generals and subordinate officers had been home on leave, many of them had brought their wives to the Peninsula during the war, but he had never quitted his post. His two sons, whom he had never heard address him as father, were now school-boys; ‡ during all these years he had never set eyes either on his wife or any of his near relations, except his brother Henry. There is something of Spartan grandeur in the lonely, laborious figure. "To do great things," says Vauvenargues, "a man must live as though he had never to die." Yet had Wellington been something more than human had he not felt some longing for home, some yearning for repose. There are, however, but faint traces of either in his reply to

\* This oft-quoted phrase occurs in the Duke's evidence before the Royal Commission on Military Punishments in 1836.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, ix. 82, 135.

‡ At East Sheen.

X. 44. Lord Castlereagh, who wrote from Paris on 13th April, proposing his acceptance of the British Embassy to France.

Appointed  
British  
Ambassa-  
dor in  
Paris.

"I should not, perhaps, propose this task to you, after the station you have filled, if I did not think the situation might derive an additional interest from the era at which we are arrived, and the authority your name and services would give, through this Court, to our general politics on the Continent." \*

"Although," replied Wellington from Toulouse, "I have been so long absent from England, I should have remained as much longer if it had been necessary; and I feel no objection to another absence in the public service, if it be necessary or desirable." †

So far, therefore, from laying down the burden he had borne so long, Wellington but shifted it to the other shoulder. Having set matters in train for the dispersal of the allied forces, he travelled to Paris, arriving there on 4th May, and immediately took part in the deliberations of the allied Powers. Louis XVIII. had been restored to the throne by the Provisional Government, but there were a thousand weighty matters to be settled, involving ten thousand meticulous points, before the political chart of Europe could be restored to what it had been in 1792. Wellington was of all men the last to dwell on his own importance or the magnitude of his work, yet even he could not fail to be aware of the extraordinary extent and nature of the authority with which his conquests had invested him; and, talking as he was wont to do to Lady Salisbury, as if thinking aloud, he referred to it when the twelfth volume of the Despatches appeared in 1838.

"There is nothing more remarkable than the assumption and exercise of such authority by an individual placed in the midst of these Kings and Princes and their difficulties. But I believe it was the magnitude of the difficulties which placed in my hands the authority, and gave me the confidence to exercise it as I did." †

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, ix. 141, note.

† *Despatches*, xi. 668.

‡ *Salisbury MSS.*, 1838.

Most urgent of the questions for settlement was the future of Spain. Ferdinand VII. had resumed his crown amid fireworks and fêtes, bull-fights and Te Deums, salvoes and vivas—all the manifold means by which the warm-hearted Spaniards could show their delight. A wise king might have prolonged the enthusiasm beyond the descent of the last rocket, and have brought his country, chastened by adversity, into the quiet ways of industry and peace. But Ferdinand was not a wise king; and Napoleon, in restoring him unconditionally to Madrid after the battle of Leipsig, had taken such precautions as prevented him receiving good counsel from the man best qualified to give it. Instead of sending him into Spain by Bayonne, where he would have met Wellington, Napoleon had caused him to return to his country through Catalonia.

Ferdinand found Spain governed under a very democratic constitution—the one-chambered constitution of 1812; this he abrogated at once, promising to substitute another, dissolved the Cortes, restored the Inquisition, and set on foot a cruel persecution of the *Liberales*. Instead of fulfilling his promise, he began to reign as a despot, surrounded by a *camarilla* of grandees and priests, until, to avert the danger of civil war, it became necessary for the Powers to interfere. Needless to say that the plenipotentiary chosen was Lord Wellington, the one man in Europe to whom all nations had become accustomed to turn in perplexity. Leaving Paris on 10th May, he was back in Toulouse on the 14th, reviewed and addressed the 3rd and 4th armies of Spain at Tarbe, urging them to be loyal to Ferdinand, and arrived in Madrid on the 24th. He was received by King and people with every mark of honour.

ANN. 1814.  
Affairs of  
Spain.

Wellington returns  
to Madrid.

“Did you not notice,” the Duque de San Carlos asked him after his first audience, “that when you entered the presence, the guards stamped their feet? That is only done for a grandee of the first order. You must indeed be a happy man!”

Æt. 45. Wellington would gladly have dispensed with the stamping of the guards, had he felt that his representations to the King were of much avail. Personally, he was favourably impressed with Ferdinand, but very much the reverse with his ministers. Wellington was a Tory of the Tories, but if there was one form of government he distrusted more deeply than democracy it was priest-rule. He laid before the King a memorandum \* on behalf of the Powers, and especially of Great Britain, strongly urging that effect should be given to the promises he had made on ascending the throne, and that the numerous Liberals in prison should be either tried at once or released; "but," he reported to Lord Castlereagh, "I fear that I have done but little good." † Fresh promises in abundance, with flowery compliments, were all he carried away with him from Madrid on 5th June, though probably his prestige with the Spanish army had some effect in averting civil war.

On one point, indeed, Wellington was equipped with a cogent argument. The British Cabinet had adopted very strong views about the necessity for suppressing the slave trade all over the world. Britain was still paying a large subsidy into the Spanish Treasury; £800,000 was still due on the instalment for 1814, which was made conditional on the immediate and absolute cessation of what Wellington termed "that abominable traffic."

Created  
Duke of  
Welling-  
ton.

Intent upon the re-establishment of peace, Prince, Parliament, and people were eager in acknowledgment to the warrior whose prowess had done most to make an European peace possible. On 11th May Wellington was raised to the dignity of a duke; the House of Commons, on being asked to endow the dukedom with a grant of £300,000, adopted an amendment moved by Mr. Whitbread on behalf of the Whig Opposition—the very men who had once laughed Wellington's strategy to scorn—and made it half a million. Peerages were conferred also on his well-trying brothers-in-

\* *Despatches*, xii. 40.

† *Ibid.*, xii. 38.



arms, Hill, Beresford, Cotton, Graham, and Hope. On 14th ANN. 1814. June at Bordeaux he took leave of his army in a brief but kindly general order,\* and ten days later arrived in London to receive such an ovation from all ranks as the island race are ever ready to pay to valour—especially, let it be added, to successful valour.

All that ceremony can add to popular favour was displayed when the Duke of Wellington, in Field-Marshal's uniform under a peer's robes, was introduced by the Dukes of Richmond and Beaufort to present his patent and right of summons to the House of Lords. Still more remarkable, because unprecedented, was the scene in the House of Commons. A deputation of the House having been appointed to convey to the Duke its congratulations, he was asked to name a time convenient to himself for receiving them. Having expressed a desire to reply to the House in person, the 1st July was appointed for his reception. The Speaker and many of the members being in full dress, the House was informed that his Grace was in attendance, whereupon it was resolved that he should be admitted, a chair being set near the middle of the House. On the Duke entering and making his obeisance, the whole House rose. The Speaker informed him that a chair had been placed for his repose, and Wellington sat in it for some time covered. Then he rose, uncovered, and returned thanks in a brief speech for the "noblest gift that any subject had ever received."

Wellington takes his seat in the House of Lords.

The Speaker's acknowledgment, though of almost equal brevity, was distinguished among ordinary parliamentary oratory by a passage which deserves a permanent place in English literature.

"For the repeated thanks and grants bestowed upon you by this House, in gratitude for your many and eminent services, you have thought fit this day to offer us your acknowledgments:

\* *Despatches*, xii. 62.



Æt. 45. but this nation will know that it is still largely your debtor. It owes to you the proud satisfaction, that, amidst the constellation of great and illustrious warriors who have recently visited our country, we could present to them a leader of our own, to whom all, by common acclamation, conceded the pre-eminence; and when the will of Heaven, and the common destinies of our nature, shall have swept away the present generation, you will have left your great name and example as an imperishable monument, exciting others to like deeds of glory, and serving at once to adorn, defend, and perpetuate the existence of this country among the ruling nations of the earth."

Sir Thomas Graham, who, it will be remembered, left the Peninsula in September, 1813, because of ill health, had accepted in December the command of an expedition to aid the Dutch in their rising against Napoleon, and had been badly defeated in an attempt against Bergen-op-zoom. He remained, however, in command of an allied force of British, Hanoverian, Dutch, and Belgian troops. It was desirable to have the Duke's view of the defences of the Netherlands; therefore, before taking up his duties as Ambassador at Paris, he went to that country, accompanied by some engineer officers, and surveyed the frontier from Liège, along the Meuse and Sambre to Namur, Charleroi, Mons, Tournay, and the sea. With what different feelings he viewed these scenes from those when last he stood among them—in that dismal winter of 1794, when he laid the foundation of his knowledge by learning "how not to do it"!

Wellington visits the Netherlands.

His report contains one recommendation notable among many others. "The entrance to the Forêt de Soignies \* by the high road which leads to Brussels from Binch, Charleroi and Namur, would, if worked upon, afford advantageous positions." † Ere twelve months should elapse, the spot indicated was to become famous as the field of Waterloo.

Wellington goes to Paris as Ambassador.

Wellington, returning to Paris on 22nd August, presented his credentials at the Tuileries, and immediately began his

\* The real name is Soignes.

† *Despatches*, xii. 129.

attempt to persuade the King to put down the slave trade. ANN. 1814.  
 So much in earnest was the British Government, that he was empowered to offer an immediate advance of £3,000,000 as compensation to the French planters in the West Indies, or, alternatively, the free cession of the island of Trinidad, on condition that the traffic in slaves should be abolished at once.\* He made little progress at first, even on these handsome terms. He complained that the violence with which the English press denounced the traffic irritated the French ministers and people to such a degree that no progress could be made, and every Frenchman scoffed at the idea of Great Britain being actuated by motives of pure humanity in attempting to suppress the slave trade.†

Put not your trust in princes! In October Wellington was shocked to hear that General Alava, who had been Spanish Commissioner at his headquarters from 1809 to the close of the war, and to whom he was personally much attached, had been imprisoned by the Inquisition. Of course this was the act of King Ferdinand, under whose auspices this engine of tyranny, abolished by the Cortes, had resumed its atrocious functions, and Alava, as a Constitutionalist or *Liberal*, suffered with a multitude of others. Wellington wrote to Ferdinand a vigorous remonstrance, in consequence of which Alava was released on condition of perpetual banishment—fitting reward for the fidelity with which, while most of the grandees bent their necks to the French yoke, Alava devoted himself to preserving Ferdinand's throne.

Cruel  
behaviour  
of Ferdi-  
nand VII.

Wellington's own position in Paris was not without danger. The King, indeed, regarded his presence there as a strength to himself; some of the new ministers, especially Talleyrand and Soult, welcomed their former foe as a guarantee of British support to the re-established dynasty; but there was still a strong and active anti-royalist party, and a mass of officers and soldiers thrown idle and discontented, prepared to overthrow any Government which could not find them

Wellington's position in Paris.

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, ix. 226.

† *Despatches*, xii. 142.

Æt. 45. instant employment.\* Besides these, as the Duke explained to Lord Bathurst, the host of civil *employés*, whom it had been Napoleon's policy to create, and whom he could afford to pay out of the contributions of conquered realms, had been sent about their business and become a source of danger. King Louis had no resources out of which to maintain them, and the necessity for retrenchment intensified the disaffection which there was nothing in his personal attributes to counteract. All the materials of a fresh revolution were lying about, and Wellington, the chief bulwark of the restored monarchy, received warning that his assassination had been planned.† Lord Liverpool, also, having information that some of the French Marshals were pressing the King's weak Government to arrest the Duke, whose presence they regarded as offensive to the dignity of France and an especial affront to her army, was most anxious for a decent excuse to recall him; but Wellington at first strongly resisted all suggestions to that effect. In order to overcome his objections, Liverpool asked him to take command of the forces in North America, with full powers to make peace or carry on the war according to his judgment.‡ Active service, he urged, was sufficient excuse for recalling him from a position which gave offence to a large number of Frenchmen, and Liverpool rightly judged that it was a summons which Wellington would be unwilling to decline; but he was still more unwilling to desert the post of present danger.

7th November.—“I feel no disinclination to undertake the American concern, but to tell you the truth, I think that, under existing circumstances, you cannot at this moment allow me to quit Europe. You might do so possibly in March next, but now it appears impossible. You already know my opinion of the danger at Paris. There are so many discontented people, and there is so little to prevent mischief, that the event might occur

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, ix. 315, 346, 368, 422, etc.

† *Ibid.*, ix. 458.

‡ *Ibid.*, ix. 406.

on any night; and, if it did occur, I don't think I should be allowed to depart. . . . But I confess I don't like to depart from Paris, and I wish the Government would leave the time and mode at my discretion. To go to Vienna is a bad pretence; there is no good reason for going; and it would be better to be called to England for a few days to attend the court-martial, and afterwards to be detained. It must also be observed that to go at all at the present moment is, in the opinion of the King's friends, to allow him and ourselves to suffer a defeat, and we must not do that." \* ANN. 1815.

The Cabinet, however, set more store by the Ambassador's safety than on Louis's throne. Liverpool wrote more urgently than before—"We shall not feel easy till we hear of your having landed at Dover. . . . We most earnestly entreat you to return to England with as little delay as possible." † The Duke, who never disobeyed an order, replied, "I will make immediate arrangements for quitting Paris. No man is a judge in his own ease: but I confess that I don't see the necessity for being in a hurry to remove me from hence." ‡

But this, the third occasion offered to Wellington of service beyond the Atlantic, ended as the two others did, in his energy being directed elsewhere. The British and American peace commissioners, then sitting at Ghent, were advancing slowly to an agreement, and to send Wellington to reorganise the campaign on what was evidently the eve of peace, would have been too transparent a device for getting him out of Paris and the dangers which beset him there. So another and more plausible scheme was hit upon. A Congress of the Great Powers had been sitting at Vienna for several weeks, rearranging the dislocated map of Europe, and many crowned heads were collected in that capital to look after their own territories and claims. Great Britain, however, was represented by her Foreign Secretary, Lord Castlereagh, who discovered opportunely that his presence at the opening of Parliament in February could not be

The Congress of Vienna.

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, ix. 422.

† *Ibid.*, ix. 431.

‡ *Ibid.*, ix. 434.

Ær. 45. dispensed with, and wrote to ask the Duke of Wellington to relieve him at the Congress. Endorsing the invitation, Lord Liverpool put it beyond the Duke's power to offer further resistance to leaving Paris, for he described the duty as implying the exercise of "a discretion which the Prince Regent and his Government would not like to entrust to any individual out of the Cabinet, except the Duke of Wellington." \* Quitting Paris, therefore, on 24th January, 1815, he arrived in Vienna on 3rd February, leaving his faithful aide-de-camp, Lord Fitzroy Somerset, as *chargé d'affaires* at the Tuileries.

It certainly called for a calm head and firm hand to take part in the deliberations in progress at the Austrian capital. There remains an interesting sketch of the situation in a letter written by the Duke of Wellington many years afterwards (2nd January, 1847) to Lord Stanley. †

"The Emperor Alexander was an extraordinary man in his time. He had been educated under the authority of the Empress Catherine by a certain Monsieur de la Harpe, a Genevose philosopher of the modern school, and there existed in his mind a mixture of religious enthusiasm, corporal's mania, a military discipline, madness, attachment to despotick authority—particularly to that of the Czar, and Russian ambition; each of which feelings in turn governed his conduct, none of them in moderation, and he was, upon the whole, as difficult a personage to manage as has appeared at any time. . . . Lord Castlereagh, who had concluded and signed the treaty of the Peace, was appointed the Ambassador from this country to the Congress of Vienna. On his arrival there he found the Ministers of the allied Powers in general, but particularly the Minister of the Emperor of Austria, in a state of dismay, in consequence of the extravagant pretensions of the Emperor Alexander, the peremptory tone in which they were asserted . . . with views of obtaining compensation for Russia at the expense and by the spoliation of the Saxon Monarchy, and above all by the liberal

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, ix. 462.

† Afterwards 14th Earl of Derby.

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ALEXANDER I., EMPEROR OF RUSSIA.

*(From a sketch by Carlo Fontana, in 1815.)*

*Vol. I, p. 356*

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• *Apsley How*

eratic colour given to this scheme of ambition which was ANN. 1815.  
 ed by all and viewed with apprehension even by the  
 ian plenipotentiaries themselves, who had orders to urge  
 the Congress the adoption of these measures. . . . The  
 Ministers were right in prevailing upon Lord Castlereagh  
 ht their battle for them. It was the only chance they had  
 pping the Emperor, and I really believe that if Lord Castle-  
 had not been successful, the Congress would have dissolved  
 and Buonaparte, landing in a few months afterwards, would  
 found the Powers of Europe disunited, and each acting  
 ately, as some have said he expected to find them. . . . I  
 not then at Vienna. I was the Ambassador at Paris, and,  
 g been in constant correspondence with Lord Castlereagh, I  
 ully informed of what was going on. I was sent to relieve  
 Castlereagh as the Ambassador at the Congress, either late  
 14 or early in 1815. Lord Liverpool and the Ministers in  
 and had for some time been alarmed respecting the threat  
 e French newspapers respecting myself, and had been  
 ous to remove me from Paris. I felt no such alarm; but I  
 ss that I believe that if I had been at Paris a few months  
 wards, when Buonaparte landed in France from Elba, and  
 Louis XVIII. quitted Paris to go to the Netherlands, I  
 d have been seized, and at all events prevented from joining  
 army in Flanders!"\*

utwardly, indeed, all was pacific and festive; there was  
 ymptom of the ebullient condition of Europe in the long  
 ession of dinner-parties, balls, and concerts occasioned by  
 presence of so many dignitaries, crowned and otherwise,  
 at hospitable city. "Le congrès danse," observed Talley-  
 , "mais il ne marche pas." Not the less surely were affairs  
 ing towards war, each Power being intent to curb its  
 ighbour or increase its own territory, rather than to restore  
 general equilibrium. "Never," wrote Castlereagh to  
 lington on 7th December, "never at any former period  
 so much spoil thrown loose for the world to scramble  
 † Russia pushed her claims upon Poland, Prussia upon

*Apsley House MSS.*, 1847.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, ix. 465.





# MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

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Æt. 45. Saxony, and Austria upon both; France kept a hungry eye on Holland and the Netherlands, and, albeit it may savour of partiality in a British subject to affirm so much, it is patent on the instructions to her plenipotentiary that the only Great Power which had no design of aggrandisement was England, whose object was to confirm an alliance between herself and Austria, Russia, and Prussia. By the time Wellington came on the scene, this scheme had fallen to pieces, and Lord Castlereagh had incurred the bitter displeasure of the Emperor of Russia.

"Of this Grand Alliance we must consider two, viz. Russia and Prussia, as practically ranged against us . . . and Austria alone with us. It is evident, therefore, that the fifth great European Power, which is France, must turn the scale. . . . The truth is that a war with England would at this moment be so popular in France, and the recovery of Flanders so desirable in the opinion of all parties in that country, that nothing would prevent France from joining the Northern Allies but the influence of some personal and some national feelings, which at present operate in our favour." \*

Matters went from bad to worse. The only Napoleonic sovereign left was Murat, King of Naples, with whom the Emperor of Russia entered into close relations, abetting him in his aggression on the Papal States, and interrupting the return of the Russian army to their native country in order to confirm his grip on Poland, while the King of Prussia kept his talons fixed on Saxony. King Louis, on the other hand, was impatient for the dethronement of Murat, and Austria, by Wellington's advice, was concentrating 150,000 men on the frontiers of Italy to restrain Murat's invasion of the northern duchies.

Escape  
of Napo-  
leon from  
Elba.

Everything pointed to a conflagration, in which Russia and Prussia would have been ranged in a mighty contest against Great Britain, France, and Austria; but all disputes were

\* Lord Liverpool's memorandum, 12th December, 1814.

hushed by the startling news, conveyed to Wellington on ANN. 1815. 7th March in a despatch from Lord Burghersh dated the 1st, that Napoleon had escaped from Elba with all his civil and military officers and 1,100 soldiers. Next day came word that he had landed at Cannes and was marching on Paris. The Plenipotentiaries at once sunk all their differences, and issued a proclamation of their firm resolution to maintain the peace of Europe.

Wellington, as we know, over-estimated the enthusiasm of the French people in general for the restored dynasty.

"It is my opinion," he wrote to Castlereagh on 12th March, "that Buonaparte has acted upon false or no information, and that the King (of France) will destroy him without difficulty and in a short time. If he does not, the affair will be a serious one, and a great and immediate effort must be made, which will doubtless be successful." \*

Seldom has an ambassador sent home a more misleading despatch: nevertheless, preparations on a great scale were set on foot to meet the emergency. There was still an Anglo-Hanoverian corps in Belgium under the Prince of Orange, which, with the Belgian and Dutch army, Wellington recommended should be put at the disposition of the King of France, and offered to take command of it. The Emperor of Russia was for managing the campaign by a council, and "expressed a wish," wrote the Duke, "that I should be with him, but not a very strong one; and as I should have neither character nor occupation in such a situation, I should prefer to carry a musket." † The Emperor, however, coupled his proposals with an intimation, which he desired Wellington to communicate to the British Government, that he could not move his troops without a subsidy from England. The King of France also was clamorous for money; Austria was already in receipt of a subsidy; the annual payments to Spain and Portugal had only ceased with the close of the year 1814;

\* *Despatches*, xii. 268.

† *Ibid.*

Æt. 45. and Wellington was empowered to advance £400,000 to Prussia.\* In short, the Powers of Europe seemed to regard the British Treasury as an inexhaustible well, into which each one of them claimed the right to let down his bucket. Not one of these mighty machines would work without a golden key, to be supplied by England. Authority, therefore, was given to Wellington to guarantee a subsidy of £5,000,000 to be divided among the three Great Powers,† in addition to an indemnity of £2,100,000 which Great Britain paid for the proportion in which her contingent was short of her obligations under treaty. The disposal of this money was entrusted entirely to the Duke of Wellington.‡

All the fortitude of the British Cabinet was put to the test by the renewal of the war. No further back than 20th February, when it had been a question of sending an allied expedition against Murat, Liverpool had written to Castlereagh—

“You will not have been three days in London before you will have been thoroughly convinced of the absolute impracticability of our engaging in any military operations. . . . The truth is, the country is at this moment peace mad. Many of our best friends think of nothing but the reduction of taxes and low establishments, and it is very doubtful whether we could involve the country in a war at this moment for objects which, on every principle of sound policy, ought to lead to it. . . . After such a contest for twenty years we must let people taste of the blessings of peace before we can fairly expect to screw them up to a war spirit, even in a just cause.” §

Howbeit, there was no hesitation in the instructions forwarded at once to Wellington. One propitious event, at least, coincided with the renewal of the storm; peace had been concluded with the United States, and the British troops were recalled with all speed from America.

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, ix. 597.

‡ *Ibid.*, x. 92.

† *Ibid.*, ix. 608.

§ *Ibid.*, ix. 573.

The Powers at Vienna, alarmed by reports of the progress ANN. 1815. of Napoleon, desired Wellington to proceed at once to the Netherlands and take command of the troops on the frontier. He contented himself with reporting this demand to Castlereagh on 18th March, asked for instructions, and proceeded calmly with the affairs of the Conference, which, at the moment, consisted of nothing more vital than a rearrangement of the Swiss cantons. Castlereagh's reply, dated 12th March, crossed Wellington's inquiry.

"The Prince Regent, relying entirely on your Grace's zeal and judgment, leaves it to you, without further orders, either to remain at Vienna or to put yourself at the head of the army in Flanders. The only reservation I am directed to make is, that your Grace is not to expose yourself by returning to the interior of France, unless in the command of troops." \*

At last, on 25th March, a treaty of alliance was concluded Quadruple Alliance. between Austria, Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain, binding them to maintain the treaty of Paris, and not to lay down arms until "Buonaparte should be placed absolutely beyond possibility of exciting disturbance and renewing his attempts to possess himself of the supreme power in France."

Wellington still thought lightly of the situation. "You will have seen," he wrote on the 24th to his brother Sir Henry at Madrid, "what a breeze Buonaparte has stirred up in France. We are all unanimous here, and in the course of about six weeks there will not be fewer than 700,000 men on the French frontier."

The "breeze" was swiftly acquiring the force of a hurricane. Napoleon marched from strength to strength. At Grenoble soldiers sent against him lowered their muskets before his bared breast—"Which of you will fire on your Emperor?" Their commander, Labedoyère, tore off the white cockade and joined him. Macdonald and Ney, of all Napoleon's old Marshals the last to take service under

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, ix. 591.

Æt. 45. the King, pursued opposite courses. Macdonald, true to his colours, escaped alone from Lyons, amid shouts of *Vive l'Empereur!* from his troops. Ney, a Peer of the Restoration, marched from Paris vowing that "he would bring back the usurper in an iron cage," but he had not got further than Lons-le-Saulnier before he threw off the mask. He told the prefect of l'Ain that the Marshals of France, acting in concert, had recalled Buonaparte,\* and that the army were of one mind. On 20th March Napoleon entered Paris, the Most Christian King having quitted it secretly at two in the morning, without notifying his intention to any of the foreign ministers. Between eight and nine that evening, Napoleon was installed in his old quarters at the Tuileries. At once he set about a policy of conciliation towards the Powers. On 4th April he wrote to the Prince Regent, expressing his hopes that the treaty of peace concluded between Great Britain and France on 30th May, 1814, should continue uninterrupted, and that the peace of Europe should not be disturbed. This letter Lord Castlereagh, by the Prince's command, returned unopened, and the letters from the Duc de Vicence to Castlereagh were forwarded for the information of the Congress at Vienna.† The Whig Opposition, unmindful of the discredit incurred by the falsification of all their predictions about the Peninsular war, once more took up the cudgels for Napoleon. We had no right, said Mr. Whitbread, to interfere with the French people in their choice of a ruler; persistence in a war policy would land Britain in bankruptcy; the name of Wellington was dishonoured by attachment to the declaration by the Powers, in which Napoleon was pronounced *hors de la loi*—beyond the pale of humanity, which Mr. Whitbread interpreted into a direct incitement to assassination.

Wellington takes command of army

It is doubtful if Wellington realised the intensity of the crisis, till he reached Brussels on 5th April to take command of the forces on the frontier. The magnificent array of

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, ix. 602.

† *Ibid.*, x. 699.

Spain	1000	12 9
Prussia	1000	12 9
Portugal	1000	12 9
France	1000	12 9
Italy	1000	12 9

391. 8000  
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 750 10700

Cavalry - June 18, 1815.  
 The Duke of Wellington's Army uniting  
 as given by his Grace to John Bley  
 Dr. Adjutant General present to the Battle of Waterloo

MEMORANDUM, IN THE DUKE'S HANDWRITING (REDEGED), OF THE ALLIED CAVALRY BEFORE WATERLOO.





700,000 soldiers of which he had spoken so confidently was scattered far and wide. The Russians were in Poland, the Austrians were fighting Murat in Italy; only 30,000 Prussians, occupying the newly annexed provinces on the Rhine, were at hand to co-operate with the composite force of 24,200 British, Dutch, Belgians, Brunswickers, and Hanoverians out of which he had to form an army. The British troops, only 4,000 in all, were mostly recruits; so were the 7,000 Hanoverians. Most of the 2,000 Belgians had served under Napoleon, a poor guarantee for their fidelity,\* and they were so bad that at first they could not be brigaded with the others. Wellington's letter to Lord Bathurst, written the day after his arrival in Brussels, was as nearly despondent as anything he ever penned.

ANN. 1815.  
in the  
Nether-  
lands.

"Your Lordship will see by my letter to General — in what state we stand as to numbers. I am sorry to say I have a very bad account of the troops; and — appears to be unwilling to allow them to be mixed with ours, which, although they are not of the best, would afford a chance of our making something of them. Although I have given a favourable opinion of ours to General —, I cannot help thinking, from all accounts, that they are not what they ought to be to enable us to maintain our military character in Europe. It appears to me that you have not taken in England a clear view of your situation, that you do not think war certain, and that a great effort must be made, if it is hoped that it shall be short. You have not called out the militia, or announced such an intention in your message to Parliament, by which measure your troops of the line in Ireland or elsewhere might become disposable; and how we are to make out 150,000 men, or even the 60,000 of the defensive part of the treaty of Chaumont, appears not to have been considered. If you could let me have 40,000 good British infantry, besides those you insist on having in garrisons, the proportion settled by treaty that you are to furnish of cavalry, that is to say, the eighth of 150,000 men, including in both the old

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, x. 703.

Æt. 45. German legion, and 150 pieces of British field artillery fully horsed, I should be satisfied, and take my chance for the rest, and engage that we would play our part in the game. But, as it is, we are in a bad way." \*

The Duke felt greatly at a loss in the want of Sir George Murray, his Quartermaster-General and right-hand man in the Peninsula, who, thinking there was no more service to be done in Europe, had accepted a command in America; and he complained that he was not allowed to choose his own Generals and staff for the campaign.

"To tell you the truth," he wrote to Lord Bathurst on 4th May, "I am not very well pleased with the manner in which the Horse Guards have conducted themselves towards me. It will be admitted that the army is not a very good one; and, being composed as it is, I might have expected that the Generals and the staff formed by me in the last war would have been allowed to come to me again; but, instead of that, I am overloaded with people I have never seen before. . . However, I'll do the best I can with the instruments which have been sent to assist me." †

Even after the arrival of numerous reinforcements from England, he wrote to Lord Stewart, his old Adjutant-General in the Peninsula, "I have got an infamous army, very weak and ill-equipped, and a very inexperienced staff." ‡ "I wish to God you had a better army," was all the comfort he received at first from the Duke of York's military secretary. Then Wellington bethought him of the excellent Portuguese troops created by Marshal Beresford, the "fighting cocks" of the Peninsular army, and application was made to the Regency at Lisbon for the services of 12,000 or 14,000 men, subject, of course, to the usual subsidy from Great Britain. Wellington would not ask for more, because, as he told Beresford, the Spanish Government could not be trusted not

\* *Despatches*, xii. 291.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, x. 219.

‡ *Despatches*, xii. 358.

to take advantage of a favourable occasion to take possession of Portugal.\* George Canning, British minister at Lisbon at this time, was unable, after protracted negotiations, to obtain a contingent, partly owing to the timidity of the Regency lest they should exceed their powers, for the Prince Regent of Portugal was still in America, and still more owing to the opposition of Wellington's old enemy, Principal Souza and his party. The only support, therefore, on which Wellington could rely in the defence of the Belgian frontier, which all recognised as the most valuable, was the Prussian army under Count Kleinst in the Rhine provinces, numbering at first only 30,000 of all arms.

ANN. 1815.  
Position of  
the forces  
of the  
Powers.

For the safety of the other countries bordering on France, 176,000 Russians under Count Barclay de Tolly were moving up through Germany and to guard the Middle Rhine, while 90,000 Austrians under Prince Schwartzberg and Archduke Ferdinand took post along the Rhine between Basle and Mannheim, and the Bavarian army, under Prince Wrede, with contingents from Baden, Wurtemberg, and Hesse, numbering in all 80,000 men, gathered on the Upper Rhine. In addition to these, the Emperor of Austria, having totally defeated Murat and restored King Ferdinand to the throne of Naples, was concentrating 120,000 men in Lombardy to support his forces on the frontier. This display of force might well be supposed enough to secure all parts of Europe from French aggression: but the allied Powers had far more than that in view; they had resolved to put it out of Napoleon's power to be a menace to the peace of the Continent, and an invasion of France had been decided on as soon as the Russian and Austrian armies should be in a position to advance. The destruction of Napoleon's power was their purpose, irrespectively of the possible restoration of Louis XVIII.

"Our object," wrote Wellington to Castlereagh on 24th April, "should be if possible to restore the King, as the measure most

\* *Despatches*, xii. 321; *Suppl. Despatches*, xiv. 540.

Æt. 45. likely to ensure the tranquillity of Europe for a short time ; and although we cannot declare that to be our object, we should take care to avoid to do anything, and particularly to declare anything, which can tend to defeat it." \*

Wellington, from the moment he arrived at Brussels on 5th April, perceived the necessity for strengthening the defences of the frontier, because, although he expected that the allied Powers would be in a position to make a combined advance into France at the beginning of May, he could not neglect the chance of Napoleon assuming the offensive, or even defeating the invading armies. In order, therefore, to protect his communications with England through Antwerp and Ostend, he caused the existing works at those places and Nieuport to be strengthened, and employed 20,000 labourers in constructing new ones at Ypres, Audenarde, Tournay, Ath, Mons, and Ghent. Notwithstanding his diligence in these defensive works, and the backward state of British reinforcements, he was earnestly anxious to strike a blow before Napoleon's preparations should be further developed. It has been the fashion of military critics to esteem Wellington as not only a master of Fabian strategy, but as a strategist whose genius inclined him to repel rather than to assail, trusting more to the difficulties of his enemy in holding a large force together than to the effect of his own initiative.† It was not so in this instance. Time was now all on the side of his adversary. Napoleon in Paris, with all the fortresses of France in his hands and the food supply of the nation at his back, was in a position very different from that of his

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, x. 147.

† The present Commander-in-chief has lent some sanction to this view. In writing an introduction to Major Griffiths' *Wellington and Waterloo* (Cassell and Co., 1898), Lord Wolseley draws a comparison between Marlborough and Wellington, and observes: "The former always took the offensive, the latter usually waited to be attacked. . . . Whilst Marlborough will be remembered for his persistent and brilliant offensive, history will always couple Wellington's name with that of Fabius as a tactician."

Marshals in Spain, with long and difficult communications ANN. 1815. through a hostile country. The longer he was left alone, the more powerful he would become; he must not be allowed a single week longer than absolutely necessary. Wellington, therefore, wrote on 10th and 13th April to Lord Clancarty,\* who had succeeded him as Plenipotentiary at the Congress of Vienna, laying before the Powers a complete and concerted plan of campaign,† and urging the necessity for prompt action.

“The ministers of the allied Powers and the august Sovereigns will see how important it is that no time should be lost in commencing offensive operations. This point is so clear, that it would be a useless waste of your time and mine to discuss it; but there is a period approaching before which it is desirable that our forces should enter France.”

But as the month of April passed away it became evident that the choice of battle-ground lay, not with the Powers, but with Napoleon. That giant in resource was ready before the Russian and Austrian armies were near the frontier. Never was his faculty for developing the military strength of the French nation manifested in such an extraordinary and concentrated degree as in those Hundred Days. With every desire to strike home, Wellington had to wait for the other Powers. Not for the first time in his history does his attitude recall that of the cavalier in the Eastern fable who, riding round the city, read inscribed on the first gate—“Be bold!” and on the second—“Be bold, and evermore be bold!” but on the third—“Be not too bold!”

On 15th January, 1815, the royal army of France numbered Strength of the French 195,883 of all ranks, without reckoning the *maison militaire*, the gendarmerie, and the veterans.‡ By 15th February this army.

\* *Despatches*, xii. 295, 302.

† *Ibid.*, xii. 301.

‡ *Houssaye*, 1, 2. Napoleon's statement that the royal army on 20th March numbered only 149,000 (*Memoires pour servir à l'histoire de France en 1815*) is as misleading as Colonel Charras's (*Campagne de 1815*) estimate of 224,000. Houssaye's figures are incontestable, being taken from official documents.

Æt. 45. had been augmented by 7,000 or 8,000 soldiers recalled to service under the decree of the previous November. But when the royal army obeyed, as it did almost to a man, the summons of Napoleon, he was obliged to disband the Swiss and the 1<sup>re</sup> *regiment étranger* to the number of 3,208. In round numbers, he found himself at the beginning of April at the head of 200,000 regular troops. Of the twenty Marshals of France, Berthier, Marmont, and Victor were with King Louis in Belgium. They were struck from the roll; so were Oudinot and Augereau; while Macdonald, though much personal persuasion was exerted by Napoleon and by other officers to bring him back, remained firm in his resolve not to serve against the King of France. Gouvion Saint-Cyr was received to pardon, but no command was given him; neither was gallant Kellermann employed at first, but Serurier was retained in his command of the Invalides. Lefebvre was retired on account of his age, and the same disability prevented the employment of Masséna. Murat had ceased to be a Marshal of France when he became King of Naples. He was now in retreat at Toulon, and prayed hard to be received again to his command; but Napoleon could not forgive him for having been ranged among the enemies of France in the year previous. It is said that afterwards, in the mournful solitude of St. Helena, Napoleon repented of having disdained the service of this splendid cavalry commander.\* Jourdan, author of the conscription—that stupendous instrument of ambition—was appointed Governor of Besançon; Brune was placed at the head of the 9th military district of Marseilles; to Suchet was committed the army of the Alps; Mortier had command of the cavalry of the guard; Grouchy became Commander-in-chief of cavalry in the army of the North; but Mincey was shelved with a seat in the *Chambre des Pairs*. Soult replaced Berthier—

\* “A Waterloo Murat nous eût valu peut-être la victoire. Que fallait-il? Enfoncer trois ou quatre carrés Anglais. Murat était précisément l’homme de la chose.”

*cette brute de Berthier*—as chief of the staff; and as for N. J. ANN. 1815.  
 —*le plus brave des braves*—it was his lot to see post after  
 post filled, without hint of employment for himself.

Two hundred thousand troops were nothing against all the power of Europe; Napoleon never deceived himself about that. On 9th April he issued the *rappel* to the men on six months' furlough and to 85,000 men who had deserted rather than serve the Bourbons, a measure which brought to the eagles not less than 75,898 soldiers in the early days of June.\* On the following day a decree went forth mobilising the Gardes Nationales, which numbered 234,720, of which 150,000 had reported themselves by 15th June. On 18th May Napoleon appealed to all retired soldiers to rejoin the army, which produced 25,000 men fit for garrison duty. The conscription had been abolished under the royal charter, and Napoleon hesitated at first to revive it. Marshal Davout, his War Minister, tried to dissuade him from such a course, and the Conseil d'État refused to sanction it; Napoleon overruled both, and the conscripts of 1815 were called out by a decree of 4th June. The response completely falsified Davout's apprehensions; the enthusiasm, except in the western departments, was greater than in revolutionary times, and within a week 46,419 eager recruits had been enrolled. How these were paid, clothed, and armed is no part of this narrative; for the purpose in hand it is sufficient to record that Napoleon, having landed in March with 1,100 men at his back, before the close of those wondrous Hundred Days had the disposal of a regular army of 312,400 and an auxiliary force of 222,600—in all 535,000 of all classes—and calculated that by 1st October he would have not less than 800,000. Such was the output of the marvellous machinery devised by Jourdan in the conscription.

Nothing could have been finer than the spirit animating the French troops. The magic of the Emperor's presence was hardly needed to dispel the artificial sentiment of loyalty

\* *Houssaye*, 86.



Æt. 45. towards the Bourbon, which, though it was more real, and amounted to something locally in the west and south, had never touched the heart of the army. Enthusiasm is a feeble word to describe the feelings with which the soldiers tore off the *cocarde blanche* and mounted the tricolour. But among his high military officials Napoleon encountered a different state of matters. There were jealousies, there were enmities, there were *griefs*, which rendered the apportionment of command a difficult one. Berthier was lost to him—Berthier, who, though a Marshal of France, never was a *tête militaire*, yet possessed administrative qualities and technical experience which had rendered him an excellent chief of the staff for twenty years, and one who thoroughly understood his master.\* To replace Berthier Napoleon chose Soult, although so recently as in his *ordre du jour* of 9th March he had denounced the Emperor as a madman and an adventurer. It was not a felicitous choice. Soult was a splendid commander, but his career had ill fitted him for the duties of chief of the staff; moreover, many suspicions attached to him, and the officers of the army detested him.† In the appointment of Generals of division, Napoleon was guided chiefly by the advice of Davout, his War Minister. There were many heart-burnings and dissensions among these officers, but with these we have little concern here. What remains is the fact that within two months Napoleon had collected a powerful army,

\* "I do not believe," said the Duke to Lord de Ros, "Berthier to have been a man of any remarkable talent, but he thoroughly understood Napoleon's views and system of carrying on the affairs of headquarters. It was confidently said that when Napoleon inquired of Soult on the appearance of the Prussians during the battle of Waterloo whether intelligence had been sent of their approach to Grouchy, Soult replied, 'J'ai envoyé un officier.' 'Un officier,' said Buonaparte. 'Ah, si mon pauvre Berthier était ici il en aurait envoyé six!'" (*de Ros MS.*). Berthier did not survive the severance from his old master for long. Leaving Ghent in May, he tried to reach the French frontier by Basle, but was detained at Stockach by the Prince of Hohenzollern. On 1st June, as a regiment of Russian dragoons were passing his windows on their way to the seat of war, he fell or threw himself out, and was killed on the spot.

† *Houssaye*, 58.



as well equipped and disciplined as any that had ever served him, and commanded by Generals who had given proof of their quality on many fields.\*

Napoleon was as swift to decide how to employ his forces as he had shown himself rapid in organising them. Had he awaited the attack of the gathering Allies, he must have invited all the evils of war to descend on French territory, while he employed his army in the manner least in accord with the French military genius, which is always strongest in attack. He preferred to carry the war upon foreign soil, and to fall upon the British and Prussian armies in Flanders before his other assailants had come into line. He detailed the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 6th Corps d'armée, the Imperial Guard, and a large force of cavalry, for the immediate invasion of Belgium. The command of the cavalry was given, as has been mentioned, to Grouchy; the various corps d'armée were commanded respectively by Drouet d'Erlon, Reille, Vandamme, Gérard, and the Comte de Lobau; and the whole force amounted to—

Infantry . . . . .	89,415
Cavalry . . . . .	23,595
Artillery . . . . .	11,578 with 344 guns
	124,588

Prince Blücher, who had assumed command of the Prussian army, had his headquarters at Namur. His forces were divided into four Corps—the 1st at Charleroi under Zieten, the 2nd under Pirch I. at Namur, the 3rd under Thielemann at Ciney, and the 4th under Bülow at Liége; consisting in all of—

Infantry . . . . .	99,715
Cavalry . . . . .	11,879
Artillery . . . . .	9,360 with 312 guns
	120,954

\* It is a remarkable and interesting fact, in view of the average age of British Generals serving at the present time, that of all Napoleon's Generals in this army only two exceeded his own age of forty-six. Grouchy and Drouet d'Erlon were each forty-nine, and every General had seen twenty years of war service.

Æt. 45.  
 The  
 Anglo-  
 Belgian  
 army.

The right of the 1st Prussian Corps communicated at Genappe with the left of the Anglo-Dutch army under the Duke of Wellington, which was organised in two corps, with a reserve—a novelty in British practice which, in effect, was only imperfectly adhered to in the campaign. The composition of the allied army on 13th June, the day when Wellington received the final refusal of the Portuguese Regent to furnish a contingent, was as follows:—

British . . . . .	31,253
King's German Legion . . . . .	6,387
Hanoverians . . . . .	15,935
Dutch-Belgians . . . . .	29,214
Brunswickers . . . . .	6,808
Nassau contingent . . . . .	2,880
Engineers, staff corps, etc. . . . .	1,240
	<hr/>
	93,717

The proportion of the various arms was thus—

Infantry . . . . .	69,829
Cavalry . . . . .	14,482
Artillery . . . . .	8,166 with 196 guns
Engineers, etc. . . . .	1,240
	<hr/>
	93,717 *

Wellington's 1st Corps was under command of the Prince of Orange, and occupied positions extending from Genappe to Enghien; the 2nd Corps, under Lieut.-General Lord Hill, continued the line of positions by Ath to Audenarde on the Scheldt, with the 5th and 6th Divisions lying in and around Brussels, and supplying garrisons to Antwerp, Ostend, Nieuport, Yprès, and Mons. Of the six British divisions only the 1st, under Cooke, was composed entirely of British troops—the Guards. Hanoverians and Germans made up the strength of the others. Formidable in numbers, the Duke's army

\* These are the figures cited by Mr. J. C. Ropes from Siborne's History, and may be taken as practically correct, although I have not been able to make the two authorities exactly correspond.

contained some very untrustworthy material. The King's ANN. 1815 German Legion were splendid troops, for the most part Peninsular veterans; but five-sixths of the British infantry had never seen a shot fired in anger. The Saxon contingent mutinied at Liège on 2nd May,\* were sent to the rear, and took no further part in the campaign. The Hanoverians were chiefly raw recruits, so were the Belgians, with the additional disqualification of being of very dubious fidelity; the sympathies of many of them were known to be with Napoleon. Wellington grumbled at first, as has been shown, about the kind of tools he had to work with, but he never betrayed any lack of confidence.

"It was not without surprise," he once remarked in conversation, "that I found the allied troops, when I took the command in Flanders before Waterloo, at once acknowledge and obey my authority with the same deference as my own army; and when I was at the Prussian headquarters on my way from Vienna I perceived no coldness towards me, although a strange mischance had just occurred which might naturally have created a feeling against me among the Prussians. One Monsieur Reinard, who was a leading man in the Bureau des Affaires Etrangères at Paris, had made his escape immediately on Napoleon's arrival from Elba, taking with him a treaty which had just been privately prepared between France, England, and Austria, in order to resist a threatened encroachment of the Prussians upon Saxony. This Reinard was stopped on his passage through the cantonments of the Prussian army, on suspicion he might be a spy of Napoleon's, and his papers being consequently searched and examined this secret treaty was discovered." †

\* *Despatches*, xii. 346.

† *De Ros MS.*

Æt. 29.

## APPENDIX C.

*The Affair of Sultanpettah.*

After the description of the defeat of a party of the 33rd Regiment, under Colonel Wellesley, in the assault on the Sultanpettah tope was in type (p. 32), I found at Apsley House the following letter, written by the Duke of Wellington to Colonel Gurwood when the proofs of the first volume of the *Despatches* were under revise. As it refers to the only occasion on which Wellington met with a reverse in military operations, it seems worthy of publication even at this distant date, especially as he has illustrated it with a sketch-plan by his own hand. Reference is also made therein to certain other disputed points in Sir Arthur Wellesley's Indian service.

“ S. Saye, Dec. 6, 1833.

“ MY DEAR COLONEL,—Since I wrote to you last I have been to London; and have found some papers which are very interesting which I send by this occasion. . . .

“ The truth is what I stated. We had not reconnoitred the ground. The Tope was on the Enemy's side of the Nullah in this way. (Here follows sketch.)

“ I had carried the Nullah quite up to the mark O. My advanced guard under Capt. West of the 33<sup>d</sup> was beyond it and through the tope and the lost Prisoners on the Enemy's side of it. But we could not maintain ourselves in it. In fact we knew nothing about the matter.

“ The words in Page 30 & 31 are quite right. You will find yourself borne out in respect to them by Harris's papers. I write to obtain for you a view of them. . . . In respect to my removal to Ceylon to command the troops in the Expedition, I must inform you that Lord Wellesley had been ordered to send an expedition to Batavia in the year 1800; of which he desired that I should take the command. I send you the Letters upon this subject from all the Authorities at Fort St. George; and

my final decision that i would stay in Mysore to lead the expedition against Doondiah Wahag. . . . Then followed the Campaign against Doondiah Wahag; at the conclusion of which I was ordered to go to Trincomalee to take the command of the troops destined to attack Mauritius. ANN. 1799.

"I have not yet been able to find the First Instructions. Those which I inclose certainly don't mention Egypt. But I think that Egypt must have been mentioned in the first Instructions. Egypt is mentioned in my Letters; and it is quite clear that I turned my attention to Egypt as well as to Mauritius during my stay at Trincomalee, as I was fully informed and prepared upon the subject, as appears by the Memorandum which I gave to Sir David Baird at Bombay which is published in his Life.

"The truth is that I never entirely approved of the Expedition to Mauritius. There is among the Letter book a very remarkable one to Lord Wellesley upon that subject of the — 1801. I don't think that I could now write a better one. But this is quite clear from these Papers. I never expected to be superseded in the command. I sailed from Trincomalee on the — February, having received the Requisition of the Secretary of State; and it appears that on the voyage to Bombay on the 21<sup>st</sup> of Feb<sup>r</sup> I received the Notification of Sir David Baird's appointment to the command. See the letter to Genl. Baird Page 27 of the 21 Feb<sup>r</sup>. You will see in the End of the Letter Book Page 152 the copy of a Letter to Sir Henry Wellesley in which I expressed my feelings upon the subject of having been superseded, although originally appointed to command all these troops on each and all of the expeditions.

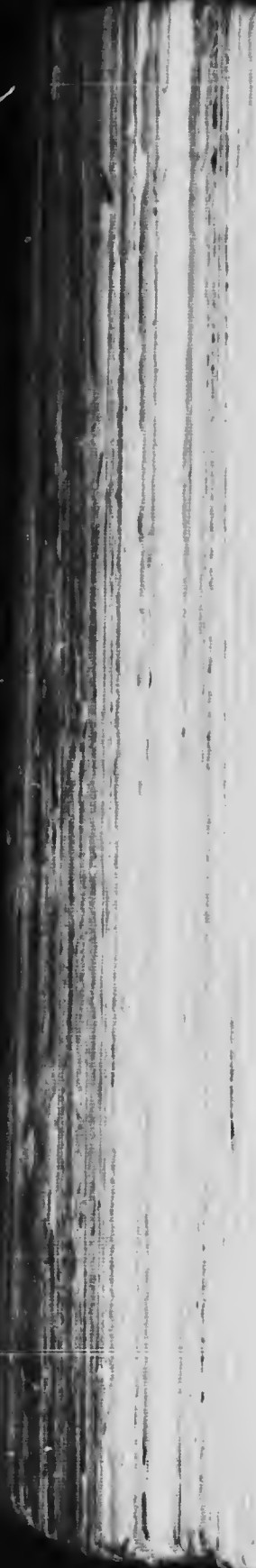
"I take the truth to have been that the General Officers of superior Rank remonstrated. This was very right. I am not surprized at it. I never was. But the Gov<sup>r</sup> General having made the appointment ought to have had strength to stand to it. It was of the unexplained supersession that I complained."



# The Life of Wellington

VOLUME II.

2









NAPOLEON I., EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH.  
1815.

*Vol. ii. Frontispiece.*

# THE LIFE OF WELLINGTON.

## CHAPTER I.

### LIGNY AND QUATRE-BRAS.

1815.

- |                                                                 |                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| May 3, 1815. Wellington and Blücher assume defensive positions. | June 16. . . Inactivity of the French in the morning. |
| June . . . Napoleon leaves Paris. His skilful manœuvres.        | Wellington inspects Blücher's position at Ligny.      |
| „ 14 . . . Takes up headquarters at Beaumont.                   | And returns to Quatre-Bras.                           |
| His plan of campaign.                                           | Battle of Quatre-Bras.                                |
| „ 15 . . . Crosses the Sambre and captures Charleroi.           | The Emperor recalls d'Erlon and the 1st Corps.        |
| Arrival of Marshal Ney.                                         | Consequent confusion.                                 |
| The Emperor gives him command of the left wing.                 | Ney's attack on Quatre-Bras.                          |
| And that of the right wing to Grouchy.                          | Arrival of Picton's division.                         |
| Desertion of the French General Bourmont.                       | Charge of Kellermann's cuirassiers.                   |
| The situation in Brussels.                                      | The French attack finally repulsed.                   |
| The Duke's orders to the army.                                  | Heavy loss on both sides.                             |
| The Duchess of Richmond's ball.                                 | Wellington's narrow escape.                           |
| „ 16 . . . Wellington rides to Quatre-Bras.                     |                                                       |

THE Duke of Wellington had an interview with Prince The Allies  
Blücher on 3rd May at Tirlemont, and came to a good assume  
understanding with him.\* It had become evident by this defensive  
positions.

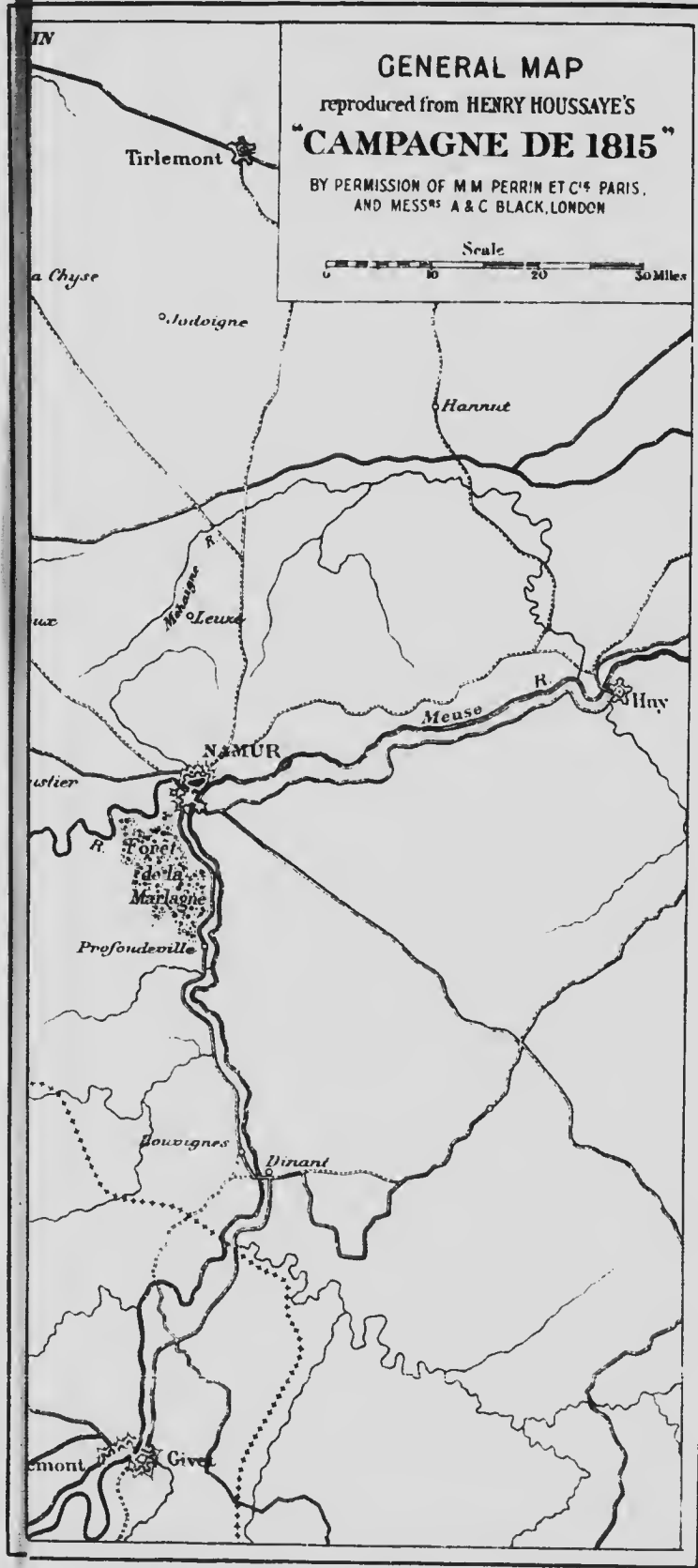
\* *Despatches*, xii. 345.

**ÆT. 46.** time that the Allies would have to receive the attack. Although the forces of both Wellington and Blücher were much scattered, covering about one hundred miles of frontier they were more capable of concentration than is apparent at first sight. Each of Blücher's four corps could assemble at its own headquarters within twelve hours; little more would have sufficed to concentrate his whole army at Namur; while in thirty hours it could form line of battle at any point threatened with attack. Wellington's cantonments were more distantly extended, but they formed a segment of a circle round Brussels, whence his reserve could be moved along excellent roads to strengthen any part of the line, upon which two-thirds of his whole force might be concentrated within twenty-four hours. Orders could be conveyed within six hours from his headquarters in Brussels to any part of his army. As early as 30th April, when it first became apparent that the position of the Russian and Austrian armies made it necessary to yield the initiative to Napoleon, Wellington drew up a secret memorandum for the guidance of the Prince of Orange, Lord Hill, Lord Uxbridge,\* commanding the cavalry, and Sir W. de Lancey, the Quartermaster-General.† There were three main routes leading from France to Belgium along which Napoleon might direct his attack—the paved roads of Charleroi, Mons, and Tournay. On the first route there were no fortifications, the defences designed for Charleroi not being in an advanced state; but those at Mons, Tournay, and Ath, formerly destroyed by the revolutionary armies, had been repaired, and must have been taken or masked by an enemy invading on either of these routes—a serious consideration for Napoleon, whose army was so greatly inferior in numbers to the Allies. Nevertheless Wellington so confidently expected that he would choose one or both of the more northern roads, that he placed his best troops on the right, massing his

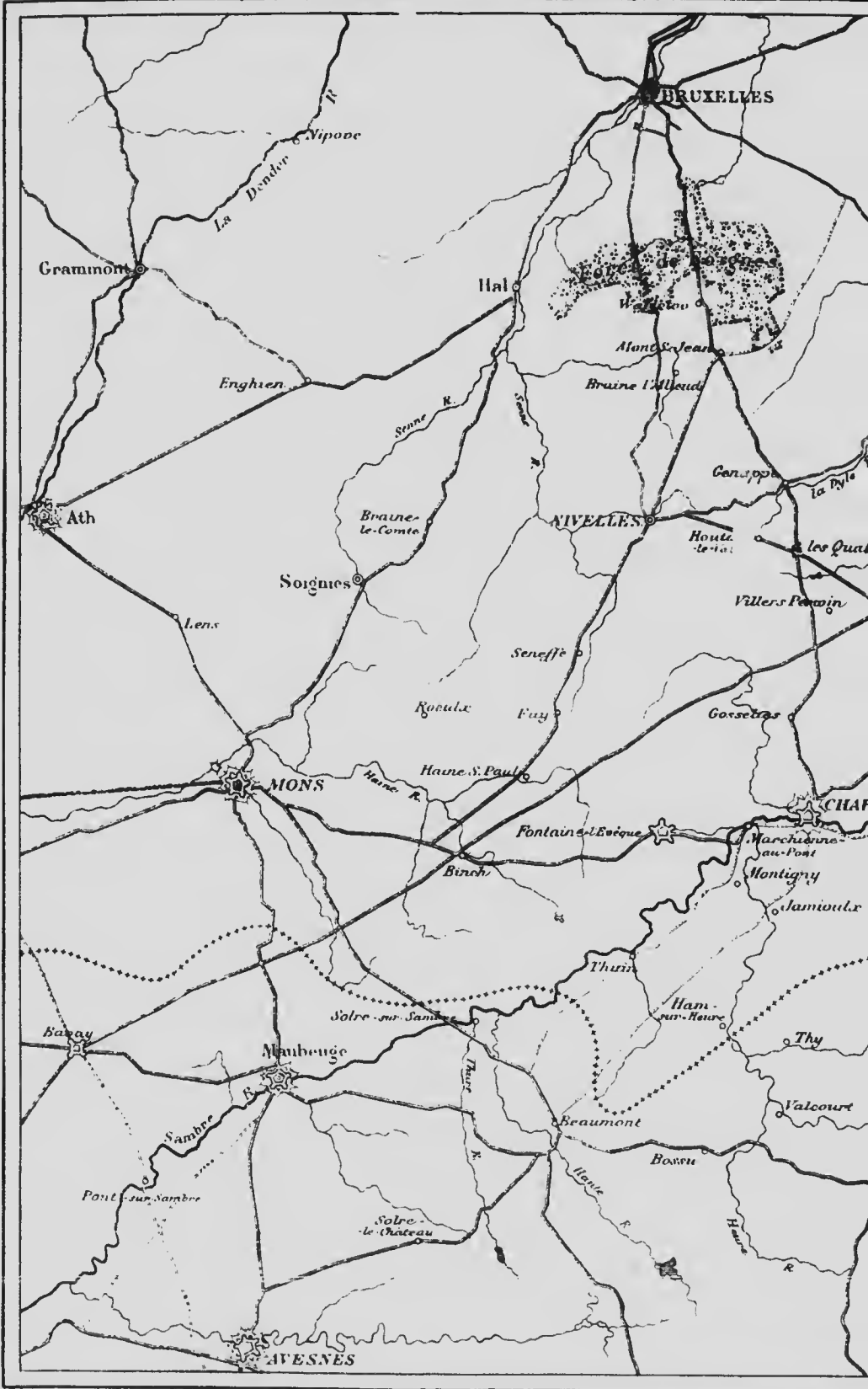
\* Afterwards Marquis of Anglesey.

† Killed at Waterloo. His rank was that of Deputy-Quartermaster-General but he was the senior in his department.

attack.  
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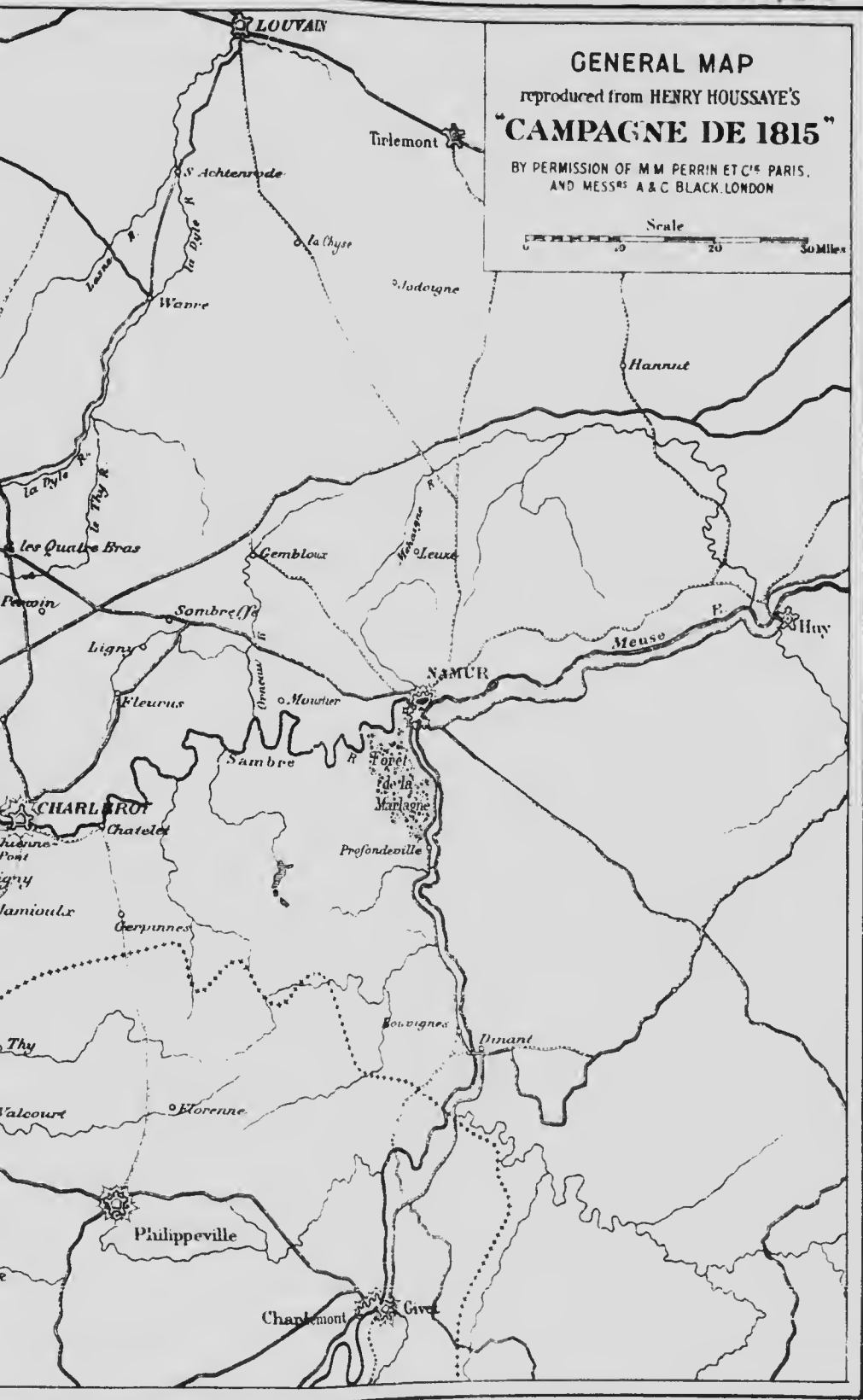
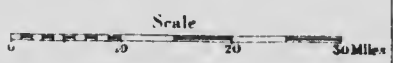


er-General



**GENERAL MAP**  
 reproduced from HENRY HOUSSAYE'S  
**"CAMPAGNE DE 1815"**

BY PERMISSION OF M M PERRIN ET C<sup>IE</sup> PARIS,  
 AND MESS<sup>RS</sup> A & C BLACK LONDON







cavalry in that direction also, at Grammont, and moving the Dutch and Belgian divisions to the left of his position next the Prussian right. He was convinced that the attack should have been made by way of Mons rather than by the Meuse and the Sambre, and he maintained that opinion all his life.\*

Up to the latest moment before his final advance Napoleon masked his real intention, by maintaining detachments along the whole Franco-Belgian frontier. The regular troops garrisoning the fortresses were secretly withdrawn and replaced by National Guards, and it was not till 13th June that Major-General Sir Hussey Vivian discovered that he had opposite to him at Tournay, not a French cavalry picket, but a handful of custom-house officials, who made no secret that the army was concentrating at Maubeuge. Napoleon left Paris at daybreak on 12th June; on the 14th his headquarters were at Beaumont, about sixteen miles south of Charleroi, the whole of his forces being well within reach of his personal command. The corps of Gérard, 16,000 strong, bivouacked before Philippeville, forming the right wing. The centre, composed of two corps of the Imperial Guard under Vandamme and Lobau, 66,000 men, lay at Beaumont; and the left wing, composed of 44,000 men of the two corps of d'Erlon and Reille, was posted on the Sambre at Solre-sur-Sambre. On arriving to take command of the army, the Emperor—Emperor not only *de facto* but *de jure*, for his titles had been secured to him when he was interned in Elba—issued one of those stirring proclamations by which he knew so well how to exalt the spirit of his soldiers. Herein Salamanca and Vitoria were but named to recall what evils might happen when he placed the command on lieutenants; on the anniversary of Marengo and Friedland he summoned Frenchmen to revive the glories of Austerlitz and Wagram, of Jena and Montmirail. "To every Frenchman who has a heart," he cried, "the moment is arrived to conquer or to die!"

\* See the Duke's memorandum on Waterloo, written in 1846 (*Suppl. Despatches*, x. 513).

Æt. 46. In spite of this demonstration on his left, Wellington, believing it to be a feint, still expected the attack to come in the way of Mons.

Napoleon's plan of campaign. A great deal has been written about Napoleon's intentions and choice of a route in advancing upon his objective—Brussels; and it does not encourage one to find that the two able writers who have most lately applied themselves to the study of this campaign have arrived at opposite conclusions. On the one hand, M. Houssaye is filled with just admiration of *la belle opération stratégique* conceived by the Emperor before he left Paris, by which he should steer his attack upon the point of contact between the armies of Wellington and Blücher and wedge them asunder, to be dealt with thereafter in detail.\* On the other hand, Mr. Ropes has collected evidence to prove that Napoleon never entertained the idea of thrusting himself between the two armies, but marched against the Prussian left because he believed that Wellington's divisions could not concentrate so rapidly as Blücher's corps, and that he would have time to defeat the Prussians before the Allies could be on the ground in force.† In support of this view, which is opposed to that taken by almost every other historian, Mr. Ropes claims the support of the German critic Clausewitz; of Wellington, as interpreted by Lord Ellesmere; and of Napoleon himself. Clausewitz may be dismissed as balanced by Alison, Jomini, Charras, and a host of other writers; the reveries of Napoleon at St. Helena, where he had access to no sources of information outside his own memory, are well known to have led him beyond the limits of fact; and as for Wellington, one cannot but call to mind a conversation repeated by Croker. Mr. Gleig said something about "Buonaparte's plans of campaign." "Pooh!" interjected the Duke, "he *had* no general preconceived idea of a campaign. In one of his campaigns, that of 1809, General Wrede, the Bavarian, commanded the army until the arrival of Buonaparte. When

\* *Houssaye* 93, 131.

† *Ropes*, 3-15.

the Emperor came, Wrede expressed a hope that the measures ANN. 1813. he had taken might be found to fall in with his Imperial Majesty's plan of campaign. Buonaparte immediately said that he never had a general plan of campaign; that he collected his forces together as well as he could, and then acted *pro re nata*, as he thought best, adding that Wrede had done exactly what he could have wished by concentrating the army as much as possible, and handing it over to him to be employed according to the circumstances of the moment. This," added the Duke, "I had from Wrede himself." \* There is also a passage in the Duke's conversations with Lady Salisbury which shows that Mr. Ropes has put too implicit faith on Lord Ellesmere's interpretation, and that the Duke fully believed that Napoleon deliberately tried to force the English and Prussians asunder. "Napoleon," said he, "committed a great mistake in endeavouring to cut in between the Prussians and the English. He ought to have gone along the direct road by Mons." †

Having, then, determined before leaving Paris to possess himself of Brussels, it seems rather fruitless to pursue inquiry as to the exact moment when Napoleon decided on the best means of accomplishing this. From the moment when he arrived at Beaumont, his mark was where his adversaries were weakest and least able to concentrate rapidly—the point of junction between the Prussian and Anglo-Belgian lines, through which lay what seemed to him the easiest way to Brussels. Curiosity about the exact sequence of his intentions is merged in admiration of the

\* *Croker*, ii. 123. Lady Salisbury also repeats this anecdote from the Duke's conversation. "When General Wrede," said the Duke, "asked Napoleon before the battles of Eylau and Friedland what was his plan of campaign, 'Je n'en ai pas,' answered the Emperor; 'je n'ai point de plan de campagne.' And it was true: he had no plan: all he required was that his troops should be assembled and posted as he directed, and then he marched, and struck a great blow, defeated the enemy, and acted afterwards as circumstances would allow" (*Salisbury MSS.*, 1838).

† *Salisbury MSS.*, 1838.

Æt. 46.  
The  
French  
cross the  
Sambre.

Arrival of  
Marshal  
Ney.

The  
Emperor  
gives him  
command  
of the left  
wing.

faultlessness of their execution. By the evening of the day after his arrival at Beaumont, Napoleon had led his army across the Sambre, captured Charleroi, advanced twenty miles into Belgian territory, and bivouacked with 124,000 men disposed in a triangle between the points of Campinaire, Gosselies, and Charleroi. Whether such had been Napoleon's deliberate purpose or not, the wedge had been inserted, to be driven home on the morrow. Of his purpose at the moment there is further evidence. During the afternoon had arrived at the French headquarters one who was destined to play a leading part in the events of the next few days. Marshal Ney had been received back into the Imperial service; the Emperor affected to have forgotten the ugly incident of the iron cage; but he left him without a command in the army of invasion. Napoleon, however, had a kindly feeling for *la bête noire*, as he now called the Marshal; on 11th June he wrote to Davout, bidding him say to Ney that if he wished to be present in the first battles, he must report himself at Avesnes on the 14th. Ney required no second summons; following the Emperor from Beaumont, he overtook him at Charleroi. "Good morning, Ney," was Napoleon's abrupt greeting. "I am glad to see you. You will take command of the 1st and 2nd Corps d'armée. I give you also the light cavalry of my Guard, but do not employ them. To-morrow you will be joined by Kellermann's cuirassiers. Go and drive the enemy along the road to Brussels and take up a position at Quatre-Bras." Read in connection with this the *Bulletin de l'Armée*, issued at Charleroi on the evening of 15th June—"The Emperor has given command of the left wing to the Prince of Moskowa (Ney), who has fixed his headquarters at Quatre-Bras on the road to Brussels"—and most people will agree with M. Houssaye that further evidence as to the Emperor's immediate intention is unnecessary. He meant to force his way to Brussels between the two armies opposed to him, and in dictating this order on the evening of the 15th, assumed—or pretended to assume—

that Ney had done his part by establishing himself at Quatre-  
 Bras. After giving the left wing to Ney, the Emperor  
 removed Grouchy from command of the cavalry, and verbally  
 gave him the right wing, with instructions to take possession  
 of Fleurus; but, after Gilly had been taken, Vandamme,  
 commanding the 3rd Corps, declared his men were tired,  
 and refused to advance further under orders of the General  
 of cavalry.

ANN. 1815.  
 —  
 And com-  
 mand of  
 the right  
 wing to  
 Grouchy.

Ney, also, failed to possess himself of Quatre-Bras.  
 General de Perponcher, commanding the Dutch-Belgian  
 division on Wellington's extreme left, being convinced that  
 the enemy's attack was no feint, as had been at first supposed,  
 took on himself the responsibility, the Prince of Orange being  
 absent in Brussels, of placing the brigade of Prince Bernhard  
 of Saxe-Weimar at Quatre-Bras, instead of moving it, as he  
 had received orders to do, to Nivelles. Consequently, when  
 Ney's advanced guard arrived late in the evening at Frasnes,  
 they found Quatre-Bras occupied by a Nassau battalion and  
 a battery of horse artillery. The French had been under  
 arms since two in the morning; the very names, still more  
 the characters, of Ney's officers were unknown to him, and,  
 in a happy hour for the Allies, he decided to do no more that  
 night. Had he persevered, it is difficult to believe that the  
 weak detachment before him could have held their position,  
 and the whole character of the campaign must have been  
 altered. That it was not so altered, that the wedge was not  
 driven home that night, was not due to Wellington's dis-  
 positions, but to the prompt and unauthorised action of  
 General de Perponcher.

A sinister event marked the opening of the campaign for  
 the 4th French Corps. On the morning of the 15th, General  
 Bourmont, commanding its leading division, deserted to the  
 enemy with his whole staff. Gérard had declared to the  
 Emperor that he would answer for his friend's fidelity with  
 his head. "Cette tête, done, c'est à moi, n'est pas?" said  
 Napoleon, playfully tapping Gérard on the cheek after

Desertion  
 of General  
 Bourmont.

**Æt. 46.** receiving his report of Bourmont's treachery, adding more gravely, "mais j'en ai trop besoin." On reaching the Prussian headquarters, Bourmont received a cold reception from Prince Blücher, who would not deign to speak to the renegade, although he had important intelligence to give.

The situa-  
tion in  
Brussels.

The position of matters at the allied headquarters in Brussels now claims attention. By some misadventure or carelessness, which can never be explained now, the Duke of Wellington received no information of the French advance till three in the afternoon. The Prussians had been engaged since four in the morning; General Müffling, who was attached to the Duke's staff, has explained that General von Zieten, as soon as he was attacked, sent an officer off to Brussels, who arrived at 3 p.m., and that he, Müffling, at once apprised the Duke.\* But from Charleroi to Brussels is only thirty miles; how did that officer spend eleven hours on the road? Above all, how did the Prince of Orange, commander of the left wing of the army, who ought to have been at the front, happen to be in Brussels, dining with the Duke of Wellington, when the news did at last arrive? Undoubtedly here is ground for the allegation, so indignantly repudiated by those who permit no reflection on their hero's infallibility, that Wellington was taken by surprise.

The  
Duke's  
orders to  
the army.

Müffling asked Wellington where he would assemble his army, observing that Blücher would certainly concentrate on Ligny. The Duke replied that he must wait for advice from Mons before fixing the rendezvous, but that he would order

\* It well illustrates the value of evidence, and, at the same time, the kind of despair which almost overwhelms one who wishes to sift out of it the truth, that Sir William Napier, the historian of the Peninsular War, stated that it was Müffling himself who bore the message from Blücher to Wellington on 15th June. "I feel," he begins, "that I do not throw away what I am going to tell you, and it is from the Duke's mouth." He then quotes the Duke as having said, "I cannot tell the world that Blücher picked out the fattest man in his army to ride with an express to me, and that he took thirty hours to go thirty miles" (*Waterloo Letters*, No. 1). Müffling, of course, was in Brussels all day, being the Prussian Commissioner at the British headquarters, and received Von Zieten's express when it arrived, at last, from the front.

all to be ready to march at a moment's notice. Two hours later the Duke sent orders to his army to concentrate on its left; not on Quatre-Bras, however, where the main road from Charleroi to Brussels passed through his lines, but at Nivelles, seven miles to the west of that road.\* Next, Müffling received a second despatch from the front, from Marshal Blücher this time, announcing that he was concentrating on Sombrefse, close to Ligny. The Duke approved, but still refused to fix his place of assembly before he heard from Mons.

"I went to my quarters," stated Müffling, "towards 10, drew up my report, leaving a place for the name of the rendezvous, and kept a courier's carriage ready at my door. Towards midnight the Duke called and told me, 'I have a report from General Dörnberg at Mons that Napoleon has moved on Charleroi with all his force, and that he, General Dörnberg, has nothing in his front. I have therefore sent orders for the concentration of my people on Nivelles and Quatre-Bras.'" †

There is, however, no mention of Quatre-Bras in these after-orders: ‡ the movement on Nivelles is confirmed. Yet at that moment Ney's advanced guard lay within two miles of Quatre-Bras, which place, had Wellington's orders been obeyed to the letter, the French might have occupied unopposed.

Readers of *Vanity Fair* (and what English man or woman has foregone the delights stored in Thackeray's masterpiece?) must have acquired a pretty accurate idea of the state of society in Brussels when Napoleon crossed the Belgian frontier. The town was crowded with fashionable non-combatants. Numbers of English families—some drawn thither

English  
visitors in  
Brussels.

\* It is significant of the Duke's disbelief in the genuineness of the attack from the south that some of the movements indicated in the afternoon order are not to take place "until it is quite certain that the enemy's attack is upon the right of the Prussian army and the left of the British army" (*Despatches*, xii, 473).

† *Suppl. Despatches*, x, 510.

‡ *Despatches*, xii, 474.

**Æt. 46.** out of solicitude for relatives in the army, others out of simple curiosity and love of excitement—thronged the hotels and lodging-houses.

The Duke of Wellington was most intimate with the Duke of Richmond's family, and the unpublished letters of the Rev. Spencer Madan, private tutor to the young Lennoxes, contain some interesting particulars of these days.

“Brussels, 13th June, 1815.

“... Though I have given some pretty good reasons for supposing that hostilities will soon commence, yet no one would suppose it, judging by the Duke of Wellington. He appears to be thinking of anything else in the world, gives a ball every week, attends every party, partakes of every amusement that offers. (Yesterday) he took Lady Jane Lennox \* to Enghien for the cricket match, and brought her back at night, apparently having gone for no other object but to amuse her. At the time Buonaparte was said to be at Maubeuge, thirty or forty miles off.

“14th June, 1815.

“The Duke of Wellington seems to unite those two extremes of character which Shakespeare gives to Henry V.—the hero and the trifier. You may conceive him at one moment commanding the allied armies in Spain or presiding at the conference at Vienna, and at another time sprawling on his back or on all fours upon the carpet playing with the children.

“His judgment is so intuitive that instant decision follows perception; consequently, as nothing dwells long upon his mind, he is enabled to get through an infinity of business without being embarrassed by it or otherwise than perfectly at his ease.

“In the drawing-room before dinner he was playing with the children, who seemed to look up to him as to one on whom they might depend for amusement. When dinner was announced they quitted him with great regret, saying, ‘Be sure you remember to send for us the moment dinner is over,’ which he promised to do, and was as good as his word.”

Feasting and dancing went on every night; the Duke of

\* Married Lawrence Peel, younger brother of the Minister, Sir Robert Peel.



Wellington had fixed 21st June as the date for a grand ball he intended to give, but the Duchess of Richmond anticipated him by selecting the 15th for her ball. The Duke of Richmond,\* though a general officer, was in Brussels like many other gentlemen, merely as a civilian spectator—an interested one, indeed, for he had three sons in the army; one, Lord March, on the Prince of Orange's staff, another, Lord George, on the Duke's, and a third in the Blues. The Duchess's brother, the last Duke of Gordon, was Colonel-in-Chief of the 3rd (Scots) Regiment of Guards, while the 92nd Gordon Highlanders,† with the 42nd and 79th Highlanders, formed part of the 5th Division stationed as the reserve in Brussels. Desiring to show her foreign guests a Highland reel, the Duchess of Richmond engaged some of the sergeants and privates of the 42nd and 92nd to perform one for their entertainment. Before the summer sun had quenched the ball-room lights, these poor fellows were trudging southwards, some of them never to return.

Now it has been asserted that the Duke of Wellington, although perfectly aware of Napoleon's movements, determined to attend this ball in order to reassure people about the safety of Brussels. General Müffling quotes him as having said at midnight, after communicating to him the intelligence from Mons, "The numerous friends of Napoleon (in Brussels) will be on tiptoe; the well intentioned must be pacified; let us therefore go to the Duchess of Richmond's ball, and start for Quatre-Bras at 5 a.m."

\* As soon as Wellington's promotion to Field Marshal gave him seniority over the Duke of Richmond, that nobleman chivalrously offered to serve under his former junior and secretary at the Irish Office—an offer which somewhat embarrassed the Horse Guards, inasmuch as the Duke of Richmond had no experience of active service.

† This fine regiment was raised by the fourth Duke of Gordon towards the close of the eighteenth century. Recruits came in slowly at first; it is said that only about a dozen men had been enrolled, when the Duchess, a celebrated beauty and madcap, undertook to fill the ranks if the recruiting were left to her. She gave out that every man who would take the King's shilling should receive it in his lips from between hers. The story goes that in a very short time the complement was complete.

ANN. 1815.

The  
Duchess  
of Rich-  
mond's  
ball.

Æt. 46.  
Wellington was  
taken by  
surprise.

Granted, then, that this was the Duke's object in attending a ball at such a moment, and permitting his officers to attend it, is there not proof in this that he was not aware of Napoleon's movements? All he knew was what he wrote to the Duc de Feltre at 10 p.m., that the Prussian posts at Thuin had been attacked, but that no news had reached him from Charleroi later than 9 o'clock in the morning, *two hours before it was captured by the enemy*. Pieton still lay in Brussels with the reserve of the army, under orders to march, indeed, at short notice; but, had Wellington known the condition of affairs at the front, it would have been halfway to Quatre-Bras before the ball began. Had he realised that Napoleon's advanced guard was bivouacked within two miles of the left of his army, is it possible that he would have loitered or have permitted the Prince of Orange, to whom that left was entrusted, to loiter among the fiddles and champagne? Is it likely that Lord Hill, commandant of the right wing of the army, that Lord Uxbridge, commandant of the cavalry, that the Generals Pieton, Ponsonby, Clinton, Byng, Cooke, Kempt, Paek, Maitland, and others would have been content to be absent from their divisions and brigades had the truth been suspected? It is perfectly clear from his own despatch that Wellington was completely deceived as to the nature of Napoleon's movements.

"I did not hear of these events (the attack on Thuin) till in the evening of the 15th, and I immediately ordered the troops to prepare to march, and afterwards to march to their left, as soon as I had intelligence from other quarters to prove that the enemy's movement on Charleroi was the real attack." \*

It is not so certain when the real state of the case was revealed to him. Probably it is true, as reported, that news of the capture of Charleroi reached the Duke in the ball-room, and that he instructed his general officers to leave the place quietly, so as to cause no alarm, and it was then, towards

\* *Despatches*, xii. 478.

two in the morning of the 16th, that the reserve was called ANN. 1815. to arms and marched off; but it is not known certainly whether this took place before, during, or after supper, at which the Duke returned thanks for the toast of the allied army proposed by General Alava.\* Here, at all events, is testimony from the journal of Lady Hamilton Dalrymple—made out of hundreds of persons who scrutinised the Duke's movements and expression on that memorable night.

“Although the Duke affected great gaiety and cheerfulness, it struck me that I had never seen him have such an expression of care and anxiety on his countenance. I sat next him on a sofa a long time, but his mind seemed quite pre-occupied; and although he spoke to me in the kindest manner possible, yet frequently in the middle of a sentence he stopped abruptly and called to some officer, giving him directions, in particular to the Duke of Brunswick and Prince of Orange, who both left the ball before supper. Despatches were constantly coming in to the Duke . . . however, we remained till half-past two, and when I left the Duke was still there. . . . At four o'clock in the morning . . . I went to the window (it was the finest morning possible). I saw the Highland Brigade marching out to the tune of ‘Hieland Laddie’ . . . a number of British regiments followed, then foreign troops, and at eight o'clock the Duke of Wellington and his staff passed. . . .”

Even when the Duke left Brussels on the morning of the 16th he had not made up his mind that Quatre-Bras, and not Nivelles, was to be the point of concentration, which is clear

\* The late Sir William Fraser was strongly of opinion that he had identified this historic ball-room as still in existence; but the late Dowager Lady de Ros and Lady Louisa Tighe, both of whom were at their mother's ball, were positive that the building had disappeared, and that the site of it is now traversed by the Rue des Cendres. The story, so often repeated, that Lady Louisa Tighe buckled on the Duke's sword before he set out for the front, has been emphatically contradicted by her ladyship herself, who, happily, is still alive. It is a pity that M. Houssaye has marred his fine narrative by giving currency to a tale so mislading as to the Duke's simple character and dislike of display.

Æt. 46. from the fact that Picton had orders to halt the reserve division at Waterloo, where the roads to Nivelles and Quatre-Bras separate. Captain (afterwards General Sir George) Bowles, indeed, in his interesting memorandum of what took place, says that the Duke, before leaving Brussels, had fixed on Quatre-Bras; but the battle which took place a few hours later impressed the minds of men so powerfully with the name of Quatre-Bras, that it found its way into subsequent narratives more easily than any other.

“The Prince of Orange came back suddenly, just as the Duke of Wellington had taken his place at the supper table, and whispered some minutes to his Grace, who only said he had no fresh orders to give, and recommended the Prince to go back to his quarters and go to bed. The Duke of Wellington remained nearly twenty minutes after this, and then said to the Duke of Richmond, ‘I think it is time for me to go to bed likewise;’ and then, whilst wishing him good night, whispered to ask him if he had a good map in his house. The Duke of Richmond said he had, and took him into his dressing-room,\* which opened into the supper-room. The Duke of Wellington shut the door and said, ‘Napoleon has *humbugged* me, by G——! he has gained twenty-four hours’ march on me.’ The Duke of Richmond said, ‘What do you intend doing?’ The Duke of Wellington replied, ‘I have ordered the army to concentrate at Quatre-Bras; but we shall not stop him there, and if so, I must fight him *here*’ (at the same time passing his thumb-nail over the position of Waterloo). He then said adieu, and left the house by another way out. He went to his quarters, slept six hours, and breakfasted, and rode at speed to Quatre-Bras. . . . The conversation in the Duke of Richmond’s dressing-room was repeated to me, two minutes after it occurred, by the Duke of Richmond, who was to have commanded the reserve, if formed, and to whom I was to have been aide-de-camp. He marked the Duke of Wellington’s thumb-nail with his pencil on the map, and we often looked at it together some months afterwards.” †

\* It was the study.

† *Letters of the first Earl of Malmesbury*, ii. 445. The map was lost when the Duke of Richmond went to Canada.

No orders for the movement of troops on the 16th, or for their concentration upon any point towards the allied left, are extant, subsequent to the after-orders issued at 10 p.m. on the 15th, except those instructions dated 16th June, published in *Despatches*, xii. 474, to which the editor, Colonel Gurwood, appended the following note:—

ANN. 1815.  
Wellington's  
orders to  
the army.

“The original instructions issued to Colonel de Lancey (Deputy-Quartermaster-General) were lost with that officer's papers. These memorandums of movements have been collected from the different officers to whom they were addressed.”

Now these memoranda are five in number,\* four being addressed to Lord Hill and one to Major-General Sir J. Lambert, and it is singular that those writers who have founded upon them the theory that Wellington, before leaving

\* (1.) *To General Lord Hill, G.C.B.*

“16th June, 1815.

“The Duke of Wellington requests that you will move the 2nd Division of infantry upon Braine-le-Comte immediately. The cavalry has been ordered likewise on Braine-le-Comte. His Grace is going to Waterloo.”

(2.) *To the same.*

“16th June, 1815.

“Your Lordship is requested to order Prince Frederiek of Orange to move, immediately upon receipt of this order, the 1st Division of the army of the Low Countries, and the Indian Brigade, from Sotteghem to Eughien, leaving 500 men, as before directed, at Audenarde.”

(3.) *To the same.*

“Genappe, 16th June, 1815.

“The 2nd Division of infantry to move to-morrow morning at daybreak from Nivelles to Quatre-Bras. The 4th Division of infantry to move at daybreak to-morrow morning to Nivelles.”

(4.) *To the same.*

“16th June, 1815.

“The reserve artillery to move at daybreak to-morrow morning, the 17th, to Quatre-Bras, where it will receive further orders.”

(5.) *To Major-General Sir J. Lambert, K.C.B.*

“16th June, 1815.

“The brigade of infantry under the command of Major-General Sir J. Lambert to march from Assche at daybreak to-morrow morning, the 17th, to Genappe, on the Namur road, and to remain there until further orders.”

Æt. 46. Brussels, had ordered a concentration upon Quatre-Bras, seem to have overlooked the fact that three of them contain directions for movements to be carried out *not on the 16th but on the 17th*; further, that the only one which bears the place of origin is dated from Genappe, showing that the Duke was far on the road to the front before he issued it. This order, addressed to Lord Hill, directs the movement on the 17th of the 2nd Division from Nivelles to Quatre-Bras, and the 4th Division to Nivelles. This in itself disposes of the allegation that the Duke had issued orders for a concentration on Quatre-Bras before he left the ball-room in the early morning of the 16th. There is more. In one of these five memoranda Lord Hill is informed that the cavalry has been ordered to Braine-le-Comte, seventeen English miles to the west of Quatre-Bras. How is such a disposition to be reconciled with a concentration upon Quatre-Bras? Finally, it is inconsistent with such a concentration having been ordered early on the 16th that Picton remained at Waterloo with his division till after midday,\* and that the Duke passed and left him there on his way to the front. The Duke, therefore, cannot have issued his final orders for a concentration on Quatre-Bras (which it has been surmised were lost with Sir W. de Lancey's papers) before he himself joined the Prince of Orange at that place.

Wellington rides  
to Quatre-  
Bras.

"I found there the Prince of Orange with a small body of Belgian troops, two or three battalions of infantry, a squadron of Belgian dragoons, and two or three pieces of cannon, which had been at the Quatre-Bras since the preceding evening. It appeared that the picket of this detachment had been touched by a French patrol, and there was some firing, but very little; and of so little importance that, after seeing what was doing, I went on to the Prussian army, which I saw from the ground was assembling upon the field of Saint Amand and Ligny, about eight miles distant." †

\* *Waterloo Letters*, p. 23.

† *Croker*, iii. 173.

"In the meantime," wrote the Duke in his Waterloo despatch, "I had directed the whole army to march upon Les Quatre-Bras;" and goes on to say that Picton's division arrived about half-past two. Now, there is a slight inaccuracy here. We know that Picton's division, though it may have been sighted at half-past two, did not arrive till half-past three.\* The position of Waterloo—Mont-Saint-Jean—is just nine English miles from Quatre-Bras, the village of Waterloo is a couple of miles further. Either distance could be covered by a mounted officer in less than an hour; but Picton's division, with guns, could not be reckoned on performing the march in less than three hours. It seems probable, therefore, that it was not till the Duke had himself inspected the position at Quatre-Bras, and satisfied himself that the attack on Ligny was to be a genuine one, that he issued final orders for the concentration of all his forces on the Prussian right.

It is clear that the Duke had no right to reckon on Perponcher's weak detachment being left so long in undisturbed possession of Quatre-Bras; being permitted, indeed, to regain on the morning of the 16th some of the ground yielded on the 15th. The whole responsibility for this lapse must be borne by Ney. Making every excuse for that Marshal on the ground that he was but newly arrived, had been so suddenly placed in command of two corps d'armée, had been compelled to improvise a staff from among officers with whom he was imperfectly acquainted, and knew very little about what Germans would term the "dislocation" of his forces, the fact remains that he took no measures to prepare for that advance which Scult, at half-past six in the morning, informed him was about to be made. His advanced guard, as we know, had touched Frasnes overnight, but the rest of his divisions were echeloned as far to the rear as Marchienne-au-Pont, nine miles, and Thuin, sixteen miles distant. Had Ney's columns been closed

Inactivity  
of the  
French on  
the morn-  
ing of the  
16th.

\* *Waterloo Letters*, p. 24.

Æt. 46. — to the front at an early hour on the 16th, he would have found nothing before him but Prince Bernhard's Dutch brigade, but at 10 o'clock Ney's troops were not even under arms.\*

In like manner, if Napoleon had brought up his right into line with his advanced posts—if, in short, his army had bivouacked overnight in line of battle instead of in line of march—only one of the four Prussian corps, General Zieten's, was in position at Ligny to oppose him. Pirch I.'s, on the march from Namur, had only got as far as Onoz and Mazy, six miles from Ligny; Thielemann's was at Namur, fifteen miles off; whereas the fourth Prussian corps, Bülow's, was still at Liège, sixty miles distant. Napoleon had only to form his line of battle to the front early on that morning, and he would have brought 120,000 men to crush one Prussian corps d'armée and one Belgian Dutch brigade. Then he might have turned to demolish the British and Prussian forces as they arrived in succession. Instead of this, no effort was made to bring up the rear divisions from Charleroi and Châtelet till nearly midday on the 16th, when three-fourths of the Prussian army had assembled at Sombreffe and Ligny, and the attack was put off till the afternoon. Ney, on the left, timing his movements by the Emperor's, could but keep up an ineffective skirmish with his advanced guard, wasting the precious hours while the British were assembling before him. *Aliquando dormitant*—Wellington's unpreparedness, or, if that be too harsh a term, his miscalculation, on the 15th, was neutralised by Napoleon's inertness on the 16th; and thus the two greatest commanders of their age each inaugurated by a false move their first encounter with the other.

When Wellington perceived that all was quiet in front of Perponcher's division, he wrote the following letter to Prince Blücher:—

\* *Houssaye*, 187, note.



"On the heights behind Frasnes.

ANN. 1815.

"June 16, 1815. 10.30 a.m.

"MY DEAR FÜRST,—My army is situated as follows: The Corps d'Armée of the Prince of Orange has a division here and at Quatre-Bras, and the rest at Nivelles. The Reserve is in march from Waterloo to Genappe, where it will arrive at noon. The English cavalry will be at the same hour at Nivelles. The corps of Lord Hill is at Braine-le-Comte. I do not see any large force of the enemy in front of us, and I await news from your Highness and the arrival of troops in order to determine my operations for the day. Nothing has been seen on the side of Binche, nor on our right.

"Your very obedient servant,

"WELLINGTON."\*

After inspecting the Prince of Orange's position, the Duke, accompanied by his aide-de-camp, Sir Alexander Gordon, and two or three orderlies, rode over to inspect that of Blücher at Ligny, where he met Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Hardinge,† British Commissioner at the Prussian headquarters.

Wellington visits Blücher.

"On the morning of the 16th I left Brussels and rode forward about five miles beyond Quatre-Bras to see the Prince of Orange's outposts.‡ After that, I went over to the Prussians about seven miles to our left from Quatre-Bras, and found them drawn up on the slope of the ground with their advanced columns close down to the rivulet of Ligny, the banks of which were so marshy that the French could only cross it at the bridges of three or four villages that lie along its course. I told the Prussian officers, in presence of Hardinge, that, according to my judgment, the exposure of the advanced columns and, indeed, of the whole army to cannonade, standing as they did displayed to the aim of

\* This letter, quoted by Ropes (p. 106) from Von Ollech's history, was not published till 1876. It will be noticed that the position of the cavalry has been altered since the order sent to Lord Hill (see p. 15).

† Afterwards Field-Marshal Viscount Hardinge, G.C.B.

‡ He cannot have ridden due south, or he would have been landed within the enemy's outposts at Frasnes.

Æt. 46. — the enemy's fire, was not prudent.\* The marshy banks of the stream made it out of their power to cross and attack the French, while the latter, on the other hand, though they could not attack them, had it in their power to cannonade them, and shatter them to pieces, after which they might fall upon them by the bridges at the villages. I said that if I were in Blücher's place with English troops, I should withdraw all the columns I saw scattered about in front, and get more of the troops under shelter of the rising ground. However they seemed to think they knew best, so I came away very shortly. It all fell out exactly as I had feared—the French overwhelmed them, as they stood, by a prodigious fire of artillery, and I myself could distinguish with my glass from Quatre-Bras a general charge of the French cavalry on their confused columns, in which charge it was that Blücher was ridden over and near killed." †

And  
returns to  
Quatre-  
Bras.

It has often been asserted that Wellington gave Blücher an unconditional promise of support, and that this decided Blücher to receive battle. Wellington, as has been shown, did not anticipate much trouble on that day at Quatre-Bras, and no doubt expected to be able to support Blücher when his own troops had collected. But his engagement was by no means unconditional. Müffling reports his last words as being—"Well, I will come, provided I am not attacked myself." As soon as he returned to Quatre-Bras, which he reached at half-past two or three o'clock, the Prince of Orange informed him that the French were in force in the wood before him, but that he did not expect they would advance that afternoon. At that moment loud cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* were heard, taken up in succession by brigades, and a loud voice could be heard distinctly crying—"L'Empereur recompensera celui qui s'avancera!"

"That," observed the Duke, "must be Ney going down the

\* "If they fight here," said the Duke to Hardinge, "they will be damnably mauled" (*Stanhope*, 109).

† *De Ros MS.*

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FIELD-MARSHAL VON BLÜCHER, AGED 72.  
*From a Pencil Drawing in 1814, by Major-General Blich-Regentson*  
*(Vol. II, p. 20.)*



lino. I know what that means ; we shall be attacked in five minutes." \* ANN. 1815.

And so it was. Immediately afterwards the French columns Battle  
of Quatre-  
Bras. debouched from the wood in fine order, with drums beating, the Prince of Orange withdrawing his advanced light troops and guns before them.† As Wellington sat watching the enemy, he was surprised to see that instead of both corps, 40,000 or 50,000 strong, advancing against him, one of them, that opposite his own left, was moving off sharply to its right in the direction of Ligny. This, though it gratified him at the time, also puzzled him exceedingly ; and the explanation was not apparent till many days later. It was this. In fixing 2.30 p.m. as the hour for Grouchy's attack on the Prussians at Ligny, the Emperor ordered Ney to fall on the Prince of Orange at the same time, to sever the British communication with Mons and Ostend, and to meet the Emperor at Brussels at seven o'clock the following morning. The Emperor, with the Imperial Guard in reserve, undertook to keep his eye on the movements of both Grouchy and Ney's columns, and support either according to the turn of affairs—"je me porterai sur l'une ou l'autre aile selon les circonstances."‡ But at 3.15 p.m., after three orders had been despatched to Ney directing him to carry Quatre-Bras, the Emperor, through Sault, sent him a fourth, more urgent than the rest, commanding him to support Grouchy by directing his attack on the right flank of the Prussians at Ligny. "The fate of France is in your hands ; therefore hesitate not a moment to move according to the Emperor's commands, and direct your march upon the heights of Saint-Amand and Brye."

\* Houssaye describes Wellington as considering the situation at this moment as critical, and almost hopeless ; but he misinterprets the meaning of a phrase used in the Duke's letter to Lady F. Webster : "We fought a desperate battle" (*Suppl. Despatches*, x. 501). English readers will perceive the difference between a desperate battle and a desperate situation (compare vol. i. p. 56, note).

† *De Ros MS.* ; *Croker*, iii. 173.

‡ The Emperor's letter to Ney, 16th June. Napoleon sent nine despatches to Ney in the course of this day (*Houssaye*, 185).

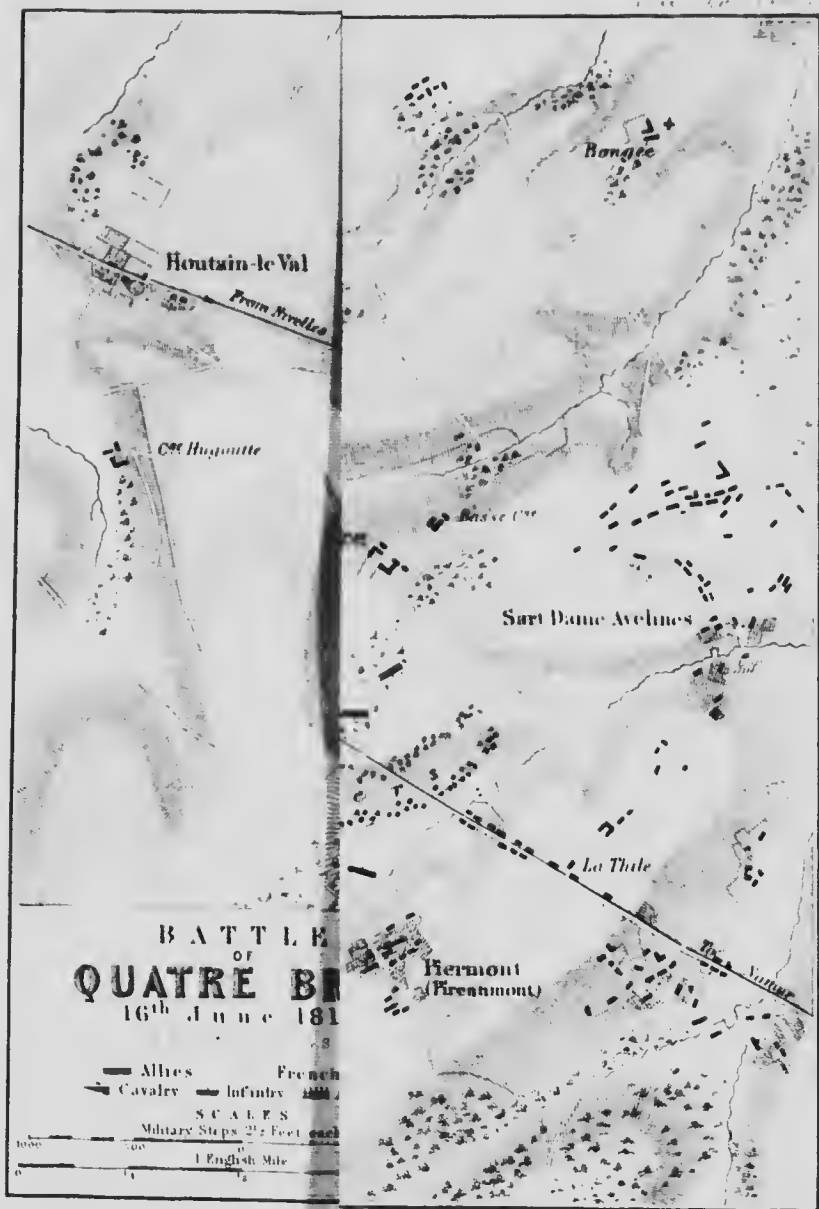
ÆT. 46.

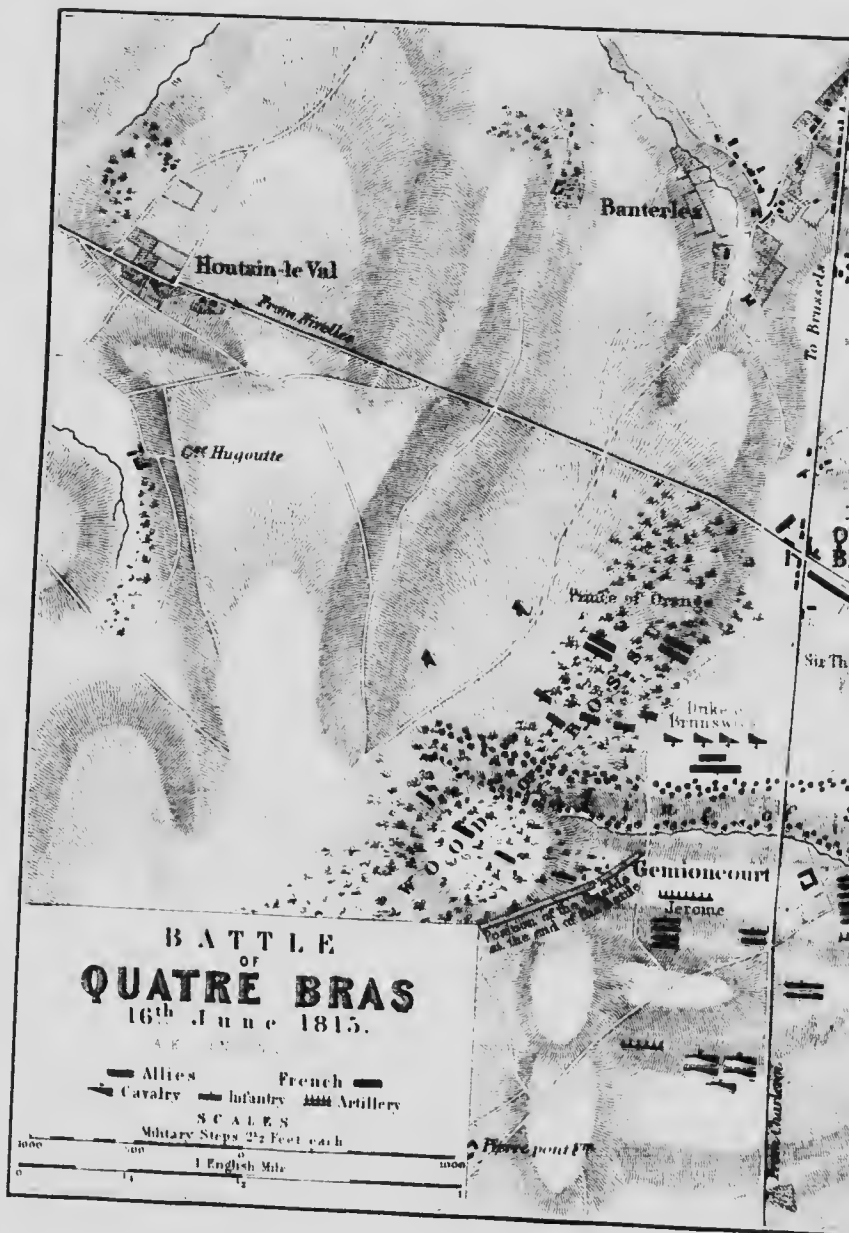
Colonel Laurent, charged to carry this pencilled command to Ney, rode round by Gosselies. Fifteen minutes after he started Napoleon despatched another officer, Colonel de Forbin-Janson,\* with orders direct to d'Erlon, commanding him to move upon the eminence of Saint-Amand and fall upon Ligny. "Monsieur le Comte d'Erlon," the note ended, "you are about to save France and cover yourself with glory!" D'Erlon would gladly have exchanged this fine peroration for greater clearness in his instructions. *Portez vous . . . à la hauteur de Saint-Amand*—was not the intention *sur la hauteur?* Forbin-Janson, an officer of but a year's experience, could throw no light on the meaning. He had ridden a shorter route than the messenger to Ney, and d'Erlon received his orders *three-quarters of an hour sooner* than Ney. He carried them out to the letter. Instead of marching upon the height of Saint-Amand—*sur la hauteur*—he advanced on a line with that hamlet—*à la hauteur*—sending Delcambre, the chief of his staff, to inform Ney of the change in his destination. Up to five o'clock Ney was under the delusion that d'Erlon was supporting him on the right, but at that hour Delcambre reached him with d'Erlon's message, announcing his change of direction. Five minutes later Colonel Laurent rode up with the Emperor's order of 3.15 to Ney, whose fury was without bounds. The balls from a British battery were ploughing up the ground round him. "Ah! these English balls," he cried, "I wish they were all in my belly." He sent Delcambre back with positive orders to support Reille in his attack on Quatre-Bras, then in full progress.

It was too late. When Delcambre rejoined d'Erlon at six o'clock, the 1st Corps was almost within cannon-shot of Saint-Amand and in full view of the Prussians. D'Erlon had to choose between continuing the movement in compliance with the Emperor's direct command and obeying the

\* *Houssaye*, 201, where a minute analysis is undertaken of the cause of the confusion. Mr. Ropes (p. 182) disbelieves in the Emperor's direct order to d'Erlon, but M. Houssaye produces convincing evidence in support of it.

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imperative recall of his immediate superior. The soldier's ANN. 1815. duty seemed clear: he countermarched his columns, and, leaving Fleurus which he had approached within two miles, began the return to Quatre-Bras which was three times as far off. By no fault of its commander the whole energies of the 1st Corps d'Armée, which, rightly directed, had been irresistible at Quatre-Bras, was dissipated in fruitless oscillation between the two battle-fields.\*

Ney had begun his attack about three o'clock with a furious onset upon the farm of Gémioncourt, situated on the Charleroi-Brussels highway. The fields were so deep with rye that it was difficult to make out the exact positions of friend or foe, a condition all in favour of the Allies, as concealing their real weakness; for in truth the Duke began this action with no more than 7,000 infantry and 16 guns, against 15,000 or 16,000 French. Gémioncourt, weakly defended by a detachment of Nassau troops, was speedily taken, and Prince Jérôme's division on the French left drove the Dutchmen out of the wood of Bossu. These two important points gained, Ney ordered a general advance. The conflict grew warm on the allied left at Piermont, and the superior numbers of the enemy soon began to prevail, until the 5th Division,† under

\* Wellington's criticism on Napoleon's generalship on this occasion was severe and just. "I wonder what they would have said of me if I had done such a thing as that. I have always avoided a false move. I preferred being too late in my movement to having to alter it" (*Salisbury MSS.*, 1838).

† The divisions of the British army had been re-numbered since the close of the Peninsular war. On 15th June, the day before the battle of Quatre-Bras, Wellington had consulted his Generals as to their desire to have them restored to the old order. Had there been time to effect this, Sir Thomas Picton's division, the 5th, would have become again the 3rd, so long and gloriously associated with his name.

Peninsular Numbers.	Waterloo Numbers.	Generals.
1 (the Guards)	1	General Cooke
2	4	Sir C. Colville
3	5	Sir T. Picton
4	6	Sir L. Cole
5	3	Sir C. Alten
6	2	Sir H. Clinton

(*Despatches*, xii. 470).

Æt. 46. — old Picton, opportunely arrived from Brussels, 7,200 strong. Soon the Brunswick corps, nearly 7,000, marched in from Nivelles, and the Nassau contingent 6,900, making, with 1,200 of Van Merlen's horse, a total of some 22,000 Allies. By five o'clock Ney, who had begun the fight with overpowering superiority of numbers, was in turn outnumbered by 6,000 or 7,000. Nevertheless the Allies were at a great disadvantage in regard to cavalry. Lord Uxbridge's division had been directed to advance from Ninhove till the rear of the column had crossed the high-road from Mons to Brussels; but, owing to a misapprehension of the order, they were halted as soon as the head of the column touched it.\*

The rest of the afternoon was spent in a series of encounters of exceeding severity, the course of which it is very difficult to follow. Personal impressions of every battle are confined to each man's sphere of observation; at Quatre-Bras the spheres of all men were unusually limited. Besides the deep corn, which concealed the infantry, there was the wood of Bossu, masking the attack of the enemy's left; and the successive arrivals of Wellington's forces render the sequence of events more than usually confusing. It must be confessed that there were departures as well as arrivals. Many of the Belgians and Dutch were Buonapartist at heart; others were indifferent or disaffected; nearly all believed Napoleon to be invincible. Thus it came to pass that the 2nd Dutch-Belgian Division, upwards of 7,000 strong, who had held such a brave front under the Prince of Orange in the fore part of the day, tired of the sport before evening, and quitted the field almost to a man. The chief feature of the fight was the steady endurance by British infantry of the repeated charges by French cavalry. Picton, to relieve the pressure on the squares of the 42nd, 44th, 79th, and 92nd, actually charged the French cuirassiers and lancers with the Royals, the 28th and 32nd Regiments. Ney had forfeited all the advantage he enjoyed in the morning: he had proved in

\* *De Ros MS.*

anticipation the truth of Napoleon's verdict uttered at ANN. 1815 St. Helena, "Ney n'était plus le même homme." Still he was proud and brave: he held in his hand the Emperor's billet—"le sort de la France est entre vos mains." He knew that he was outnumbered before the heads of the 1st (Guards) Division, and the 3rd (Alten's) Division appeared about six o'clock coming up from Nivelles: mad with rage at the Emperor and chagrin at his lost opportunity, he must wrench victory even at the last hour. He sent for Kellermann.

"My dear General," said he, "the safety of France is at stake. We must make a supreme effort. Take your cavalry and fling yourself upon the English centre. Crush them!—ride them down!"

War-worn Kellermann was not the man to blench at such an order; nevertheless he pointed out that the enemy was now 25,000 strong, and that he had with him only a single brigade of cuirassiers, the other three brigades being far to the rear, in accordance with Ney's own commands.

"What does that matter?" roared Ney, above the thunder of the guns. "Charge with what you have; ride them down! I'll support you with all the cavalry I have. Go; go, I tell you!"\*

Ten minutes later Kellermann's trumpets sounded the charge. In column of squadrons, eight hundred steel-clad Charge of Kellermann's cuirassiers. horsemen thundered down upon Sir Colin Halkett's brigade. The first battalion, the 69th Regiment, was forming square in compliance with instructions from their Brigadier, when an officer of high rank rode up and asked what they were about.

"Preparing for cavalry, sir," was the reply, "by the Brigadier-General's orders."

"Oh, cavalry be d—d! There's none within miles of you. Reform column, sir, and deploy at once."

This fresh order was in the act of being carried out when

\* *Houssaye*, 207, quoting Kellermann's narrative in the French *Archives de la Guerre*.

Æt. 46.

the cuirassiers swept upon the column, rode through it, and carried off the regimental colour.\* The 30th and 33rd stood firmly in their squares, shoulder deep in rye; the cuirassiers rode past them, scattered the Belgian and Brunswick cavalry, and penetrated as far as Quatre-Bras, completely turning the allied position. On the left of Quatre-Bras the banks were lined by the 92nd Highlanders and some Hanoverians. The Duke of Wellington, dismounted, stood on the left of the Highlanders; then, moving round to the rear of the line, called out, "Don't fire, ninety-second, till I give you the word!" When the cuirassiers were within thirty yards he gave the order for a volley, which told with terrific violence, completely stopping and repulsing the attack,† and Kellermann, being unsupported, drew off in great disorder, with the loss of one-third of his brigade. Reinforcements were arriving in quick succession to the Allies, when Ney received positive orders from the Emperor by the hand of Colonel Baudus, that, happen what might to the left wing, d'Erlon was without fail to march to his right.‡ Ney was on foot, having had two horses shot under him, and, more like a madman than a cool-headed soldier, began rallying his broken infantry and leading them against Pack's Highlanders, continuing the hopeless combat till nearly nine o'clock. Then he drew off, having been sacrificed by his master's interference with d'Erlon, but, in Napoleon's opinion, not sacrificed in vain. The 1st Corps had been neutralised, the 2nd beaten, yet in the Emperor's larger view the day had not been lost. On the contrary, his object had been attained; he had severed the armies of Blücher and Wellington and kept them apart, while he inflicted a severe defeat on the Prussians at Ligny—

\* The 69th only brought one colour on the field, having lost the other at the disastrous affair of Bergen-op-Zoom in the previous year.

† *Waterloo Letters*, p. 386.

‡ "Il faut absolument que l'ordre donné au comte d'Erlon soit exécuté, quelle que soit la situation où se trouve le maréchal Ney. Je n'attache pas grande importance à ce qui passera aujourd'hui de son côté. L'affaire est toute où je suis, car je veux en finir avec l'armée prussienne" (*Houssaye*, 212, quoting *Baudus MS.*).

the last and not the least characteristic in the long roll of ANN. 1815. Napoleonic victories. Had the positions of the two commanders been reversed, it may be safely said that Wellington, even at the price of attaining an important advantage, would never have compromised one of his Generals by withdrawing from him half his force at the moment of attack—would never have declared that “he attached little importance” to what befell that General.

On the other hand, it must be freely admitted that if Ney had shown ordinary alacrity in the morning and collected his forces in time to carry out the Emperor's earlier orders, he could have spared d'Erlon perfectly well, have cut to pieces or driven away the weak detachment of Perponcher, and probably no serious attempt would have been made to hold the position of Quatre-Bras against him. It was owing to Ney's culpable laxity that there was any battle of Quatre-Bras to be recorded.

The following is a return of the loss to the Allies, so far as known, in killed, wounded, and missing:—

British . . . . .	2,275
Hanoverians . . . . .	369
Brunswickers . . . . .	819
	3,463 officers and men.*

Of the casualties among the Dutch and Belgian troops no separate return could be made, most of them having deserted the field in the afternoon, spreading news of the total defeat of the Allies. The loss of the French was officially stated at 4,300.†

\* *Siborne*, i. 160. Of the British regiments, the Highlanders suffered most severely; but, to judge from the following passage in a letter written from Brussels on 17th June by Lady Georgina Lennox (afterwards Lady de Ros) to Lady Georgina Bathurst, they were not of sufficient importance to cause much concern to the fashionable ladies in that town. “Thank God, my dearest G., all our friends are safe. There was a general action yesterday evening, the Guards were not engaged. . . . Poor Sir D. Pack is severely wounded, and the poor Duke of Brunswick died of his wounds. . . . The Scotch were chiefly engaged, so there are no officers wounded that one knows.”

† *Housaye*, 213.

Æt. 46.

Narrow  
escape of  
Wellington.

The Duke of Brunswick fell at the head of his good Black Brunswickers, whose sable uniform and silver death's-head and crossbones bore witness how the duke's father had fallen in like manner commanding his hussars at the Battle of Jena. At the time Brunswick was killed, Wellington himself was in great peril. The Brunswick infantry, which had replaced the troops of Nassau in the first line, gave way under a charge of French cavalry. Wellington rode up with the Brunswick hussars to cover them, but these also fell into disorder under a heavy fire of musketry, and fled before a charge of Piré's "red lancers." Wellington galloped off, closely pursued, and, arriving at a ditch lined by the Gordon Highlanders, called out to them to lie still. He set his horse at the fence and cleared it, bayonets and all.

Another incident in this hard day's work, harder than most men younger than the Duke would care to undertake on the morrow of a ball,\* may be told in Wellington's own words.

"It was that same evening that I saw one of the strangest chances I ever recollect. A French regiment of cuirassiers, I suppose 600 or 700, came dashing up the Charleroi road to Quatre-Bras for the purpose of a reconnaissance—just where the Namur road forms the 'quatre bras;' there are some farm houses there, and also a large farm yard with a gate into the road. I had posted some infantry in the ditches at the cross-way, and these cuirassiers, being checked by their fire, turned off the head of their column into the gateway of the yard. I was looking attentively at their proceedings with my glass, in fact I was not more than a quarter of a mile distant, and, seeing they all followed into the gateway, I naturally concluded they had some way out at the back of the farm yard, by which they had

\* The Duke had ridden from Brussels five miles beyond Quatre Bras, 29 miles, then 7 miles to Ligny and back, 43 miles in all, before the battle began, and remained in the saddle till nightfall. Colonel the Hon. Frederick Ponsonby, arriving late at night with his brigade of cavalry, found the wearied troops fast asleep in their bivouac, but Wellington was sitting in his tent, chuckling over the contents of some English newspapers which had just arrived. Truly an Iron Duke!



retired upon their army along the skirt of the wood. But to ANN. 1815.  
 my great surprize on looking again, about ten minutes afterwards, in the same direction, I saw them all rushing out full gallop at the gateway, and returning by the very road they had come. They lost several men by our infantry firing from their ditches, but the main body escaped well enough. It seems that when they found there was no outlet from the farm yard into which they had so heedlessly turned, without knowing the place in the least, they quietly got into order, and seeing we took no notice of them, waited a quarter of an hour and then effected their escape in the manner I tell you. Had we but thought it possible they were there, we might have captured every man without fail." \*

About ten o'clock that night, Wellington sent his aide-de-camp, Sir Alexander Gordon, who had been in the saddle since early morning, with an escort of two squadrons of the 10th Hussars, to find his way to the Prussian headquarters. Riding as far as Sombreffe without hindrance, he found General von Zieten's headquarters still in that village, and the ground on which the Prussians had been beaten in the morning was occupied only by a few French videttes which he drove off.† Blücher, the 4th Prussian Corps not having arrived, had been so much weakened by his defeat that he had been obliged to retire in the night upon Wavre.

Napoleon, whose constant practice it was to calculate the future or the unknown by a percentage of chances,‡ was almost sure that Blücher would retire upon his base on the Rhine; but, while overrating the extent to which the Prussians had suffered in the battle, he underrated their staunch old Marshal's fidelity to Wellington.

\* *De Ros MS.*

† *Ibid.*

‡ A good example of this mental habit may be seen at the beginning of the Peninsular war, when Napoleon reckoned the odds in favour of Bessières at Rio Seco as 75 to 25, and those of Dupont at Baylen as 80 to 20.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE SEVENTEENTH OF JUNE.

1815.

June 16, 1815. Confusion in Brussels. Was Wellington surprised by Napoleon?	June 17 . . . . Great rain-storm. Strength of the allied army.
„ 17 . . . . Wellington retreats from Quatre-Bras. Napoleon's inactivity and its cause. His orders to Marshal Grouchy. Cavalry action at Genappe. Napoleon's energy in pursuit.	Strength of Napoleon's army. Wellington's communications with Blücher. He decides to receive battle. Blücher assures him of support.

Confusion  
in Brussels.

**M**ANY vivid descriptions have been given of the panic and confusion caused in Brussels by the fugitive Belgian and Dutch soldiers. The sound of artillery had been borne distinctly to the town on the sultry air.

“At first I was utterly incredulous; I could not—would not believe it; but, hurrying to the Parc, we were too soon, too uncontestably convinced of the dreadful truth, by ourselves hearing the awful and almost incessant thunder of the guns apparently very near us. . . . Late as it was we went to see Mrs. H., whom we knew to be in great alarm. We found her sitting surrounded by plate, which she was vainly trying to acquire sufficient composure to pack up, with a face pale with consternation, and quite overcome with agitation and distress. . . . My brother had engaged horses, upon the condition of their being in readiness to convey us to Antwerp at a moment's warning by day or night,

if required. . . . Thinking it prudent to be prepared, we had sent our *valet-de-place* to *la blanchisseuse* to desire her to send home everything belonging to us early in the morning. *La blanchisseuse* sent back a message—'Madame,' said the valet, 'the *blanchisseuse* says that if the English should beat the French, she will iron and plait your clothes, and finish them for you; but if, *au contraire*, these vile French should get the better, then she will assuredly send them back *tout mouillés* early to-morrow morning.' . . . Great alarm continued to prevail all through the night, and the baggage wagons stood ready harnessed to set off at a moment's notice. . . . At six o'clock we were roused by a violent knocking at the room-door, accompanied by cries of '*les François sont ici ! les François sont ici !*' Starting out of bed, the first sight we beheld from the window was a troop of Belgic cavalry galloping from the army at the most furious rate, through the Place Royale, as if the French were at their heels; and instantly the whole train of baggage wagons and empty carts, which had stood before our eyes so long, set off full speed by the Montagne de la Cour, and through every street by which it was possible to effect their escape. . . . No language can do justice to the scene of confusion which the court below exhibited; masters and servants, ladies and stable-boys, valets and soldiers, lords and beggars; Dutchmen, Belgians and Britons; bewildered *garçons* and scared *filles-de-chambre*; enraged gentlemen and clamorous coachmen; all crowded together, jostling, crying, scolding, squabbling, lamenting, exclaiming, imploring, swearing and vociferating, in French, English and Flemish, all at the same time. Nor was it only a war of words; the disputants had speedy recourse to blows, and those who could not get horses by fair means endeavoured to obtain them by foul. The unresisting animals were dragged away half-harnessed. The carriages were seized by force, and jammed against each other. Amidst the crash of wheels, the volleys of oaths, and the confusion of tongues, the mistress of the hotel, with a countenance dressed in woe, was carrying off her most valuable plate in order to secure it, ejaculating, as she went, the name of Jesus incessantly; while the master, with a red night-cap on his head, and the eternal pipe sticking mechanically out of one corner of his mouth,

ANN. 1815.

Æt. 46. was standing with his hands in his pockets, a silent statue of despair."\*

Next morning Lady Hamilton Dalrymple notes in her journal—

"17th June.—I again got up a little after four o'clock. What a different sight from the morning before! An uninterrupted chain of carts going helter-skelter—carts with wounded soldiers—Belgian regiments seeming to be without any discipline or control—all pouring into the town; wounded soldiers lying upon the pavement, having got as far as the town, but unable to crawl further—the dismay was universal. The morning was fine, but about one o'clock the most dreadful storm of thunder and lightning I ever recollect came on. We were obliged to shut the shutters. . . . Lord Apsley came to me with a message from the Duke of Wellington to say he had been obliged to retreat to the last position before he gave up Brussels; that he hoped to be able to retain it, but as it was very uncertain, he advised us to have horses quite ready and all our things packed up. . . . During the whole evening and night the rain fell in torrents. I do not remember for a continuance of so many hours having ever seen it so heavy; it was exactly as if pitchers of water were pouring down. . . .

"18th June.—At six in the morning we procured horses and set off to Antwerp. The road was nearly blocked."

D'Erlon's corps rejoined Ney after the cessation of fighting on Friday evening, but the weary British were not disturbed in their bivouac that night.

Was Wellington surprised by Napoleon?

Any attempt to review the incidents and results of the fighting on the 16th is impossible without referring to the heated controversy which has raged round them. Setting aside the extreme advocates of the Duke's infallibility (for it is clear that but for Ney's inactivity in the morning, and the dislocation of his attack in the afternoon, the allied position

\* *The Days of Battle, or Quatre-Bras and Waterloo, by an Englishman resident in Brussels* (London, 1853). pp. 26-40.

must have been easily forced), there remain only three ANN. 1815 conclusions deserving consideration.

First: that the Duke of Wellington was actually surprised by Napoleon's advance across the Sambre.

Second: assuming that he was not surprised, that his tactics were faulty in neglecting to concentrate earlier on his left at Quatre-Bras, and that by selecting Nivelles as the rendezvous, seven miles west of the Charleroi to Brussels road, compromised both armies by admitting between them the head of Ney's corps d'armée.

Third: still assuming that his dispositions were so complete that he cannot be held to have been taken by surprise, that his adversary outmanœuvred him by a rapid and masterly concentration opposite the weakest point in the line of defence.

Wellington himself was always, as might be expected, exceedingly reticent on the subject. Although he never admitted that he had been surprised, except in the conversation in the Duke of Richmond's dressing-room,\* he never denied it in any of his writings. He was on the watch, for we have his own assurance that from the moment he knew that the French were on the march, until he quitted Brussels on the morning of the 16th, he never went twenty yards from his own quarters, so as to be sure to receive the first intelligence coming from the front.† He was watchful enough, but not in what proved to be the direction of danger. The following extract from his strictures on Clausewitz's criticism of himself contains the key to the idea which dominated the whole of his dispositions, even after he knew of Napoleon's arrival on the frontier, and the concentration upon Maubeuge and Valenciennes,‡ up to, and even after, the very morning of Waterloo.

"The Duke of Wellington's letters, published by Colonel Gurwood, afford proofs that he was convinced that the enemy ought to have attacked by other lines than by the valleys of the

\* See p. 14, *supra*.

† *Salisbury. S., de Ros MS.*

‡ *Suppl. Despatches*, x. 436-481, *passim*.

Æt. 46. Sambre and the Meuse; and that even up to the last moment previous to the attack of his position at Waterloo, he conceived that they would endeavour to turn it by a march upon Hal. . . . It might be a nice question for military discussion, whether Buonaparte was right in endeavouring to force the position at Waterloo, or the Duke of Wellington right in thinking that, from the evening of the 16th, Buonaparte would have taken a wiser course if he had moved to his left, have reached the high-road leading from Mons to Bruxelles, and have turned the right of the position of the Allies by Hal. It is obvious that the Duke was prepared to resist such a movement."\*

The hypothesis may be dismissed at once that Wellington deliberately left the position of Quatre-Bras open in order that Napoleon, in advancing upon Brussels, should expose both flanks to the armies on either side. The whole work of the 16th consisted in repairing the error of the 15th by assembling the Anglo-Dutch forces to prevent such an advance.

Reverting, then, to the three alternative conclusions to which one is shut up in examining the events of these days, one is forced to admit that the Duke of Wellington was both outmanœuvred and surprised. This plain fact remains, although the blame for the surprise be laid, not on Wellington, but on von Zieten's laggard messenger on the morning of the 15th, or on von Zieten for sending only one messenger, who must have lost his way. Remains the superiority of manœuvring. Wellington's adversary, who, with admirable skill, masked his movements along the whole western frontier

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, x. 530. Mr. Ropes (p. 90) says that "some of the statements in this paper fairly take one's breath away;" but he refrains from mentioning more than one, namely, the Duke's statement that "having received intelligence of the French attack only at three o'clock in the afternoon of the 15th, he was at Quatre-Bras before the same hour on the morning of the 16th with a sufficient force to engage the left of the French army." It seems easy to take away the breath of some people. Surely it is obvious that "morning" was written here by a slip of the pen for "afternoon," especially as in another part of the same memorandum, which was written in 1842, the Duke mentions that he did not leave Brussels till the morning of the 16th.

of Belgium, timed the arrival of nine corps, distributed ANN. 1815. between Lille and Metz, to coincide exactly with that of the Imperial Guard from Paris, and selected for that concentration the weakest part in the allied lines, must surely be credited with having outmaneuvered his opponent. Up to that point, Napoleon's conduct of the campaign was as masterly and brilliant as anything in his military career. Five years later Wellington frankly described it to Charles Greville as "the finest thing that ever was done—so rapid and so well combined."\*

Imagine a parallel case arising in modern autumn manœuvres. A red force is to guard the approach to Derby of a blue force coming from the west of England. Railroads are barred; the only means of locomotion are the soldier's legs. There are four routes by which the invasion may be made—the high-roads through Northwich, Newcastle-under-Lyne, Stafford, and Lichfield. The red general has made up his mind that his blue adversary will choose the route by Stafford, at the same time keeping his army distributed along the frontier, ready to concentrate at any point threatened. His army consists of two corps, the 1st under General A—, with headquarters at Stafford; the 2nd under General B—, with headquarters at Lichfield. The blue general withdraws his best troops from their cantonments opposite Northwich, Newcastle-under-Lyne, and Stafford, and concentrates them rapidly to the south of Lichfield, replacing them with some militia battalions, without the red general being aware of what is going on. One afternoon, General B— rides into Derby and informs the red general that, early in the morning, the enemy had approached his outposts in great force, but so little serious did he think the movement that, instead of sending word thirty miles back to Derby, he had brought it himself, which would, and does, enable him to attend the county ball in Derby that night. General A—, commanding the 1st Army Corps, has also left his headquarters

\* Greville, i. 39.



Æt. 46. at Stafford, *the point where the red general expects the attack to be made*, in order to attend the ball. What does the red general do? He does not send Generals A—— and B—— back to their headquarters, but permits them to attend the ball with the chief officers of their staff and the generals of divisions and brigadiers. He sends orders to all his forces to be ready to concentrate at short notice, not on Lichfield, where the danger had appeared, but at Rugeley, because he believes the movement on Lichfield to be a feint, and because his judgment, whether founded or not on private information, still leads him to believe that Stafford is the route whence danger is most imminent. He then goes to the ball himself, and permits the officers of his staff and of the reserve in Derby to do the same, and it is past midnight before he hears that Walsall has been captured by the blue general thirteen hours previously. Would not the umpires pronounce that the blue general had outmanœuvred the red, and that the red general had been surprised?

Apply these conditions to the defence of Brussels. Does not the condition of the town itself, so graphically described in letters written home by the English girl quoted above, exclude every conclusion except that of complete surprise? Every incident of the 15th–16th June, after the arrival of the news in the ball-room, goes to show what had happened was as little expected by the military as by the civilian residents.

“The cavalry officers, whose regiments for the most part were quartered in villages about the frontier, ten, fifteen and even twenty miles off, flew from the ball-room in dismay, in search of their horses, and galloped off in the dark, without baggage or attendants, in the utmost perplexity which way to go, or where to join their regiments, which might have marched before they arrived.”\*

Wellington, therefore, was both outmanœuvred and surprised by Napoleon on 15th June; to deny it is to suppose

\* *Days of Battle*, p. 20.



him capable of voluntarily transgressing his own cardinal rule: "No army should ever be brought to its ground later than ten o'clock at night, nor should the columns of march be formed earlier than three in the morning, even when a forced march is necessary. With less than five hours' rest no soldier can endure the fatigue of marching, much less of fighting." \*

Yet it must be remembered that, had the officer said to have been despatched by General von Zieten at 4 a.m. reached Brussels, as he ought to have done, at 7 a.m. instead of at 3 p.m., the reserve would have been at Quatre-Bras by 2 p.m. on 15th instead of 3.30 p.m. on 16th, and the concentration on the point threatened would have been timely, and well within the powers of the rest of the troops.

The morning of 17th June was one of intense and sultry heat. Wellington, having spent the night at Genappe, returned very early in the morning to Quatre-Bras, whence he sent Gordon once more with half a squadron along the Namur road to gain intelligence. Returning between seven and eight o'clock, Gordon found his chief striding restlessly up and down the high-road, and reported that he had pushed as far as Tilly, where he had seen General von Zieten, that the Prussian army was in retreat upon Wavre, and that the enemy were in force on the right of the road about two miles distant. This was the first intimation the Duke received of the direction of Blücher's retreat; an officer sent overnight from the Prussian headquarters, having been wounded, failed to carry the news.

Now Ney, having been rejoined by d'Erlon with the 1st Corps, had more than 40,000 men in his command, whereas Wellington, after the Dutch troops had bolted, could not bring more than 25,000 into action. Clearly, then, having lost the support of the Prussians on his left, he could no longer maintain his position at Quatre-Bras.

"Old Blücher," said he, "has had a damned good hiding.

\* De Ros MS

Wellington retreats from Quatre-Bras.

ANN. 1815.

ÆT. 46. — and has gone eighteen miles to his rear. We must do the same. I suppose they'll say in England that we have been licked; well, I can't help that."

About ten o'clock orders were issued for the army to retire by successive brigades through the defile of Genappe into the position of Mont-Saint-Jean in front of Waterloo. The Duke, retaining with himself the cavalry and two battalions of the 95th Rifles, having sent out his orders, read some letters and papers which had arrived from England, and then lay down on the roadside, having covered his face with a newspaper, and fell asleep.\* Awaking after a short nap, he rode down in front of Quatre-Bras, looking about through his glass, and expressing his surprise at the perfect quietness of the enemy. "It is not at all impossible," he said, "that they may be retreating."

Why was Wellington allowed so much time to begin his hazardous retreat? For two reasons. In the first place, Ney, deeply incensed with the Emperor for having interfered with d'Erlon's column at the most critical moment of his attack, had made no report of the failure of his own operations on the 16th. It was not till the Emperor's aide-de-camp, Count Flahault, returned to Fleurus about 8 o'clock a.m. on the 17th that Napoleon learnt the truth, and was told also that Ney knew nothing about the result of the battle of Ligny. Even then, late as it was, it was not too late to have attacked Wellington with immensely superior forces—Wellington, whom Napoleon had imagined was long since in full retreat upon Brussels—but there was another circumstance which interfered. A great deal has been written, said, and surmised about the state of Napoleon's health at this time. In mental vigour it has been alleged that he was not equal to the victor of Austerlitz and Marengo—a suspicion which his conduct during the days from 12th to 16th June ought surely to dispel. Nevertheless these days had been a time of incessant mental and physical strain. Since daylight on the 12th,

Cause of  
Napoleon's  
inactivity.

\* *Waterloo Letters*, p. 154.

when he started from Paris, the Emperor had taken little ANN. 1815. repose. He was suffering from a painful, but not a dangerous, malady, which made riding disagreeable exercise; he had grown stout, and was not capable of such long-continued bodily exercise as the Duke of Wellington underwent with impunity; but there is the testimony of General Foy that "he retained all the vigour of his mind, and his passions had lost little of their strength." On the morning of the 17th, when there was every reason for prompt and vigorous action, the Emperor's movements were leisurely and undecided—the loitering of a weary man.

"To-day," he directed Soult to write to Ney about 8 a.m., "will be needed to terminate this operation (viz. the occupation of Quatre-Bras), to supply ammunition, bring in stragglers, and call in detachments. Give your orders accordingly; and see to it that all the wounded are cared for and taken to the rear. We hear complaints that the ambulances have not done their duty."

The Emperor had ordered overnight that the cavalry of Pajol and Exelmans should follow the Prussians and ascertain whether, as was probable, they were retreating on their own base at Liége and Namur, or whether, possibly, they would fall back so as to unite with Wellington for the defence of Brussels. About nine o'clock he left his quarters at Fleurus and rode upon the battlefield of Ligny, visiting the wounded and passing along the ranks of his troops paraded *without arms* in front of their bivouacs. Then he dismounted and discussed at length with Grouchy and other officers, not the prospects of the campaign, but, strangely enough, the course of politics in Paris. It was nearly eleven o'clock before it Napoleon's orders to Grouchy. was reported to him that the troops at Quatre-Bras were not, as he had supposed, and as was the fact, merely Wellington's rear-guard, but his whole force on the ground. Not before that hour did he decide to support Ney in a fresh attack on Quatre-Bras with Lobau's 6th Corps and the whole Imperial

Æt. 46. Guard. At the same time he committed a corps of 34,000 men and 96 guns to Marshal Grouchy, giving him verbal orders to pursue the Prussians in the direction of Namur.\*

The  
Duke's  
retreat.

About two o'clock in the afternoon, the Duke, riding about with Sir Hussey Vivian in front of Quatre-Bras, saw the glitter of steel in the sun, and, turning his glass on the field of Ligny, perceived heavy masses of the enemy moving upon his own position.† Simultaneously the French under Ney began to show themselves in front for the first time, just as a heavy rain-storm was spreading over the sky. The sun of Austerlitz was about to be obscured, but the French position was still brilliantly illuminated; only on Quatre-Bras and the land to the north the storm-twilight had descended. The Duke at once ordered the 95th and the cavalry to fall back steadily along the road to Brussels, and trotted on himself to get some dinner which had been prepared for him in Genappe. The storm had broken by this time; Lord Uxbridge had opened fire with his guns upon Napoleon himself and his staff; a battery of horse artillery of the Guard replied; the reverberation shook the heavens; a deluge of rain began which all witnesses agree in describing as without parallel in their experience.

Cavalry  
action at  
Genappe.

The Duke was hardly seated at table when word came from Lord Uxbridge that he was hard pressed, and required the presence of the Commander-in-chief. The Duke, mounting at once, galloped back to the high ground before Genappe, where he found the 7th Hussars in much disorder, having been repulsed with loss, and refusing to follow their officers to a fresh attack. Wellington brought up the Life Guards,

\* No incident in this campaign has given rise to greater controversy than the exact nature and sequence of the successive orders to Grouchy, and the degree of Grouchy's responsibility for what followed. In the present narrative I am not concerned to balance nicely the evidence affecting the character of a French marshal, and shall endeavour to state merely the bare facts as they appear to have borne on the fortunes of the Prussian and Anglo-Dutch armies. Those who wish thoroughly to understand the question should have recourse to the admirable narratives of Mr. Ropes and M. Houssaye.

† *De Ros MS.*

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LE MARÉCHAL GROUCHY.

[Vol. ii. p. 40.]



who charged the enemy with success, and delivered the 7th ANN. 1815. from an awkward predicament, for they had lost all formation, were jammed in the streets and defile of Genappe, and could not retire because of the dense column behind them.

Having checked the forward movement of the enemy, Wellington carried off Lord Uxbridge to share his dinner. He afterwards expressed the opinion that the retreat of the cavalry "would have been as uninterrupted and easy as that of the infantry had been in the morning, had not Lord Uxbridge taken it into his head to make that attack on the French lancers as they were coming out of Genappe, which ended so disastrously for the 7th Hussars." \*

Napoleon, who rode at the head of the advanced guard throughout the pursuit, was present in this affair, and certainly betrayed no traces of the inactivity he had shown in the morning. Napoleon's activity in the pursuit.

"One ought to have been witness," says the author of *Napoléon à Waterloo*,† "of the rapid march of this army on the 17th—a march more like a steeplechase than the pursuit of a retreating enemy—to realise the energy to which Napoleon knew how to inspire troops under his immediate command. Six pieces of the horse artillery of the Guard, supported by the *escadrons de service*, marched in the first line, and poured grape on the masses of the enemy's cavalry as often as, taking advantage of some accident of ground, he endeavoured to halt, take position, and check our pursuit. The Emperor, mounted on a small and very active Arab horse, galloped at the head of the column; he was constantly close to the guns, stimulating the gunners by his presence and his words, and more than once he was in the thick of the shells and balls which the enemy's artillery poured on us."

The extraordinary rain soon rendered the going very difficult over the cultivated land, which became one continuous swamp. This told in favour of the British, who were

*De Ros MS.*

† An officer of the Imperial Guard, who remained near the Emperor all this day.

Æt. 46. far the lighter column, the rest of the allied army being already in position before Waterloo.

"It rained in such a way as I never saw either before or since; it seemed as if the water were tumbled out of tubs. . . . The ground was so soft that at every step our horses sank halfway to the knees, and in several places where we passed over fallow land, it had the appearance of a lake, the rain falling upon it faster than it could be absorbed or run off." \*

Strength  
of the  
allied  
army.

It was nearly seven o'clock before Napoleon's advanced guard brought up on the elevated plateau in front of the position chosen by Wellington at Mont-Saint-Jean. General Picton opened fire with twelve guns on the head of the French column, which, being unable to retreat owing to the pressure behind, suffered for about half an hour. Two French horse batteries made reply, till the British fire ceased by order of the Duke. By this time the Anglo-Dutch army had assembled to the number of 67,661 of all arms, with 156 guns.† In addition to these, the Duke, always haunted by apprehension of a turning manœuvre on the part of the French, thought it expedient to keep a corps of observation at Hal, wholly detached, and thirteen miles to the west of his position at Mont-Saint-Jean. This corps consisted of 17,500 men, being some brigades of the 4th Division under General Colville and the corps of Netherlanders under Prince Frederick of Orange, who was directed on the 17th to defend the position between Hal and Enghien "as long as possible." ‡ This force, which might have been employed with advantage on the 18th, remained inactive on the whole of that day. The army in position before Waterloo was of very uneven material, largely composed of militiamen and young soldiers. It was made up as follows:—

\* *Hamilton MS.*

† *Siborne*, i. 460. Brialmont gives a slightly larger total, having apparently made no allowance for the losses on 16th and 17th June.

‡ *Despatches*, xii. 476.



British . . . . .	24,991
King's German Legion . . . . .	5,824
Hanoverians . . . . .	11,220
Brunswickers . . . . .	4,962
Nassau Contingent . . . . .	2,880
Dutch-Belgia . . . . .	17,784

ANN. 1815.

67,661 men.

Against these Napoleon brought into the field, after detaching the two corps under Grouchy, 71,947 men. The discrepancy between the actual numbers on either side was scarcely enough to affect the prospects of the impending conflict; being, indeed, to a great extent only apparent, owing to the British returns including only effective rank and file, and non-commissioned officers, whereas the French always included in their returns officers, musicians, etc. But the French had a great superiority in cavalry, of which they had 15,000 of the best, and in artillery, having 246 guns. The general quality of the infantry, also, was far superior to that of the Allies, for Napoleon's old campaigners had flocked to the eagles, forming a homogeneous, seasoned body of troops—the finest army in Europe. Of this disparity in quality the Duke was well aware; he never concealed his dissatisfaction with the quality even of his British troops, and always said that “he started with the very worst army that had ever been got together.”\* He acknowledged, however, that four or five of his old Peninsular battalions acted as a very rapid leaven on their young countrymen. The whole of the Hanoverian troops were militiamen, except some veteran battalions of the King's German Legion; and the Nassau men, though seasoned troops, actually fired on the Duke when, in the course of the battle of Waterloo, he attempted to rally them.†

Despite the consciousness of these disadvantages, the Duke

\* *Palmerston's Journal*, p. 13.

† *Ibid.*, p. 14. These three Nassau battalions were the same which had come over to the British from Soult's army during the operations round Bayonne in 1813.

ÆT. 46 of Wellington had chosen his own battlefield,\* and was resolved to fight; but to the last moment, even when Napoleon's divisions were taking up their positions in his front, he was doubtful where the battle would take place. On the morning of the 17th, as soon as he discovered that Napoleon had neglected to occupy the field of Ligny, he had sent word to Blücher saying that he was about to fall back on Mont-Saint-Jean, and would give the French battle there, provided he had the support of one Prussian corps. Blücher, however, had been badly hurt in the battle of Ligny. Charging at the head of his cavalry, his horse was shot under him, he was twice ridden over by the French cavalry, and was believed to be killed or taken. He was carried, however, to the village of Mellery, where he spent the night in great pain and discomfort, in a little house crowded with wounded men. He was seventy-two years of age, and, being badly bruised, had to resign the command temporarily to his Chief of the Staff, Gneisenau. Now Gneisenau's confidence in Wellington had been grievously shaken on the previous day. When the Duke rode over to the Prussian headquarters on the morning of the 16th, not anticipating any serious work that day at Quatre-Bras, he undoubtedly did give a conditional assurance that he would support Blücher in the battle then imminent "provided I am not attacked myself." From this, taken in conjunction with a letter written to Blücher by Wellington three hours previously on his first arrival at Quatre-Bras, in which he said, "I do not see any large force of the enemy in front of us, and I await news from your Highness and the arrival of troops in order to determine my operations for the day," † Gneisenau certainly

Gneise-  
nau's dis-  
trust of  
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ton.

\* "The position occupied by us at Waterloo will attract many a John Bull, who will wonder why the devil that should be called a *position*, and return about as wise as he came. The Beau (a nickname borne by the Duke in this campaign) has a better eye, for he fixed upon it last summer (see p. 382, *supra*) in case of necessity to fight an action in the neighbourhood of Brussels, supposing the enemy to advance by the road he did; and one close to Hal, in case he advanced by Mons" (*Dumaresq MSS.*).

† This letter was first published by Von Ollech in 1876.

had drawn the inference that Wellington was not a man to  
 be relied on. On the morning of the 17th he was very  
 imperfectly acquainted with the course affairs had taken at  
 Quatre-Bras, and he held the English General responsible for  
 the defeat of the Prussians at Ligny.\* Nevertheless he was  
 unwilling at first to renounce all communication with the  
 Anglo-Dutch army. While Blücher was disabled, Gneisenau  
 took the important responsibility of ordering the 1st and 2nd  
 Prussian corps (Zieten and Pirch I.) to fall back on Wavre  
 instead of preserving the line of Namur; but on the 17th,  
 when Blücher gallantly resumed the command in spite of  
 his bruises, Gneisenau advised him to look after his own  
 safety by falling back on Liége, and securing his communi-  
 cation with Luxembourg.† Blücher, however, was too staunch  
 to desert his ally; supported by his Quartermaster-General  
 Grolmann, and acting in a spirit which can never be too highly  
 admired, he ordered the concentration of the whole of his four  
 corps d'armée upon Wavre. But at noon on the 17th, when  
 Wellington's message arrived at Blücher's headquarters at  
 Wavre, it was not known where the 3rd and 4th Prussian  
 corps (Thielemann and Bülow) had got to; moreover, the  
 reserve of ammunition had not come up. It was not, there-  
 fore, till shortly before midnight on the 17th, when Bülow's  
 arrival at Dion-le-Mont had been notified, that Grolmann  
 wrote Blücher's reply to Wellington, to the effect that Bülow  
 would move at daybreak by Saint Lambert to attack the  
 French right, supported by Thielemann; and that Zieten and  
 Pirch I. would conform with their corps. It must have been  
 about daybreak on the 18th before the Duke got this valuable  
 assurance,‡ and it implies no little hardihood on his part

Blücher  
 keeps  
 tryst.

\* It is admitted now on all hands that Blücher's decision to accept battle at Ligny was wholly independent of any assurance of support from Wellington, though no doubt he wished and hoped for it (see *Ropes*, p. 145).

† *Stanhope*, 110.

‡ The story that the Duke, after seeing his troops into their bivouacs at Mont-Saint-Jean on the evening of the 17th, rode over to Wavre and received personal assurance from Blücher of his support on the morrow, seems to belong to the

Ær. 46. — that, before receiving it, he had resolved to stand his ground, because, for all he knew, "it was a perfectly possible thing that he might the next morning be assailed by a hundred thousand men,"\* his information being that not more than 12,000 or 15,000 men had been detached under Grouchy to follow the Prussians.

Wellington  
anxious  
about his  
right.

Still the Duke would not bring in Prince Frederick's corps from Hal, and two letters written by him at 3 a.m. on the morning of the 18th, from his quarters in the village of Waterloo, betray considerable uncertainty and anxiety as to the course which events should take. The first of these is to the Duc de Berri, who was with the King of France at Ghent.

"It is possible that the enemy may turn us at Hal, although I have Prince Frederick's corps in position between Hal and Enghien. If that happens I beg your Royal Highness to march on Antwerp and canton yourself in the neighbourhood, and to inform his Majesty that I pray him go from Ghent to Antwerp by the left bank of the Scheldt . . . not on false rumours, but on receiving certain intelligence that the enemy has entered Brussels, in spite of me, by turning me at Hal." †

The second is to Lady Frances Webster in Brussels, for the Duke was not unmindful, even on the eve of battle, of the safety, and even the comfort, of his English friends there.

category of myth. Mr. Ropes, in his third edition (pp. 238-242), has carefully examined the evidence in support of it, and dismissed the story as a fable, although in previous editions he had expressed his belief in its truth. It is to be noted that the Duke, who had no possible reason for concealing the truth in this matter, never alluded to his alleged ride on that night of terrible rain, although he used to delight in discussing such incidents in his warfare. "It is impossible," says Greville (2nd series, ii. 41), "to convey an idea of the zest, eagerness, frankness and abundance with which he talked and told of his campaigns."

\* Ropes, 235.

† Despatches, xii. 477.

"MY DEAR LADY FRANCES,—As I am sending a messenger to Ann. 1815.  
 Bruxelles, I write to you one line to tell you that I think you  
 ought to make your preparations, as should Lord Mountnorris,  
 to remove from Bruxelles to Antwerp in case such a measure  
 should be necessary. . . . The course of the operations may  
 oblige me to uncover Bruxelles for a moment, and may expose  
 that town to the enemy; for which reason I recommend that  
 you and your family should be prepared to move on Antwerp at  
 a moment's notice. . . .

"Believe me, etc.,  
 "WELLINGTON.

"Present my best compliments to Lord and Lady Mount-  
 norris."\*

Many critics, from Napoleon downwards, have blamed the  
 Duke for giving battle in such a position as Mont-Saint-Jean,  
 whence, if beaten, it has been considered that he could not  
 have retreated through the dense forest of Soignes upon  
 Brussels. M. Thiers, also, in his *Histoire du Consulat et de* Brussels  
*l'Empire*, started the false idea, afterwards taken up by other was not the  
 writers, that the Duke's base of operations was Brussels. It British  
 was nothing of the kind; he had his headquarters there, but base.  
 his base was Ostend and the coast. No doubt his chief object  
 was to protect the capital of the Netherlands; but it will be  
 observed that, in the letter last quoted, he speaks of the  
 possibility of having to "uncover" it—not to retire upon it.  
 That such was his intention was clearly explained at the  
 dinner-table of Mr. Littleton (afterwards Lord Hatherton) at  
 Teddesley, where the Duke was staying on 8th December,  
 1825.

"After dinner the conversation turned on the battle of  
 Waterloo, and on those French writers who maintained that it  
 ought never to have been fought on that ground at all, as, if  
 beaten, the Allies could not have retreated through the forest of

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, x. 501.

Æt. 46. Soignes. The Duke, speaking with much earnestness, said that was a mistake.

“‘I knew every yard of the plain beyond the forest, and the road through it. The forest on each side of the chaussée was open enough for infantry, cavalry, and even for artillery, and very defensible. Had I retreated in that direction, could they have followed me? The Prussians were on their flank, and would have been on their rear. The co-operation of the Prussians in the operation I undertook was part of my plan, and I was not deceived. But I *never contemplated a retreat on Brussels*. Had I been forced from my position, I should have retreated to my right, towards the coast, the shipping and my resources. I had placed Hill where he could have lent me important assistance in many contingencies, of which this was one. Again I ask—if I had retreated on my right, could Napoleon have ventured to follow me? The Prussians, already on his flank, would have been on his rear. My plan was to keep my ground till the Prussians appeared, and then to attack the French position, and I executed my plan.’

“As the party left the room, Croker remarked, ‘I never heard the Duke say so much on this subject before.’” \*

\* Note by Lord Hatherton, *Apsley House MSS.*

## CHAPTER III.

### WATERLOO.

18th June, 1815.

8 a.m. . . . .	Position of the allied army. The advanced posts of La Haye, Papelotte, La Haye Sainte, and Hongoumont.		Repulse of Durutte's column at Papelotte.
8—9 . . . . .	Napoleon prepares to attack.	11 a.m.—7 p.m.	Well sustained defence of Hongoumont.
10 . . . . .	The Emperor's first order to Grouchy. The French order of battle.	3.30 p.m. . . . .	Second attack on La Haye Sainte.
11 . . . . .	Having marshalled his line of battle, the Emperor returns to Rossomme.	4—6 . . . . .	Ney attacks with the cavalry.
11.30 . . . . .	Attack on Hongoumont.	4.30 . . . . .	Bülow's Prussian corps enters the field.
1 p.m. . . . .	Bülow's corps appears on the French right. The Emperor's second order to Grouchy.	5 . . . . .	Engages Lobau's 6th corps, and carries Plancenoit.
1.30 . . . . .	Ney receives the order to attack.		Lord Hill moves up on the right.
2 . . . . .	Advance of d'Erlon's corps d'armée.	5.30—7.30 . . . .	Critical position of both armies.
2.15 . . . . .	Bylandt's Dutch brigade is broken. Donzelot is repulsed by Kempt's brigade.	7.30 . . . . .	Plancenoit taken and retaken.
2.30 . . . . .	Death of Sir Thomas Picton. Marcognet is repulsed by Pack's brigade.	8 . . . . .	Zieten's Prussian corps begins to operate on the French right.
2.40 . . . . .	Charge of the Union Brigade.		Final attack on the Allies.
2.45 . . . . .	Death of Sir William Ponsonby.	8 . . . . .	Defeat of the Middle Guard.
2.40 . . . . .	Charge of Lord E. Somerset's brigade.		General advance of the Allies.
		9 . . . . .	Rout of the French.
			Meeting of Wellington and Blücher.
		<i>Appendix D.</i>	<i>The Duke's Conversation about Waterloo.</i>
		<i>Appendix E.</i>	<i>The Defeat of the Imperial Guard.</i>



ÆT. 46. "THE people of England may be entitled to a detailed and accurate account of the battle of Waterloo, and I have no objection to their having it, but I do object to their being misinformed and misled. . . . I am really disgusted with and ashamed of all that I have seen (written) of the battle of Waterloo. The number of writings upon it would lead the world to suppose that the British army had never fought a battle before; and there is not one which contains a true representation, or even an idea of the transaction; and this is because the writers have referred as above quoted (to stories picked up from peasants, private soldiers, individual officers, etc.) instead of to the official sources and reports." \*

Twenty years later, after examining Major Siborne's model of Waterloo, now in the United Service Institution, the Duke made this confession: "It is very difficult for me to judge of the particular position of each body of troops under my command . . . at any particular hour." † Again: "Surely the details of the battle might be left to the original official reports. Historians and commentators were not necessary." ‡ "There is one event," he said to Lord Mahon, "noted in the world—the battle of Waterloo—and you will not find any two people agree as to the exact hour when it commenced." § He used to say that he was accustomed to read so many conflicting descriptions of the battle that he would soon begin to believe he was not there himself.

F. M. *The Duke of Wellington to Walter Scott, Esq.* ||

"Paris, 8th August, 1815.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter of the 2nd regarding the battle of Waterloo. The object which you propose to yourself is very difficult of attainment, and, if really attained,

\* Letter from the Duke to Sir J. Sinclair, 28th April, 1816 (*Suppl. Despatches*, x. 507).

† *Suppl. Despatches*, x. 513.

‡ *Ibid.*, 530.

§ *Stanhope*, 88. The Duke himself seems scarcely to have known. In his official despatch (*Despatches*, xii. 481) he says "about ten o'clock;" in his letter to Walter Scott (*ibid.*, 508) he says "at eleven."

|| In the published despatches this name is left blank.



is not a little invidious. The history of a battle is not unlike Ann. 1815. the history of a ball. Some individuals may recollect all the little events of which the great result is the battle won or lost: but no individual can recollect the order in which, or the exact moment at which, they occurred, which makes all the difference as to their value or importance. Then the faults or the misbehaviour of some gave occasion for the distinction of others, and perhaps were the cause of material losses; and you cannot write a true history of a battle without including the faults and misbehaviour of part at least of those engaged. Believe me that every man you see in a military uniform is not a hero; and that, although in the account given of a general action like Waterloo, many instances of individual heroism must be passed over unrelated, it is better for the general interests to leave those parts of the story untold, than to tell the whole truth. If, however, you should still think it right to turn your attention to this subject, I am most ready to give you every assistance and information in my power.

“Believe me, etc.,

“WELLINGTON.”

“Paris, 17th August, 1815.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter of the 11th, and I regret much that I have not been able to prevail upon you to relinquish your plan. You may depend upon it you will never make it a satisfactory work. I will get you the list of the French army, generals, etc. Just to show you how little reliance can be placed, even on what are supposed the best accounts of a battle, I mention that there are some circumstances mentioned in General ——’s account which did not occur as he relates them. He was not on the field during the whole battle, particularly not during the latter part of it. The battle began, I believe, at eleven. It is impossible to say when each important occurrence took place, nor in what order. . . . These are answers to all your queries: but remember, I recommend you to leave the battle of Waterloo as it is.”

With these warnings, and many similar ones from the same source, ringing in his ears, how shall a writer, at this time of

Æt. 46

day, take up the well-worn theme, or hope to succeed where so many are held to have failed before him? Nothing more ambitious can be attempted than a synthetic sketch of the great scene, relying on those official reports which the Duke would have one regard as the only authentic materials for history, supplemented by his own subsequent memoranda and conversations, by incidents drawn from the numerous personal narratives, some already in print, others still in faded, tattered manuscript, and by the labours of those who have so industriously collated the official papers on both sides.

The rain continued to descend in torrents during the night of the 17th-18th, with violent thunder and lightning, drenching the troops of both armies in their comfortless bivouac on the miry fields.

"We arose with the daybreak," wrote an officer of the Scots Greys; "a miserably looking set of creatures we all were, covered with mud from head to foot, our white belts dyed with the red from our jackets, as if we had already completed the sanguinary work which we were about to begin."\*

The rain stopped soon after sunrise on Sunday, 18th June, though the sky remained overcast. In the allied lines all was busy preparation from daybreak; the soldiers kindled fires with difficulty to cook breakfast, cleaned their rusted arms, and, a practice which Wellington disliked exceedingly but never succeeded in checking, instead of drawing the charges of their muskets, fired them in the air. At six o'clock the "fall in" sounded, and soon after the batteries, squadrons, and battalions took their appointed places in line of battle.

Lord Uxbridge, as next in seniority to the Commander-in-chief, came to the Duke and said that he should like to know his plans, because, if anything should happen to the Duke, the command would devolve on himself.

Now, the Duke was on bad personal terms with Lord Uxbridge, who had been forced upon him by the Horse

\* *Hamilton MS.*

Guards instead of his old cavalry general, Lord Combermere Ann. 1815.  
(Stapleton-Cotton), and his answer was a rough one.

"Plans!" quoth he. "I have no plans, except to give that fellow a damned good licking."

Waterloo, where Wellington's headquarters were on the night of 17th-18th June, is a small village, at that time within the great forest of Soignes,\* on the Charleroi-to-Brussels paved road, about nine miles south of Brussels. Two English miles further south is the hamlet of Mont-Saint-Jean, where the *chaussée* to Nivelles branches off to the south-west. From this point the Charleroi road, still running south, ascends a gentle incline, till, nearly three-quarters of a mile south of Mont-Saint-Jean, it is traversed at right angles by the unpaved cross-road from Wavre and Ohain to Braine-la-Leud, marking the crest of a low ridge running due east and west. From this point the road dips into a shallow valley, passing between a sandpit on the left,† and the farmhouse and orchard of La Haye Sainte on the right, crossing the hollow, and ascending through a slight cutting a second ridge, parallel to that of Mont-Saint-Jean, and distant from it at no point more than twelve hundred yards. The cross-road from Ohain to Braine-la-Leud marked the front of Wellington's position, and, although an insignificant feature in unprofessional eyes, possessed at that time certain qualities which proved of inestimable importance to the defending force. To the east of the Charleroi *chaussée* this cross-road was fenced with high and thick hedges now removed; to the west it sank into a cutting between banks five or six feet high.‡

To appreciate the merit of the Duke's position it must be borne in mind that the cross-road from Ohain to Braine-la-Leud runs along the edge of the plateau; that the ground

Position of  
the allied  
army on  
18th June.

\* In 1815 the forest extended further to the south than it does now, and encircled the village, which, at the present day, lies on its outskirts.

† Now partially filled up.

‡ Most unhappily these banks have been obliterated by the removal of soil to form the huge mound marking the right centre of the allied position.

Æt. 46. behind, that is, to the north, declines gently for a thousand yards as far as the hamlet of Mont-Saint-Jean, and that the ground in front, to the south, falls with a sharper descent into the little valley. It was the Duke's invariable custom, when possible, to keep his first line in shelter from fire, until immediately before it was engaged,\* and the ground at Mont-Saint-Jean enabled him to carry out this principle. The first line of the Allies was placed on the reverse slope of the ridge behind the hedges and banks of the Ohain cross-road, the infantry being in quarter columns at deploying interval. The undulating ground behind them was occupied by the second line and reserves, including nearly all the cavalry, concealed from view of the enemy, and protected from his fire, by the land contour. The front was not protected by entrenchments, but the banks and hedges were pierced for the passage of cavalry and artillery.

The allied  
order of  
battle.

Commencing from the centre of the allied position, to the east of the Charleroi road, Sir Thomas Picton held command with his 5th Division; Kempt's Light Infantry standing nearest the road; next them Pack's Highland Brigade, with Best's Hanoverian Brigade on their left; Wineke's Hanoverian Brigade further to the left, with Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar's Nassau Brigade on their left opposite the farm of Papelotte; and Vandeleur's and Vivian's cavalry brigades covering the outer or left flank of the whole line. To the west of the Charleroi road, its left flank resting upon it, was formed Alten's 3rd Division, the brigades in succession from the left being Ompteda's King's German Legion, Kielmansegge's Hanoverians and Colin Halket's 5th Brigade. On Alten's right was drawn up the 1st or Guards Division under General Cooke, comprising the brigades of Maitland and Byng, with Byng's right resting on the Nivelles high-road. Beyond this road, and in reserve about Merbe-Braine, was Clinton's 2nd Division, composed of the brigades of Adam,

\* His chief criticism of Blücher's disposition before the battle of Ligny had been that the troops would suffer from the enemy's fire before they could be engaged.

Mitchell, Du Plat, and W. Halket. On the extreme right, Ann. 1815. and thrown back from the general alignment, Chassé's Dutch division occupied the village and vicinity of Braine-la-Leud. Lord Edward Somerset's brigade of heavy cavalry was behind the centre of the line to the west of the Charleroi road, to the east of which was Sir William Ponsonby's "Union Brigade"—the Royal Dragoons, Scots Greys, and Inniskillens. Kruse's Dutch infantry was posted on Somerset's right.

It will be observed that, although the army had been formally organised in two corps, the left being under command of the Prince of Orange, the right under Lord Hill, this novel arrangement was not strictly adhered to in the line of battle, the brigades being disposed so as to distribute as much as possible the older and more trustworthy troops among those of less experience. The Duke was careful to give his first line the advantage of the shelter afforded by the ground, and this was skilfully done. But to this there was one exception, utterly unaccounted for to this day. Bylandt's Dutch brigade was placed immediately on the east of the Charleroi road, on the outer slope of the ridge, a hundred and fifty yards in front of Kempt and Pack, and wholly exposed to the enemy's fire. What these poor fellows suffered there must be remembered when their subsequent behaviour has to be described.

Such being the general disposition of the first line of the The Allies, there remain to be described certain advanced posts advanced posts. of great importance which the Duke caused to be occupied. Abutting on the west side of the Charleroi road, three hundred yards in front of the general line, is the farmhouse, outbuildings, garden, and orchard of La Haye Sainte, enclosed in walls and hedges.\* This was occupied as an advanced post by four hundred men of the King's German Legion, and an *abattis* was thrown across the high-road from the southern

\* The house and barn have been rebuilt since 1815, but much of the original garden wall remains, in which, on the west side, may be traced the loopholes made by its garrison. Even the two slight buttresses shown in the contemporary drawing remain to this day.

Æt. 46. angle of the enclosure. Four hundred yards in front of the extreme allied left, Perponcher's Dutchmen occupied the farms of La Haye and Papelotte, with a picket of the 10th Hussars thrown still further forward in the village of Smohain.

Coming now to the right of the allied position, there stand in the valley, five hundred yards in front of the Ohain cross-road, the château, walled garden, and farmyard of Hougoumont,\* protected at that time on the south by a thick wood and copse, which has now disappeared. This quiet country house, with its rustic environment, was destined to lasting fame by reason of the long-drawn fury with which its possession was contested. It was occupied at first by the light companies of the 3rd Battalion 1st (Grenadier) Guards, of the 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards, and of the 2nd Battalion 3rd Guards,† a Nassau regiment, and some Hanoverian rifles. About noon, four more companies of the Coldstream, and, later still, the remainder of the 3rd Guards, were moved in to reinforce. During the night the loopholes in the garden wall were cleared out, ‡ new ones were cut in the buildings; platforms and embankments were raised inside the garden walls to enable the men to fire over the top.

The Allies, then, showed a front of nearly three English miles towards the south, defined and strengthened by the hedges and banks of the Ohain cross-road, and with four advanced posts, La Haye, Papelotte, La Haye Sainte with its sandpit, and Hougoumont with its garden, orchard, and wood. On the right the line extended a mile further, but was thrown back nearly *en potence*, so as to face west-south-west.

Mounted on his famous charger, Copenhagen, the Duke rode with his staff along the lines as the brigades took up

\* This is what philologers term a "ghost name." The real name was Château du Goumont, but it found its way into despatches, and thence, indelibly, into history, as the Château d'Hougoumont.

† Now the Scots Guards.

‡ Not made for the first time, as usually stated. They were part of the old defences of the place, having, as may be seen to this day, stone facings in the brickwork.

their positions. Crossing over to Hougoumont, he brought ANN. 1815. the Coldstream Guards back from the copse, posting them in the orchard, garden, and buildings, and replaced them by sending the Hanoverian and Nassau men into the wood. He wore his usual exceedingly plain dress—blue frock, blue cloak,\* white pantaloons, black sword-belt, cocked hat without plume,† but with King George's black cockade and three smaller ones in the colours of Portugal, Spain, and the Netherlands, indicating the four services in which he held marshal's rank. The one piece of dandyism he affected was wearing a white cravat, fastened behind the neck with a buckle, instead of the regulation black stock.

The Emperor Napoleon, before retiring to rest at the farm of Caillou shortly before midnight on the 17th, dictated to Soult the order of battle for the morrow. After resting an hour he rose again, and, accompanied by General Bertrand, rode through the pouring rain right round his advanced posts. He was uneasy lest the enemy should beat a retreat during the night, but from the little tavern of La Belle Alliance,‡ distant only 1,400 yards from the centre of the allied line along the Charleroi road, he saw the bivouac fires of Wellington's army, and felt satisfied it was going to hold its ground. Returning to the Caillou at dawn, he found a despatch, sent off by Grouchy from Gembloux at ten o'clock, announcing that the Prussians were moving in two columns, one upon Liége, the other upon Wavre, and that he intended to follow the Wavre column, to prevent it co-operating

Position of  
the French  
army.

\* When Garrard was making an equestrian statuette of the Duke, Lord Bathurst asked the Duke whether he wore a cloak at Waterloo. "It was a showery day," replied he, "though it got finer in the afternoon. I had my cloak on and off fifty times. I remember very well putting it on, because I never get wet when I can help it. When it grew fine, I took it off and fastened it on my saddle" (*Salisbury MSS.*, 1837).

† The Duke's cocked hat was made exceedingly low in the crown, and was commonly covered with oilskin in bad weather.

‡ This name, which derived so much significance from the events of the day, had its derisive origin in the marriage of a former proprietor, who was old and ugly, with a pretty young woman in the neighbourhood.



Æt. 46. with Wellington. All this was satisfactory enough. Half  
 --- Blücher's forces were falling back upon their communications  
 with Luxembourg; with the other half Grouchy assuredly  
 could deal, and prevent any interference with the defeat  
 Napoleon was about to inflict on the Anglo-Dutch army.  
 He little knew that Wellington and Blücher had been in  
 communication throughout the night. The state of the  
 ground, however, in consequence of the rain, had seriously  
 retarded the march of the Emperor's divisions. It had been  
 his intention to attack at daybreak, but now, at 5 a.m., he  
 issued orders for the men to make their soup, and for the  
 brigades to take up their positions in line of battle at nine  
 o'clock, "as indicated in his order of the previous evening." \*  
 It was long after that hour before his array was complete.  
 The whole of the Imperial Guard, Lobau's corps d'armée,  
 Durutte's division, and Kellermann's cuirassiers had not  
 arrived from Genappe; the state of the roads and country  
 greatly retarded their march; but the mischief had its source  
 in the Emperor's fatal waste of the morning of the 17th. Had  
 he advanced early on that morning on the 17th, he would not  
 only have interfered very gravely with the retreat of the Allies,  
 but, supposing them to have succeeded in retiring safely upon  
 the position of Mont-Saint-Jean, his various corps would have  
 been forward in time to begin the attack early on the 18th.

The  
 Emperor's  
 breakfast  
 party.

The Emperor broke his fast at the farm of le Caillou with  
 Soult, Bassano, Dronot, and other Generals, the meal being  
 served on silver plate with the Imperial arms; after which,  
 at eight o'clock, maps were brought out, and the situation was  
 eagerly but leisurely discussed.

"The enemy," observed Napoleon, reverting to his favourite  
 calculation of the odds, "is one-fourth stronger in numbers  
 than we; † nevertheless the chances are ninety to ten in our  
 favour." At that moment entered Ney, who had observed  
 some movements in the allied lines which looked like

\* *Houssaye*, 279.

† This, of course, was not the case; probably Napoleon reckoned on Wellington  
 having brought in Prince Ferdinand's corps from Hal.

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retreat, and urged the Emperor to hasten the attack, or the enemy would escape. ANN. 1815

"You have seen wrong," replied Napoleon; "the time is past for that. Wellington would suffer destruction if he attempted retreat. He has thrown the dice, and they are in our favour."

Soult deplored the absence of Grouchy. He counselled the Emperor once more, as he had done the day before, to recall at least part of the 34,000 good men detached with that Marshal.

"You think," retorted the Emperor, roughly, "because Wellington defeated you, that he must be a great General. Tell me that he is a bad General, that the English are poor troops, and that this will be the affair of a *déjeuner*."

"I hope so," replied Soult.

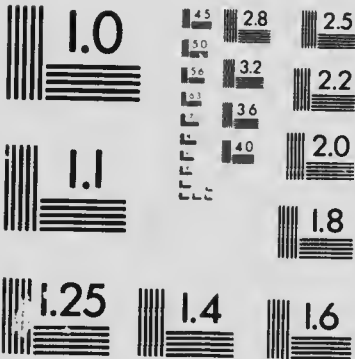
After this the party were joined by Napoleon's brother Jérôme and General Reille. The Emperor asked Reille his opinion of the English army. Reille certainly was not without experience of its quality: he said he thought that, well posted as they were, the British infantry were invulnerable to a front attack, because of the excellence of their fire; but he believed they might be outmanœuvred. Napoleon asked this opinion no better than Soult's; with an impatient exclamation he broke up the gathering. The General of engineers, Haxo, returned from reconnoitring and reported that the enemy had no entrenchments. He did not mention the natural features and buildings of which Wellington had taken full advantage to strengthen his position.

At this time only Reille's corps was in position; the other columns were still moving up from Genappe, labouring through the deep soil. Jérôme Buonaparte told the Emperor that on the previous evening the hotel waiter, who served him with supper at Genappe, repeated what he had heard an aide-de-camp say while Wellington was dining at the same house in the afternoon, namely, that the British and Prussian commanders had given each other the rendezvous before the



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Æt. 46. forest of Soignes, and that the Prussians would come up by way of Wavre.

“Bah!” said Napoleon; “after a battle such as that of Fleurus (Ligny) the junction of the English with the Prussians is out of the question for two days from now. Besides, the Prussians have Grouchy at their heels.” Then, wearing his well-known grey paletôt over his usual uniform as a colonel of *chasseurs-à-cheval*, Napoleon got on his white charger Marengo,\* and rode off to the front at La Belle Alliance, which he had fixed as the *point d'appui* of the right and left wings of his army. He took with him as guide Jean Decoster, who kept a small roadside tavern,† bound in the saddle of a troop-horse, and attached by a picket-rope to that of a mounted chasseur. Having scanned the allied position, and while his troops were still assembling, the Emperor rode back to the farm of Rossomme, where, seated at a small table in the open air, he wrote to Grouchy in reply to that Marshal's despatch of 10 p.m. on the 17th. Upon this letter of the Emperor's, and the interpretation put upon it by Grouchy, hinged, as it turned out, the issue of the day. To take any part here in the controversy between the apologists of Napoleon and the defenders of Grouchy would lie far outside the limits of the present work; that Napoleon's instructions to Grouchy were obscure, or at least ambiguous, is sufficiently proved by the widely divergent interpretation put upon their text by the historians who have most recently analysed it. This much, however, may be said. Napoleon himself, as is well known, laid the whole blame of the subsequent miscarriage upon Grouchy, but the initial error lay in the vagueness of the Emperor's orders to him when he was

The  
Emperor's  
order to  
Grouchy.

\* Marengo was a beautiful little Arab, measuring only 14 hands 2 inches. His skeleton may be seen in the museum of the United Service Institution, but one of his hoofs, mounted in silver gilt as a snuff-box, belongs to the mess of St. James's Palace guard. Marengo in the course of the day was wounded in the near haunch, on which Napoleon mounted his white Arab mare Marie.

† In some maps Decoster's tavern, situated a few hundred yards south of La Belle Alliance, is marked Maison d'Ecosse, a corruption of Maison Decoster.

first detached on the 17th at Ligny to pursue the Prussians ANN. 1815. "in the direction of Namur and Maestricht." But when, early on the 18th, Napoleon became aware that Blücher had baffled the French Marshal by a rapid concentration upon Wavre, so far from summoning Grouchy to the support of the main army, he directed him to follow the Prussians to Wavre. Now Grouchy, with 34,000 men, had before him 75,000 Prussians, by no means in the dispirited and disorganised condition imagined by the Emperor. This consideration is not always present with those who reproach Grouchy for not pressing the enemy more vigorously. But then it is said that when he heard from Walhain (not Sart-à-Walhain \*) the cannonade opening at Mont-Saint-Jean, he should at once have made all speed to support the Emperor, as Gérard urgently desired him to do. Supposing he had done so, which would have been directly to disregard his instructions, must he not still have been too late to save the battle, being sixteen miles distant from the field? When, at 4 p.m., he received the Emperor's morning order, it did but confirm him in what he had undertaken: "You will direct your movements upon Wavre, so as to approach us, act in concert with us and keep communication with us, driving before you the Prussian army which has taken that route, and which may have halted at Wavre, *where you must arrive as soon as possible.*" This command Grouchy carried out to the letter by attacking and defeating Thielmann's corps at Wavre, while the other three Prussian corps slowly but steadily made their way towards Mont-Saint-Jean. "One is compelled," says M. Houssaye, "to read into this letter (Napoleon's morning order) that which is not in it, namely, an order to Grouchy to manœuvre by his left in order to bring him near the main body of the French army. . . . From the tenour of this order it is manifest that, at 10 o'clock in the morning, the Emperor neither summoned Grouchy to his field of battle, nor reckoned on seeing him arrive." †

\* *Ropes*, 256.† *Houssaye*, 316, note.

Æt. 46.

However, whether Grouchy is to be blamed for disobeying the order dictated to Bertrand by the Emperor and sent to Grouchy on 17th June (an order which he afterwards repeatedly and falsely denied having received); whether, further, the construction which he placed on the Emperor's order of 10 a.m. on the 18th can be justified, is outside the scope of the present narrative; all that concerns it is that although Grouchy was within hearing of the guns at Waterloo, and was strongly urged by Gérard, commanding the 4th Corps, to move to the Emperor's support, he refused to do so, and spent the day fighting the 3rd Prussian Corps under Thielmann at Wavre. A later and more imperative order sent by Napoleon at 1.30 p.m., when Bülow's attack on the French right flank was imminent, did not reach Grouchy till five in the evening, when it was too late to do anything.

The  
French  
order of  
battle.

With drums beating, colours flying, and bands playing *Veillons au salut de l'Empire*, Napoleon's last army defiled past him into its position on the plateau of La Belle Alliance, affording to their adversaries beyond the valley an imposing display of force as the heavy columns wheeled and dressed with the deliberate precision of a holiday review. Each brigade as it passed by lowered its colours to the great chieftain, loud and long rang the shouts of *Vive l'Empereur!* louder and longer, said a veteran officer of the 1st Corps d'armée, than he had ever known before, for the men were determined that they should be heard among the brick-red lines which fringed the crest of Mont-Saint-Jean.

The position taken up by Napoleon was on the ridge, or plateau, of La Belle Alliance, corresponding in height, general direction, and character to that of Mont-Saint-Jean. The French centre, like that of the Allies, was marked by the Charleroi high-road; like that of the Allies, also, but not so accurately, the general alignment was marked by a cross-road. The force on the field consisted of the 1st (d'Erlon's four divisions), 2nd (Reille's three divisions), and 6th (Lobau's

three divisions) Corps, the Imperial Guard (three divisions), ANN. 1815. the heavy cavalry of Kellermann and Milhaud, and the light cavalry of Domon and Subervie—in all 71,947 men, of which 15,765 were cavalry and 7,232 artillery with 246 guns.

The army was disposed in three lines, the right wing of the first line being formed by d'Erlon's corps in dense columns under Allix, Donzelot, Marcognet, and Durutte, with its inner flank resting on the Charleroi road near La Belle Alliance, and with Jacquinet's light cavalry covering the outer flank opposite La Haye and Papelotte. Reille's corps of three divisions—Bachelu, Foy, and Jérôme—furnished the left wing of the first line, extending from La Belle Alliance to the Nivelles road, on which were Piré's light cavalry, opposite Hougoumont. After these troops had taken up their position, vigilant eyes in the allied army could perceive countless black specks appearing in the intervals along the front—those terrible *bouches-à-feu* which herald and enforce the operations of the sister arms.\* In the centre of the second line, Count Lobau's infantry were massed in column on the west of the Charleroi road, balanced by the cavalry of Domon and Subervie on the east thereof. D'Erlon's infantry divisions had the support of Count Milhaud's cuirassiers in the second line; those of Reille that of Kellermann's. Further back, close to Rossomme, loomed the dark masses of the Imperial Guard in reserve, with cavalry on either flank.†

\* It is needless to remind the reader that no display of this kind could ever be witnessed in modern warfare. It was sufficiently remarkable even in those days, for the English and French artillery were within easy range of each other the whole time.

† The infantry of the Guard wore their fighting dress this day—bear-skin cap without plume or hackle, blue breeches and long blue coats with red epaulettes. But each man carried in his haversack his parade dress, to be worn on entering Brussels, making his load, with musket and forty rounds of ammunition, nearly 70 lbs. avoirdupois. The Young Guard consisted of men of four years', the Middle Guard of men of eight years', and the Old Guard of men of twelve years' service and upwards.

ÆT. 46.

Seldom, if ever, within historic times has such a mighty force been marshalled within so small a compass. Seventy-two thousand French, with 246 guns, were drawn up against sixty-eight thousand British and their allies, with 156 guns—one hundred and forty thousand men with four hundred cannon; yet the whole space, from flank to flank, was less than three miles; \* at no point did the distance between the opposing armies amount to a mile; three miles, measured along the straight Charleroi road, covered the distance between the rearmost reserves of both armies. The undulating ground between the two positions was deeply cultivated, without fences, as at this day, and covered with high and rich crops of rye and clover, soon to be trampled into a miry and bloody stubble. To one standing midway across the hollow between the two hosts, before they engaged, the preponderance of force would have seemed enormously in favour of the French, both because of their massive formation—quarter columns of double companies at short intervals—and because the first line of the Allies were screened by the hedges, and their second line, reserves, and most of the cavalry hidden by the reverse slope of the ridge.

It was close on eleven o'clock before the Emperor had completed his leisurely dispositions and returned to his post at Rossomme. There he issued the order which showed his disdain for Reille's caution. As soon as all the troops had come up from Genappe, which would be at one o'clock, the allied position was to be attacked in the centre; the British infantry, whom Napoleon never yet had encountered in battle, were to be crushed and pierced by the very means which those who had so encountered them knew they were strongest in resisting; and the superior manœuvring of the French, although repeatedly proved in former campaigns, was not to be employed in turning the enemy's left, where he was weakest, whereby also he should be separated from the possible approach of the Prussians from Wavre.

\* Wellington held a front of nearly eight miles at Busaco with 36,000 men.



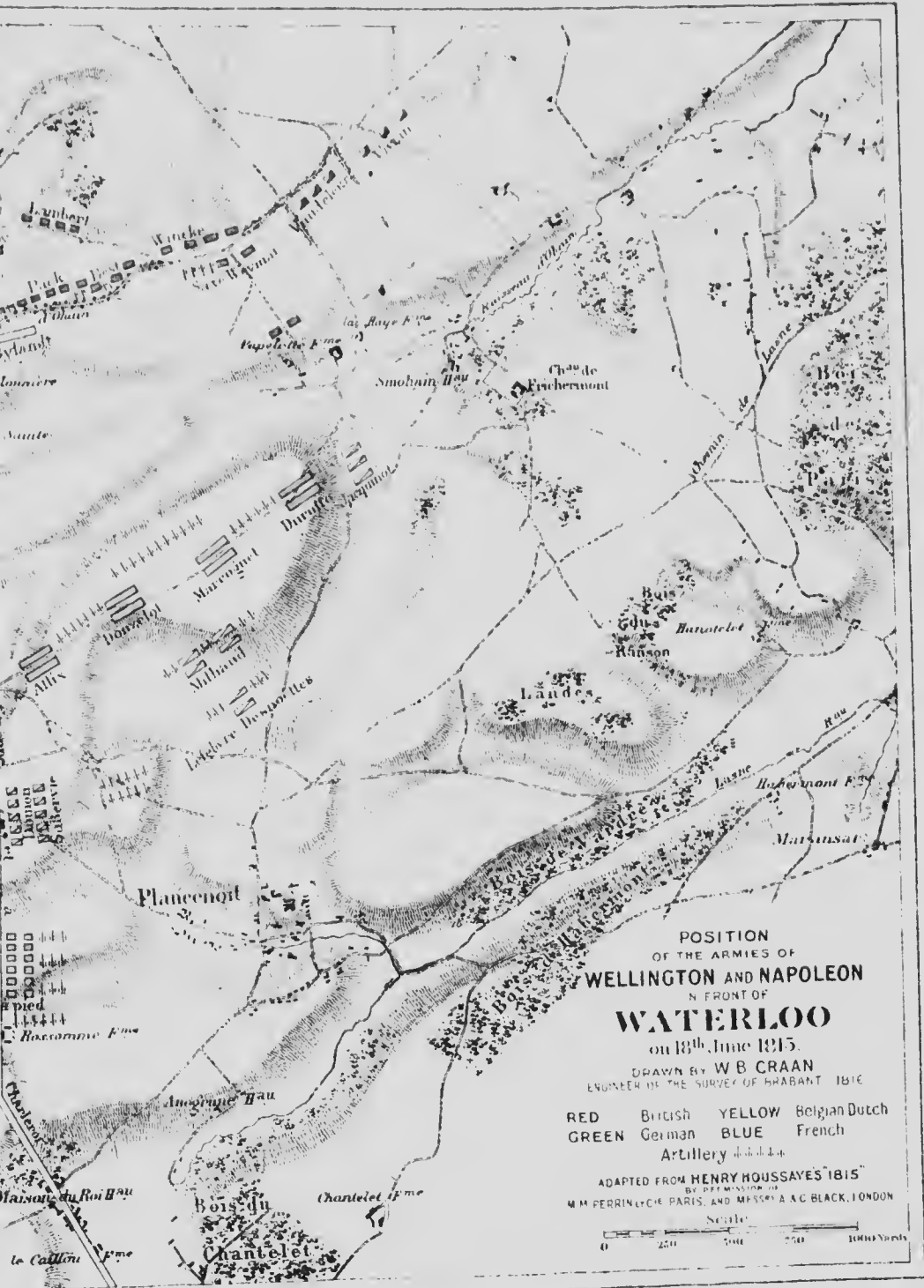
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... on which the Belgian Lion is placed



In determining on this mode of attack, Napoleon had to take into account the advanced posts of the Allies. To induce Wellington, if possible, to weaken his centre, he decided not to wait till his whole line was formed, but directed Reille to possess himself of Hougoumont at once.

ANN. 1815.  
Attack on  
Hougou-  
mont.

Shortly after eleven o'clock, coils of white smoke surged out from the French left, and a mighty roar crashed along the dark hedge of war. The British batteries on the allied right made sonorous response: the ominous sound rolled as far as Walhain, sixteen miles to the east, where Grouchy, having finished a leisurely breakfast, was dallying with a dish of strawberries.

Under cover of a terrific cannonade, Jérôme led a brigade of four regiments in echelon of battalions, preceded by a cloud of skirmishers, into the hollow before the copse of Hougoumont, while Piré's lancers moved along the Nivelles road. The Emperor had not intended Jérôme's attack to be much more than a feint, but it developed into a furious combat which lasted throughout the day. The tirailleurs of the French 1<sup>er</sup> *leger* made good their footing in the skirts of the wood, supported by the 3<sup>e</sup> of the line. Foot by foot they fought their way through the thick copse; after an hour's murderous work the men of Nassau and a detachment of Guards were driven back to the walls of Hougoumont, whence a deadly fire poured upon the assailants. Reille sent orders not to push further than the wood, but Jérôme persisted in the endeavour to capture the château, sending up fresh battalions to the assault. Some of these outflanked the enclosures, getting in rear of Hougoumont and firing out of the deep rye at Colonel Smith's battery on the ridge above Byng's brigade. More companies of the Coldstream Guards forced their way in to reinforce the garrison, but no movement was made from the allied centre, as Napoleon had hoped would be the result of this attack.

While the combat raged round Hougoumont, preparations went on for the grand attack in the centre. Eighty guns

Æt. 46.

—  
 Appearance of  
 Bülow's  
 Prussian  
 corps.

were placed in battery in front of La Belie Alliance, and Ney's columns stood waiting the word to advance. The usual preliminary cannonade was about to open when, at one o'clock or thereby, Napoleon, ever anxiously looking for signs of Grouchy's approach, although he had no right to expect it, detected, about six miles to the north-east, a dark shadow on the heights—apparently a body of troops. The atmosphere was close and hazy; Soult was sure it was troops, probably Grouchy's; others of the staff thought it was only a wood. All doubts were set at rest by Marbot's hussars bringing in a Prussian serjeant whom they had captured, bearing a letter from Bülow to Wellington, announcing the arrival of the 4th Prussian Corps at Chapelle-Saint-Lambert. The junction, then, of the Prussians with Wellington's army, which Napoleon had derided in the morning as *paroles en l'air*, was on the point of accomplishment.\* Instantly he detached the light cavalry of Domon and Subervie to reconnoitre, and Soult wrote at the same time to Grouchy, bidding him abandon his movement on Wavre, hasten to fall on Bülow's rear, and join the French right. "Ne perdez pas un instant pour vous rapprocher de nous et nous joindre, et pour écraser Bülow, que vous prendrez en flagrant délit." †

The apparition of the Prussian corps gave Napoleon more concern than surprise, because he had already received a despatch sent by Grouchy from Gembloux at six in the morning, announcing the general movement of the Prussian army either upon Brussels or to form a junction with Wellington at Mont-Saint-Jean. The Emperor, however, still cherished the hope that Blücher would not risk a movement upon Mont-Saint-Jean. "This morning," he said to Soult, "the chances were ninety to ten in our favour; they are

\* Bülow's cavalry had been seen from the allied lines at an early hour in the morning, moving on the heights in front of Ohain. This was his advanced guard, the march of the main column being retarded by the wet ground and difficult defiles of Wavre.

† This despatch did not reach Grouchy till 5 p.m.

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Hot and Hot  
(From a *Deutscher* note, in 1815)



No. 1.

In Pursuing  
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How you ...  
Patrol to ...  
E. Chateaux.

No. 1.

Let your people  
encamp near the  
gardens where the  
caddis were  
The Cavalry continue  
in the village or  
Basson where  
they are

ORDERS PENCILLED BY THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON DURING THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

NO. 1 TO SIR H. VIVIAN, COMMANDING LIGHT CAVALRY BRIGADE ON THE LEFT. NO. 1 WAS WRITTEN AFTER THE BATTLE, BECAUSE ORDER NO. 1 HAS BEEN STRUCK OUT WITH THE PENCIL, SHOWING THAT NO. 1 WAS ANTERIOR TO NO. 1.





still sixty to forty, and if Grouchy repairs the horrible fault ANN. 1815. he has committed by loitering at Gembloux, and marches fast, the victory will be all the more decisive, because Bülow's corps will be utterly destroyed."

Among the innumerable treasures of Apsley House none are more precious than three folded pieces of ass's skin, such as the Duke used to carry in his pocket during an action, and pencil his orders upon to his Generals. By great good luck these, which were used at Waterloo, were not sponged clean as was usually done, and at this day one may retrace the firm, clear characters as they were written in the very roar and tumult of the field. The first of them must have been sent out, probably to Sir Hussey Vivian, at this period of the battle.

"The Prussians have a corps at St. Lambert. Be so kind as to send a Patrole from our left by Ohain to communicate with them. Have you sent a Patrole to Braine-le-chateau?"

Napoleon could no longer neglect his right flank. Incessantly taking pinches of snuff, as was his custom in times of anxiety or excitement, and as he continued to do throughout this day, the Emperor wheeled up to the right the 6th Corps under Count Lobau to guard the approaches from Wavre and Saint-Lambert. Then he gave Ney the order to begin his attack. The grand battery of eighty guns, Ney receives the order to attack. posted on the edge of the plateau to the east of the Charleroi road, crashed continuously for half an hour in a cannonade to which the British and Brunswick batteries \* made prompt response. At two o'clock the fire ceased, as d'Erlon's four Advance of d'Erlon's corps. magnificent divisions of infantry, under the Generals Allix, Donzelot, Marcognet, and Durutte, advanced 18,000 strong in echelon of divisions from the left at four hundred paces distance, Ney himself riding with d'Erlon at the head of the leading division (Allix). Napoleon rarely interfered with

\* In 1815 batteries of field and garrison artillery were termed "brigades," and batteries of horse artillery "troops."

Æt. 46. his Generals in their mode of executing movements which he directed; on this occasion the usual formation for attack, in columns of battalions at open or half distance, was exchanged for a most objectionable one. Each division was formed in a single close column of battalions, with a front of 160 to 200 files, and a depth of twenty-four, a formation rigid and unwieldy, whence it was equally difficult to deploy or to form square, and peculiarly ill-adapted for the deep and broken ground to be traversed.\*

As each echelon in descending the slope cleared the line of fire, the batteries behind reopened on Picton's 5th Division and Bylandt's unfortunate Dutch brigade. The French covered their advance with a long line of skirmishers, and soon the whole valley from Papelotte to the Charleroi road was wrapped in flame and smoke, and filled with dreadful noise—the musketry rattling below, the cannon bellowing overhead. Wellington watched the advance from under a moderate-sized elm on the ridge, just in front of where the Ohain road crosses the highway.† In vain his staff urged him to move away, seeing how dangerously the tree was drawing the enemy's fire. Of Allix's division, Quiot's brigade was engaged in a determined assault upon La Haye Sainte, two hundred yards in front of the Duke. Witnessing how hard pressed were Baring's Germans in defending it, he sent one of Ompteda's battalions to their relief, which, however, was broken by a charge of Travers's cuirassiers, and he only withdrew when the enemy's tirailleurs began firing from the north end of the garden.‡ D'Erlon's massive columns

Attack on  
La Haye  
Sainte.

\* M. Houssaye (p. 338, note) suggests that d'Erlon's aide-de-camp, in carrying his order to the divisional generals, mistook the formation of *la colonne par division*, i.e. column of double companies at half or wheeling distance, for *la colonne de division*, i.e. eight battalions in a single close column. But d'Erlon must be held responsible, as the formation took place under his eye.

† This elm is no longer to be seen, an enterprising Englishman having been allowed to purchase it and enrich himself by the sale of its wood in snuff-boxes and what not.

‡ *Waterloo Letters*, p. 33.

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MAJOR-GENERAL SIR DENIS PACK, K.C.B.

[Vol. ii. p. 69.]

aving been  
snuff-boxes



suffered terribly from artillery fire during their advance; ANN. 1815.  
 nevertheless they pressed on, steadily ascending the slope. Allix's division drove two companies of the 95th Rifles out of the sandpit near La Haye Sainte. Next them Donzelot's men, with loud cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* moved upon Bylandt's Dutchmen, who had been grievously torn by the fire of the grand battery immediately opposite them at a range of not more than a thousand yards. These broke and ran up the slope, nor can they be justly blamed for doing so, seeing how cruelly they had been exposed. The fugitives passed through the ranks of the Cameron Highlanders, who, lying in shelter of the cross-road behind the advanced position, jeered them derisively, and many a sly prod from a bayonet quickened the movement of the broken battalions to the rear.

The French tirailleurs were now close to the hedges of the Ohain road; not a musket-shot betrayed what lay before them. Brave old Picton was there, with as much as Quatre-Bras had left him of Kempt's and Pack's brigades—three thousand light infantry and Highlanders. "Rise up!" he cried; the word was echoed by the brigade commanders, and Kempt's brigade\* moved forward to the crest, sweeping before them the busy tirailleurs.

The congestion of the French columns had become unbearable. Donzelot halted his division, the second from the left, under the crest in order to attempt a deployment; he was in the act of carrying out this movement, so difficult from his peculiar formation, when a loud hurrah from the ridge above caused all to look up. Within forty yards stood the thin red line, far overlapping the flanks of the French column. A sharp command, and every musket was levelled at the "present;" another, and a torrent of lead tore through the crowded ranks. Donzelot's men wavered, began to fall back; then, in the comparative silence, for the French cannon

Donzelot  
repulsed by  
Kempt's  
brigade.

\* The 28th and 32nd Regiments, the 79th Cameron Highlanders, and 1st Battalion 95th Rifles.

Æt. 46. had suspended their fire as their own men climbed the slopes, was heard Picton's last word of command—"Charge, hurrah!" He lived not to see the result: a musket ball entered his right temple, and he fell dead on the spot between the cross-roads and the sandpit.\* The command was obeyed, though; with loud cheers the British line poured down the slope, forcing Donzelot's disordered mass into greater confusion.

Lord Palmerston has recorded Wellington's own words describing an incident at this period of the combat: they are instructive as showing, not only how he was exposed to fire as constantly as any of his fighting line—more so, because at no period of the day could he seek shelter by lying down—but also how the commander of a great army, when regimental officers are falling fast, must at times assume the direction of a mere handful of men.

"A column of French was firing across the road at one of our regiments. Our people could not get at them to charge them, because they would have been disordered by crossing the road. It was a nervous moment. One of the two forces must go about in a few minutes—it was impossible to say which it might be. I saw about two hundred men of the 79th, who seemed to have had more than they liked of it. I formed them myself about twenty yards from the flash of the French column, and ordered them to fire; and, in a few minutes, the French column turned about." †

Marcognet  
repulsed  
by Pack's  
brigade.

This disposed of the second echelon of Ney's attack. While Donzelot was attempting to deploy, the third echelon, under Marcognet, came up on his right and passed him, crossed the Ohain road on the crest, and suddenly encountered

\* "A rough, foul-mouthed devil as ever lived," was the Duke's elogy on this gallant officer, "but he always behaved extremely well; no man could do better in different services I assigned to him" (*Stanhope*, 69). The officers of the 1st Battalion Connaught Rangers, the old 88th, still wear a black line in their gold lace, in mourning for the chief who led their corps so often to victory.

† *Palmerston's Journal*, p. 53.

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LIEUT.-GENERAL THE EARL OF UXBRIDGE, G.C.B.,  
AFTERWARDS 1ST MARQUIS OF ANGLESEY.  
*Vol. ii. p. 70.*



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Pack's Highland brigade deployed in line.\* Here, again, the superiority of fire from an extended front told with fatal effect on the French columns; Marcognet's men were checked. Now was the moment for the cavalry, and they were ready at hand. Sir William Ponsonby had wheeled his "Union Brigado" into line on the reverse slope to the east of the high-road—the Royal Dragoons, Scots Greys, and Inniskillens. The enemy's cavalry was threatening, and as Ponsonby's line advanced the Highlanders were forming squares; but with loud cries of "Scotland yet!" many of them seized the stirrups of the Greys as they passed through the intervals, and were carried forward in the charge. The heavy cavalry fell upon both flanks of Marcognet's division, completing their rout, forced back some heavy masses of French cavalry, and rode on through the deep ground, often up to their girths, against the French in position on the south side. They got out of hand, as Wellington often complained his cavalry did, and suffered in consequence from the enemy's charges and cavalry, finally being forced to retire with the irreparable loss of their commander, Sir William Ponsonby.†

ANN. 1815.

Charge  
of the  
"Union  
Brigade."

While the Union Brigade were thus occupied on the east of the Charleroi road, Lord Uxbridge himself was leading Lord Edward Somerset's heavy brigade‡ against Travers's cuirassiers and Allix's infantry upon and to the west of that road. The cuirassiers had ridden up as far as the cross-road, and were actually in it, in the hollow way, when the Household Cavalry appeared on the bank above their heads. In order to extricate themselves, the cuirassiers had to defile to the right, and get upon the high-road between the allied position

Charge of  
Lord E.  
Somerset's  
brigade.

\* Third Battalion 1st Royal Scots, 3rd Battalion 42nd Royal Highlanders, 2nd Battalion 44th Regiment, and 92nd Gordon Highlanders.

† Ponsonby's groom or orderly had not brought his charger in time or to the right place, and Sir William was mounted on a hack. In leading a charge against the Polish Lancers, the animal, overweighted, stuck fast in the mire; Sir William and his aide-de-camp were killed on the spot.

‡ The 1st and 2nd Life Guards, the Horse Guards, and the King's Dragoon Guards. Lord Uxbridge afterwards admitted that he made a great mistake in leading this charge himself.

ÆT. 46. — and La Haye Sainte.\* Somerset's regiments charged them before they could re-form, scattered them, and drove Allix's infantry column back in disorder across the valley; but they, in turn, like their comrades in the Union Brigade, paid the penalty of disregard of trumpet and voice sounding the recall. "When I was returning to our position," said Lord Uxbridge, "I met the Duke of Wellington, surrounded by all the *corps diplomatique militaire*, who from the high ground had witnessed the whole affair. The plain appeared to be swept clean, and I never saw so joyous a group as this *troupe dorée*. They thought the battle was over." †

Repulse of  
Durutte's  
column at  
Papelotte.

Still there remains to be told the fortune of Durutte's division on the right of the French attack. It suffered less than the others, but having sustained the charge of Vandeleur's light brigade, ‡ was obliged to draw off, though in good order, and without much loss. The grand attack of the whole French right wing had failed. A period of comparative calm, brief, but well marked, ensued. Only at Hougomont, far on the British right, the conflict still raged furiously. The attack on this post, originally intended as no more than a diversion, had developed into the most sustained, and not the least murderous, of the day, owing to gross mismanagement on the part of Reille. No attempt was made to batter down the defences on the west with artillery, which would have been perfectly practicable, and must have rendered the position untenable. Hand to hand the combatants contested every yard of the copse; repeatedly driven to the shelter of the walls, the defenders as often sallied forth, until the wood and orchard became a sheer charnel-house. The barn caught

The con-  
flict at  
Hougou-  
mont.

\* This part of the ground has been grievously altered: the banks have disappeared, and the road is now level with the fields on either side. The direction taken by Travers's cuirassiers exactly corresponds with that of the modern tramway.

† *Waterloo Letters*, p. 9.

‡ The 11th, 12th, and 16th Light Dragoons; not the 13th as stated by M. Houssaye (p. 347), which was in Grant's brigade. During this charge the 11th Light Dragoons remained in reserve on the plateau.

fire, probably from some shells thrown in by the divisional artillery of Jérôme. Wellington perceived it, and sent the following pencilled order to Captain and Lieut.-Colonel James Maedonell (Glengarry's third son) commanding the Guards in the château:—

ANN. 1815.

"I see that the fire has communicated from the Haystack to the Roof of the Chateau. You must however still keep your Men in those parts to which the fire does not reach. Take care that no Men are lost by the falling in of the Roof, or floors. After they will have fallen in occupy the Ruined walls inside the Garden; particularly if it should be possible for the Enemy to pass through the Embers in the Inside of the house."

But although this increased the suffering of the garrison, many wounded men perishing in the flames, it gave no advantage to the assailants. Furious at Jérôme's failure, Reille sent forward Foy's division to reinforce, and, towards evening, Bachelu's division also. It was all in vain: for eight hours twelve hundred men held as many thousands at defiance, and most nobly justified the Duke's choice of Hougomont as an advanced post.

About three o'clock Napoleon received a despatch from Grouchy, written at 11.30 a.m., which gave him cause for anxiety. Grouchy, when he wrote this, was still at Walhain, eight heavy miles from Wavre. Bülow was already in position at Saint Lambert, less than five miles from La Belle Alliance; unless it should occur to Grouchy to move to his left on hearing the guns of Waterloo, Bülow would presently be on the right flank of the French. Time, esteemed so cheaply in the morning, was of supreme value now; the English must be beaten before Bülow could come into action. Before that could be done, La Haye Sainte must be taken. D'Erlon, having rallied and re-formed his shattered columns, Napoleon committed the enterprise to Ney. Once more the great battery discharged its thunder, while to the left Reille's artillery roared on the west of the high-road. Ney led one of Quiot's brigades, covered by one of Donzelot's extended

Second  
attack on  
La Haye  
Sainte.

ÆT. 46. skirmishers to the attack. The skirmishers pushed forward to the very crest of the allied position, but recoiled once more from the fatal hedgerows. The storm of La Haye Sainte failed also, so busily Baring's Germans spread death around them. Here again, as at Hougoumont, it is past comprehension why more use was not made of artillery, which, in ten minutes, should have reduced the homestead to a heap of road metal. Ney flew about like a madman. The cannonade at this period was terrific: the oldest soldiers had not heard the like. To save them from the fire, Wellington withdrew some of his battalions behind the dip of the plateau. Ney mistook it for a movement of retreat, and called for a brigade of cavalry. D'Erlon's infantry was already ascending the slopes. By some misadventure, instead of a single brigade, two whole divisions, 4,000 strong, including the light cavalry of the Guard and the Red Lancers, were set in motion to the front. Great was the surprise of Wellington's staff to see this preparation to attack infantry still in perfect order in their position. So far from any intention to retreat, Wellington had just been strengthening his first line by bringing up brigades from the second line and reserve, every regiment lying down to avoid exposure to fire.

The men were called to their feet; squares were formed; the gunners were ordered to keep up their fire till the last moment, and then to run for shelter in the squares, leaving their guns at the edge of the plateau.\* The French cavalry

\* The behaviour of the artillery at this period was not perfect; indeed this is one of the episodes of the battle which lay at the root of the Duke's firm determination never to countenance any history of it. Writing to Lord Mulgrave, 15th December, 1815, in respect to a request which had been made for a mark of special favour to the field officers of artillery present at Waterloo, he said: "In my opinion, you have done quite right to refuse to grant this favour . . . To tell you the truth, I was not very well pleased with the artillery in the battle of Waterloo. The army was formed in squares immediately on the slope of the rising ground, on the summit of which the artillery was placed, with orders not to engage with artillery, but to fire only when bodies of troops came under their fire. It was very difficult to get them to obey this order. The French cavalry charged, and were formed on the same ground with our artillery, in general

I see that the fire has  
 commenced from the  
 hay stacks to the top  
 of the bastion

You must however still  
 keep your Men in those  
 parts to which the fire  
 does not reach  
 Take care that no Men  
 are lost by the falling

in of the roof or floors  
 after they will have fallen  
 on crossing the inner wall  
 inside of the bastion, parts  
 of which it should be  
 possible for the Cavalry  
 to pass through the  
 windows on the inside  
 of the House -

ORDER DICTATED BY THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON, DURING THE BATTLE OF  
 WATERLOO, TO LIEUTENANT MACDONELL, COMMANDING DETACHMENT  
 OF GUARDS IN BARRICADE



We ought to have  
 more of the Cavalry  
 between the two  
 high Roads that is  
 say, three Brigades  
 at least besides the  
 Brigade in observation  
 on the right & behind  
 the Belgian Cavalry

& the 8 of Cumberland  
 Hussars

One heavy & one light  
 Brigade might remain  
 on the left

ORDER PENCILLED AND SENT BY THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON, DURING THE  
 BATTLE OF WATERLOO, TO THE EARL OF EXETER, COMMANDING THE  
 CAVALRY.





advanced on the west of the high-road in echelon of squad- ANN. 1815.  
rons from the right, slowly, because of the deep ground and the high corn. It was a madcap—a cruel enterprisc. The batteries on the heights drove lanes of death through the glittering masses of cuirassiers, of gay lancers and gallant hussars; with faultless, yet fruitless, courage and discipline these fine horsemen rode up to the batteries and through them out on the platcau behind, where, far as the eye could reach, the squares stood motionless, impregnably hedged with steel. It is an hour for ever memorable in the annals of the British infantry; perhaps the best, because the simplest, account of it is contained in Wellington's own words to Walter Scott, who was importunate for materials of history.

“The French cavalry were on the plateau in the centre between the two high-roads for nearly three-quarters of an hour, riding about among our squares of infantry, all firing (of artillery) having ceased on both sides. I moved our squares forward to the guns; and our cavalry, which had been detached by Lord Uxbridge to the flanks, was brought back to the centre.\* The French cavalry were then driven off. After that circumstance, repeated attacks were made along the whole front of the centre

within a few yards of our guns. We could not expect the artillery men to remain at their guns in such a case. But I had a right to expect that the officers and men of the artillery would do as I did, and as all the Staff did, that is to take shelter in the squares of the infantry till the French cavalry should be driven off the ground, either by our cavalry or infantry. But they did no such thing; they ran off the field entirely, taking with them limbers, ammunition, and everything, and when, in a few minutes, we had driven off the French cavalry, and could have made good use of our artillery, we had no artillerymen to fire them; and, in point of fact, I should have had no artillery during the whole of the latter part of the action, if I had not kept a reserve at the commencement. . . . It is on account of these little stories, which must come out, that I object to all the propositions to write what is called a history of the battle of Waterloo” (*Suppl. Despatches*, xiv. 618).

\* The actual order of recall is here given in facsimile. “We ought to have more of the Cavalry between the two high Roads. That is to say, three Brigades at least, besides the Brigade in observation on the right, & besides the Belgian Cavalry & the D. of Cumberland's Hussars. One heavy & one light Brigade might remain on the left.”

Æt. 46. of the position by cavalry and infantry till seven at night; how  
 — many I cannot tell." \*

The  
 French  
 cavalry  
 renew their  
 attack.

The French cavalry, with indomitable courage and perseverance, renewed their assault on the plateau a second, a third, and even a fourth time, with exactly similar result. The Emperor realised the terrible blunder that had taken place; he saw from La Belle Alliance what was going on beyond the valley. "That premature movement," he said to Soult, "may have a fatal effect on the fortunes of to-day."

"He has compromised us," growled Soult, "as he did at Jena."

"It is too early by an hour," continued Napoleon; "but we must support him now he has done it."

Capture of  
 La Haye  
 Sainte.

He ordered Kellermann to support Milhaud with four brigades of euirassiers and carabineers. They gained the crest; they crowned the allied position; yet they could do no good when there, because they were not supported by infantry. Had the Emperor withdrawn one of Reille's divisions from the fruitless operations at Hougoumont, it must have gone hardly with the Allies, for it only wanted the fire of artillery and infantry to break the squares—the cavalry would have done the rest.† But Napoleon had his whole attention engrossed elsewhere at the time: he was obliged to leave Ney to deal with the enemy in front, in order that he himself might prepare to encounter danger from another quarter. Meanwhile, the garrison of La Haye Sainte had exhausted all their ammunition. The precaution of making a postern in the western or northern wall of the enclosure had been neglected;‡ it was found impossible to pass in supplies, and Baring, having spent his last cartridge,

\* *Despatches*, xii. 610.

† It is only some fifty miles from Waterloo to Courtrai, where, in 1302, the Flemish pikemen first showed how infantry alone were the masters of cavalry alone, and, in the Battle of the Spurs, defeated Robert, Count d'Artois, and all the chivalry of France.

‡ *Stanhope*, 245.



HAITI, SAINT-PIERRE, FROM THE SOUTH  
(From a drawing made in 1815.)

Vol. II, p. 76

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collected the remains of his little force, forty-two men all told, and made good his escape to the general line. A serious loss, this, to the Allies. French sharpshooters swarmed into every part of the buildings and enclosure, whence they directed an injurious fire upon the right of the 5th Division. Ney established a battery there, which enfiladed the allied squares at less than three hundred yards range; Donzelot's skirmishers, crossing to the west of the high-road, pressed yet closer; some battalions of D'Erlon's wearied divisions moved forward once more; one of Reille's fresh columns might have decided the contest, but Reille was still wasting his energy on Hougoumont. Nevertheless, the danger was tremendous. General Ompteda fell dead near the high-road; Sir William de Lancey, the Quartermaster-General, riding beside Wellington, received mortal injury from a cannon shot; not far off, Sir Alexander Gordon took his death-wound; further to the right the Prince of Orange and General Alten were struck down; Kielmansegge's Germans, sorely pressed, began to yield. *The centre is open: vive l'Empereur!* It is a moment to test the steadiest nerve. The Duke remained calm, but very grave; beset on all sides by officers asking for instructions, he has but one answer for all: "There are no orders, except to stand firm to the last man."

Ney only required reinforcements to establish himself in the enemy's centre. He sent Colonel Heymès to ask them from the Emperor. "More troops!" shouted Napoleon; "where am I to get them? Does he expect me to make them?"

In truth Napoleon's position was as critical as Wellington's. It was about half-past four when he became aware that his right flank was imminently threatened. Blücher had joined Bülow's 4th Corps at Chapelle-Saint-Lambert about one o'clock, whence he directed his march upon Plancenoit, a village well in rear of the French right. When he began his attack here about five o'clock, the 2nd Corps under Pirch I.

The  
Prussian  
army  
enters the  
field.

ÆT. 46. was only two miles behind him; Zieten's 3rd Corps was drawing near in front of the French right along the ridge from Ohain, while Thielemann's 4th Corps was fighting Grouchy at Wavre. The Emperor's anxiety deepened; while the impression in the allied army became very general that the day was lost. Towards the right of the allied line, many of the troops not actually engaged began to turn restive under prolonged exposure to artillery fire. The Duke's attention was concentrated on the conflict on the central plateau, where the slightest failure of staunchness on the part of the infantry, exposed to prolonged and repeated assaults of cavalry, must have involved irrevocable defeat.

"At this time the action was evidently all against us. . . . Lord Uxbridge was gone, and all his staff; the Duke of Wellington was shut up occasionally in squares,\* all his staff disabled, being either killed, wounded or dismounted; there was therefore no one to report anything that occurred in the centre of the army." †

There was much misgiving and perplexity; happily, the great majority of British and Hanoverian officers behaved with the dignity of their rank, and a common spirit of gallantry and endurance seemed infused into the rank and file, down to the youngest recruit. But there are black sheep in every flock, and there can be no doubt that not a few officers and men rode quietly off the ground to Brussels, and an undue anxiety was shown by others to accompany escorts of prisoners and wounded to the rear. ‡ The Duke of Cumberland's Hussars deserted the field *en masse*.

\* It has been denied that the Duke entered a square at any time during the day, but there is his own statement in writing to show that he did (*Suppl. Despatches*, xiv. 619).

† *Hamilton MS.*

‡ *Ibid.* It is unnecessary to repeat the instances of personal cowardice described by Mr. Hamilton, but so much unfavourable comment has been passed by English writers on the conduct of the Belgian-Dutch and Nassau troops, that it ought to be clearly explained once for all that misconduct was not confined to them alone, as may be seen from the following extract from the general order thanking the troops "for their conduct in the glorious action:" —

About four o'clock Wellington, no longer apprehending ANN. 1815. danger on his right, had desired Lord Hill to move up to the support of the troops in Hougoumont. They were in time to repulse a new attack to which Ney, after the fourth failure of his cavalry to break the allied line on the plateau, had ordered up a fresh infantry division (Bachelu's) and a brigade of Foy's division. It was too late. These six thousand troops which, at an earlier hour, might have followed the cavalry with good effect, for the allied guns were temporarily silenced each time the cavalry passed them, were cut to pieces and dispersed by the converging fire of Hill's guns and of his infantry line.

To meet the Prussian menace on his right, Napoleon had brought forward the 6th Corps from its position in the second line on the west of the high-road, and caused Lobau to form it on a new front towards the east. Against this Blücher caused Bülow to direct his attack; who, manœuvring by his right, turned the outer flank of the 6th Corps, dislodged the brigade which held Plancenoit, and took possession of this important post, which gravely affected the Emperor's whole position and compromised his line of retreat. Napoleon sent Duhesme with eight battalions of the Young Guard to recapture Plancenoit, which was effected after a fierce encounter, with house-to-house fighting. Shortly after, the Young Guard in turn were driven out of the village, upon which the Emperor detached two battalions of the Old Guard (the 1st

Lord Hill moves up on the right.

Bülow engages the French right.

Conflict at Plancenoit.

"The Field Marshal has observed that several soldiers, and even officers, have quitted their ranks without leave, and have gone to Bruxelles, and even some to Antwerp, where, and in the country through which they have passed, they have spread a false alarm in a manner highly unmilitary and derogatory to the character of soldiers. The Field Marshal requests the General officers commanding divisions in the British army, and the General officers commanding the corps of each nation of which the army is composed, to report to him in writing what officers and men (the former by name) are now or have been absent without leave since the 16th instant" (*Suppl. Despatches*, x. 538).

Brialmont, Jomini, and other writers have described the road to Brussels in rear of Mont-Saint-Jean as being so crowded with fugitives that Wellington had no choice but to hold his ground, retreat through the forest being impossible.



ÆT. 46. of the 2nd Grenadiers and the 1st of the 2nd Chasseurs), who once more retook Plancenoit, the Young Guard rallying under their shelter.

Napoleon orders the final attack.

Then, and not before, Napoleon was free to turn his mind to the attack on Mont-Saint-Jean. It was past seven; he had lost the support of Lobau's corps, which must remain on the defensive; yet, as he scanned the opposing ridge through his glass, fortune seemed to smile on the tricolor. On his right, Durutte's division held La Haye and Papelotte, with skirmishers extended to the very crest of the plateau; d'Erlon's other divisions were busy and well forward on Durutte's left; in the centre, the gunners and sharpshooters at La Haye Sainte were diligently raking the allied position on their right and left; to the west of the road Ney crowned the height; Wellington's front was broken and disordered—probably he had used up all his reserves; there was yet time to snatch victory by a supreme effort. The Emperor had still in hand twelve battalions of the Guard, two others being engaged in holding Plancenoit. Leaving three more as a reserve near La Belle Alliance, he caused Drouot to advance into the valley with the other nine formed in squares, riding himself at the head of the leading battalion.

Advance of the Imperial Guard.

Zieten's Prussian corps enters the field.

Again too late! Half an hour earlier, when Ney implored reinforcements, this noble column might have turned the day; but the moment *à frapper juste* was past. Wellington had re-established his line, bringing Chassé's Dutch division in from Braine-la-Leud, Vandeleur's dragoons and Vivian's hussars from the extreme left, and calling up Wincke's infantry brigade and four Brunswick battalions from the reserve. Moreover, the 1st Prussian Corps had reached Ohain an hour previously. Wellington had sent Colonel Fremantle to bid them hasten to his support; but their commander hesitated, for some of his staff had brought him word that the English were beaten, and that the road to Brussels was one mass of fugitives. Happily, Müffling had ridden towards the left to look out for his countrymen. Perceiving that Zieten

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WATERLOO, JUNE 18, 1815.  
(From a Lithograph by Raffet.)



was moving to support Bülow, he galloped over to him, and succeeded in persuading him to come to Mont-Saint-Jean. When the first six battalions of the Middle Guard descended into the valley, Zieten's advanced guard was already at Sionain. This caused the Emperor to post one of these six battalions to the west of the Charleroi road, and committed the other five to Ney for the final attack on the right centre of the Allies. He led them, still in squares,\* in echelon from the right, with a pair of eight pounders in each interval of the echelon, not straight across to the nearest and weakest part of the enemy's line, but diagonally athwart the undulating ground between the Charleroi and Nivelles roads, against the troops on the allied right which had suffered least during the day. Reille ought surely to have supported their advance by sending forward some brigades on their left, but by some mismanagement these superb battalions went to their doom alone. Of cavalry they had but the support of a squadron or two. A captain of French carabineers left his regiment, galloped across the valley among the skirmishers of H.M. 52nd Regiment, calling out, "Vive le Roi! look out! that — Napoleon will be upon you in half an hour with his Guards." ANN. 1815. — Napoleon's last card.

Sorely torn by the converging fire from the allied line, the first square of the Middle Guard ascended the slope, slippery with blood and mire, and obtained a momentary advantage over the Brunswickers and the British 30th and 73rd. Wellington himself, always at hand where the stress was sorest, rallied the Brunswickers, and General Chassé, once an officer in Napoleon's service, brought up Van der Smissen's Dutch battery, which opened fire with good effect. Of Chassé's two brigades, d'Aubremé's was leaving the field in disorder,

\* The statement that the Imperial Guard moved in squares, a formation most unsuitable for crossing uneven ground under a heavy fire, has been called in question; but M. Houssaye quotes from the MS. of General Petit of the Imperial Guard, who assisted in carrying out the formation prescribed by Ney, and is positive on the subject.

ÆT. 46. but the other, Ditmer's, formed on the left of 30th and 73rd British and charged in fine order.

The second echelon (4th Grenadiers) coming up on the left of the first during this contest, engaged in a hand-to-hand conflict with Sir Colin Halkett's brigade.

An important change had been made in the formation of the allied infantry on this part of the plateau. The attack of the French infantry columns had been met and repulsed in line two deep, the fighting formation peculiar to British troops. When the cavalry ascended the slopes, squares were formed; but the fire of squares is ineffective against infantry; when the line was attacked by cavalry and infantry combined recourse was had to a new formation, which, while preserving an extended front to deal with infantry, possessed some of the weight of a square to sustain the impact of cavalry. The battalions were formed in line four deep.

The 33rd began to yield; Halkett seized one of their colours and, loudly calling on them to bear themselves like men, restored their formation, and the French advance was stayed.

The third and fourth echelons had become fused together during the advance through the deep, uneven ground, and reached the crest as a single column, containing the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 3rd Chasseurs.\* There was nothing in their front, apparently, and they had neared the cross-road, when Wellington's voice was heard clear above the storm, "Stand up, Guards!" † Then, from the shelter of the way-

\* So many and conflicting are the narratives of this period of the combat that the exact position of the troops and sequence of incidents can never be positively determined. The 1st British Guards received the title of Grenadiers in honour of having defeated the Grenadiers of the Imperial Guard; but the third echelon of the attack, which came in contact with H.M. 1st Guards, were undoubtedly Chasseurs. Where all bore themselves so well, the victors may be well content to divide the honours equally.

† This is the origin of the theatrical "Up, Guards, and at 'em!" The Guards were lying down, as it was the Duke's orders all troops should do under fire, when not actually engaged. Having bidden them rise, he then gave the commanding officers orders to attack (*Croker*, iii. 281).

side banks rose the line of Maitland's brigade of Guards, four deep and fifteen hundred strong, which poured a withering volley into the square, and charging, swept them out of the combat.

Near the foot of the slope pursued and pursuers encountered the last and left echelon (4th Chasseurs) still unbroken. The British Guards obeyed the command to retire, which they did in double time and in considerable disorder. Regaining the crest, they re-formed on the flank of Colin Halkett, and to the left of Adams's brigade (52nd, 71st, and 95th). Colonel Colborne \* immediately changed his battalion front one-eighth of a circle to the left, so as to bring his whole fire to bear on the last echelon in its advance, a movement which set the seal on the failure of Napoleon's last attack.† Just as the splendours of sunset were flowing over the scene, the last body of Frenchmen that reached the plateau of Mont-Saint-Jean were broken and scattered.‡

At the moment when the leading echelon was pressing back the Brunswickers, the 30th and the 73rd, Ney's fifth horse was shot under him, and General Friant was severely wounded. Believing that the heights had been carried, he rode slowly back to where the Emperor sat between Belle Alliance and Haye Sainte, and reported to him that all was going well at the front. Napoleon was about to lead in person three more battalions of the Guard § to reinforce the fighting line. While they were being marshalled for attack—one battalion deployed with a battalion in close column on either flank—he kept his glass turned upon the conflict in which he was about to bear a part.

\* Afterwards Lord Seaton.

† Here, again, professional opinion is irreconcilably divided as to the exact proportion borne by the 52nd and the rest of Adams's brigade, compared with that to be credited to Peregrine Maitland's Guards. Colborne claimed that the 52nd changed front and opened fire *before* the charge of the Guards (*Waterloo Letters*, 287).

‡ See Appendix E, p. 93.

§ 1st Chasseurs, 2nd Grenadiers, and 2nd Chasseurs.

Æt. 46. Suddenly his hand fell.

“ Mais ils sont mêlés ! ” he exclaimed in hollow accents to his aide-de-camp, Count Flahault, who was under no illusion as to what troops were meant. The sun had just set. There was no radiance to prevent all men seeing what was going on out there in the north-west.

Defeat  
of the  
Imperial  
Guard.

First the trampled corn was sprinkled, then it was covered with a confused mass of men moving south ; behind and among them the sabres of Vivian's hussars and Vandeleur's dragoons rose and fell with direful diligence. “ La garde recule ! ” sounded like a sob in the motionless ranks of the Old Guard, and sped with astonishing swiftness to every part of the field. “ La garde recule ! ” cried the men of Allix, Donzelot, and Marcognet, and began to melt away from the vantage ground they had so nobly won. “ La garde recule ! ” whispered Reille's columns, still unbroken on the left. Far on the right, Durutte's battalions, suddenly confronted by the heads of Zieten's columns, where they had been told to look for Grouchy's, caught up the word. Next, the uneasy murmur, “ Nous sommes trahis ! ” was heard—for was there not treason ? Had not General Bourmont and his staff and sundry other officers openly gone over to the enemy ? “ La garde recule ! ” Oh, fatal cry ! soon swelling into one still more dreadful—last tocsin of the soldier's agony—“ Sauve qui peut ! ” Papelotte and La Haye were abandoned, and from the east, as already from the west, the wreck of the Last Army rolled towards the Charleroi road.

Last stand  
of the Old  
Guard.

Not ashamed—some in the delirium of success—others under the sheer pang of remembered defeat—to revile the great commander by declaring that before the battle was fairly lost he rode off the field and abandoned to destruction the army which had made him their god. No need to quote from tales of which the tellers had better have held their peace. Nothing jars more harshly on English ears than slander of a beaten foe. Napoleon did his duty to the last. He broke the brigade of the Old Guard into squares, and placed them

across the line of flight to the west of the Charleroi road,\* ANN. 1815.  
hoping to rally behind them at least their comrades of the  
Middle Guard; and, holding in hand his four *escadrons de*  
*service* of light cavalry till the pursuit drew near, he launched  
them, but in vain, against Vivian's hussars.

Ney comes along with the crowd—Ney, who has been  
seeking death and finding no friendly bullet to end this  
frenzy of defeat—Ney, bareheaded and in rags, shrieking to  
d'Erlon as they are borne together in the crush, "If you  
and I come out of this alive, d'Erlon, we shall be hanged!"  
then succeeds in rallying some of Durutte's division. "Come  
and see how a marshal of France dies!" But these, too,  
fall away from him. Covered with blood and mud and black  
powder, with a broken sword in his hand, he enters one of  
the squares of the Old Guard—the only steadfast objects in  
the hideous torrent of panic and pursuit.

When Wellington recognised the supreme moment, he rode General  
advance of  
the allied  
line.  
forward to the crest of the ground, and, above the smoke-  
wreaths, clearly defined as a bronze statue against the bright  
western sky, held his cocked hat aloft and forward. No mere  
theatrical gesture this, we may be sure, but the signal—more  
rapid than word of mouth—for a general advance, and straight-  
way the whole allied army, except the Highland brigade, the  
Germans of Ompteda and Kielmansegge, and some batteries  
which were so built in with corpses that they could not move,  
descended from the heights where it had patiently endured  
the fiery storm for nine hours. The battalions closed their  
thinned ranks as they marched; far in advance of the general  
line was Colborne's 52nd; and on their left the cavalry swept  
the ground, doubling up the flank of Durutte's scattered array.  
Of the enemy, only Reille's corps on the left and three squares  
of Napoleon's Old Guard at La Belle Alliance remained in  
formation. Ney himself fought dismounted in the ranks of  
the Middle Guard not far from the Charleroi road. Men fell  
thick and fast around him, yet he remained unwounded:

\* *Houssaye*, 402.



Æt. 46. destiny had marked him for a darker fate. His false move earlier in the day, by exhausting Napoleon's reserve of cavalry, told with fatal effect after the failure of his attack with the Guard.

All kinds of wild stories have found harbour in this final act of the tragedy of Waterloo. Lamartine has told an admiring public that the Duke drew his sword and charged at the head of the cavalry. His sword was never out of its scabbard all day.\* Here are his own words describing the last act in the drama.

"The Infantry was advanced in Line. I halted then for a minute in the bottom that they might be in order to attack some Battalions of the Enemy still on the Heights. The Cavalry halted likewise. The whole moved forward again in very few moments. The Army did not stand the attack. Some had fled before we halted. The whole abandoned their Position. The Cavalry were then ordered to charge and moved round the flanks of the Battalions of Infantry. The Infantry was formed into Columns and moved in pursuit in Columns of Battalions." †

Napoleon  
leaves the  
field.

The dusk began to deepen. The Middle Guard had re-formed its squares, and easily kept the cavalry at bay. But when the allied infantry came up, Napoleon, weary of the useless slaughter, and seeing these squares riven with a dreadful fire, gave them the order to retreat. He himself, despairing of rallying his flying troops, rode into the square of the 1st Battalion of the 1st Grenadiers, which, with the other two squares of the Old Guard, slowly retreated along the Charleroi road, followed by General Adams's brigade and a battalion of Hanoverian militia. Colonel William Halkett, commanding this militia, attacked the square commanded by General Cambronne, calling on it to surrender. The summons not being complied with, he treated them to a dose of musketry, on which the square broke up, leaving the General

\* *Croker*, iii. 281.

† Memorandum by the Duke on Siborne's model of the field of Waterloo, written in 1836 (*Suppl. Despatches*, x. 513).

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Waterloo,



RETREAT OF THE IMPERIAL GUARD.  
(From a Lithograph by Raffet.)



# BATTLE OF WATERLOO

18<sup>th</sup> June 1815  
CRISIS OF THE BATTLE

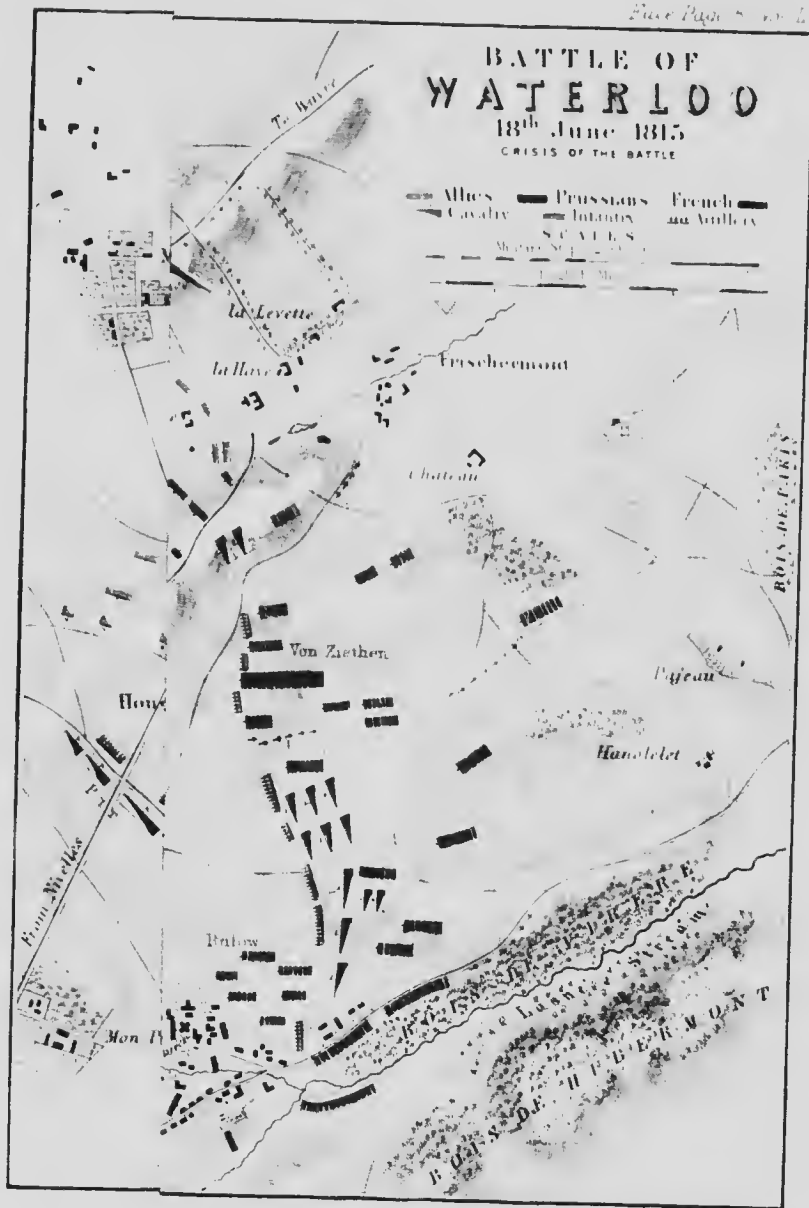
— Allies — Prussians — French —  
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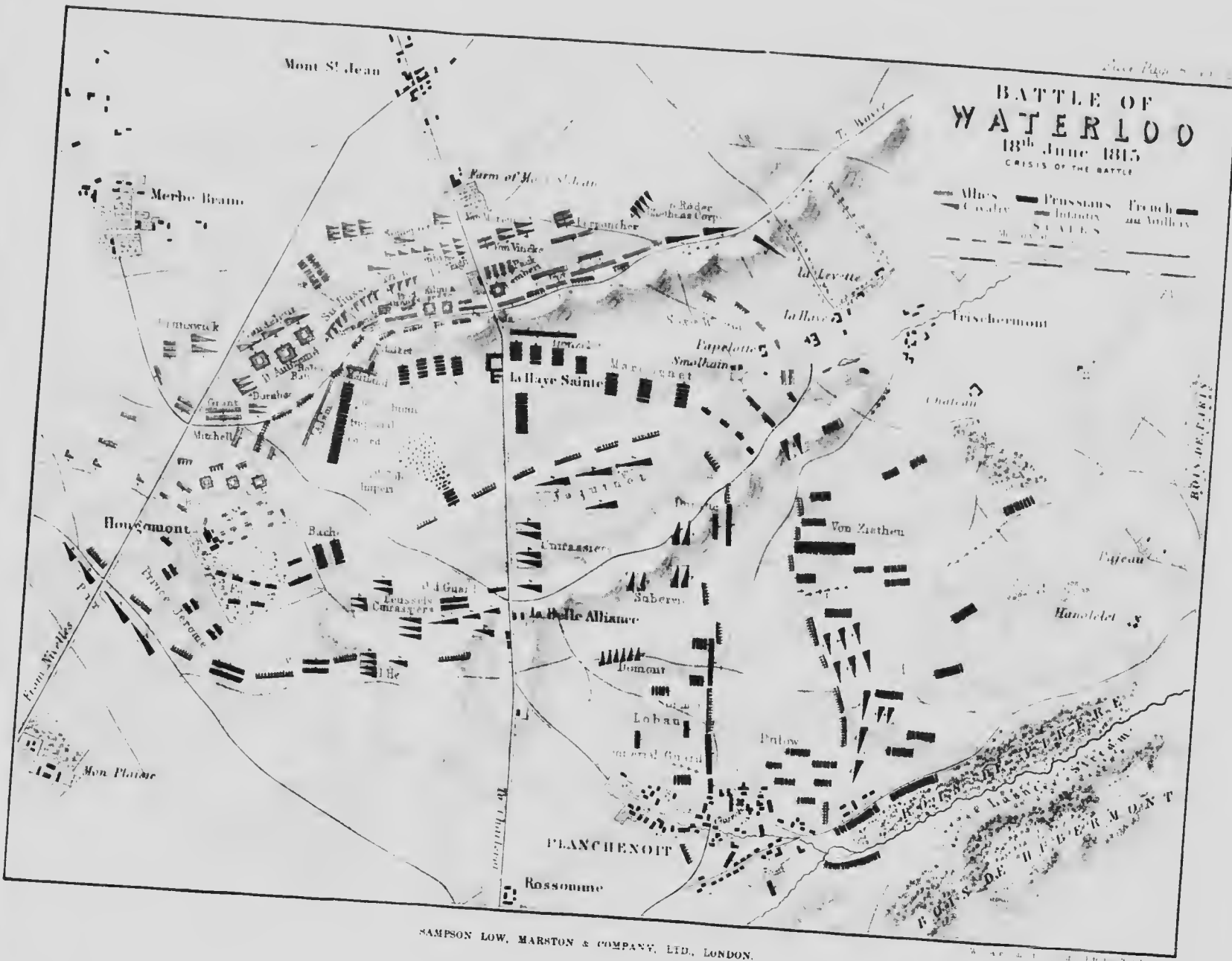
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Scale Page 7 of 11

# BATTLE OF WATERLOO

18th June 1815  
CRISIS OF THE BATTLE

— Allied Cavalry	— Prussian Infantry	— French and Allies
— Prussian Cavalry	— Prussian Artillery	— Prussian Cavalry
— Prussian Artillery	— Prussian Cavalry	— Prussian Cavalry



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Scale 1:50,000



and two other officers unprotected. Halkett galloped up to the General, and made as if to cut him down, on which he yielded himself prisoner.\*

While this was the state of affairs between Rossonme and La Belle Alliance, the Prussians were driving the Young Guard out of Plancenoit. The fugitives fled along the Brussels road, crowding round the squares of the Old Guard, who, to preserve their own formation, had the cruel task of driving them off with bayonets and even with bullets. This cross current of fugitives took the pressure of the pursuit off the Old Guard, and the Emperor rode out of his square of Grenadiers, pacing in advance of their retreat with Soult, Drouot, Bertrand, and a few *chasseurs à cheval* as escort. At the farm of Le Caillou he joined a battalion of chasseurs of the Old Guard, and continued his course with it in the direction of Genappe.

About ten o'clock Wellington met Blücher in the dark in the village of Genappe.† The old Prince saluted the Duke warmly on both cheeks, and offered to relieve his troops in the pursuit. Wellington willingly accepted the offer, for his people had been fighting for ten hours. Blücher's men had endured a hard day also, having marched fifteen miles fasting over execrable ground, and fought their way from Frischermont to Plancenoit. It had been no easy matter for him to keep tryst. His men had eaten nothing since the day before; it was only his constant presence and encouragement that had given them the spirit to carry the artillery through the marshes of Lasne.

\* It is an unpleasant task to dispel romantic illusions, but *le mot de Cambronne* was something less chivalrous than the traditional "La garde meurt, mais ne se rend pas!" The Duke of Wellington used to laugh at it, and told how Cambronne was brought to him just as he was sitting down to dinner in Waterloo village. The Duke told him he was sorry he could not receive him as a guest until he had made his peace with King Louis, who had made him a viscount. The Duke used to add that there was a set of ladies at Brussels, partisans of the Prince of Orange, called *la vieille garde*, of whom it was said, "Elles ne meurent pas et se rendent toujours!" (*Salisbury MSS.*, 1836).

† The Duke's letter to Mr. Mudford (*Suppl. Despatches*, x. 509)

ANN. 1815.

The Prussians recapture Plancenoit.

Meeting of Wellington and Blücher.

Æt. 46.

"Come, lads," he cried to some gunners labouring at the wheels of a piece deeply bogged; "you would not have me break my word!"

The  
Prussians  
take up the  
pursuit.

So Gneisenau went forward with his dragoons, reaping the harvest of death by the light of the summer moon, and Blücher followed with Bülow's infantry. At Genappe they captured the Emperor's carriage and a vast amount of baggage and artillery. Wellington, in his official despatch, made honourable acknowledgment of what he owed to his faithful ally.

"I should not do justice to my own feelings or to Marshal Blücher and the Prussian army, if I did not attribute the successful result of this arduous day to the cordial and timely assistance I received from them. The operation of General Bülow upon the enemy's flank was a most decisive one; and even if I had not found myself in a situation to make the attack which produced the final result, it would have forced the enemy to retire if his attacks should have failed, and would have prevented him from taking advantage of them if they should unfortunately have succeeded."\*

After the battle the Duke went to the little inn in Waterloo, where some dinner was prepared for him and the survivors of his staff. Sir Alexander Gordon † had been brought thither mortally wounded; the Duke caused them to lay him on his own camp-bed, while he himself lay down in the outer room, wrapped in his cloak.

Before going to rest the Duke directed Dr. Hume to bring him the list of casualties in the morning, in order that he might include it in his despatch. Dr. Hume brought it about 5 a.m., and, finding the Duke asleep, left the paper beside him. Returning later in the morning, he found the Duke awake, having perused the list. His countenance was apparently unchanged, except that under his eyes were two whitish streaks. He had not washed his face since the

\* *Despatches*, xii. 484.

† Brother of the Earl of Aberdeen.



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FIELD-MARSHAL GEBHARD L. VON BLÜCHER,  
PRINCE OF WAHLSTAAT.

*(From a Picture in Apsley House.)*

[Vol. ii, p. 88.]



battle; it was still covered with the mud and grime of ANN. 1815. the field, and those streaks were the traces of tears he had shed for his lost soldiers.\* After writing his despatch at Waterloo early on the morning of the 19th, Wellington called for his horse, and rode into Brussels. Lady Georgina Lennox,† calling early on 19th, was struck by the Duke's exceeding sadness—no elation of victory, only sorrow for the lives of so many brave soldiers. It was the countenance, not of a conqueror, but of a fallen General.

Indeed, the loss was frightful enough to cast a shadow on the most glorious triumph of arms. The killed and wounded were reckoned among the Allies thus:—

British and Hanoverians . . . . .	11,678
Prussians . . . . .	6,999
Netherlanders . . . . .	3,178
Brunswickers . . . . .	687
Nassau Contingent . . . . .	643

Total 23,185 officers and men.

Out of twenty-four officers the Scots Greys lost seven killed and nine wounded. Captain Cheney, on whom the command of the regiment devolved during the last three hours, had five horses shot under him in half an hour. The Cameron Highlanders, out of forty-two officers, lost five killed and twenty-six wounded; the Royal Scots, six killed and twenty-five wounded out of thirty-nine, and so on. The accounts of the French losses vary between 18,000 and 30,000 killed and wounded. It is certain they lost 227 cannon.

The Duke was as constantly exposed throughout the day as any one; more so, indeed, for he was ever present where the battle was at its closest; yet he remained unhurt. When a cannon-shot took off Lord Fitzroy Somerset's right arm, he was riding with his left arm touching the Duke's right. Again, when Lord Uxbridge lost his leg, the cannon-shot which struck him passed first over the withers of Copenhagen.

\* See Appendix D, p. 91.

† Afterwards Lady de Ros.

Æt. 46. "By God! I've lost my leg," cried Uxbridge. "Have you, by God?" was all the Duke's reply.\* De Lancey also received his mortal wound from a cannon-shot when riding by the Duke's side; and his mind must have been more or less than human had he shown no sense of gratitude for the number and narrowness of his escapes. Nothing is rarer in the vast mass of his correspondence than appeals, or even references to the Almighty, though it cannot be denied that he often swore by His name; but at 3 a.m. on the morning after the battle, writing to Lady Frances Webster to tell her she might remain in Brussels in perfect safety, after enumerating the chief losses he had sustained, he added, "The finger of Providence was upon me, and I escaped unhurt." †

Among all the learned disquisitions and fanciful rhapsodies about this great battle, the Duke's simple, homely description of it to his old comrade-in-arms, Lord Beresford, condenses the whole affair into a single paragraph.

"You will have heard of our battle of the 18th. Never did I see such a pounding match. Both were what the Lozers call gluttons. Napoleon did not manœuvre at all. He just moved forward in the old style, in columns, and was driven off in the old style. The only difference was that he mixed cavalry with his infantry, and supported both with an enormous quantity of artillery. I had the infantry for some time in squares, and we had the French cavalry walking about us as if they

\* *Greville*, 2nd Series, i. 135.

† When Colonel Gurwood was editing his twelfth volume he paid £50 to an impecunious barrister for the Duke's two letters to Lady F. Webster, and asked the Duke whether he approved of their being printed. The Duke at first replied that he did not care whether they were published or not, provided the names were not given, adding, "*The finger of Providence* ought to be omitted." Afterwards he wrote (1st September, 1838) to say they had better be suppressed, as "containing nothing of publick or military interest" (*Apsley House MSS.*). The letters, however, were printed after the Duke's death in the *Supplementary Despatches* (x. 531). Lady F. Webster was a very pretty woman, daughter of the first Earl of Mountnorris, and wife of an officer in the 9th Light Dragoons. Her husband was on the staff of the Prince of Orange at Waterloo.

had been our own. I never saw the British infantry behave so well." \* ANN. 1815.

Before his crowning victory, the Duke's countrymen had exhausted the catalogue of honours which could be heaped on a single individual. Parliament now purchased the mansion and estate of Strathfieldsaye and bestowed it on the conqueror of Napoleon, to be held by him and his heirs forever, on condition of presenting a tricolor flag to the Sovereign at Windsor annually, on 18th June. Of the innumerable monuments erected in his honour, perhaps it is only necessary to allude to one, the bronze statue of Achilles in Hyde Park, which was subscribed for by the countrywomen of the Duke, and made out of guns taken at Vitoria and elsewhere. Mention may also be made of one of the Prince Regent's gifts, the colossal marble statue of Napoleon by Canova, which Louis XVIII. gave to the Prince Regent after the peace of 1814, and now stands in the staircase at Apsley House. When some critic observed to Canova on the disproportionate smallness of the orb representing the globe, which the figure holds in the left hand, the sculptor replied—"Ah! but you see Napoleon's world did not include Great Britain." Further recognition of the Duke's services.

## APPENDIX D.

*The Duke's Conversation about Waterloo.*

The following notes of a conversation at Walmer have been preserved in Lady Salisbury's journal for the year 1836:—

*Lady S.* "I suppose you must have felt secure of the victory when the Guards withstood the famous charge. What was your feeling at the moment? Did it not surpass all that one can imagine?"

\* *Despatches*, xii. 529. The original of this letter was sold by auction in August, 1899, for £21.

Æt. 46.

*The Duke.* "It is very singular, but I have no recollection of any feeling of satisfaction. At the time I was by no means secure of the victory, nor till long afterwards: I can recollect no sensation of delight on that day—if I experienced it. My thoughts were so entirely occupied with what was to be done to improve the victory, to replace the officers that were lost, to put everything in proper order, that I had not leisure for another idea. I remember our supper that night very well, and then I went to bed, and was called about three in the morning by Hume,\* to go and see poor Gordon, but he was dead before I got thro. Then I came back, and had a cup of tea and some toast, wrote my despatch, and then rode into Brussels."

*Lady S.* "But now, while you were riding there, did it never occur to you that you had placed yourself on a pinnacle of glory?"

*The Duke.* "No. I was entirely occupied with what was necessary to be done. At the door of my own hotel† I met Creevey: they had no certain accounts at Brussels, and he called out to me, 'What news?' I said, 'Why, I think we've done for 'em this time.' . . . I staid all that day in Brussels, making different arrangements; among other things there was a mutiny among 3,000 prisoners we had in the gaol, with only 600 troops to guard them. I sent orders to the commanding officer that, if they attempted to break a single bar, he was to fire in among them, and I sent them word that I had done so. We heard no more of them after that. Then the Mayor came in great alarm. His people had seen some troops they mistook for French, and fancied they were coming upon them. I told them there was no fear; that Napoleon's army was scattered to the devil, and half way to Paris by that time. I left Brussels next morning at four o'clock; the second night I slept at Malplaquet; the third I took Perronne; the fifth day I joined the Prussians before Paris. But it was not till ten or twelve days after the battle that I began to reflect on what I had done, and to feel it."

*Lady S.* "But the feeling of satisfaction must have come at last. I can't conceive how it did not take possession of your mind immediately—that you did not think how infinitely you had raised your name above every other."

\* One of the medical staff.

† In the Rue Montagne du Parc.

*The Duke.* "That is a feeling of vanity; one's *first* thought is for the public service." ANN. 1815.

*Lady S.* "But there *must* be a lasting satisfaction in that feeling of superiority you always enjoy. It is not in human nature it should be otherwise."

*The Duke.* "True. Still, I come constantly into contact with other persons on equal or inferior terms. Perhaps there is no man now existing who would like to meet me on a field of battle; in that line I am superior. But when the war is over and the troops disbanded, what is your great general more than anybody else? . . . I am necessarily inferior to every man in his own line, though I may excel him in others. I cannot saw and plane like a carpenter, or make shoes like a shoemaker, or understand cultivation like a farmer. Each of these, *on his own ground*, meets me on terms of superiority. I feel I am but a man." \*

## APPENDIX E.

*The Defeat of the Imperial Guard.*

General Petit's statement, quoted by M. Houssaye, that the Middle Guard attacked in five squares, will be keenly disputed by students of military history. Most British eyewitnesses testify to the formation being in two columns, but it is easy to imagine that the original formation of squares in direct *échelon* would be disordered in the advance under a heavy fire across undulating and muddy ground, covered with crops. The dense smoke must have interfered with such a formation being accurately judged from the British position.

"I cannot describe positively," wrote Lieut. Gawler of the 52nd Regiment, "from my own observation the formation of the enemy, for, when the right of the 52nd subsequently crossed the summit, the smoke was very dense; but it has been

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1836.

ÆT. 46. confidently stated in the regiment that, as seen from *this* side, it was in two columns in direct échelon—the left considerably to the rear. It has also been stated that at first the opening between the two columns was distinctly visible.”\*

On the other hand, Lieut. S. Reed of the 71st Regiment, which was on the right of the 52nd, and supported it in its charge, wrote—

“The Imperial Guard, I think, were either in square or column. I do not think they were in line. . . . We charged three squares of the Guard, whom we broke and pursued. . . . The French squares having separated, the 52nd pursued what had been their right square; the other two fell to our lot.” †

The third battalion in Adams' brigade was the 2nd of the 95th Rifles. Corporal Aldridge, who served twenty-two years in that regiment, said, “The French came up in three columns abreast of each other; they looked like quarter-distance columns.” ‡ Now, a square in movement is not easily to be distinguished from a column at quarter distance, but the fire from the flank of a square when halted is very much more powerful than anything that can be effected by the flank files of a column. When the Guard did halt, its flank fire was most intense, causing a loss to the 52nd of about one hundred and fifty men in less than four minutes. Such a fire could never have come from the flank of a column.

As to the timeworn controversy between the 52nd and the Grenadier Guards for the chief honour in routing the Imperial Guard, his would be an intrepid judgment that were offered to decide it. The case for the 52nd has been set forth at large and in detail in Mr. Leeke's two volumes on *Lord Seaton's Regiment at Waterloo*; while the First Regiment of the Guards—*beati possidentes*—derive their title

\* *Waterloo Letters*, 289.

† *Ibid.*, 298.

‡ *Ibid.*, 302.



of Grenadiers from the general order of 29th July, 1815, ANN. 1815.  
which declares that the Prince Regent has been pleased to  
confer that title upon them in commemoration of their having  
defeated the Grenadiers of the Imperial Guard at Waterloo.  
In such a noble rivalry, arising from sources so complex  
and so remote, let the countrymen of these brave troops  
pronounce the verdict—"Honours easy!"

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION.

1815-1818.

<p>June 19, 1815 . . . How the news of victory came to England. Napoleon's flight to Paris.</p>		<p>Duke with the French, and the causes thereof. Trial and execution of Marshal Ney.</p>
<p>„ 15 . . . . . His surrender to Captain Maitland, R.N., at Rochefort.</p>	<p>Nov. 20 . . . . .</p>	<p>The army of occupation.</p>
<p>„ 29 . . . . . The British and Prussians encamp before Paris.</p>	<p>„ . . . . . 1817.</p>	<p>The Duke appointed chief commissioner of arbitration and finance.</p>
<p>„ 29—July 4. Negotiations for an armistice.</p>	<p>Feb. 10, 1818. . .</p>	<p>Attempt to assassinate the Duke.</p>
<p>July 3 . . . . . The Convention of Paris.</p>	<p>„ 21 . . . . .</p>	<p>The British Cabinet recall the Duke from Paris.</p>
<p>„ 6 and 7 . . . Occupation of Paris by the allied armies.</p>	<p>„ 25 . . . . .</p>	<p>The Duke's one act of disohedience.</p>
<p>„ 8 . . . . . Restoration of Louis XVIII. Moderating influence of the Duke upon the Allies. Unpopularity of the</p>	<p>October 30 . . .</p>	<p>Evacuation of France by the Allies.</p>
	<p><i>Appendix F</i> . .</p>	<p>Influence of the Duke of Wellington on the character of the British Army.</p>

**F**AR different was the manner in which the glorious tidings found its way from Waterloo to London from the way news of battle is flashed about the globe at the present time. We can imagine how field correspondents would feed the wires for us now ; how the evening papers with rapid editions would keep us abreast of every movement and intensify the

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LADY BAGOT, LADY BURGHERSH, LADY F. SOMERSET,  
THE DUKE'S NIECES.

*(From a Drawing by Lawrence at Apsley House.)*

*Vol. iv. p. 96.*

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agony of every ominous phase; how the offices would be ANN. 1815.  
besieged by eager crowds all night, and the best or worst be  
known before another sun. Fourscore years ago the utmost  
speed at man's command lay in the legs of a good horse.\*

Almost the only individual of Wellington's staff remaining How the  
uninjured at the close of the day was the Hon. Henry Percy.† news came  
He had left the Duchess of Richmond's ball, and ridden to to Eng-  
Quatre-Bras without having time to change even his shoes, land.  
and him the Duke charged to carry to England the despatch  
announcing the victory. His mission was anticipated. The  
financial house of Rothschild, with shrewd business eye to  
Stock Exchange movements, had a fast sloop lying off  
Antwerp, which reached England some hours before Percy.‡  
Landing at Dover, Percy posted with all speed to London,  
with two eagles§ of the Imperial Guard sticking out of the  
windows of his chaise, one on either side. Arriving at the  
Horse Guards late in the evening, he was told the Duke of  
York was dining out. He went on to Lord Castlereagh's;  
the Foreign Secretary was dining at the same house as the  
Commander-in-chief in St. James Square. Arriving there,  
he found the Prince Regent was of the dinner-party; he  
demanded an immediate audience, and was shown into the  
dining-room carrying his papers and the French eagles.

"Let the ladies leave the room," said the Prince Regent as  
soon as he perceived Percy; then, holding a hand out to the  
travel-stained soldier—"Welcome, *Colonel Percy!*"

"Go down on your knee," exclaimed the Commander-in-  
chief, "and kiss hands for the step you have obtained."

\* Pigeon-flying, as a means of conveying intelligence, though well known at  
that time, does not seem to have been employed during the campaign. The  
semaphore telegraph was used sometimes between ships and fixed points on  
shore.

† Son of the Earl of Beverley. His eldest brother succeeded to the dukedom  
of Northumberland, on the death of the 4th Duke, in 1865.

‡ Consols stood at 58½ when Rothschild's messenger arrived. Enormous  
profits were realised on the rise.

§ Every French regiment possessed an eagle, but, as each regiment consisted  
of five battalions, every eagle repres. the equivalent of five stands of colours.

Æt. 46. Next, and before the despatch was opened, numberless inquiries were addressed to him about different officers. His answer was so often "dead" or "severely wounded" that the Prince Regent burst into tears.

Napoleon arrived at Charleroi about daybreak, on 19th June, with a small mounted escort. Halting at Laon on the 20th, he held a council of war. He desired to assemble there the remains of his army. Prince Jérôme had collected 20,000, and Grouchy, who had renewed the combat with Thielmann at Wavre on the 19th, till apprised of the defeat of the *grande armée*, had been ordered to march on Laon with all speed; but the opinion of his Generals being adverse to further resistance, Napoleon continued his flight to Paris, handing over to Soult the command of such troops as he could collect. There is no occasion to retrace here the dismal close of the Hundred Days; of the fallen Emperor's reception in his capital; of his abdication for the second time on 22nd June, in favour of his son; of the rejection of that son by the Chamber of Representatives, and the election instead of an Executive Commission of five. Still believing himself to be the Man of Destiny, and "regarding himself still as the first soldier of the nation," he offered his services as General to defend France with 70,000 men still under arms; but they were refused, and on the 3rd July Napoleon was at Rochefort, seeking a passage to America. Baffled by the vigilance of the British cruisers, he surrendered himself on the 15th a prisoner to Captain Maitland of the *Bellerophon*, and penned his famous letter to the Prince Regent, desiring to "seat himself at the hearth of the British people."

Second  
abdica-  
tion of  
Napoleon.

Wellington  
and  
Blücher  
enter  
France.

On 21st June the allied army crossed the French frontier; Valenciennes and Quesnoy being promptly blockaded by the British, Maubeuge and Landreçy by the Prussians. Cambrai was taken by escalade on the 24th, on which day King Louis, in consequence of Wellington's invitation, joined the British headquarters at Le Cateau. On the 26th the Duke received overtures from the French Commissioners for a suspension of

hostilities, which Blücher and he declined,\* believing the ANN. 1815. abdication to be only a trick to gain time. The Commissioners were informed that no armistice could be granted as long as Napoleon Buonaparte was in Paris and at liberty, and the Allies continued to advance on Paris with 120,000 men. On 2nd July Wellington fixed his headquarters at Gonesse. M. Brialmont has attributed the rapidity of their advance to a concerted scheme between the British and Prussian Marshals for the political purpose of obtaining the submission of Paris before Russia and Austria could enter the field, thereby obtaining for Great Britain and Prussia a preponderating influence in the settlement of the affairs of France. The refutation of this innuendo, so far as Wellington is concerned, is contained in his letter to Prince Blücher of 2nd July, in which, after dissuading the Prince from his project of attacking Paris at once, he observes—

“It is true we shall not have the vain triumph of entering Paris at the head of our victorious troops; but, as I have already explained to your Highness, I doubt our having the means at present of succeeding in an attack upon Paris; and, if we are to wait till the arrival of Marshal Prince Wrede to make the attack, I think we shall find the Sovereigns disposed, as they were last year, to spare the capital of their ally (Louis XVIII.), and either not to enter the town at all, or enter it under an armistice, such as it is in your power and mine to sign this day.” †

Napoleon being finally off the scene, the way was open for an armistice. Accordingly, on 3rd July, the Convention of Paris was signed, in which the chief conditions were—a suspension of arms, the evacuation of Paris by the 50,000 or 60,000 troops therein, the withdrawal of all the French forces to the south of the Loire, and the peaceable occupation of the capital by the Allies. Meanwhile, the Provisional Government, in order to conciliate the army, had proclaimed Napoleon II. as Emperor; but Wellington having intimated

The Con-  
vention of  
Paris.

\* *Despatches*, xii. 512, 522, 533.

† *Ibid.*, xii. 527.

Æt. 46. to them that the Allies could not treat with Napoleon or any of his house, the Commissioners, secretly inspired by Fouché, asked whether, if, instead of King Louis XVIII., some other prince of the Royal House were called to the throne, the Allies would raise any objection. The fact is that among the French people there was no kind of enthusiasm for the House of Bourbon, least of all for Louis XVIII., who, while personally the object of no admiration on the part of the allied Sovereigns, was regarded with actual dislike and hostility by the Emperor of Russia.

Wellington told them bluntly that they had best bring back their legitimate King, instead of trying any more usurpers, and be quiet about it, as the surest means of attaining the peace of Europe.\* Fouché tried to insist on the adoption of the tricolor as the flag of the Bourbons, to which the Duke replied that "the tricolor had become the flag of rebellion, and could not be adopted by the King." The interview lasted from eight in the evening till five in the morning, and the Commissioners separated without coming to any conclusion. Next morning the Duke had an interview with King Louis, and advised him, in order to facilitate his immediate restoration, to confer an appointment on Fouché. Talleyrand was accordingly directed to make out his appointment as Minister of Police. The Commissioners met the Duke again at Neuilly that evening, when Fouché began raising fresh difficulties. Said the Duke, "Mais avant d'aller plus loin, lisons un peu ce papier que tient Monsieur de Talleyrand." The change was instantaneous; all difficulties vanished.† On 6th and 7th July the armies of Wellington and Blücher took peaceable possession of Paris; General Müffling was appointed Governor of the city, and Louis XVIII. returned to his capital as King on the 8th.

Well was it that Napoleon had quitted Paris and its environs before the Allies entered, for it is doubtful whether the British Marshal's influence over his fiercer colleague

Occupation of Paris by the Allies and restoration of Louis XVIII.

\* *Despatches*, xii. 534.

† *Salisbury MSS.*



would have prevailed to avert a tragedy. *Mortui non mor-* ANN. 1815.  
*dent*\* was an aphorism which occurred to many others besides the bluff Blücher about the quondam prisoner of Elba. "To conclude," wrote Liverpool to Castlereagh † on 21st July, "we ‡ wish that the King of France would hang or shoot Buonaparte as the best termination of the business." § As it was, Wellington had a delicate task in restraining Blücher's heavy hand. Ever since he had risen to high command, Wellington had set the example of moderation and humanity in conquest; || but besides this high principle there was the circumstance that the British had no wrongs to avenge on the French. It was otherwise with the Prussians: the column of Austerlitz and the bridge of Jena recalled too bitterly the injuries of a conquered fatherland and the exactions levied by the Emperor on the city of Berlin. Prince Blücher, accordingly, felt that he was only performing an act of equity in imposing a levy of one hundred million francs on the city of Paris, and setting his engineers to mine the arches of the Pont de Jena. Wellington vigorously

\* "Dead men don't bite."

† Lord Castlereagh was still British Minister at the Tuileries.

‡ The Cabinet.

§ *Suppl. Despatches*, xi. 47.

|| In spite of his uniform humanity towards an enemy and his insistence on his army paying its way in a foreign country, the Duke was by no means ignorant of the rights of conquerors under the law of nations, as the following passage from a letter to Mr. Canning, written in 1820, will show: "I believe it has always been understood that the defenders of a fortress stormed have no claim to quarter; and the practice which prevailed during the last century of surrendering a fortress when a breach was opened in the body of a place, and the countersearp had been blown in, was founded upon this understanding. Of late years, however, the French have availed themselves of the humanity of modern warfare, and have made a new regulation, requiring that a breach should stand one assault at least. The consequence of this regulation was to me the loss of the flower of the army in the assaults of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz. I certainly should have thought myself justified in putting both garrisons to the sword; and if I had done so to the first, it is probable I should have saved 5,000 men in the assault of the second. I mention this to show you that the practice of refusing quarter to a garrison which stands an assault is not a useless effusion of blood" (*Civil Despatches*, i. 94).

Æt. 46. remonstrated. In regard to the first, he urged in a letter of admirable tact and tone that the levy, if made at all, should be made with the general consent of the Allies; and in regard to the second, he pointed out that one of the articles in the Convention reserved all public monuments and buildings to be dealt with according to the will of the allied Sovereigns.\* Luckily, Prince Blücher was neither thin-skinned nor jealous of the renown of his puissant colleague; he was essentially what is known as "a good fellow," and suspended his project in both respects, though grumbling mightily, until the arrival of the Sovereigns. Not the less did Wellington, as the more distinguished of the two commanders, incur the odium of having been the author of both schemes, and was execrated by Frenchmen of all parties for the threatened injuries which, in fact, he was the sole agent in averting.

Moderation of the Duke's views.

There were other circumstances which tended to bring the Duke into disfavour with the Court party. It appeared to the allied Sovereigns that France, if not dismembered, must at least be reduced to such limits as would prevent her being in future a menace to the peace of Europe; indeed, Lord Liverpool advocated that she should be deprived of the territory annexed by Louis XIV.† To this project Wellington offered strenuous resistance. His letters on the subject must be studied in order to understand how far his views extended beyond the limits of his profession—how great he was in statesmanship as well as in strategy. While agreeing that the Revolution and the Treaty of Paris had left France too strong for the rest of Europe, weakened and bankrupt as the other continental Powers had become from the long strain of Napoleonic war and exaction, and by the destruction of all the fortresses in the Low Countries and in Germany, he argued that the Allies neither had the right to make any material alteration in the Treaty of Paris, nor would they attain peace by demanding cessions which Louis XVIII. might summon his people to resist.

\* *Despatches*, xii. 552.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, xi. 32.

"That which has been the object of the Allies has been to put an end to the French Revolution, to obtain peace for themselves and their people, to have the power of reducing their overgrown military establishments, and the leisure to attend to the internal concerns of their several nations, and to improve the situation of their people. The Allies took up arms against Buonaparte because it was certain that the world could not be at peace as long as he should possess, or should be in a situation to obtain, supreme power in France; and care must be taken, in making the arrangements consequent upon our success, that we do not leave the world in the same unfortunate situation respecting France that it would have been in if Buonaparte had continued in possession of his power. . . . Revolutionary France is more likely to distress the world than France, however strong in her frontier, under a regular Government; and that is the situation in which we ought to endeavour to place her. With this view, I prefer the temporary occupation of some of the strong places, and to maintain for a time a strong force in France, both at the expense of the French Government and under strict regulation, to the permanent cession of even all the places which in my opinion ought to be occupied for a time. These measures will not only give us, during the period of occupation, all the military security which could be expected from the permanent cession, but, if carried into execution in the spirit in which they are conceived, they are in themselves the bond of peace."

This temperate counsel prevailed and was acted on, but Wellington received no credit for its leniency, either from the French people or the courtiers of King Louis. On the contrary, the royalist party deeply resented his action in obtaining the restoration to office of the regicide Fouché, who was, moreover, more than suspected of having been in the plot to bring back Napoleon. Fouché, a member of the Convention which ordered the execution of Louis XVI., had been created by Napoleon Duc d'Otrante, and served under him during the Hundred Days. A thorough time-server, he now was anxious to obtain high office under Louis XVIII. It has been asserted persistently that Wellington had long been in

ANN. 1815.  
 Unpopularity of the Duke with the French.

Æt. 46. secret communication with this individual, had received from him secret intelligence of the movements of the Emperor during the Hundred Days, and had disposed his troops accordingly in anticipation of the campaign of Waterloo.\* The whole fable is dispelled, and the Duke of Wellington's part in the restoration of Fouché explained, by what he wrote to General Dumouriez on 25th September, 1815.

“ Before my arrival near Paris in July, I had never seen Fouché, nor had any communication whatever with him, nor with those connected with him. . . . The fact is that all the Powers, England among others, had been trying during the spring and summer to persuade the King to take Fouché into his service, as a means of conciliating a great number of persons towards his Majesty, and, notwithstanding that I never could see that he carried the influence attributed to him, I carried out that which the others desired. . . . On my arrival near Paris I knew that the Allies were not agreed in favour of the King; that the Russians especially were hostile to the restoration; that neither the army nor the Assemblies were favourable to him; that four provinces of the realm were in open rebellion; and that others, including the city of Paris, were very cold. It was clear to me that if I could not gain Fouché's interest in the King's restoration, his Majesty must have remained at Saint Denis, at least till the arrival of the Sovereigns, which would have been greatly to the detriment of his authority and dignity, should he ever reascend the throne. Therefore I advised his Majesty to take Fouché into his service, in order that he might make his entry with dignity and without an effort on the part of the Allies, and I am perfectly certain that he owes his tranquil and dignified restoration to this advice.” †

While the Duke's action in regard to Fouché thus incurred the ire of the Court party, circumstances connected with the fine art collection in the Louvre brought upon him the deep

\* This is stated confidently in Alison's *History of Europe* and in Walter Scott's *Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk*.

† *Despatches*, xii, 649.

animosity of Frenchmen in general and citizens of Paris in particular. It had transpired that, previous to the capitulation of Paris, King Louis had volunteered a pledge to the King of the Netherlands that, in the event of his own restoration, he would replace in the churches and galleries of Holland and the Low Countries those works of art of which Napoleon had despoiled them as a conqueror. The fulfilment of this pledge was claimed by the King of the Netherlands at a conference of the Powers, whereupon Prince Blücher declared that his master, the King of Prussia, had an equal claim in respect to the works of art carried off from his dominions, and claims were lodged also on behalf of Italy. This was tantamount to the dissolution of the collection in the Louvre; but Wellington, unable to conceive the King of France departing from his promise, was equally unable to perceive any equitable grounds for the retention in Paris of works of art belonging to other Powers who had not received a similar promise. The Prussians, therefore, were allowed to help themselves, and removed all the pictures belonging to their nation and other German principalities. Wellington undertook the negotiations with the Prince de Talleyrand and the Duc de Richelieu for the removal of the property of the King of the Netherlands. The King shuffled, and declined to issue any orders on the subject; and finally, the Duke was told that if he must have the pictures, he must take them with an appearance of force in order to screen the King. Accordingly a working party of British soldiers was employed to take down and pack the Netherlands pictures, which, having the appearance of an act of spoliation on the part of the British, excited extraordinary resentment among the people of Paris, the odium of which was thrown on the Duke. He was far too loyal and far too indifferent to public opinion to explain, as he might have done, that it was the King of France, and not he, who was responsible, but he was careful to make known to his own Government the true history of the affair.\*

ANN. 1815.

The question of the galleries.

\* *Despatches*, xii. 641.

Æt. 46.

It is said that those of Napoleon's Generals who had become Royalists turned their backs upon the Duke at the Court of the Tuileries. Observing this, King Louis made some excuse for their rudeness, but the Duke replied lightly, "Sire, ils sont si accoutumés à me tourner le dos, qu'ils n'en ont pas encore perdu l'habitude!"\*

Trial and  
execution  
of Marshal  
Ney.

There remains to be noticed another event in relation to which the Duke of Wellington's conduct excited attention and some unfavourable comment far beyond the limits of France. When Louis XVIII. was restored in 1814, his return to the capital was signalled by none of those punitive, still less vindictive, measures which usually follow the re-assertion of legitimacy, as in the case of Ferdinand VII.'s restoration to the throne of Spain. The Revolution and the Empire had been overcome after a long struggle, but those who had taken active parts in them were not treated as rebels, save that Napoleon himself had been placed under restraint. But the events of the Hundred Days had been marked by acts of such flagrant treachery on the part of those in high military command that to condone them altogether would have been to admit that every private soldier executed for desertion or disobedience had been the victim of murder. The capitulation of Paris, indeed, had provided that the lives, liberty, and property of the inhabitants should be respected by the allied Generals and their troops, but this by no means could be held to preclude the established French Government from such disciplinary acts as might be determined on. Nevertheless, when in November a list of persons proscribed was published by Fouché, an attempt was made to prove that the clause in the capitulation referred to was of the nature of a general amnesty, and that the Duke of Wellington, as one of the parties to the capitulation, was guilty of a breach of faith in permitting the proscription.

Among the persons so proscribed were Marshal Ney and

\* "Sir, they are so much accustomed to turn their backs upon me, that they have not yet lost that habit!"

Colonel Labedoyère, who had both betrayed, in a singularly ANN. 1815. disgraceful way, the trust of a command accepted from Louis XVIII. Neither of these persons was found in Paris after the capitulation, and it was to persons so found that the capitulation exclusively referred. Ney and Labedoyère both left Paris under feigned names before the Allies entered it, but both were indiscreet enough to return. No doubt the King's Government would have been glad to let them leave the country quietly, but they did not choose to do so; their presence was denounced by zealous officials in the provinces; they were tried and condemned to death.

Ney and his wife made passionate appeals to the Duke of Wellington to interfere. He declined to do so. Why? Not, assuredly, because he bore resentment against the brave General whom he had encountered and defeated on so many fields. Not because there was any tinge of cruelty in his character; his whole career is one long testimony to his natural clemency, but is also a testimony to justice. Had Ney been unjustly condemned, Wellington undoubtedly would have exerted the influence he had so often used over the actions of King Louis, and obtained a pardon. He did intercede with the King on behalf of General le Comte de Lobau, because, he said, "although a faithful servant of Buonaparte, and perhaps the most active and useful, he was never employed by the King, and therefore did not betray him." But Ney's treachery had been of a peculiarly heinous kind. At the very moment that he set out from Paris, proclaiming loudly that he would bring back Napoleon in an iron cage, he was in secret league with the invader. Had Wellington interfered he would have felt that he was acting unworthily in obtaining for an officer of the highest rank that which he could not have asked had the culprit been a private soldier caught in the act of deserting to the enemy. It was the subject of his frequent complaint that, under the British military code as it then was, officers often escaped the punishment due to their breaches of duty, while the non-



Æt. 46. — commissioned and private ranks enjoyed no such immunity. It cannot have been agreeable to the Duke to resist the appeals made to him on behalf of his ancient antagonist, especially considering the chivalrous relations which always prevailed between soldiers of all ranks in the British and French armies; to the public clamour he was indifferent; his private inclination he was accustomed to control, and he refrained from any interference in a case where there was not the slightest suspicion of injustice.\*

The army  
of occupa-  
tion.

On 20th November, 1815, a convention was signed by the representatives of the Powers, and by the Duc de Richelieu as representing King Louis's Government, providing for the withdrawal of all the foreign troops from France, except an army of occupation of 150,000 men, to be fed and paid at the expense of France, and to be maintained for a period of five years within the frontiers of that country on a line extending from the Upper Rhine through the departments of Moselle, Meuse, Ardennes, Nord, and Pas de Calais, subject to a limit of three years, should the Powers agree to shorten the period. In addition to the charge of maintaining these troops, it was agreed that France should pay an indemnity of 700,000,000 francs (£28,000,000) to the late belligerents. That the negotiations on which this treaty was based were ever carried to a unanimous issue must be attributed in equal measure to the admirable harmony with which Castlereagh and Wellington always worked together, and to the support given them by Count Nesselrode, representing the Emperor of Russia, in moderating the more rigorous demands of Prussia and Austria. That the occupation itself did not bring about fresh disturbance was chiefly owing to the choice by the

\* Mr. Gleig says that, while the trial was going on, the Duke expressed himself, "both openly and in private circles, adverse to the execution of Ney" (*Brialmont*, iii. 17). Probably this amounted to no more than a friendly hope that Ney would escape the capital sentence; in later years, at all events, the Duke entertained no doubt that the Marshal suffered rightly. "It was absolutely necessary," he said to Lady Salisbury in 1838, "to make an example" (*Salisbury MSS.*).



Powers of a Commander-in-chief of the allied forces. It was ANN. 1815. arranged that Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, and Russia should each furnish a contingent of 30,000 men, and the smaller German States in the aggregate a like number, which, by common consent, were placed under command of the Duke of Wellington. Wellington is appointed to the chief command.

The eventful year of 1815 had drawn to a close, and Napoleon was playing inoffensive whist for sugar-plums with the ladies at Longwood \* before the various corps composing the army of occupation had taken up their allotted positions, and France was relieved from the presence and expense of maintaining nearly a million foreign troops. The Duke, fixing his headquarters at Cambrai, at once set about, by a mixture of tact and firmness, establishing in his composite command those principles of moderation and strict respect for property which, however alien from the practice of continental armies, it was ever his first object to insist on his troops observing. The military part of his obligations, difficult and complicated as it was, formed but a small part of his labours. His correspondence at this period, extending to the affairs of most European nations, and to the relations of Spain and Portugal with their American colonies, is amazing in its volume and detail. Among other questions submitted to him was the reduction of the British army contemplated by the Cabinet in consequence of the brighter prospects of enduring peace. It is usually calculated that it takes twice as long to make an efficient cavalry soldier as it does to train a foot soldier, but the Duke seems to have held a different opinion, as expressed in writing to Lord Bathurst.

“My opinion is that the best troops we have, probably the best in the world, are the British infantry, particularly the old infantry that has served in Spain. This is what we ought to keep up, and what I wish above all others to retain. The cavalry, that which is the expensive branch of the cavalry—the

\* As described in letter from Admiral Sir George Cockburn, 22nd October, 1815.

Æt. 48. — horses—may be put down in peace; and upon the renewal of war it is more easy to recruit them, or even horses for the artillery, than it is to get together a good body of infantry. For this reason I would recommend you not to lose your good infantry if you can keep it; and to reform († reduce) rather the horses of your cavalry and artillery to the utmost, and all the expensive parts of your establishment.” \*

Appointed  
Chief Com-  
missioner  
of Arbitra-  
tion and  
Finance.

It had become customary whenever a difficulty of unusual magnitude arose in European politics to call in the aid of the Duke of Wellington. Under the Convention of Paris a commission of diplomacy and finance was appointed, consisting of Sir Charles Stuart, Count de Goltz, Baron de Vincent, and General Pozzo di Borgo, representing respectively Great Britain, Prussia, Austria, and Russia, and charged with the settlement of claims sent in by nearly every Government in Europe on behalf of every town and village, every province and parish, where French troops had made their presence felt during the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. Against these had to be weighed counterclaims on behalf of the French Government, and in the complicated calculations which arose, the Commissioners freely availed themselves of the Duke's advice. Still they made but slow progress: at the end of nearly two years of deliberation it became obvious that the allied Sovereigns had under-estimated the extent of these claims, which, by midsummer of 1817, already amounted to fifty millions sterling, although the claims of Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal had not yet been lodged. Clearly, the resources of France would prove unequal to meet these demands, added to the cost of the indemnity and the expense of the army of occupation. Thus matters were drifting to a deadlock, when, on 30th October, 1817, the Emperor of Russia wrote under his own hand to the Duke of Wellington as to one who, “placed at the head of the military forces of the European alliance, had contributed more than once, by the wisdom and moderation which distinguished him, to the

\* *Despatches*, xii. 668.

reconciliation of weighty interests," \* expressing his desire ANN. 1817. that the Duke should defer to the wishes of the allied Powers and of all interested parties by placing himself at the head of the Commission, and arbitrating on the claims with a view to arriving at a speedy and practicable means of liquidating them.† He accepted this post—*une position nouvelle en Europe*,‡ as he justly termed it—and from this point his despatches become simply bewildering in their number and the intricacy of the calculations set forth and received from his correspondents. No idea can be formed of the nature of his labours, or of the amount of personal consideration bestowed by him on details, except by an examination of the letters in 1817 and 1818. Not only did he succeed in consolidating the claims against France into one manageable sum, but he arranged that, although this was a large reduction from the aggregate of claims, France should be held to have liquidated them when she made payment of that amount to the Allies, who should undertake settlement with the creditors; and to enable the French Government to make this payment, Wellington negotiated a loan for them with the leading financiers of Europe.

"Since Baring left me, as I generally spend the greatest part of every morning now with money-changers, Rothschild has been with me; and he says that he is certain that the French Government will experience no difficulty in realising within the year, that is, twelve months, the whole sum which they want." §

The pages of history may be searched in vain for a parallel Unique position attained by the Duke. to the position of Wellington. Great conquerors, like Alexander or Napoleon, have wielded more extensive powers, but the voluntary assignment of undisputed ascendancy by crowned heads and diplomatists to the subject of an alien monarch is unique in the history of civilisation. At the age of eight-and-forty Wellington was the most conspicuous

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xii. 119.

† *Ibid.*, 156.

‡ *Ibid.*, 212.

§ *Ibid.*, 261; 9th Feb., 1818.

Æt. 48. figure—the most exalted individual in the world. His good sword had won him equal rank with the greatest captains; his capacity for rule, his inflexible rectitude, his superiority to all intrigue and suspicion of self-seeking, his far-seeing sagacity—these drew upon him the choice of the Sovereigns to place him in the most critical post of administration and diplomacy.\*

His  
scrupulous  
avoidance  
of selfish  
ends.

It is to be noted how scrupulous the Duke was not to turn the trust reposed in him to his private advantage, and this in small matters as well as in great. When the Governments of allied States conferred on him high military rank, carrying with it handsome emoluments, in accepting the rank he invariably declined the pay. As Spanish Generalissimo he had been entitled to draw £8,000 a year; instead of which he allowed the money to accumulate, and, at the close of the war, handed it over as a fund for the benefit of the Spanish army. In the same spirit he expressed quick displeasure on hearing that certain horses of the pontoon train had been employed to draw the carriages of the Duchess of Wellington and the Duchess of Richmond from Valenciennes to Cambrai, on their way to a review.

“As one of these carriages is mine,” he wrote to Sir George Wood commanding the artillery, “and this example may be drawn into a precedent of using for private convenience the horses belonging to the public, than which nothing could be more injurious to his Majesty’s service, I am anxious to take this opportunity of recalling your particular attention to his Majesty’s orders and regulations on the subject; and I beg that

\* In Lady Salisbury’s interesting notes of conversations with the Duke there is one of an observation describing the illuminant process of a penetrating intellect. “There is a curious thing that one feels sometimes; when you are considering a subject, suddenly a whole train of reasoning comes before you like a flash of light: you see it all (moving his hand as if something appeared before him, his eye with its brightest expression), yet it takes you perhaps two hours to put on paper all that has occurred to your mind in an instant. Every part of the subject, the bearings of all its parts upon each other, and all the consequences, are there before you” (*Salisbury MSS.*).

on all future occasions . . . those sent in charge [of horses ANN. 1818. belonging to the public] may have orders in writing not to allow them to be employed for the convenience of any officers in his Majesty's service, or of any of his Majesty's subjects, without an order in writing signed by me." \*

It was not in the nature of things that one in such a His unpopularity in France. peculiarly influential position as the Duke of Wellington should avoid incurring the hostility of parties and persons. The Court party resented the counsels of clemency which he urged in regard to the regicides; royalists, as well as Buonapartists and revolutionaries of every degree, chafed more and more because of the hateful presence of the army of occupation, of which he was the head, and because of the stipulated payments in exacting which he had been appointed the chief agent. Lastly, there was a mass of officers on half-pay and disbanded soldiers on no pay, seething with discontent, a fertile soil for a rank crop of conspiracy. Many of the persons obnoxious to the restored monarchy of France had been excluded from that country, and received passports requiring them to reside in Brussels, more or less under police supervision. These persons published a series of libels in certain newspapers, for which, as they imputed base and mischievous acts and motives to the Duke in his public as well as in his private character, it was necessary to prosecute and punish them. It then became apparent that an extensive revolutionary plot was in process of maturing at Brussels, that many of those engaged in it were on intimate terms with persons in the confidence of the Belgian Government, and were receiving assistance and encouragement from at least one British nobleman. One of the leaders of the conspiracy was Comte Victor de Cruquenbourg, whose brother was aide-camp to the Prince of Orange, and the Prince himself was known to be indisposed to interfere with the utmost freedom of political opinion and its expression. His liberal

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xii. 92.

Æt. 48. proclivities were destined to sustain a severe shock by an event which took place early in 1818.

Already, on 25th June, 1816, an attempt had been made to destroy the Duke's house in the Rue des Champs Elysées, on the occasion of his giving a ball to the French princes. Smoke was perceived issuing from the cellar shortly after midnight; on search being made a quantity of combustibles and explosives, including a barrel of oil and bottles filled with gunpowder, were found to have been laid there and a match applied. It was a narrow escape, because the explosion of the powder would have interfered with any attempt to extinguish the flames, had the discovery been delayed but a few minutes. The affair, however, was hushed up; the Duke had previously arranged to start for England next day, in order to take a course of Cheltenham waters, and no attempt was made to bring to justice the miscreants, who were generally supposed to be Buonapartist malcontents.

Attempted  
assassina-  
tion of the  
Duke.

The second attempt on his life was more nearly successful, and was distinguished by certain very disquieting circumstances. Lieut.-General Sir George Murray, serving once more under his old chief, received a letter written in Brussels on 30th January, 1818, by Lord Kinnaird, a gentleman who had made himself conspicuous by his avowed sympathy with the revolutionary conspirators and by liberal contributions to their money chest. He told Murray that a French refugee, under sentence of death, had desired him to obtain the interest of the Duke of Wellington to procure for him liberty to return to Paris, but that he (Kinnaird) had declined "both because I believed the Duke did not interfere, and because there seemed to be no pretence whatever for asking such interference." The fellow then asked if Kinnaird would intercede for him with M. de Cazes, if he revealed a plot which was about to be put in effect against the Duke's life. All the man wanted was a safe conduct to carry him to Paris, when he would undertake to point out to the police within twenty-four hours the hired assassin who had been

waiting his opportunity for more than four months.\* The Duke, when Murray laid the matter before him, made very light of it; there never was a less likely subject for intimidation than he. Murray was directed to reply that, unless Lord Kinnaird knew to the contrary, his acquaintance was probably "a mere humbug, and will obtain nothing by the line he has taken."† He expressed, in addition, the wish, not unnatural in the circumstances, that Lord Kinnaird should communicate the name of his informant.

Lord Kinnaird's letter was received on the morning of 8th February; Murray's reply was written in the afternoon. Two days later, on the 10th, the Duke dined with Sir Charles Stuart, at whose house, among others, he met Marshal Grouchy and Madame De Staël. The Duchess of Wellington was not residing in Paris at this time. His own hotel has long since been improved off the plan of Paris: it stood in the Rue des Champs Elysées, and was entered by a *porte cochère* at an awkward angle to the street, and so narrow that the two sentries were obliged to fall back each time a carriage passed in, the sentry boxes being outside the gate. The Duke returned from dinner soon after midnight, and just as the carriage turned into the entry, a fellow stepped forward and fired a pistol in at the window.

The coachman instantly whipped up his horses and dashed into the courtyard. The Duke, who had been leaning back in his carriage, heard the report, but did not see the flash. Thinking his coachman had knocked down one of the sentries, whose musket had gone off, on alighting he asked him what on earth he meant by driving in at such a pace, and told him he had knocked down a sentry. "I saw a man fire at your Grace," replied the coachman.

Two of the Duke's servants coming along the street heard the report, saw the flash, and the assassin running away; one of them proposed to stop him. "No, no," said the other; "it's only a row between some damned Frenchies; best keep out of it."‡

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xii. 274.

† *Ibid.*, 260.

‡ *De Ros MS.*



ÆT. 48.

The French Government were, or affected to be, incredulous of the genuine character of the attempt, but warnings had arrived from other sources than Lord Kinnaird, which left no doubt whatever of the existence of an extensive conspiracy against the Duke's life. He had, besides, received numerous anonymous letters, to which he had paid not the slightest attention; \* but, the attempt having been made, he insisted on due diligence being shown in order to discover the culprits. He sent Lord Kinnaird's letter to be laid before the King of the Netherlands, that nobleman having explained that his sense of honour would not permit him to reveal the name of his informant. The worst part of the affair was that the Prince of Orange—the Duke's brother-in-arms at Waterloo—was implicated in the conspiracy by the extent he was known to have encouraged and sheltered the French refugees. In reply to the Prince's letter of hot disclaimer (which, curiously enough, was not written till two months after the outrage), the Duke replied calmly—

“I assure your Royal Highness that the idea never did nor never could have entered my mind that you had any knowledge of the plot, which I believe nobody now doubts was formed by the French refugees in the Netherlands, to assassinate me. Those who know me best will do me the justice to say that, whenever the idea was suggested in my presence, I always answered that I would as soon suspect my own son as I could your Royal Highness; but I will not conceal from your Royal Highness that this occurrence has brought your name into discussion in a way very disagreeable to your friends.” †

Lord Kinnaird's connection with the conspirators led him into a good deal of trouble. As he persisted in refusing to give up the name of his informant, orders were issued by the Belgian Government for his arrest. Leaving Brussels secretly, he took his informant with him to Paris, choosing to construe a passage in a letter from the Duke to Lord Clanarty,

\* *Stanhope*, 76.† *Suppl. Despatches*, xii. 480.



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FREDERICK WILLIAM, PRINCE OF ORANGE,  
AFTERWARDS FIRST KING OF THE NETHERLANDS.  
*(Vol. ii, p. 116.)*



British Minister in Brussels, as an efficient safe conduct for his companion.\* On arriving in Paris, both were arrested, but Lord Kinnaird was released at the request of the Duke, who took him into his own house, otherwise, as he wrote to Lord Bathurst, "he would probably have been lodged in the Conciergerie, which I certainly should not have liked." † His lordship made but a shabby return for the Duke's protection. He left Paris on 15th April, telling his host he was going to Brussels. ‡ This was merely a blind to deceive the police, because it was found that he had gone two stages along the road to Amiens. He left a sting behind him. On the day of his departure he addressed a letter, and an exceedingly long memorandum, to the French Chamber of Peers, accusing the Government and, by implication, the Duke of Wellington of breach of faith in the arrest of the informer Marinet. Wellington simply characterised this malicious document, drawn up by one enjoying his hospitality and protection at the moment, as "certainly a very impudent production, but I think I ought not to give it any answer." §

Lord  
Kinnaird  
accuses the  
Duke of  
bad faith.

The judicial inquiry was prolonged for many months both in Paris and Brussels. It was ascertained beyond all moral doubt that the man who fired the shot was one Cantillon, an ex-sergeant of dragoons, and that he acted in the pay and under the direction of a large number of persons, chiefly old officers *en demi-solde* of Napoleon's armies; but although many of them and Cantillon himself were kept in custody for a long time, no one was punished. Cantillon was committed for trial, but was acquitted by the French jury, which was not

\* "It may be proper to mention to you that the French Government are disposed to go any length in the way of negotiation with the person mentioned by Lord Kinnaird, or others, to discover the plot, and to co-operate with the Government of the King of the Netherlands on the subject" (*Suppl. Despatches*, xii. 328).

† *Suppl. Despatches*, xii. 332.

‡ *Ibid.*, 479.

§ *Ibid.*, 535. Lord Kinnaird acted very indiscreetly, and incurred suspicion of much from which the Duke freely acquitted him. But when he returned to England Lady Holland dubbed him "Oliver" Kinnaird.

*Æt.* 48. — surprising, considering the amount of popular sympathy he had secured. Among the swarm of squibs—straws which show the direction of the wind—the following doggerel affords a fair sample of the quality and spirit:—

“ Mal ajuster est un défaut ;  
 Il le manqua—et voici comme,  
 L'imbecile visa trop haut,  
 Il l'avait pris pour un grand homme ! ” \*

In the mind of one man, at least, there can have been no doubt of Cantillon's guilt, for Napoleon added a codicil to his will at St. Helena, devising 10,000 francs to him in acknowledgment of the service he had attempted to render his country by the murder of Wellington!

“ Cantillon,” ran this precious document, “ had as much right to assassinate that oligarchist, as Wellington had to send me to perish on the rock of St. Helena,” a parallel which, as Sir Walter Scott pointed out, betrays a reasoning either infirm or insincere. “ If both were wrong, why reward the ruffian with a legacy? but if both were right, why complain of the British Government for detaining him at St. Helena?”

The  
 British  
 Govern-  
 ment recall  
 the Duke  
 from Paris.

Lord Bathurst communicated to the Duke the unanimous instruction of the British Cabinet that he should avoid further risks by withdrawing from Paris to his headquarters at Cambrai, † and, in a separate letter, conveyed the Prince Regent's commands to the same effect.

“ His Royal Highness, deeply impressed with the conviction that the preservation of a life of such inestimable importance is paramount to all other considerations, has commanded me to inform your Grace that it is his pleasure that you should,

\* “ Aiming badly is a blunder ;  
 The idiot missed, and cheated fate ;  
 He aimed too high—and little wonder !  
 He thought his man was something great.”

† *Suppl. Despatches*, xii. 325.

without delay, quit Paris and proceed to the headquarters at ANN. 1818.  
Cambrai." \*

Hence arose the solitary instance on record of disobedience The Duke's one act of disobedience.  
to the orders of his superiors on the part of this great  
disciplinarian.

"I only regret," ran his reply to Bathurst, "that the Cabinet did not, as they usually have done, consult my opinion before they decided on a case in which I am principally and personally concerned, and on a line of action depending on particular circumstances existing here at the moment, of which I must be a better judge than anybody else. It is very hard to place me in the situation of being obliged to disobey, or even to delay to obey, the positive order of the Prince Regent; but I must do the latter at all events, as I conceive the public interests require it." †

No doubt the Duke was doing valuable public service in Paris by bringing about the liquidation of international claims and hastening to a close the foreign occupation of France, but one can read between these lines the repugnance of a proud spirit to the faintest suspicion of being intimidated, and this is still more apparent in other passages of this letter.

"It must not be supposed that the allied Ministers here are very cordially united, either in their objects or councils, because they don't break out. The truth is that I keep them together; but if I were to withdraw from Paris altogether, and particularly if I were to do so in a manner which should shake the public respect for me, you would no longer see that union of councils and objects which has prevailed here since the peace. In short, I have no hesitation in stating it as my opinion that, after assassination, the greatest public and private calamity which could happen would be to obey the order of the Prince Regent. Indeed, I don't know that I should not prefer that the assassin should have succeeded, as at least I should have died respected." ‡

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xii. 326.

† *Ibid.*, 333.

‡ *Ibid.*, 335.

Æt. 48.

Thus, calmly defiant, Wellington remained at his post in Paris till the end of April. By that time he had succeeded in persuading the Powers to accept a sum of 240,000,000 francs (£9,600,000) as settlement in full of all claims instead of the gross amount of 800,000,000, outside the expenses of the army of occupation. He had also carried towards completion the negotiation of loans to the French Government by the English houses of Hope and Co. and Baring Brothers. In connection with the last matter, he went to London early in May, and by the middle of that month was back at Cambrai. In September following the representatives of the Powers met in conference at Aix-la-Chapelle to take into consideration the propriety of withdrawing the army of occupation. The Duke had previously resisted proposals which had been urged, not only by the French Government, but by the Emperor of Russia,\* for the anticipation of the term of three years, which had been fixed under the Convention of Paris as the minimum, although he had consented to a reduction of the force in 1817 by 30,000 men. Negotiations proceeded so smoothly that, on 5th October, the Duke was able to write to Lord Bathurst asking for ships to be sent at once to Calais, Antwerp, and Ostend for the embarkation of the British contingent. On the 30th he issued from Cambrai his *Ordre du jour*, bidding farewell to the troops of different nationalities, and thanking them for their excellent behaviour while under his command.† Of his own part in conducting the occupation, so hazardous in its nature, to a pacific close, ample recognition was expressed by the pen of Lord Bathurst, which lent itself on this occasion to terms more characteristic of French or Spanish documents than the frigid officialism of English despatches. "Amidst the signal achievements

Evacuation  
of France  
by the  
Allies.

\* Repetition in history is proverbial. The recent action of the present Emperor of Russia by inviting the Powers of Europe to confer on a project of universal disarmament is singularly akin to that of Alexander I., whose project of a Holy Alliance included the settlement of all international disputes by periodical conferences of crowned heads.

† *Suppl. Despatches*, xii. 795.

which will carry your name and the glory of the British Empire down to the latest posterity, it will not form the least part of your Grace's renown that you have exercised and concluded a command unexampled in its character with the concurrent voice of approbation from all whom it could concern." •

ANN. 1818

## APPENDIX F.

*Influence of Wellington on the Character of the British Army.*

The close of the Duke's long warfare seems a fitting opportunity to appraise the permanent effect of his command upon the British land forces.

First as to the officers, his early complaints of their inefficiency, their inattention to orders, and their neglect of regimental duties, contrast in a marked degree with what we are accustomed to read at the present day in despatches; but it was inevitable, having regard to the absence of all previous training and the system of appointment and promotion. They were gallant to a fault—*sans peur, mais sans avis*; examples of misconduct in action were as rare among officers as among their men: practically they formed a *quantité négligeable*. It was Wellington's part to instil into regimental officers that sense of duty which appears now inseparable from the profession; to awaken in them pride in knowledge of tactics and acquaintance with interior economy, which, in the early years of the century, were considered creditable only in sergeants. In short, he established, or at least revived, the tradition of proficiency as inseparable from the dignity of a commission.

Duties of officers.

There were exceptions, of course, to the general level of incompetency which he found prevailing in the service— young officers like the three Napiers of the Light Division,

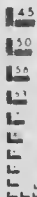
\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xii. 852.





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Fletcher, Jones, and Chapman of the Engineers, Ramsay and Ross of the Artillery; senior officers, too, like Hope, Graham, Beresford, Hill, and George Murray; gifted staff officers like Waters, Fitzroy Somerset, and Alexander Gordon, whose hearts were in their profession, who looked upon it as something more than a mere mill of brutal discipline for turning yokels into marching machines, who cordially welcomed the Duke of York's reforms, and ardently longed for more. Sir John Moore had already shown what the British infantry might become, fashioning the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th Regiments at Shorncliffe into an ideal brigade, hereafter to develop into the world-famed Light Division. But the average regiment was no better than could be expected from a system which tolerated ignorance and indolence in the officers, while it exacted slavish obedience from the men.

Promo-  
tion.

Wellington accepted, and even approved, the recognised effect of family influence upon promotion, which, in these plainer-spoken days, we should stigmatise as jobbery, but he claimed vehemently that military character and service should count for something also. For instance, there was a certain Captain Lloyd of the 43rd whose promotion he frequently urged on the Horse Guards, speaking "both as a general officer and on the part of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland;" but his recommendation was persistently neglected.

"It would be desirable, certainly," he wrote to the Military Secretary, "that the only claim to promotion should be military merit; but this is a degree of perfection to which the disposal of military patronage has never been, and cannot be, I believe, brought in any military establishment. The Commander-in-chief must have friends, officers on the staff attached to him, etc., who will press him to promote their friends and relations, all doubtless very meritorious, and no man will at all times resist these applications; but if there is to be any influence in the disposal of military patronage, in aid of military merit, can there be any in our army so legitimate as that of family connexion, fortune, and influence in the country. I acknowledge, therefore,

that I have been astonished at seeing Lloyd, with every claim that an officer can have to promotion, still a captain; and others, connected with the officers of the staff, promoted as soon as their time of service had expired. . . . I, who command the largest British army that has been employed against the enemy for many years, and who have upon my hands certainly the most extensive and difficult concern that was ever imposed on any British officer, have not the power of making even a corporal!!! . . . Even admitted that the system of promotion by seniority, exploded in other armies, is the best for that of Great Britain, it would still be an advantage that those who become entitled to it should receive it immediately, and from the hand of the person who is obliged to expose them to danger, to enforce discipline, and to call for their exertions."\*

The allusion to the disuse of promotion by seniority in other armies is not quite clear, seeing that in 1839 the Duke wrote to Lord Hill—

"Seniority regulates the service of all armies. This rule is the safeguard of authority against the influence and power of pretensions however founded. The enforcement of it is essential to the meritorious officer on service. . . . I must say that of all the difficulties with which I had to contend in the Peninsula, the greatest was the advanced rank in the Portuguese service given to our officers, and the relations of command in which they consequently stood towards the officers of the British army."†

It is very remarkable, considering how frequently and bitterly the Duke complained of the average ignorance of officers of the army, that he set no store by professional education. He held the opinion, since so clearly expounded by Guyau,‡ that the object of education is not to fill a head but to form it, conscious, no doubt, that his own professional

\* *Despatches*, vi. 305.

† *Apsley House MSS.*

‡ "Outside the sum total of the narrow and positive science indispensable in practical life, all restricted scientific instruction is sterile."

eminence had been attained, not by means of the instruction he received at school, but by knowledge acquired subsequently by the exercise of a strong will. Probably he would have given assent to Mr. Ruskin's doctrine that "the first use of education is to enable us to consult with the wisest and the greatest men on all points of difficulty;" but in effect he expressed himself more simply, that "the best education for the military and all other professions was the common education of the country."\*

The  
Duke's  
personal  
influence.

A volume might be filled with wise maxims gathered from the Duke's letters of advice, remonstrance, or censure addressed to officers under his command. Let a single instance suffice, remembering that, although the Duke never was what could be termed a popular commanding officer, men of all ranks had such perfect confidence in his experience and judgment that every word he wrote or spoke was laid to heart and quoted from lip to lip. When Marshal Beresford complained to him more bitterly than usual about an officer under his command who was in the habit of sending home false and injurious reports, Wellington replied, "There is only one line to be adopted in opposition to all trick; that is, the steady, straight line of duty, tempered by forbearance, lenity, and good nature." †

Sometimes, in his later years, the Duke's injunctions to his officers were too paternal not to provoke a smile. His counterblast in 1845, though not so prolix, but equally ineffective as that of James VI., became almost equally famous, and for a while tobacco-stoppers, carved in his likeness, became very popular.

"G.O. No. 577.—The Commander-in-Chief has been informed that the practice of smoking, by the use of pipes, cigars, and cheroots, has become prevalent among the Officers of the Army, which is not only in itself a species of intoxication occasioned by the fumes of tobacco, but, undoubtedly, occasions drinking and

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1838.

† *Despatches*, iv. 441.

tippling by those who acquire the habit; and he intreats the Officers commanding Regiments to prevent smoking in the Mess Rooms of their several Regiments, and in the adjoining apartments, and to discourago the practice among the Officers of Junior Rank in their Regiments."

The wits of *Punch* made merry over this, declaring that the officers were in dismay, "dreading the possibility of being thrown upon their conversational resources, which must have a most dreary effect."

In one respect the Duke's influence upon the habits of officers is open to criticism. When he rose to high command in the army the usual dress of an officer, even when not on duty, was his uniform, as it remains now in Continental armies. The Duke's example, arising out of his personal dislike of display, first set the fashion of "mufti," or plain clothes. For instance, in 1814, when Louis XVIII. attended the Odéon theatre with the Royal Princes and a brilliant suite, the Duke occupied the box opposite the royal one, and was the only officer in the building not in uniform.

The Duke attached almost higher importance to the non-commissioned officers than to any other rank in the service. Time, and the change which it has wrought in the professional zeal of regimental officers and in the habits of non-commissioned officers, have removed some of the grounds for the Duke's reliance on the inferior ranks; but his opinion is still worth quoting, were it only as a warning against relapse into the old indolent system.

Non-commissioned officers.

"The Guards are superior to the Line, not as being picked men like the French—for Napoleon gave peculiar privileges to his guardsmen and governed the army with them—but from the goodness of the non-commissioned officers. They do, in fact, all that the commissioned officers of the Line are expected to do—and don't do. This must be so as long as the present system lasts—and I am all for it—of having gentlemen for officers; you cannot require them to do many things that should be done.

They must not speak to the men, for instance—we should reprimand them if they did; our system in that respect is so very different from the French. Now all that work is done by the non-commissioned officers of the Guards. It is true that they regularly get drunk once a day—by eight in the evening—and go to bed soon after, but then they always take care to do first whatever they were bid. When I had given an officer in the Guards an order, I felt sure of its being executed; but with an officer in the Line, it was, I will venture to say, a hundred to one against its being done at all.” \*

One day the Duke had been quoting the saying of a certain sergeant, and added, “I have served with all nations, and I am convinced that there would be nothing so intelligent, so valuable, as English soldiers of that rank, if you could get them sober, *which is impossible.*” †

He was always very anxious to maintain the dignity of the non-commissioned ranks, and to preserve the due proportion in their pay to that of the rank and file. Thus in 1812 he wrote earnestly on the subject to Lord Liverpool.

“The foundation of every system of discipline which has for

\* *Stanhope*, 17. The Duke would have altered his opinion had he lived to see the great change in the habits and attainments of line officers, brought about by the general elevation of the spirit of the service which we owe, in large measure, to the influence of the late Prince Consort. The following instance, described to me by an officer of the regiment who was present, took place some time in the 'forties, and illustrates the kind of thing which was not at all uncommon. The regiment, a fine one, which lost at Waterloo fourteen killed and wounded out of twenty-six officers, was paraded for inspection in the Phoenix Park. After riding down the ranks, the inspecting officer directed the Colonel to put the battalion through some manœuvres, beginning with a change of front. The Adjutant began giving the necessary words of command, upon which the General, unreasonably exacting, desired that the Colonel should direct the movement himself. Now Colonel — knew only one movement, namely, how to form square from line or column. Instead, therefore, of changing front, he promptly brought the battalion into square, and gave the command for file firing, which, continuing till all the ammunition was expended, effectually silenced the remonstrances of the inspecting officer.

† *Salisbury MSS.*, 1837.

its object the prevention of crimes must be the non-commissioned officers of the army. But I am sorry to say, that notwithstanding the encouragement I have given to this class, they are still as little to be depended on as the private soldiers themselves; and they are just as ready to commit irregularities and outrage. I attribute this circumstance very much to the lowness of their pay in comparison with that of the soldiers. Within my recollection the pay of the soldiers of the army has been increased from sixpence to one shilling per diem; while that of the corporals, which was eightpence, has in the same period been raised only to one shilling and twopence; and that of the sergeants, which was one shilling, has been raised only to one shilling and sixpence. . . . Your Lordship will observe that the old proportions have not been preserved; and the non-commissioned officers of the army not only feel no inclination to preserve a distinction between them and the private soldiers, but they feel no desire to incur the responsibility, and take the trouble, and submit to the privations of their situation for so trifling a difference in their pay. . . . The remedy for this evil is to increase the pay of the corporals and sergeants, so as at least to restore the old proportions." \*

These representations prevailed in the end, though not until after much resistance on the part of the Treasury had been overcome. It was feared that demands might follow for an increase in the pay of ensigns and lieutenants.

Turning now to the rank and file, Wellington's despatches <sup>Rank and file.</sup> and general orders bear testimony that the difficulty he found in enforcing discipline was second only to that which he encountered in getting officers to learn and attend to their duties. He succeeded in overcoming both difficulties, but the way was hard, and he did not endear himself to soldiers in the process. Vauvenargues, nearly a hundred years before, had cried in the wilderness, "If you would raise the character of men, you must raise them to consciousness of their own prudence and strength;" but the lesson had not been laid to heart. Military punishment ran upon a scale of mediæval,

\* *Despatches*, ix. 228.

of demoniac ferocity. To realise its horrors one has to look up such a case as was sanctioned by a commanding officer of singular mildness and thoughtful nature. Charles Napier, commanding the 50th Regiment, writes to his mother in June, 1808—

Corporal  
punish-  
ment.

“You know my antipathy to flogging: you know that it is unconquerable. . . . This antipathy gains strength from principle and reason, as I am convinced it could be dispensed with. Still, as other severe punishments do not exist in our army, we must use torture in some cases, until a substitute is given by our government. Mark this narrative. A robbery was committed in the regiment, and the thief was discovered in a few hours. . . . I resolved to make a severe example. . . . He was sentenced to nine hundred lashes. Yet there was not one positive proof of the robbery, all was presumptive evidence: but I charged him with breaches of discipline which could be proved, and my resolve was to punish or not, according to my own judgment, a commanding officer being in truth despotic.

“Two days I took to consider every circumstance, thinking, if he should be afterwards proved innocent, it would be disagreeable to have bestowed nine hundred lashes wrongfully. . . . Yesterday he was flogged in the square. . . . When he had received 200 lashes he was promised pardon, if he told where the money was. No! God in heaven was his witness he was innocent. . . . In this manner he went on. I was inexorable; and it is hardly credible that he received 600 lashes, given in the most severe manner . . . praying for death to relieve him. . . . At six hundred lashes he was taken down, with the seemingly brutal intention of flogging him again in a half-healed back . . . the greatest torture possible. . . . Directions were given that he should be kept solitary to lower his spirits. . . . Pain, lowness and the people employed to frighten him succeeded: he confessed all, and told where the money was hid.” \*

The same author testifies in another place that when he was a subaltern he frequently saw 600, 700, 800, 900, and

\* *Life and Opinions*, i. 87.



1,000 lashes sentenced by a *regimental* court-martial, and generally every lash inflicted. He had heard of 1,200 inflicted, but never saw it. Writing in 1837, he rejoiced that even a general court-martial could no longer inflict more than 200 lashes, and that it was no longer legal to bring a poor fellow out of hospital to receive the balance of his sentence. Of his experiences of the old system he writes as follows:—

“I have seen many hundreds of men flogged, and have always observed that when the skin is thoroughly cut up or flayed off, the great pain subsides. Men frequently convulsed and screaming during the time they receive from one lash to three hundred lashes, and then they bear the remainder, even to eight hundred or a thousand lashes, without a groan. They will often lie as if without life, and the drummers appear to be flogging a lump of dead, raw flesh. Now I have frequently observed that, in these cases, the faces of the spectators assumed a look of disgust; there was always a low whispering sound, scarcely audible, issuing from the apparently stern and silent ranks; a sound arising from lips that spoke not.”

Such was the system devised to encourage recruiting at the beginning of the present century; it is scarcely credible to us at the end of it. It was the system which Sir Arthur Wellesley had to administer in taking command of an European army. How did he apply it? Not exactly as an enlightened commander would do at the present day. He did not abolish the lash—far from it; to the end of his days he never believed that it could be safely dispensed with. Charles Napier himself dared not advocate its abolition *on active service*. Neither did the Duke entertain a high opinion of the possibility of raising the common soldier's morality or self-respect. “The scum of the earth; all English soldiers are fellows who have enlisted for drink—that is the plain fact—they have all enlisted for drink.”\* He used the only

Wellington's  
opinion of  
the lash.

\* *Stanhope*, 14.

means which military law, as he found it, gave him to enforce discipline; but his sense of humanity and justice was as strong as his discipline was inflexible. His general orders in the Peninsula abound in instances where a prisoner having been sentenced to death or flogging for desertion, insubordination, or plunder, the Commander-in-chief confirms the sentence, but pardons the culprit, either because his regiment has been behaving well in recent operations, or because offences of the kind have lately been rare, or because of some slight irregularity in the proceedings. Plundering of peaceful inhabitants was the one crime he detested and was determined to put down. The country round Copenhagen was devastated by Lord Cathcart's troops, without an effort made to stop it; but in the detachment under Sir Arthur Wellesley, when a man of good character in the 43rd stole some cherries off a tree in front of his billet, he was sentenced to receive 25 lashes\*—not worth taking off a fellow's jacket for, officers of the old school would have said.

Still, the Duke remained to the last an uncompromising advocate of corporal punishment; he was unable to imagine discipline maintained in a volunteer army without that *ultima ratio*. It seems never to have occurred to him that, while it was a more or less effective deterrent from crime, it was also a deterrent to voluntary enlistment, except by "the scum of the earth." So strongly did he feel on this subject that, when in Opposition in 1833, hearing that Lord Grey's Government were about to propose an alteration in the Mutiny Act, whereby "corporal punishment should be restricted, if not entirely abolished," in the British services, he wrote a very strong memorandum to the King, stating his opinion that no punishment could be substituted for corporal punishment without causing the army, at least, to fall into a state of hopeless indiscipline.† Three years later, appearing as a witness before the Royal Commission on Military Punishments in 1836, he gave his opinion emphatically that

\* *Life and Opinions*, i. 80.

† *Apsley House MSS.*, 1833.

flogging was the only effective deterrent, because, unlike solitary confinement, imprisonment with hard labour, or other punishments which had been introduced during his experience of the army, it was inflicted in public, and every man knew what was before him if he incurred a sentence of corporal punishment.

"I have no idea of any great effect being produced by anything but the fear of immediate corporal punishment. I must say that in hundreds of instances the very threat of the lash has prevented very serious crimes. It is well known that I have hundreds of times prevented the most serious offences by ordering the men to appear in their side arms. When I found any great disorder going on, the first thing I did was to order that all the men must appear, if they appeared in the streets at all, in their side arms; that was the first thing. I then ordered that the rolls should be called every hour; and all these restraints were enforced by the fear of the lash. . . . Then, after that, if this did not do, I ordered them all under arms, and kept them standing near their arms. It is well known that I have done that very thing frequently. All these things were ordered to prevent the mischief in the first place; and in the next place, I was quite sure that no man would venture to disobey it, because he knew that if he ventured to disobey it, he would come to corporal punishment.

Advocates  
corporal  
punish-  
ment.

*Q.* "Supposing the power of corporal punishment had not been in your hands at that time, could you by any other means have established that discipline in the army?"

*A.* "No; it is out of the question. . . . Having had this subject in contemplation for six or seven years, I have turned it over in my mind in every possible way, and I declare that I have not an idea of what can be substituted for it.

". . . When I marched up to Paris with the Prussian army upon my right, they were obliged to quit the country in which they were living. Both armies were living by requisition, and we went and lived in that same country, because my army was in a state of discipline, and order, and regularity, and obedience, and the Prussian was not.

"Towards the close of the Peninsular campaign, by discipline, and by care and attention, the army was brought into such a state of discipline that every description of punishment was almost discontinued altogether. I always thought that I could have gone anywhere and done anything with that army. It was impossible to have a machine more highly mounted and in better order. . . . When I quitted that army on the Garonne, I do not think it was possible to see anything in a higher state of discipline, and I believe there was a total discontinuance of all punishment."

The discipline and performances of the British army at the present day have gloriously falsified the predictions of those who pronounced it impossible ever to abolish corporal punishment; none the less it is certain that at the beginning of the century the very existence of a British army abroad depended upon its existence. Civilisation and education have told upon the classes from which the army is recruited with an effect as marked as that which professional pride and sense of duty has had upon its officers. It is impossible to imagine in the British army, as we know it, the prevalence of a practice very common when Sir Arthur Wellesley first took command of European troops, namely, the chastisement of soldiers by their officers. From the first Wellesley sternly repressed this habit; had it continued, it is not difficult to believe that, without corporal punishment officially administered, neither discipline nor due respect for commissioned officers could have been maintained.

The Duke of Wellington, then, must be held to be justified in his opinion that corporal punishment was indispensable to restoring discipline to the army as he found it, with officers for the most part uninstructed in their duties and indifferent to the personal welfare and comfort of their men; although as soon as he had succeeded in establishing discipline, and convincing the general body of regimental officers that it was disgraceful to neglect the details of their profession, he found it possible practically to suspend the use of the lash altogether.

Where time has proved the Duke to be in error, is in his disbelief in the possibility of raising the self-respect of the private soldier, so that he could ever be ruled except by the terrible dread of corporal punishment.

In spite of his somewhat harsh expressions about the irredeemable character of the average rank and file, the Duke was never indifferent—no good officer can be so—to the soldier's welfare and personal comfort. At Saint-Jean-de-Luz, in 1814, when it came to his knowledge that a private had been discharged from the headquarters of his battalion in a destitute condition, he directed a very sharp rebuke to be sent to the officer responsible, followed by the admonition, "The attention of a commanding officer, and the credit of the corps, should always be considered connected with the soldier's welfare till the last hour of his service, and omission on any points relating to that end cannot fail to prove prejudicial to the interests of the corps." \* Wellington's solicitude for the soldier.

Although indifferent to details of uniform, no matter affecting the soldier's comfort or efficiency was so minute as to escape his attention. Thus in 1813, although tents had been provided for the men, they could not be carried for want of mules; the three animals allowed by regulation for each company being loaded with heavy iron camp ketties. Wellington caused light tin kettles to be made, one for each mess of six men, and provided each man also with a tin canteen, thus enabling three tents to be carried for each company.

The Duke was inflexible in his belief in the impossibility of shortening the soldier's service, without sacrificing efficiency. In 1847, Lord John Russell having submitted to him as Commander-in-chief a plan for the discharge of soldiers after ten years' service, the Duke replied—"It is very painful to me to be under the necessity of troubling your lordship at this moment, but it is absolutely impossible for me to be the Duration of service.

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xiv. 372.

instrument of carrying into execution a project which will destroy the efficiency of the small army which her Majesty's Government has at its disposition." \*

Rewards  
and  
medals.

Closely cognate to the subject of punishment is that of rewards and decoration, and in order to understand the apparent austerity of the Duke in this matter one must bear in mind the altered view in which it has come to be regarded since the days of his service. All honours and orders, by the laws of chivalry, derived their whole value from the Sovereign—the fountain of honour—and that value was held to depend on their exclusive and select character. War medals, being of the nature of a chivalrous order, would have been considered to lose much of their value if they were made common, and in fact no regimental officer who had not commanded a battalion in action, or served within prescribed ranks on the staff, was eligible to receive a war medal before the battle of Waterloo. Nay—it was not sufficient to have been in action, as Lord Fitzroy Somerset reminded Lord Beresford in 1833, when he applied for a decoration for some officer. He quoted the instances of Sir Rowland Hill, who commanded a corps d'armée at Busaco, of Sir Miles Nightingale's brigade and of the brigade of Guards, all of which troops, though they suffered severely from artillery fire, never actually were exposed to the fire of small arms. Consequently neither Hill nor Nightingale, nor any of their officers, nor those of the Guards, received the Busaco clasp.† After Waterloo, the Duke of Wellington recommended that a medal should be granted to all officers *and men* who had taken part in that great victory,‡ and the Prince Regent directed that such a

\* *Apsley House MSS.*

† Unpublished letter from Lord F. Somerset to Lord Beresford.

‡ "I confess that I do not concur in the limitation of the order (of the Bath) to field officers. Many captains in the army conducted themselves in a very meritorious manner, and deserve it; and I never could see the reason for excluding them either from the order or the medal. I would likely beg leave to suggest to your Royal Highness the expediency of giving to the non-commissioned officers and soldiers engaged in the battle of Waterloo a medal. I

medal should be struck and distributed.\* Every man present at Waterloo was also entitled to reckon two years' additional service towards discharge and pension. Strange to say, no such recognition of the long warfare of which Waterloo was but the epilogue was made till 1848, when the Queen presented a medal to those who still survived to claim it, covering the operations in the period from 1793 to 1814. Honours are more lavishly bestowed at the present day, and it would be wrong to interpret the Duke's policy in the regulation of rewards by the sentiment which governs it under a different state of things. The chief value of a decoration in A.'s eyes is the fact that it has been conferred on B., C., and D., who, he may feel, are not better entitled to it than himself.

As a matter of fact, the Duke never objected, as it has been asserted he did, to a Peninsular medal being granted to all ranks. He did object, and felt it necessary to interfere, when the officers of the army petitioned the House of Lords to move the Sovereign to grant them medals, for he considered that an infringement of the royal prerogative; but, as he explained to Lord John Russell, as soon as he was "informed that it was the wish of the Sovereign and her Ministers, I eagerly adopted the plan, and suggested means to facilitate its execution." †

The dress and equipment of the soldier was regulated by the Duke of York and the Horse Guards; Wellington had little time to bestow on matters of taste or even of comfort, and he expressed his views very seldom on the subject. Only once, when a change of uniform was contemplated for the cavalry, he wrote home begging that it might be made as different as possible from French uniforms, to avoid awkward

Equip-  
ment and  
dress.

am convinced it would have the best effect in the army; and, if that battle should settle our concerns, they will well deserve it" (*Despatches*, xii. 520: 28th June, 1815).

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xi. 343.

† 10th December, 1846 (*Apsley House MSS.*).



mistakes. It is true that he is credited with having cut off the pigtails of his soldiers when he disembarked in the Mondego in 1808; but he made no remonstrance, apparently, against his men being obliged to serve under a southern sun wearing eruel black leather stocks and preposterously high and heavy head-dresses.

Arms.

With regard to improvements in arms the Duke was exceedingly conservative. He regarded Colonel Congreve's invention of rockets with great suspicion, though they had a decided success at Bayonne,\* and he retained an almost superstitious admiration for Brown Bess, which might have been shaken had he lived to witness its inferiority before the Russian Minié rifles in the Crimea.

*The Duke of Wellington to Lord Fitzroy Somerset.†*

“Walmer Castle, 9th November, 1835.

“I return the books and papers which you sent me; and as the Master-General desires to have my opinion, I give it; but I do so with great diffidence; and deference for the superior judgment of others. I have always considered the Alteration of the Armament of the British Infantry, including the Indian Army, and scattered as it is, in all parts of the World, as a most serious undertaking. I considered our Arm as the most efficient that had yet been produced. The fire from it undoubtedly is acknowledged to be the most Destructive known. It is durable, it bears all sorts of Ill-usage, is easily repaired, and kept in Repair and serviceable; and besides its Power as a Missile, its length is an advantage in the use of the Bayonet. When I knew more of these Details than I do now we had in Store some Hundreds and Thousands of these admirable Arms; and I confess that I always considered undesirable any alteration of them, much more any change of them for others of different Calibre, Length, etc. in reference to the Expence to be incurred, in Comparison with the advantage to be acquired. . . .

\* It is not generally known that a British rocket battery was engaged in the battle of Leipzig.

† Afterwards Field-Marshal Lord Raglan.



"For instance in case of Wet—which Musquet will recover soonest—the one with the Flint and the Steel lock, or the one with the lock for the use of Detonating Powder? I recollect having had a Trial with Manton's plugs on that point. The Musquet with the Flint and Steel lock commenced its fire the soonest. . . . Can the Soldier be entrusted to take care of the 60 or 75 Rounds of Priming composed of Fulminating Powder? Will it bear all the vicissitudes of heat, cold, wet to which he must be exposed? Where is it to be kept in order that he may get at it for use with certainty and celerity? . . . I do not hesitate to declare my opinion that it would be absolutely impossible to venture to rely upon the Priming Ammunition whether in our Fleet or our Armies. . . . In respect to cutting balls into four or more parts,\* I think that the Spanish Guerillas practised this method. I can recollect that the Impression upon our minds at the time was, that it was not fair. That Impression may have been erroneous. It is certain that the Wound received was a bad one." †

The Duke was justly proud of the fire of his infantry, which was steadier and more effective than that of any other European troops. When Lord Salisbury asked him how he accounted for the French having refrained from attacking him during the retreat from Burgos, he replied, "Because they had found out that our bullets were not made of butter!" ‡

\* The cuts did not divide the balls, but gave them the effect of an expanding bullet.

† *Apsley House MSS.* The Duke lived to modify his opinion about the best infantry firearm. In an unpublished letter to Lord Anglesey, 13th May, 1851, he says, "I quite concur in your Lordship's opinion of the superiority of the musquet called the Minié Rifled Musquet, with which I consider it desirable that all the infantry of Her Majesty's Army should be supplied, as well as the marine and other troops." The Duke opposed the project of arming part of the infantry with the improved musket, because of the confusion which might arise in ammunition for arms of different calibre. "If the fifty odd thousand barrels now in store cannot be turned into the Minié musquets with the same calibre with the newly ordered Minié musquets, I would recommend you to sacrifice the value of odd £50,000, and even the time which will be lost in replacing them, rather than incur the inconvenience of having in the service musquets of two or more calibres."

‡ *Salisbury MSS.*, 1837.

## Cavalry.

In all his campaigns, except that of Waterloo, the Duke was weak in cavalry, and was supposed to be indifferent to that arm. Even in India, where he sometimes had the assistance of large bodies of native horse, they gave him nearly as much trouble as they did service, owing to their want of discipline. British cavalry were trained to execute all their movements at high speed, which might be considered a point in superiority to those of other nations, but in fact it was the reverse. It unsteadied the men, especially the supports; the horses, often fed on green forage, got blown, and Wellington frequently complained that officers had such an unconquerable belief in the necessity for charging at full speed that he lost all control over his cavalry after they were employed in a battle. He probably shared Jomini's opinion, that far more is lost by the disarray caused by high speed in a charge than is gained by the additional impetus. "All our movements," he wrote to Lord Combermere in 1816, "are too quick for those of large bodies of cavalry . . . I wish you would turn your mind . . . to keep the charge, as well as all other movements, at the pace at which at least the middling goers, if not the slowest, can keep up." \*

The Duke favoured Lord William Russell's idea of employing cavalry in single, rather than in double rank. He advocated, as the original and ordinary formation, three squadrons in single lines one behind the other, at a distance of 400 yards, and in discussing the question with Lord William left an interesting memorandum of his own practice in the use of the mounted arm.

"My practice in regard to cavalry was this: first, to use them upon advanced guards, flanks, etc., as the quickest movers, and to enable me to know and see as much as possible in the shortest space of time; secondly, to use them in the momentary pursuit of beaten troops; thirdly, to use them in small bodies to attack small bodies of the enemy's cavalry. But I never attacked with them alone, always with infantry, and I considered our cavalry

\* *Suppl. Despatches*, xi. 454.

so inferior to the French from want of order, although I consider one squadron a match for two French squadrons, that I should not have liked to see four British squadrons opposed to four French; and, as the numbers increased, and order of course became more necessary, I was more unwilling to risk our cavalry without having a great superiority of numbers. For this reason I used my cavalry even less than Buonaparte did his, for he gained some of his battles by the use of his cuirassiers as a kind of accelerated infantry, with which, supported by masses of cannon, he was in the habit of seizing important parts in the centre or flanks of his enemy's position, and of occupying such points till his infantry could arrive to relieve them. He tried this manœuvre at the battle of Waterloo, but failed, because we were not to be frightened away; and in fact (we) attacked the cuirassiers, who were in possession of the line of our cannon, with the squares of infantry; and when once we moved them, I poured in our Life Guards, etc. This shows the difference of his principles and mine; but it was to be attributed to his having his cavalry in order. Mine would gallop, but could not preserve their order, and therefore I could not use them till our admirable infantry had moved the French cavalry from their ground." \*

With regard to the Duke's general practice as a tactician, this has been so closely analysed by many competent authorities as to render superfluous any review of it in this place, so profoundly have the altered conditions of armament, transport, and communication modified all considerations of that nature. Nevertheless, two main objects must always remain of chief importance, and were never absent from the Duke's mind: First, in a campaign, the maintenance of lines of communication; second, in battle, what he expressed in his own words—"The great secret of battle is to have a reserve. I always had, with the infantry sometimes eight or ten deep, and with the cavalry—no end to the reserve." †

\* *Civil Despatches*, iii. 353.

† *Salisbury MSS.*, 1837. Sir Walter Scott has a note to similar effect in his journal—27th April, 1828. "I heard the Duke say to-day that the best troops would run now and then. He thought nothing of men running, he said, provided they came back again. In war he had always his reserves."

## CHAPTER V.

### WELLINGTON AS CABINET MINISTER.

1818-1822.

October . 1818.	The Duke enters Lord Liverpool's Cabinet State of domestic politics in Great Britain.	August 17. . . .	Trial of Queen Caroline. Resignation of Canning.
Aug. 16, 1819.	The Peterloo riot.	July 17, 1821 .	Coronation of George IV. The Duke revisits Waterloo.
Jan. 29, 1820 .	Death of George III.	Aug. 12, 1822.	Death of Lord Londonderry (Castlereagh).
February 23 .	The Cato Street Plot. Proceedings against Queen Caroline.	September 13.	The Duke persuades the King to receive Canning to office.
June . . . . .	Popular excitement and mutiny of the Guards.		
July 5 . . . . .	Bill introduced to divorce the Queen.		

THERE are not wanting those who hold the opinion that, had the assassin's bullet cut short the great Duke's career at its zenith, his renown would have suffered no whit in the esteem of later generations, but, on the contrary, would have retained some lustre which became overcast in the murky atmosphere of political life. It may be so. It may be that if, like his great counterpart Nelson, he had been struck down when scarcely past his prime, and with the first gloss still fresh on his laurels, the story had gained something in dramatic symmetry; there had remained more direct suggestion of the heaven-born in the life-work both of England's greatest sailor and her greatest soldier: Wellington's task would have been pronounced *teres atque rotundus*.



ARTHUR, DUKE OF WELLINGTON, ETAT. CIRCA 51.

*(From a Printing in the Apsley House Collection.)*

[Vol. ii. p. 140.]

en Caro-  
of Can-  
George  
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But in that case his countrymen would have missed the revelation of a type of character—the noblest form of aristocrat. Hitherto all Wellington's doings had been far from our shores. All men had heard of him, comparatively few had seen him; he was not a familiar figure in festivals, in Parliament, or any public place. When he sheathed his sword at the close of the military occupation of France, he returned home as a soldier, single of purpose, ready to take the field again should the summons come, but with a strong disinclination towards political life. ANN. 1818.

"The Duke told me," wrote Lady Salisbury in her journal of 1836, "that when office was first proposed to him by Lord Castlereagh after the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, he had the greatest dislike to accepting it, and the only thing that determined him was the assurance that, if he refused to join, he should weaken the Ministry and become a rallying-point for the disaffected." \*

The world had been so long at war that no man could reckon on the endurance of the measures devised to secure peace; nevertheless, little as he expected or desired it, the Duke of Wellington, in returning to England, was crossing the threshold of a new sphere of energy and influence, and a whole generation was to be born and grown up for whom he should become the embodiment of English political life, to whom he should set the pattern of an English gentleman. "The Duke" *sans phrase*—"the Duke" without territorial designation—came to denote the individual as precisely as did the titles "the King" or "the Speaker."

In all his campaigns, from the time immediately preceding the dethronement of Tipú Sultan in 1798 down to the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818, Wellington had displayed conspicuous sagacity and adroitness as an administrator, and Lord Liverpool was not slow to perceive how much strength his Cabinet would derive by the addition of a soldier-statesman

The Duke  
joins the  
Cabinet.

\* Salisbury MSS.

Æt. 49. of such wide experience. Accordingly, on 23rd October, when the Congress was on the eve of completing its labours, he wrote to the Duke offering him the post of Master-General of the Ordnance, which Lord Mulgrave cheerfully and handsomely consented to vacate for his acceptance, coupled with a seat in the Cabinet. The Duke replied that, although he wished, for many reasons, that the arrangement could have been postponed, he would "make no objection to the appointment taking place," inasmuch as the Government attached importance to a prompt settlement. Such a frigid acceptance of Cabinet rank conferred on an individual for the first time must surely be almost unique in the experience of Prime Ministers; but the remarkable sentences which follow have scarcely received the attention they deserve, containing, as they do, the key to a good deal which earned for the Duke in after years the displeasure of the Tory party.

"I don't doubt that the party of which the present government are the head will give me credit for being sincerely attached to them and their interests; but I hope that, in case any circumstance should occur to remove them from power, they will allow me to consider myself at liberty to take any line I may at the time think proper. The experience which I have acquired during my long service abroad has convinced me that a factious opposition to the government is highly injurious to the interests of the country; and, thinking as I do now, I could not become a party to such opposition, and I wish that this may be clearly understood by those persons with whom I am now about to engage as a colleague in government. I can easily conceive that this feeling of mine may, in the opinion of some, render me less eligible as a colleague, and I beg that, if this should be the case, the offer you have so kindly made to me may be considered as not made, and I can only assure you that you will ever find me equally disposed as you have always found me to render you every service and assistance in my power." \*

\* *Suppl. Despatches.* xii. 813.



Returning to England shortly before Christmas, the Duke took up his residence in Apsley House, which he had bought from Lord Wellesley some years previously, and which meantime had undergone, at the hands of the architect Wyatt, a drastic transformation from the original structure of the brothers Adam to the building as it stands at this day. About the bill for the alterations, amounting to £130,000, the Duke observed, "It would have broken any back but mine;" and he seems never to have taken any pride in his palace, nor to have had any of the affection for it which he bore to Strathfieldsaye and Walmer.

British home politics, when the Duke returned to take active part in them, were passing through an ominous phase. As long as the war lasted, employment was plentiful and prices ruled high; the national spirit rose nobly to the occasion, and Ministers received almost uniformly admirable support from the country. Not the less surely, however, though silently, the revolutionary leaven had been spreading through the lower ranks, and assuredly there was plenty of material to feed it. The brutality of the military scale of punishment has been commented on elsewhere in these pages; a more certain source of danger was the severity of the criminal code. Horse and sheep-stealing, the theft of the value of five shillings from a shop or of forty shillings from a dwelling house, were capital offences; prisoners charged with these, or with any one of other two hundred offences, were not permitted to be heard in defence through counsel, and the horrors inseparable from detention in prison or hard labour in the hulks rendered transportation a doom greatly coveted by evil doers.

At the beginning of the war in 1792 the public debt of Great Britain and Ireland stood at £239,650,000, imposing an annual charge of £9,301,000 on Great Britain and £131,000 on Ireland; at its close in 1815 it had swollen to the unparalleled sum of £861,000,000, without reckoning terminable annuities, and the yearly burden to £32,645,618, or, if the

ANN. 1818.

State of  
Great  
Britain in  
1818.

**Æt. 49.** sinking fund be taken in account, to more than £46,000,000. Nevertheless, the full weight of this burden was not perceptible till the close of the war which had caused it. The first effect of peace was a heavy fall in the price of agricultural produce and of manufactures. British imports were reduced nearly 20 per cent. in 1816, and exports by 16 per cent. The price of copper fell from £180 to £80 per ton, of iron from £20 to £8, of hemp from £118 to £34. Wheat, which had often stood as high as £6 per quarter during the war, was worth but 5*s.* 6*d.* at the beginning of 1816, though a war season raised the price to 8*s.* at the end of April, thereby destroying the solitary alleviation to the hardships of the masses—that of cheap bread.

The fall  
in prices.

European markets were closed to British goods by sheer reason of the impoverishment of buyers; the home market fell flat because of the diminished resources of the land-owning class, whose rents, having rolled up handsomely under the stimulus of war prices,\* now came down with a rush necessitating curtailment of expenditure of every kind. Mills and factories were closed, and multitudes of artisans wandered over the country destitute and discontented, creating serious riots in many places; reduction in the land and sea forces added nearly a quarter of a million to the ranks of the unemployed,† and upon farmers and rural labourers the pinch came with terrible severity. In a single parish in Dorsetshire, as stated in the House of Commons, out of 575 inhabitants 41 were in receipt of relief from the rates.

In the highest level of society there was little to counteract the peculiar stress which lay so heavily on the country, or to attach the subjects to the monarchy. The old King, indeed, still lived, but blind—deaf—hopelessly mad—he was but the

\* In Scotland alone, where the gross rental amounted to £2,000,000 in 1793, it stood at £5,278,000 in 1815.

† By a single stroke of the sword the navy was reduced from 100,000 men in 1815 to 33,000 in 1816, the army was put on a peace footing, and the militia was disembodied.

husk of the kindly, shrewd country-gentleman who had once ANN. 1818. so admirably fulfilled what Englishmen desire in their Sovereign. His virtues, if not forgotten, had been almost effaced by the odious profligacy and shameless extravagance of his eldest son, the Prince Regent. Even these might have been atoned for and forgiven, for the English people are liberal in making allowance for young blood; but they are impatient of open scandal in married lives. The relations between the Prince and Princess of Wales had long been cynically disgraceful. A separation took place before the birth of their only child, Princess Charlotte; the Prince resumed his former ill-regulated life; the Princess took up her abode in a villa at Charlton, where an unfortunate levity of manner and undue freedom with persons of inferior rank gave occasion for the most unfavourable surmise. The Prince, desirous of occasion for a divorce, sought diligently for evidence against her when his Whig friends came into office in 1806, they appointed a secret commission to examine upon the Princess's conduct, but the charges completely broke down. Another inquiry was instituted under the Privy Council in 1813, and in 1814 the Princess went to live on the shore of the Lake of Como. Whatever truth may have lain under the charges against the Princess of Wales, there can be no doubt that her conduct was culpably careless and unbecoming to any lady, let alone the future Queen of Great Britain. Nevertheless, her husband's habits were so notorious, and his attempts to make out a case against the Princess so unlovely, that the popular sympathy was all on her side. She and her daughter were greeted everywhere with cheers by the populace; whereas a moody silence prevailed whenever the Prince appeared in public.

In their attempts to keep order by the strong hand Ministers incurred extreme unpopularity. The Habeas Corpus Act Habeas Corpus Act suspended. was suspended in England and Scotland from February, 1817, to March, 1818, an extreme measure which has never since been resorted to in Great Britain; penal acts to repress sedition

Æt. 49. and prohibit assemblies were carried through Parliament against vehement opposition; even the Cambridge Union, the undergraduates' debating society—was suppressed by the edict of the Vice-Chancellor. For the first, and perhaps for the last, time in history the Government armed themselves with powers to rule Great Britain more forcible than those they wielded in Ireland under the Insurrection and Peace Preservation Acts. Upon no Minister did the odium of these proceedings fall with so much weight as on Lord Castlereagh, the leader of the House of Commons; his long and meritorious public service was unjustly requited by an opprobrium which darkened his later years, and finally helped to drive him out of existence. By the commencement of 1818 matters had begun to mend. True, the Government had failed in nearly all the prosecutions under the new Acts; the amelioration was due, not to the suspension of the constitution, but, in spite of it, to a fall in the price of food stuffs and to a marked revival in trade. To these, also, must be attributed as well as to the restricted nature of the electorate, the comparative immunity with which Lord Liverpool's Government passed the ordeal of a general election at midsummer. They came back to power with a loss of only fourteen seats representing twenty-eight votes on a division.

In the following year, however, the distressing condition returned. Tens of thousands of willing hands were idle, and the proverbial mischief was not far to seek. Reform was scarcely considered by members of Parliament as within the range of practical politics. Sir Francis Burdett's motion was rejected in a languid House by 153 votes to 58. Yet the Radical party turned to their own purposes the abounding discontent out-of-doors; mass meetings were held in the Midlands and northern counties demanding Reform and the repeal of the Corn Laws. They were the first mutterings of a storm which was to acquire a violence threatening even a revered institution in the country. On 16th August 50,000 or 60,000 persons assembled in St. Peter's Field near

The  
"Peterloo"  
affair.

Manchester; the Cheshire Yeomanry, two troops of the 15th Hussars, and two guns were placed at the disposal of the magistrates. When it was judged necessary to disperse the meeting, the yeomanry were ordered to march into the crowd in single file; immediately they were rendered helpless by the pressure, many of them were unhorsed; the senior magistrate called on Colonel l'Estrange with his hussars to save the yeomanry. The order was promptly obeyed: the same trumpets which had rung out at Waterloo sounded the charge in this ignoble strife; the crowd were piled and crushed together, many were injured, six persons were killed outright, and the affair, ironically named the battle of Peterloo, took a permanent place in the annals of England.

The Duke seems to have taken little part during his first year of office in directing the policy of the Cabinet. His attention was concentrated on the affairs of his department, in advising Lord Bathurst as to the defences of Canada and other Colonies, in carrying out the reduction of the forces, and in the settlement of numerous claims on the part of his old officers for distinction, promotion, or compensation for loss. Castlereagh, also, continued to take confidential counsel with him respecting the affairs of the Continent, especially what he termed the "most hazardous notion" of the Emperor of Russia of establishing a Conference of the Powers for the settlement of all disputes. Although the odium incurred by the repressive measures framed and carried by the Government in 1819 fell chiefly on Castlereagh, nevertheless that Minister's "Six Acts" had the approval and support, not only of all Ministerialists, but of a large proportion of the Whig opposition, so dire was the apprehension excited by the doings of the Radicals. The Duke urged Lord Sidmouth, the Home Secretary, to carry into execution without delay the new law against unauthorised military training. "Don't let us be reproached again with having omitted to carry into execution the laws." \* He believed that the country was "not

\* *Civil Despatches*, i. 89.

Æt. 50. far removed from a general and simultaneous rising in different parts," and was concerned that, although the lieutenants of counties had been warned to be on the alert, and officers commanding troops had instructions to support the civil power, no specific plan of operations had been laid down. The country was practically at the mercy of the insurrection which seemed to be brewing in the northern counties. Sidmouth perceived the peril, but was helpless to avert it. Wellington offered to write instructions to Sir John Byng commanding the Northern Districts. Sidmouth gratefully agreed, upon which the Duke drew up a scheme for the disposition of troops, having first in view the security of the King's garrisons, castles, and magazines, and providing nevertheless that no detachments should be stationed anywhere except within easy reach of support. "It is much better that a town should be plundered, and even some lives lost, than that the whole country should be exposed to the danger which would result from the success of the mob against even a small detachment of troops." \*

Political moralists have exhausted the vocabulary of invective in denouncing the coercive policy of Lord Liverpool's Cabinet at this time, but it is not easy to point out an alternative course, which, under the circumstances of the day, would have averted a violent revolution. No measure of electoral reform would have alleviated the suffering arising out of events beyond the control of Ministries; and the accusation that the Cabinet interfered with the right of public meeting because they were "afraid of demonstration," is merely an uncomplimentary description of the precautionary measures taken in face of such vaunts as that of Watson when haranguing a meeting at Smithfield, that 800,000 armed Radicals were resolved on liberty or death. The country was passing through one of those phases which demand extraordinary courage and nerve on the part of its rulers; it came through it with hardly any bloodshed, a result which must be attributed

\* *Civil Despatches*, i. 81.

in great part to the organisation imparted by the Duke to the forces at the disposal of the Government. ANN. 1820.

By the beginning of 1820 affairs had greatly settled down. Writing to the Baron Vincent on 5th January, the Duke observed—

“Thanks to God and to our miraculous institutions (*nos miraculeuses institutions*) we are at an end of our troubles, and you may believe that the danger which threatened us, and was imminent, has passed away. They have tried to copy our institutions in other countries; but I am tempted to believe that what people describe here as ancient abuses, which modern reformers wish to get rid of, and which our neighbours and liberal imitators decline to copy, are the very things which give us a remarkable support in all our difficulties.” \*

Sedition, however, though repressed in the provinces, assumed a more nefarious character in the metropolis. What is known as the Cato Street conspiracy was concocted under the direction of a Radical leader named Arthur Thistlewood. This fellow had once held a commission in a line regiment, resigning which, he went to Paris in 1790, and was concerned in some of the worst passages in the French Revolution. Returning to England in 1814, he engaged in the Radical agitation, and was arrested in 1818 for complicity in the Spa Field riot. As soon as he was released, he sent a challenge to Lord Sidmouth to fight him with sword or pistol. Sidmouth wished to take no proceedings, but his colleagues, regarding the offence as one against the constitution, directed his prosecution, and Thistlewood received sentence of a year's imprisonment. On his release, finding that the “Six Acts” interfered with his former course of action, he collected a number of desperadoes, and laid plans for the assassination of the whole Cabinet, the seizure of London by an armed mob, and the formation of a provisional government. Warning was conveyed by informers that a Cabinet dinner, to be

The Cato  
Street  
plot.

\* *Apsley House MSS.*



Æt. 50. held at Lord Harrowby's house in Grosvenor Square on 23 February, had been fixed as the occasion for the massacre. Fourteen men, armed with hand-grenades and other weapons, were told off for the job; one of them was to ring the door-bell, and, while he parleyed with the servant, the others were to rush in and slay every one in the dining-room. The Duke urged that the dinner should be allowed to proceed. He advised that during the night of the 22nd a body of constables should be concealed in the house, without the knowledge of any servant, that every minister should have a brace of loaded pistols in his despatch-box, and shoot down the conspirators as they entered the dining-room, while the constables took them in rear. Such heroic counsel found little favour with his colleagues, and was overruled; indeed, it was obvious that its adoption would have involved bloodshed probably not only of the assailants. The preparations for the dinner were allowed to go on, but another dinner was cooked in Downing Street, where the Ministers assembled. In the mean time measures had been taken to capture the gang in their den in Cato Street.\* Mr. Birnie, the Bow Street magistrate, went there after dusk with fourteen constables. He was to have been supported by a party of the Grenadier Guards, but, owing to a misunderstanding, they were not ready at the moment, and he proceeded without them. The constables, obtaining access by a ladder to the loft in Cato Street, found between twenty and thirty armed men, and, in the *mêlée* which ensued, one constable was killed and three wounded. The detachment of Guards came up in time to secure most of the gang, of whom six afterwards paid the penalty of death.† Previous to this affair the Duke of Wellington had very narrowly escaped assassination. One of the gang had been told off to slay him, and, waiting on

\* Cato Street exists no longer. It was a narrow lane running into John Street parallel with the Edgware Road.

† It is said that Thistlewood uttered the following laconic prayer on the gallows: "O God—if there be a God—save my soul—if I have a soul!"



evening till the Duke came out of the Ordnance Office, followed ANN. 1820.  
 him along Pall Mall, intending to stab him in the back as he  
 walked across the Green Park, as was his custom, to Apsley  
 House. Fortunately, Lord Fitzroy Somerset happening to  
 come along, the Duke made him turn, and the two gentlemen  
 proceeded into the park arm-in-arm. The assassin's courage  
 failing him, he gave up the attempt for that time.

The horror inspired by this scheme of massacre, so nearly  
 carried into effect, served to silence criticism on the coercive  
 Acts and to restore Ministers to some degree of popular  
 favour—to what degree was about to be tested, so far as a  
 general election under the franchise of 1688 could be accepted  
 as a test of national sentiment.

The old King died on 29th January, just before the Cato Death of  
George  
III.  
 Street conspiracy was disclosed. Under the constitution as  
 it then was, the demise of the monarch involved the disso-  
 lution of Parliament, which took place in March.

The first matter of moment submitted to the new Parliament  
 was of a nature to bring shame and confusion on the whole  
 nation. Among the earliest duties of the Privy Council on  
 the beginning of a new reign is the re-editing of the prayers  
 for the Sovereign and the Royal Family in the Book of  
 Common Prayer. George IV. strictly prohibited any reference  
 to his consort in the prayers, and desired his Ministers  
 to institute immediate proceedings for his divorce. With  
 the first command the Cabinet complied, on the proviso  
 that the second should not be insisted on. This did not  
 suit the King's views at all; he dictated a vigorous remon-  
 strance to the arguments of his Ministers, and gave them  
 to understand privately that unless they went on with the  
 divorce, he would either dismiss them or retire to his  
 dominions of Hanover.\* The Cabinet met on Sunday, 13th  
 February, when, after sitting for thirteen hours, Ministers

\* The kingdom of Hanover was an appanage of the crown of Great Britain  
 until 1837, when, the succession being limited to heirs male, it passed to the  
 eldest surviving brother of William IV., the Duke of Cumberland.

Æt. 51.  
 Proceed-  
 ings  
 against  
 Queen  
 Caroline.

declined to comply with his Majesty's desire. The general conclusion was that the Government was out, but the King gave way with a wry face. Howbeit, the unsavoury question was not laid to rest.

The Queen announced her intention of returning to England, and sent warrants appointing Henry Brougham and Thomas Denman her Attorney and Solicitor-General. Brougham, convinced of the dangers inseparable from her return, persuaded Lord Liverpool to undertake to set her £50,000 a year on her for life provided she should not enter British dominions nor assume the title of Queen. Probably this offer might have been accepted, but unhappily the disgust with which George IV. had inspired his subjects revived the reflex sentiment of the masses in favour of the consort who he was held to be persecuting. She might be all that her accusers tried to make out, but no industry could whitewash the private morals of the King; the rough mob chivalry were enlisted on the weaker side, with cheers for Queen Caroline and jeers for Mrs. Fitzherbert and other ladies of reputation lower than hers.\* On Monday, June 5th, Queen Caroline landed at Dover, where the officer commanding the garrison, having no direct orders to the contrary, fired a royal salute and an immense crowd which assembled drew her carriage to the inn. Her progress through Kent was triumphal; at Canterbury the mayor and corporation, in official robes, presented an address; the officers of cavalry stationed there escorted her out of the town; the clergy in gown and bands waited on her at Sittingbourne, and all along the route church bells rang out a welcome. She entered London in a shabby carriage, with Alderman Wood, a fishmonger, seated beside her, the streets thronged with crowds frantically enthusiastic. Over Westminster Bridge, through Whitehall to Pall Mall the strange procession passed, constantly increased by thousands.

\* It was generally understood that George IV. had actually married Mrs. Fitzherbert, but that the Protestant ceremony of marriage through which the marriage had gone was not valid in her case, as she was a Roman Catholic.

addition of more vehicles. The very sentries on Carlton House, the King's residence, presented arms, and the crowds did not disperse till the Queen, alighting at Alderman Wood's house in South Audley Street, appeared on the balcony, and bowed her repeated acknowledgments. Lord Sidmouth, driving home from a Cabinet with the Duke of Wellington, could not get into his own house, and the mob broke the carriage windows.\*

The popular ferment increased as days went by. There was no police force in London at that time; the Government relied on the Guards for maintaining order, and at this very time one of the battalions of this *corps d'élite* mutinied. This drew from the Duke a memorandum which led to the first steps in forming a regular police for the metropolis, afterwards carried into effect by Sir Robert Peel.

Ann. 1820.  
Mutiny  
in the  
Guards.

"We know not, and cannot know under existing circumstances, whether seeds of discontent are laid or not in other corps, and the Government depend for their protection against insurrection and revolution, and individuals for their personal safety and property, upon the fidelity of 3,000 Guards, all of the class of the people, and even of the lowest of that class. In my opinion the Government ought, without loss of a moment's time, to form either a police in London or a military corps, which should be of a different description from the regular military force, or both." †

The Guards were a privileged corps, but the privileges were confined to the officers. Really, to consider the existing conditions of military service, the heartless system of punishment and low rate of pay, is to be amazed, not that isolated cases of mutiny should have occurred, but that disaffection was not chronic and universal.

"I would recommend," continues the Duke, "some new arrangement of the duties. . . . Besides the King, who sends his own commands through Bloomfield, there are the following officers

\* Croker, i. 171.

† Civil Despatcher, i. 128.

Æt. 51. who send orders to these unfortunate troops:—the Secretary State; Commander-in-Chief; Field-Officer in Waiting; Gold Stick, Silver Stick—to the two regiments of Horse Guards on duty. The consequence is that when there is a disturbance in the town . . . nobody knows who is on or who off duty, all the troops are harassed, and the duty is ill done after all. Only last night after I had received Lord Sidmouth's directions for the duties of the night, at eight o'clock in the night I found that some orders had altered what was ordered, and that the guard at the Horse Guards was doubled, whether for any or what necessity I cannot judge. . . . The sergeants and corporals of the Guards are certainly excellent soldiers, and their conduct is exemplary on all occasions. But it must be observed that they are taken from the ranks, and of the class of the people, and liable to be influenced by the views and sentiments of the people. If the officers of the Horse Guards could perform duties required from the officers of the Line there is no doubt that the sergeants and corporals of the Guards would perform their duty even better than they do now. . . . I think therefore that it might be desirable that the duty of the sergeants and corporals of the Guards should, as far as possible, be assimilated to that of officers of the Line."

Negociations with the Queen.

On the Queen's return to London negotiations were resumed in order to induce her to leave the country quietly. Her Majesty consented on condition that her rank and prerogatives as queen should form the basis of any agreement. Lord Liverpool replied that "whatever appertains to her Majesty as queen must continue to appertain to her so long as it is not abrogated by law." Thereupon the Queen, having proposed that the matters in dispute should be referred to arbitration, the Lords Fitzwilliam and Sefton were appointed to act for her Majesty, and the Duke of Wellington and Lord Castlereagh to represent the King's Government. The peculiar character imparted to the quarrel by the fact of two Lords acting for the Queen was not diminished when, at the Duke's suggestion, these were replaced by her official representatives, Brougham and Denman.

The negotiations broke down after five days' conference. ANN. 1820.  
 The King yielded to his Ministers so far as to make large concessions from his original demands. The name and rights of a queen were to be conceded to Caroline and formally notified to the Court of the country in which she should reside in futuro, and she was to receive the thanks of Parliament for acceding to its wishes. But on what seemed the minor point of restoring to the Liturgy the name of "our most gracious Queen Caroline," King George was inflexible. "You might as easily move Carlton House," said Lord Castlereagh when Brougham raised that point.

Pending the negotiations, there had been a suspension of arms on the question in Parliament and the country. On 19th June Ministers made the announcement that the proceedings had ended in failure. In the Commons Wilberforce moved an address to the Queen, in the hope of averting what was rapidly assuming the character and menace of social strife. In the course of the debate it was suggested that, even if the Queen was not mentioned by name in the Liturgy, she might be considered as comprised in the general prayer for the royal family. "If her Majesty," replied Denman in words which echoed the general feeling out-of-doors, "is included in any general prayer, it is in the prayer for all who are desolate and oppressed."

Wilberforce's mediation was ineffective, and the affair continued its squalid course. On 5th July Lord Liverpool introduced a bill "to deprive her Majesty Queen Caroline Amelia Elizabeth of the title, prerogative rights, privileges and exemptions of Queen Consort of this realm, and to dissolve the marriage between his Majesty and the said Caroline Amelia Elizabeth," the second reading being fixed for 17th August. The London populace were not the only section of the people infuriated by what they looked on as the King's tyranny. Meetings were held in all parts of the country. The Duke of Wellington, on being taken to task for refusing, as Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire, to convene a county meeting,

Bill of  
divorce in-  
troduced.

Æt. 51. replied with injudicious bluntness that, having already presented a petition in the Queen's favour signed by 9,000 persons in that county, he did not see that any good purpose could be served "by going through the farce of a county meeting." This phrase was never forgotten. In after years it was brought against him at every turn; for although he did not intend any slight on the people of Hampshire, he expressed the small respect he really entertained for popular demonstrations, which he was at all times too much disposed to repress by force, if indifference should not quiet them.

The  
Queen's  
trial.

The scene at Westminster on 17th August, the day fixed for the Bill of Pains and Penalties, was one to test the courage of Ministers; but Lord Liverpool and his colleagues, whatever their shortcomings, have never been suspected of pusillanimity. A vast crowd filled all the approaches to Parliament; two regiments of Life Guards occupied Pall Mall Yard, the Coldstream Guards were stationed in Westminster Hall, and a battery of field artillery was kept at hand. Luckily, the utmost good humour prevailed in the crowd; they cheered the Queen and hooted the Duke of Wellington, but no violence of any sort was threatened. The proceedings on the bill were a curious mixture of the judicial and the parliamentary. Evidence was taken both for the prosecution and defence; the verdict was contained in the division on the second reading. This took place early in November, when the bill was carried by 123 votes to 95, but even this sufficient majority dwindled in the committee stage to only fifteen only, and Ministers discreetly refrained from forcing this most unpopular measure further.

Of the Queen's guilt or innocence of the charges made against her no opinion need be expressed in this place; it only need be said, that if they were unfounded, no wonder she had ever done more to wreck her reputation in contempt of all the observances which ensure and justify respect to the Parliament, in allowing her, as Princess of Wales, £350,000

a year, had made ample provision for maintaining her dignity; ANN. 1820.  
 it had been her choice to lead the life of a common tramp.

On 23rd November Parliament adjourned for a month; when it reassembled the Ministry had been weakened by the resignation of Canning, who disapproved of the proceedings against the Queen. The popular agitation, however, had greatly subsided, the Queen's conduct having damped the ardour of her warmest supporters. At the conclusion of her trial, she had boldly declared, by Brougham's advice, that she would never consent to receive a subsidy from a Parliament which excluded her name from the Liturgy. Reflection brought a change of mind: she wrote and asked Liverpool for an allowance; an annuity of £50,000 was voted and a residence provided at the public expense; nobody could say that, short of being restored to her full rights as royal consort, she was illiberally treated, and people turned their thoughts to other matters.

It is difficult to gather any evidence as to the feelings of the Duke of Wellington throughout these proceedings, because, being in daily intercourse with his colleagues, very few written communications seem to have passed between them. It is true that he told the King he had nothing to do with the appointment of the Milan Commission, sent out to collect evidence against the Queen, and that he did not know of its existence till long after he had taken office. But he undoubtedly supported the Cabinet throughout their proceedings in relation to the Queen, and imparted confidence to his colleagues in facing the popular tumult, which he despised, and supported them in the loss sustained by the defection of Canning. No man ever carried out more fully than Wellington the precept of "honouring the Crown, though it hangs on a bush," and never, perhaps, was that precept more hardly strained than in regard to George IV. Wellington had received many favours and the highest possible honours from the hands of the King, but there never was trust or affection between them. The King, indeed, relied

The Duke's part in the proceedings.



Æt. 51. greatly on the Duke, but he feared him, and at times was unable to conceal his dislike. A strong sense of duty attached the Duke to the King's service, but his confidential letters are full of expressions showing how little reliance was placed on him.

It is immediately after the breakdown of the proceeding against Queen Caroline that we come on the first evidence of the Duke advising the King independently of his colleagues in the Cabinet. The King, furious at the abandonment of the Bill of Pains and Penalties, was inclined to dismiss his Ministers.

"I am very far from wishing," ran this singular letter from the Master of the Ordnance, "to persuade your Majesty not to change your government if your Majesty thinks that others can conduct your Majesty's affairs with more advantage. But I entreat your Majesty, for the sake of your own honour, and, I add, your own independence in relation to their successors, not to deprive your servants of their power till they have concluded their business in which they are engaged." \*

Parliament had adjourned until 23rd December, when the King insisted that it should at once enter upon the question of the Queen's provision and other issues collateral on the abandonment of the Bill of Pains and Penalties. The Duke was urgent for prorogation on 23rd December in order that the bill might expire in the ordinary course, and that the remaining matters be discussed without its shadow remaining on the notice paper. In a letter of great length he argued against the prudence of discussing the Queen's affairs while the public mind was still agitated by the provisions of the discredited bill. Then he returned to the King's intention of changing his Ministers.

"No persons could serve your Majesty, excepting those now in your service, without dissolving the Parliament; and I need only point out the consequence of coming to a discussion of all

\* *Civil Despatches*, i. 150.



difficult questions relating to a provision for the Queen, and to the Milan Commission, and others collateral to the recent inquiry in the House of Lords, in a Parliament elected during the existence of the present ferment in the public mind. But those to whom your Majesty would naturally look as the successors to your present servants are, and have long been, their political rivals and opposers, particularly in their recent measures regarding the Queen; and it cannot be expected that they will not take advantage of every circumstance, however trivial, and of every action of every inferior agent, however low and corrupt, of the Milan Commission, to destroy the reputation of their predecessors in office, and, through them, that of your Majesty yourself. . . . It appears to me to be not only the height of impolicy, but the greatest degree of unfairness, to hand these servants over to their rivals and opponents for the trial of their conduct in these transactions." \*

It is not apparent whether Liverpool knew of the Duke's intention to write this letter; probably he did, because it would scarcely have been consistent with Wellington's loyalty to his chief, which was without flaw, that he should address the King behind backs, as it were: but it is a sign of the extraordinary ascendancy to which he had attained in home politics *per saltum*, that the King should have yielded to the remonstrance of a subordinate member of the Cabinet, and retained the services of Liverpool, whom, however, he never received into favour again.

The Coronation, which George's anxiety to be rid of his Queen had made it inexpedient to hold in the previous year, was celebrated with prodigious splendour on 17th July, 1821,† and here we catch sight for the last time of the unhappy Caroline, presenting herself at the portals of Westminster and turned away amid the jeers of the populace. Yes, the jeers, for the people had wearied of her griefs, and were intent on getting the most out of the pageant; so that the organ

\* *Civil Despatches*, i. 153.

† The sum voted for George IV.'s coronation was £243,000; a reformed Parliament showed its sense of economy by allowing only £70,000 for Queen Victoria's.

Coronation  
of George  
IV.

Æt. 51. pealed within, the King made his oblation at the altar and received the Sacrament, while his Queen was driving sadly home to die. She expired on 7th August, while the King was on his way to Ireland. He did not suffer the news of her death to interrupt the uproarious festivities with which he was received in Dublin, and in which he took a part more remarkable for energy than dignity.

The Duke revisits Waterloo.

During this summer the Duke went on a tour of inspection round the fortresses of the Netherlands, and afterwards visited Paris, where he had an interview with Louis XVIII. on the subject of the troubles which King Ferdinand's capricious absolutism had brought upon Spain. Louis considered himself bound to support the Bourbon dynasty in that country, and was eager to invade it, but he entertained a vast respect for Wellington, and yielded to his persuasion to unite with Great Britain in an attempt at friendly mediation.

Thereafter the Duke met George IV. at Brussels, and conducted him over the field of Waterloo. A singular contrast it must have been between these two figures on this historic ground—the florid, still handsome, but bloated and diseased voluptuary, and the lean, keen-eyed soldier-statesman; one self-styled, the English people know with how much justice, “the first gentleman in Europe;” the other *vainqueur des vainqueurs*—the first soldier in the world.

Movement for the recall of Canning.

The Queen having been removed from the scene, the Prime Minister was pressed by members of his Cabinet and others to procure the restoration of Canning to office. Liverpool though he dreaded his late colleague, yet relied greatly on his ability, and put the necessity of strengthening his Cabinet by the re-admission of the only debater who could meet Brougham on equal terms. The King flatly refused to listen to the proposal. He had not forgiven Liverpool for his failure in the matter of the divorce; far more active was his resentment against the Minister who had left his service rather than be party to the proceedings against the Queen. Thereupon Liverpool told the Duke that he intended to resign

Wellington held Canning in high esteem at this time, and was fully convinced of the advantage of bringing him back to office, but he did not approve of staking the existence of the Government upon it. He wrote a long letter to his chief, which gives a curious insight into the methods of Georgian government

ANN. 1821.

"There is no doubt that Mr. Canning is not very popular with the party, and although they in general would wish for his assistance, they would be much disappointed and displeased to find the power of the country transferred to the hands of the Whigs and Radicals, because we could not prevail upon the King to re-admit Mr. Canning into his Councils. . . . Then the question arises, ought you to make it (a threat of resignation) without being determined to carry it through? Your continued opinion, mine, that of several others of your colleagues, and of many of your friends, that it is highly desirable that Mr. Canning should be in the Government, and the claim preferred in the last letter of the 29th of June to bring his name again under the King's view, show that you ought to propose him to the King; not only under present circumstances, but whenever an opportunity may offer; his own conduct and opinions in relation to the Government being the same as they are at present. I would recommend you to propose him to the King, then, not in the spirit of hostility, not as an alternative to be taken between Mr. Canning and us, or anything else the King can find as a Government, but as you did at first, as an arrangement calculated for the strength of the Government, the benefit of the country, and the honour of the King himself." \*

The Duke then alluded to the King's desire to appoint Lord Conyngham to high office, the husband of a lady whose relations with the King were a public scandal.

"In respect to Lord Conyngham, your line is quite clear; you have nothing to propose, but you desire to remonstrate if the King should propose to appoint him Lord Chamberlain. This,

\* *Civil Despatches*, i. 193.

.Fr. 53. you may rely upon it; he will not be allowed to do. If he does, I think the appointment of Lord Conyngham, unaccompanied by a satisfactory arrangement of the question of Mr. Canning or of the Government, would give you a good ground for quarrel. But why should *we* look for a quarrel? Is it not rather our duty to endeavour to settle this petty question, which, after all, is a mere trifle, and can [not] affect us, and never was considered as affecting us, except as a point of honour? I don't mean to depreciate the importance of a point of honour to the Government; but, I would observe, that the prevention of this particular appointment became a point of honour and importance to the Government, after the rejection of Canning in June, the questions of the Irish peerages and of the green ribbons, and all the follies of the coronation. . . . As I told you at Walmer, the King has never forgiven your opposition to his wishes in the case of Mr. Sumner. This feeling has influenced every action of his life in relation to his Government from that moment; and I believe to more than one of us he avowed that his objection to Mr. Canning was, that his accession to the Government was peculiarly desirable to you. Nothing can be more unjust or more unfair than this feeling, and as there is not one of your colleagues who did not highly approve of what you did respecting Mr. Sumner,† so there is not one of them who would not suffer with you all the consequences of the act. . . . It must not be forgotten, however, that we have a duty imposed upon us which was never thrown on any of our predecessors. The question for us is not—whether we shall be content with many inconveniences and evils resulting from the King's habits and character, and which none of our predecessors ever bore, or make way for others equally capable with ourselves in carrying on the public service? but—whether we shall bear that we have to endure, or give up the government to the Whigs and Radicals, or, in other words, the country in all its relations to irretrievable ruin? " †

\* Afterwards Bishop of Winchester.

† Lord Liverpool had declined to give advancement in the Church to Mr. Sumner, who was tutor in Lord Conyngham's family, when Conyngham had asked for it.

‡ *Civil Despatches*, i. 195.

There, in a single sentence, is the key to the whole of the Duke of Wellington's political career, with the exception of a remarkable transaction, presently to be noticed. This was his guiding principle on many subsequent occasions, wherein a lesser man might have been judged as having taken a certain line out of desire for office and power. The fact is that the Duke could never, till his latest breath, view a Whig or Radical Government as consistent with the safety of the throne or the welfare of the country. One may smile at the apprehensions he expressed as to the results of the slightest tampering with the constitution or the increase of popular political power; but light is the task of upholding the throne as we know it compared with that of its defenders under George IV. Had there been no stout hearts and steady heads to stem the tide of change when it seemed about to overwhelm all landmarks, we might now be speculating on the former grandeur of the ruins of that edifice which it is our privilege to beautify and enlarge. Wellington was by no means singular in his dread of democratic change, but he was far more frank about it than others at a time when to be frank required a high degree of courage. The sentiments of Lord Bacon and Thomas Carlyle were equally outspoken on this question, but the first did not risk much when he owned to having a strong dislike for the word "people," nor the second when he made disparaging reference to "the collective wisdom of individual ignorances."

Lord Liverpool yielded to Wellington's advice and continued to conduct the King's Government, till, at the close of the session of 1822, an event occurred which revived the urgency for the return of Canning. The closing days of the session were saddened for the Duke by the alarming condition of his closest friend and most trusted colleague. Throughout the most eventful years of his life, through the shadows of disfavour cast by the Convention of Cintra, through those periods of anxiety when the continued support to the army in the Peninsula was most precarious, Castlereagh's confidence in

ANN. 1822.

Illness and  
death of  
Castlereagh.

the Church to  
ly, when Lady

ÆT. 53.

Wellington had never wavered; never, under any circumstances, had these two men ceased to rely on each other. It would be difficult to say which of them had served the other best—Castlereagh, in supporting Wellington in the field and in the conduct of the war, through good report and ill—Wellington, in crowning with success by his splendid generalship the foreign policy of Castlereagh. Without the services of the soldier, the statesman must have bowed his neck to Buonaparte—without the friendship of the statesman, the soldier's talents must have been buried with those of Burrard and Dalrymple. This noble fellowship was about to be severed. The strain of anxiety caused by the state of the country after the peace, and by the humiliation brought on the Government by the trial of the Queen, proved more than a mind, sapped by private misery of a peculiarly distressing kind,\* could sustain; and, shortly before the prorogation of Parliament, the leader of the House of Commons alarmed his friends by symptoms of approaching insanity. On 9th August the Duke of Wellington, then on the point of starting for the Netherlands, saw Lord Castlereagh,† who was also on the eve of his departure to take part in the Congress of Vienna. Castlereagh began an extraordinary complaint, that all his friends had conspired against him, that somebody had sent his horses up to town that he might fly, and that it was necessary for him to fly.

“Depend upon it,” said the Duke, “this is all an illusion. Your stomach is out of order. Ring your bell and ask your horses are in London; convince yourself.”

Castlereagh rang the bell furiously, and shouted at the servant who answered it—

“Who dared to order my horses up to town?”

“They are not in town, my lord,” replied the man; “they have not been ordered.”

\* It is known that Lord Castlereagh fell into a nefarious stratagem, which exposed him to a peculiarly cruel system of blackmail.

† I retain the title by which he is best known in history, though he shortly before succeeded his father as Marquis of Londonderry.

"There," said the Duke, when the man had gone, "you see ANN. 1822. it's as I said;" upon which Lord Castlereagh flung a handkerchief over his face, threw himself back on the sofa, and burst into tears.\*

"Well," he sobbed, "since *you* say so, it must be so."

The Duke then offered to put off his journey to the Netherlands in order to stay with him, but Castlereagh would not hear of it; so on leaving the Duke wrote an urgent note to Dr. Bankhead, requesting him to see Lord Castlereagh at once. The doctor called that night, and let blood according to the approved practice of the day. The patient's razors and every dangerous instrument were carefully removed; but there was a knife in one of his despatch-boxes, with which, on 12th August, he put an end to his life.

Thus ended one of Wellington's few intimate friendships, one which was never overcast by coldness save once. This was caused by the evil influence of Lord Castlereagh's brother, Lord Stewart,† whose intrigues against his chief in the Peninsula have been briefly referred to in the account of General Craufurd's death.‡ It was on one of the numerous occasions on which Lord Liverpool threatened to resign; Castlereagh naturally expected to succeed him as Prime Minister, but his brother insinuated to him that the Duke of Wellington intended to become head of the Government. Thereupon, and for some time after, Castlereagh treated the Duke with marked coolness, till one evening, when they were driving down together to dine with Sir William Curtis at his villa, the Duke spoke with so much frankness and cordiality of the affairs of the approaching Congress of Vienna, that Castlereagh told him of the attempt that had been made to

\* *Salisbury MSS.*

† Succeeded as third marquess on his brother's death, having been previously raised to the peerage as Baron Stewart in 1814.

‡ Vol. i. p. 253. The Duke discovered Lord Stewart's insincerity on more than one occasion, but he continued to address him in correspondence as "My dear Charles" until the final political rupture of 1846, after which he became "My dear Lord Londonderry."



Æt. 53. set them at variance, and that nothing should ever shake his confidence in his friend again.\* For Castlereagh's public and private character Wellington retained to the last the highest esteem. "He possessed a clear mind, the highest talents, and the most steady principle—more so than anybody I ever knew. He could do everything but speak in Parliament; that he could not do." †

On Castlereagh's death the Duke of Wellington received the King's commands to attend the Congress of Vienna in his place, but his departure was delayed by a sharp attack of illness. In the mean time the vacancy in the Cabinet and the Foreign Office had to be filled, and there were but two men between whom the choice of Lord Liverpool must lie—Peel and Canning. The state of Peel's health made it doubtful if he were equal to the labours of such an important department, conjoined with those of leading the House of Commons. Besides, he could not talk French, and was wholly unaccustomed to foreign affairs. The King's displeasure with Liverpool rendered that Minister the worst advocate of Canning's claims; upon Wellington, therefore, was laid the task of overcoming his Majesty's resistance. Canning, meanwhile, had accepted the appointment of Governor-General of India, and the King wrote from Scotland declaring that his decision was "final and unalterable," that to India he should go. Undaunted by this, the Duke, though confined to bed by illness, addressed his Majesty immediately upon his return to London.

The Duke prevails on the King to give office to Canning.

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, where illustrations abound of the manner in which the third marquis acted so as to forfeit the Duke's confidence. At the first Congress of Vienna, Lord Londonderry (then Lord Stewart), who was serving under the Duke, wrote home despatches constantly criticising and reflecting on the proceedings, without showing them to his chief, who only discovered it when arriving to command the army in Flanders, he received duplicates of these papers among the despatches which came from Vienna, which Lord Castlereagh had desired him to open. He did the same thing at the Congress of Verona, and Canning, who received the despatches, gave information of it to the Emperor. Metternich put the Duke on his guard against Stewart, saying, "C'est la mauvaise pièce que vous avez."

† *Salisbury MSS*



*The King to Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington.*

ANN. 1822

“Carlton House, 5th September, 1822.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—I was very glad to learn by the *friend* whom I sent to your bedside yesterday that you were rather better, and I hope that I shall have your further amendment confirmed by him to-day.

“He gave me a most faithful and detailed account of your opinion and kind feelings under the painful embarrassment in which we are at present placed; and I must confess that it has produced a stronger conviction on my mind than anything that had previously been urged by others. If I could get over that which is so *intimately connected with my private honour*, all might be well, but how, my friend, is that to be effected? I have a perfect reliance in your dutiful affection towards me as your Sovereign; I have the most unbounded confidence in your sentiments of regard towards me as your friend; my reliance therefore on you is complete.

“I am, with great truth,

“Your affectionate

“G. R.”

“Carlton House, 7th September, 1822.

“MY DEAR FRIEND.—If you are quite well enough to come out to-day, of course I shall be most anxious to see you; but let me desire of you in the strongest manner not to leave your room at any hazard.

“I have written to Lord Liverpool to say that I shall defer my interview with him until I shall have had the pleasure of seeing you. My friend, whom I again send with this, will receive from you, in the interim, any new sentiments or opinions that further reflection may have induced you to form on the painful subject under consideration. I am most sensibly impressed with your dutiful and affectionate attention to my interests and happiness.

“Believe me, with great truth,

“Your affectionate

“G. R.”

Wellington, being still confined to his room, wrote a long and clear letter, acknowledging that it had been “with pain

ÆT. 53

and difficulty" that he had brought himself to recommend the recall of Canning to office, knowing as he did the King's reasons for objecting to it, but expressing his conviction that there was no other arrangement which would enable the Cabinet to face another session.

"The honour of your Majesty consists in acts of mercy and grace, and I am convinced that your Majesty's honour is most safe in extending your grace and favour to Mr. Canning. . . . I really believe, as I have before told your Majesty, that Mr. Canning never intended to do anything displeasing to your Majesty, and I feel assured that he would be too happy to explain any part of his conduct which might have had that effect. But I confess that I doubt that any explanation would be satisfactory to your Majesty, and I am quite certain that the call for it, or even the admission of it, would not be so consistent with your Majesty's dignity, and would not give such case to your Majesty's mind, as the act of royal grace which I have taken the liberty of suggesting." \*

Canning  
and Peel  
join the  
Cabinet.

Lord Eldon was bitterly opposed to the restoration of Mr. Canning, but the Duke had the last word with the King, and it prevailed. Canning took the seals of the Foreign Office and the post of leader of the House of Commons, while Lord Sidmouth made way for Peel at the Home Office, retaining his seat in the Cabinet without a department.

*The King to Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington.*

"Carlton House, 4 p.m., 13th September, 1822.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am glad to find by my friend that you are better to-day; and I hope and trust that the indisposition is nearly over.

"Lord Liverpool has just been with me, and the affair respecting Canning may be considered as concluded. . . . Thus ends the last calamity; my reliance is on you, my friend; be watchful therefore. God bless you.

"Your sincere friend,

"G. R."

\* *Civil Despatches*, i. 274.

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THE RIGHT HON. GEORGE CANNING, M.P.  
*After a Painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence.*

[Vol. II. p. 165.]



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE FEUD WITH CANNING.

1822-1827.

<p>Sept. . 1822. The Congress of Vienna.          October . . . The Congress moves to Verona.                    The Duke and the Quaker.          1822-3. Good understanding between the Duke and Canning.          1824. Differences in the Cabinet.                    Recognition of the Spanish - American revolution.          1825. The Roman Catholic claims.          March . . . . Snppression of the Catholic Association.                    The Duke of Wellington's scheme of Roman Catholic relief.                    The Duke of York's declaration.          1826. General Election.                    The Duke loses the hearing of one ear.                    The Duke's mission to St. Petershurg.          December 5. Death of the Duke of York.</p>	<p>Jan. 7, 1827. The Duke of Wellington appointed Commander-in-chief.                    Fresh differences in the Cabinet.          February 17. Lord Liverpool struck with apoplexy.          April 11 . . The Duke and five others leave the Cabinet.                    „ 12 . . . The Duke resigns command of the army.          May 2 . . . . The Duke defends himself in the House of Lords.                    „ 21 . . . Renewed offer of the command of the army declined.                    Reconstruction of Cabinet under Canning.                    Defeat of Government on the Corn Bill.          August 8 . . Death of Canning.                    „ 13 . Lord Goderich becomes Prime Minister.                    „ 17 . The Duke resumes command of the army.</p>
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**T**HE Duke of Wellington went to the Congress of Vienna The Congress of Vienna. (afterwards of Verona) under instructions which Lord Castlereagh had drafted when about to proceed thither himself.\*

\* *Civil Despatches*, i. 284.

Æt. 53. Mr. Canning, after assuming the seals of the Foreign Office, made it appear as if the policy of his predecessor had been uniform support of absolutism wherever a people was in conflict with its Government, and assumed credit for imparting a more liberal spirit into the relations of Great Britain with other nationalities; nevertheless there is not to be found in these instructions any of that blind support of absolutism of which Canning assumed the credit of purging the foreign policy of the Government. Canning, it is true, was avowedly anxious to recognise the independence of Greece; Wellington's instructions were, not to hinder it, but "first, to prevent rupture between Russia and the Porte; secondly, to soften, as far as possible, the rigour of the war between the Turks and the Greeks; thirdly, to observe a strict neutrality." In regard to Spain, where a democratic constitution had been forced upon King Ferdinand, "there seems nothing to add to or vary in the course of policy hitherto pursued. Solicitude for the safety of the royal family, observance of our engagements with Portugal, and a rigid abstinence from any interference in the internal affairs of that country," were the principles to be observed by the British plenipotentiary. The Duke himself had succeeded, when in Paris in the autumn of 1808, in dissuading Louis XVIII. from his projected invasion of Spain to prop the failing power of the Bourbon king. As the recognition of the revolted Spanish colonies as belligerents, that, ran the instructions, "may be regarded rather as a matter of time than of principle;" and in regard to the revolution in Italy, "we may regard the duty of the British plenipotentiary upon Italian affairs as limited to informing himself of what is going on, and taking care that nothing is done inconsistent with the general system of Europe and the observance of treaties."

The Duke's instructions as plenipotentiary.

In short, it would scarcely be possible to frame directions more consistent than these with a policy of non-interference subject to respect for treaty obligations. But the Emperor of Russia, formerly in the van of liberal sentiment

greatly modified his views in the seven years since the Convention of Paris. He had ranged himself with the rest of the rulers of Europe in a desire to repress by force the revolutionary current which was surging among all the nations. He told Wellington that he regarded Spain as "the headquarters of revolution and Jacobinism; that the King and royal family were in the utmost danger, and that so long as the revolution in that country should be allowed to continue, every country in Europe, and France in particular, was unsafe,"\* and he protested against Great Britain's policy of non-interference as inconsistent with the safety of society. We have, therefore, the evidence of the Duke's despatches, describing at great length his resistance to the views of the Emperor of Russia, upon principles formulated and laid down by Lord Castlereagh, and showing that the doctrines which Mr. Canning's partisans have claimed that he imparted into the foreign policy of Great Britain, were recognised and acted on in large measure before Canning had any hand in it, and that it was Castlereagh and not Canning who inaugurated a system of honourable adherence to treaties, of resolute non-interference with the internal affairs of other countries, and of discouragement of any attempt to stamp out Liberalism in any nation.

In October the scene of the Congress was transferred to Verona. Of this period Mr. Gleig tells an amusing incident, no doubt narrated by the Duke himself. When the Congress was on the eve of leaving Vienna, the suppression of the slave trade being one of the chief subjects under deliberation, an eminent Quaker, Mr. William Allan, waited on the Duke one morning.

"Friend," said he, "I must go to Verona."

"Impossible, I'm afraid," replied the Duke. "Have not you seen the order that nobody is to be allowed to enter the town unless he is a member of one of the embassies?"

"Friend, I must go to Verona, and thou must enable me to do so."

\* *Civil Despatches*, i. 343.

The Duke  
and the  
Quaker.

ANN. 1822

ÆT. 54. "How can I do that? You don't hold any office and I have none to give you."

"Friend," persisted the Quaker, "I must go to Verona, and thou must carry me thither."

"Well," returned the amused Duke, entering into the spirit of the thing, "if I must I must. If you like to ride as one of my couriers you may do so."

And Mr. Allan actually rode into Verona as the Duke's *avant courier*, taking advantage of his official position to obtain audience of the Emperors of Russia and Austria and the other dignitaries assembled.

Good  
under-  
standing  
between  
the Duke  
and  
Canning.

The negotiations which went on until the end of November, though of much moment to the peace of Europe at that time, entailing a copious correspondence and constant vigilance upon the British plenipotentiary, retain little interest for general readers at the present day. Returning by way of Paris, Wellington received Canning's instructions to renew the offer of mediation by Great Britain with the view of averting the invasion of Spain, for which the French Government had been massing troops on the frontier for some time back. Wellington pointed out that the offer had already been rejected at Verona, and advised that it should not be renewed; but Canning was urgent, and the result was that mediation was again declined, and the war went on.

The most important feature in this correspondence is the perfect cordiality and frankness which is apparent on the part of both Ministers. The time had not come, though it was near at hand, when the Duke should imbibe that distrust of his colleague's sincerity and motives which ultimately wrecked the Ministry. The years of external peace following on Waterloo had begun to tell favourably on the internal resources of Great Britain, notwithstanding the civil disturbances which prevailed at first. The partial repayment of the Austrian loan in 1823 and the redemption of £75,000,000 of 4 per cent. stock, landed Mr. Robinson, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with handsome surpluses in his budgets of



that year and the following. But towards the close of that year the Cabinet, already divided on the Roman Catholic claims for emancipation, showed signs of further cleavage. Not only on that, but on other questions, Ministers were ranged practically in opposing camps, and a bitter feeling set in when Mr. Canning adopted the practice of seeking support from Brougham and the Opposition against his old Tory colleagues. From this period may be traced Wellington's distrust of the Minister and dislike of the man. Lord Liverpool, whose failing health had begun to tell on his powers, listened alternately to each set of counsellors, who were thus brought into direct antagonism.

ANN. 1824.

Differences  
in the  
Cabinet.

The first triumph of the Canningite party came at the close of 1824, when Canning wished to persuade his colleagues to announce in the King's speech the recognition of the independence of the Spanish-American colonies. Canning gained over Lord Liverpool to his view, and a paper was sent round the Cabinet on the subject, which produced an earnest remonstrance addressed by the Duke of Wellington to the Prime Minister. He reviewed the principles which had hitherto restrained the Government from recognising the revolted colonies of their ally; he entreated him to ascertain the real opinion of his colleagues on the question, believing as he did that all, except one (Canning), were indisposed to the step proposed or indifferent to it, and, lastly, urging that the project was highly distasteful to the King, "you will find it most difficult to obtain his consent to pledge his Government to any measures for finally separating these States from the mother country."

Recogni-  
tion of the  
Spanish-  
American  
revolution.

He concluded by expressing his distress at differing in opinion from his leader, and offered to resign.

The Duke  
offers to  
resign.

"As for my part, I came into the Government to support yourself and the principles on which you had been acting, and for which we had struggled in the field for such a length of time. I should wish to go on as I have done, and nothing makes me

ÆT. 54. — so unhappy as to differ in opinion from you. But as you know, I am not inclined to carry these differences further than necessary. I have advised, and shall invariably advise, his Majesty to follow the advice of his Cabinet. But I can easily conceive that it must be equally irksome to you to have a colleague whose opinion on many subjects is so decidedly different from yours; and I am ready, whenever you wish it, to ask the King's leave to retire from his service." \*

Lord Liverpool begged the Duke not to think of resigning.† When he submitted to the King the proposal about the Spanish Colonies, the King asked if the Cabinet were unanimous, and, on the state of matters being explained to him, expressed a desire to see the Duke of Wellington. The Duke, accordingly, had an audience at Windsor, of which the result may be traced in a communication dated the same day, 17th December, expressing his Majesty's regret that he must differ with *the majority* of the Cabinet on this subject, but, inasmuch as he always desired to concur with the opinion of his Ministers, he would not oppose the projected measures, provided previous notice were conveyed to his Allies and the King of Spain "in such language and manner as may make the communication as little obnoxious to their feelings as possible."‡ And so the matter passed, but not without significant evidence of the internal relations of the Cabinet, especially as between Wellington and Canning. "To do Mr. Canning justice," wrote the Duke to the King, "I must say that in the original draft of the Minute laid before your Majesty there was a proposition that the measure should be communicated to your Majesty's Allies, and it was struck out at the desire of Lord Westmorland principally, who was anxious to keep the measure secret as long as possible." §

The rift widened, but the cleavage between the old Tories, represented by Eldon, Peel, and Wellington, and the Liberal

\* *Civil Despatches*, li. 364.

† *Ibid.*, 366.

‡ *Ibid.*, 368.

§ *Ibid.*, 374.

Tories, headed by Canning, became complicated on the revival of the Catholic claims for emancipation. On that question, at least, the Duke's views were more conciliatory than those of the colleagues most in unison with him on projects of Free Trade and Reform. His long experience abroad had divested his allegiance to Protestant ascendancy of insular intensity; theological arguments at no time exercised the slightest influence on his opinions; he looked upon Roman Catholic disabilities merely as political safeguards; and, although he had never offered, as Peel did during the first fourteen years of his public life, an active hostility to the Catholic claims, he took part in the resistance to them as long as he considered resistance practicable and consistent with harmony between the two branches of the legislature. He cannot have been ignorant of Pitt's intention to emancipate the Catholics when he effected the Union, an intention frustrated only because of George III.'s unconquerable resistance; it has been shown that in Wellington's early days in the Irish Parliament he spoke in favour of a limited measure of relief introduced by the Government; \* and it may be assumed that, so far as he had hitherto allowed the question to occupy his thoughts, he shared the views of his brother, Lord Wellesley, whom Lord Liverpool had sent as Lord Lieutenant to Ireland on purpose to propitiate the Catholic party.

ANN. 1825.  
The  
Roman  
Catholic  
claims.

It might have been expected that the Duke of Wellington, by birth an Irishman and having held office as Irish Secretary, would have taken a forward part in the consideration of Irish politics; but he never did so willingly until they forced themselves on his attention. It must be confessed that he was destitute of any special love for Ireland as his native country; he never returned there after resigning office as Chief Secretary in 1809; he always spoke of himself as an Englishman, and took a gloomy view of the possibility of reconciling the Irish people to English rule.

But in 1823 the state of Ireland compelled every one

\* See vol. i. p. 7.

Æt. 54.

charged with ministerial duties to take up a definite attitude on the future position of Roman Catholics in relation to the constitution. Lord Wellesley's appointment as Lord Lieutenant had given deep offence to the Orangemen, stirring them to feverish activity, and causing formidable riots at Arnagh, in Dublin, and elsewhere. The truculence of the Orangemen roused the Catholics to action; under the leadership of Daniel O'Connell the Catholic Association was organised; matters became so threatening that the Irish Insurrection Act was renewed, and the Government consented, on Lord Althorpe's motion, to a Commission of Inquiry into the causes which rendered repressive legislation necessary.

The King wrote to Mr. Peel, who, as Home Secretary, was specially charged with the Government of Ireland, pointing out that the action of the Catholic Association was "what may be fairly termed intended rebellion," and complaining that an idea had been permitted to circulate that his Majesty was not unfavourable to Roman Catholic claims.

"It is high time for the King to protect himself against such an impression, and he has no hesitation in declaring that if the present proceedings continue, he will no longer consent to Catholic Emancipation being left as an open question in his Cabinet. This indulgence was originally granted on the ground of political expediency, but that expediency dissolves when threatened rebellion calls upon the King for that which the King will never grant. The sentiments of the King upon Catholic Emancipation are those of his revered and excellent father; from these sentiments the King never can and never will deviate." \*

Wellington, to whom Peel, by the King's command, first showed this letter, made light of the difficulty.

"The King told me that he had given or sent such a letter after it had reached you, but before I had seen it. I told him

\* *Peel Letters*, i. 349.

that it appeared to me that there never was a moment in which the Catholic question as a parliamentary question was so little to be apprehended as at present, and that it would be most unfortunate if he were at this moment to involve himself and his authority in it, that his intention not to allow this question any longer to be considered open went to destroy the principle on which the Government was founded, and that I really believed that many of those most opposed to the Catholics considered a Government thus formed better able to defeat the Catholics than if formed exclusively of persons opposed to what was called the Catholic question. I do not think the King intends what his letter states. At all events his intention is founded on a hypothesis, and I am certain that we shall find him very little disposed to carry such an intention into execution." \* ANN. 1825.

Events, however, soon caused the Duke to alter his mind as to the urgency of the question. Year by year the majorities in favour of Roman Catholic relief had been growing in the House of Commons. The King had allowed his Cabinet to leave it an open question; but his Majesty's uncompromising hostility to concession barred the way to a settlement, and the strange spectacle was renewed each session of Ministers passionately advocating a policy and a measure which their colleagues rose from the same bench to denounce. Even in the Lords the majorities against the motion were dwindling. In 1824, Lord Lansdowne introduced a bill conferring the franchise on English Roman Catholics, a privilege which Irish Catholics already enjoyed, and another to enable Catholics to hold Revenue offices, both of which received the support of five Cabinet Ministers, but were thrown out by the Lords. In Ireland, where the question, of course, was really a burning one, although crime and disturbance had diminished in a remarkable manner, not the less was the situation exceedingly alarming. The whole of the people, except in Protestant Ulster, were banded together in and under the absolute control of the Catholic

The question becomes urgent.

\* *Peel Letters*, i. 350.

**Æt. 55.** Association—an organisation which, as the Duke of Wellington perceived, had all the attributes of a party protected by a foreign Power. Something having to be done to prevent the two parties flying at each other's throats, in March, 1825, an Act was passed, declaring illegal all associations in Ireland constituted for the redress of grievances in Church or State "renewing their meetings for more than fourteen days, or collecting or receiving money." This was ingeniously phrased to deprive the Act of the appearance of being aimed at Roman Catholics alone, inasmuch as it brought the Orange Society within its scope: the sting lay in its application.

Suppression of the Catholic Association.

In no part of the world are the cycles of political recurrence so clearly marked as in Ireland. As the Land League suppressed by Mr. Gladstone's Government in 1881, rose from its ashes and fulfilled all the purpose of its founders as the National League, so the Catholic Association underwent some changes of structure to enable it to pass through the meshes of the Act of 1825.

King George had recently sanctioned certain concessions to his Roman Catholic subjects in Hanover, which probably caused the Duke of Wellington to believe that his Majesty's repugnance to emancipation was evaporating. This, conjoined with the obvious peril of the situation in Ireland, and the growing difficulty of resisting the measures laid before Parliament, induced him to draw up a scheme of legislation showing how far he was ready and even anxious to go in 1825. Apparently this document was prepared for the consideration of the Cabinet, though perhaps it never came before it. It is of great length and of remarkable ability, containing first a review of the whole situation, including the growth in number both of the advocates of complete emancipation and of former opponents who had become indifferent; the inexpediency of endeavouring to maintain resistance in the House of Lords against repeated declarations of opinion by the House of Commons; and the wisdom of making concessions, not, as hitherto, in time of war and

The Duke's scheme of Catholic relief.

difficulty, but during a period of external peace and internal tranquillity. It goes on to show that the recent suppression of the Roman Catholic Association made it a peculiarly favourable moment to deal with the question, and there follows a complete scheme of relief and religious equality founded on the principle of concurrent endowment. As for the charge of inconsistency which would be incurred by a Tory Cabinet undertaking such legislation, the Duke brushed that lightly aside.

"I go further, and say that the King's present servants are the men who ought to consider of it, and to decide it as far as circumstances will enable them. . . . If this be true, it is surely more manly and consistent with our duty to our Sovereign and the public so to conduct ourselves as to be able to render most service in the particular crisis of time, than to be looking about to see what imputations can be brought against us of supposed attachment to office, founded upon our continuing to hold our offices after a question has been carried . . . contrary to our opinions, by our own friends in Parliament, and by the influence of those acting in the Cabinet with us. I really cannot think we ought to quit the King in such a crisis, or that it can be any satisfaction to our friends the Protestants that the loss of the Roman Catholic question should be attended by the additional misfortune of our retirement from office." \*

Wellington knew the influence he possessed over the King well enough to feel assured that his resistance might be overcome; but there was another member of the royal house, next in succession to the Crown, not to be conciliated so easily. The Roman Catholic Relief Bill of 1825 passed the third reading in the Commons on 10th May; it was believed so generally that the Lords would accept it that Peel actually had sent in his resignation, and the Cabinet seemed on the verge of breaking up, when the Duke of York, in presenting a petition against the bill from the Dean and

\* *Civil Despatches*, ii. 595.



ÆT. 57.  
The Duke  
of York's  
declara-  
tion.

Chapter of Windsor, made a declaration of invincible hostility to all concession to Roman Catholics, winding up with the forcible words—"These are the principles to which I will adhere, and which I will maintain, and that up to the latest moment of my existence, whatever may be my situation in life; so help me God!"

The effect of this speech from the heir presumptive awakened all the languishing Protestant spirit in the country. It might have proved a hazardous thing for a royal prince to interfere in such a concern, but the English people easily condoned the constitutional impropriety in their gratitude for a bold, outspoken sentiment: the press rang with applause, the Peers for once championed the popular cause against the House of Commons, and the bill was thrown out.

In his memorandum above quoted, the Duke of Wellington had expressed the opinion that it would not be easy to revive public feeling in the country against the Roman Catholic claims, and that the majority in their favour would increase in each successive Parliament. The effect of the Duke of York's manifesto caused him to change his opinion on this point; he strongly and repeatedly urged Lord Liverpool to dissolve Parliament at once, and take advantage of the excitement in the country in favour of a policy of no concession with which, though not one which the Cabinet would make a test question, the Tory party in general was identified.

General  
Election  
of 1826.

The Duke's advice was not taken: the Parliament was allowed to run to its natural conclusion in 1826, when enough effect remained from the Duke of York's speech to return a House of Commons which in the following year rejected by a majority of four, the same bill of relief which their predecessors had passed.

In this year the Duke of Wellington was called on once more to serve on a foreign mission. His health, since he had exchanged service on the field for political life, had been very uncertain: he had passed through one attack which, if not cholera, was nearly akin to that complaint: his frame, at



time other than spare, had wasted to a degree which caused ANN. 1826. anxiety among all his acquaintance. He took pride in never allowing illness to master him, and no doubt, by dint of his strong will, he worked through many attacks which would have disabled less resolute men. But the strongest of us are at the mercy of the frailty of our organs, and the Duke had to sustain a trial this year which endured to the end of his life. One effect of his disturbed health was a troublesome deafness in one ear. The Duke's deafness. Probably in no branch of scientific surgery has so little advance been made, even during the present century of rapid enlightenment, as in the treatment of hearing. The Duke had recourse to the best advice, but in vain. At last a specialist persuaded him to submit to the injection into the ear of a strong solution of caustic. The effect was instantaneous; the sense of hearing was restored with extraordinary acuteness, but violent inflammation set in, and, in the end, the patient became, and remained for ever after, stone deaf of that ear.

Now the reason which induced the Duke to submit to such a hazardous remedy for partial deafness was his haste to render himself fit for a duty which certain events in Europe induced Canning and the King to select him to perform. The Emperor Alexander of Russia died in December, 1825. The relations between the courts of St. Petersburg and London had been cooling ever since Mr. Canning, with his enthusiasm for Greek nationality, had been at the head of the British Foreign Office. At the conference of the Powers held at St. Petersburg in 1824, Great Britain had not been represented, and the subsequent reserve of the Russian ambassador at St. James on the subject of his master's intentions in regard to Greece gave rise to the belief that the Emperor was preparing to go to war with Turkey. On Alexander's death, it was desirable, in the interests of European peace, to ascertain, and, if necessary, to modify, the projects of The Duke's mission to St. Petersburg. the new Emperor Nicolas. Accordingly, the King chose the Duke of Wellington, as "an individual peculiarly acceptable

Æt. 57. to his Imperial Majesty,"\* to convey his condolences and congratulations to the new Emperor. He was charged also with long and detailed instructions from Mr. Canning,† the chief object of which was to obtain the Emperor's assent to the pacific intervention of Great Britain between Turkey and insurgent Greece, and to dissuade him from persevering in his father's plan of European conferences, which had proved anything but conducive to international harmony. The correspondence preceding the Duke's appointment throws some light on the relations prevailing between the King, Mr. Canning, and himself, and on the apprehension felt by the King of a rupture between his two Ministers. In a letter marked, somewhat pleonastically, "Most secret and confidential *and for yourself alone*," the King explains how the proposal came to be made to himself by Mr. Canning before the Duke was consulted.

"I must in justice to Mr. Canning add, that every expression he made use of was in a very friendly and proper tone. *My fear was* that you might think that the proposal originated with me, and therefore that you might consider it as something in the shape of an *official order* without any previous private consultation on *my part, with you my friend*, as to *that* which might be agreeable to *your feelings*, and of which, I do entreat of you to believe, that I am wholly and entirely incapable.

"Mr. Canning's *fear*, on the other hand . . . seems to have arisen from *this*—the apprehension that if this proposal was not in the *very first instance*, made to *you*, you might possibly suppose that, from some unjustifiable reason, he had overlooked your superior consequence, pretensions, and ability; and therefore that he might be deemed as guilty of not showing to you *all* the high consideration and respect which *are no more than you are due*, and with which, as well as with private regard for you, he not only expresses himself, but appears to be, strongly impressed."‡

\* *Civil Despatches*, iii. 84.

† *Ibid.*, 85.

‡ *Ibid.*, 53.

Canning wrote to Lord Granville, the British ambassador ANN. 1826. at Paris, describing how the Duke received the invitation.

"I have determined to send the Duke of Wellington to Petersburg. I proposed it to the King almost as soon as the event was known; but his Majesty doubted—solely, however, on the ground of the Duke's health. I persuaded his Majesty to let me try the question upon the Duke. . . . The Duke not only accepted, but *jumped*, as I foresaw that he would, at the proposal. 'Never better in his life,' 'ready to set out in a week,' and the like expressions of alertness, leave no doubt upon my mind that the selection of *another* person would have done his health more prejudice than all the frosts and thaws of the hyperborean regions can do to it. . . . I am perfectly satisfied, and so, I believe, is he: he with my intentions, and I with his disposition to execute them, not only fairly but strenuously."\*

The Duke wrote briefly to say he was at all times ready to serve the King in any station where he could be useful. To Lord Bathurst he wrote more fully.

"Excepting in the way of conciliation, which is certainly very desirable at the commencement of a new reign, I don't expect to do much good in my mission. But I don't see how I, who have always been preaching the doctrine of going wherever we are desired to go, who had consented to go and command in Canada, could decline to accept the offer of this mission."†

The negotiations were entrusted exclusively to the Duke, Lord Strangford, the British ambassador at St. Petersburg, being instructed to that effect.‡ In spite of warnings the Duke received at Berlin, where he spent a few days on his journey out, that it was impossible for Russia to avoid going to war, in order to allay the seditious movement in her own army, he found the Emperor Nicolas much disposed to accept the friendly mediation of Great Britain, and willing to avoid

\* Stapleton, 470.

† *Civil Despatches*, iii. 113.

‡ *Ibid.*, 93.

ÆT. 57. a Turkish war if the Porte could be persuaded to comply with the treaty of Bucharest. After a month spent in constant interviews and negotiations, the Duke left St. Petersburg with the conviction that, whatever may have been the intentions of the late Emperor, Nicolas had no intention of going to war on behalf of the Greeks, and that if war did break out between Russia and Turkey, it would be solely to enforce the just rights of his empire under treaty. Before leaving he obtained the agreement of the Emperor to a joint protocol, under which Russia and Great Britain were to offer their mediation between Turkey and Greece, on the basis of Greece becoming a Turkish dependency, paying a fixed tribute to the Sultan, but enjoying freedom of religion and of trade.

Death of  
the Duke  
of York.

On 5th December, 1826, the Duke of York died. Of all the sons of George III., he was the only one who had secured to any degree the affection of the public and the esteem of his friends. As a General in the field he had proved an admitted failure, but during his long tenure of office as Commander-in-chief he had earned the confidence of the army and the character of a good administrator. His interference upon the Roman Catholic question, although not to be defended on constitutional grounds, had undoubtedly won for him a degree of popular favour which he would not have earned by attending more exclusively to the duties of his office.

Some months before the Duke of York's death the King had told the Duke of Wellington that it was his wish that (Wellington) should become Commander-in-chief in the event of the Duke of York's death; and as neither the Duke of Cambridge nor the Duke of Cumberland could be considered in relation to such an appointment, public opinion was assigned that post to the Duke of Wellington. The Duke, however, begged the question might not be discussed till it arose for settlement, and he was not at all surprised, upon the Duke of York's death, to find that the King coveted the appointment for himself. Peel wrote in dismay at such

project: \* Liverpool denounced it as "preposterous," † but ANN. 1827. Wellington merely observed in reply to Peel —

"However extraordinary the arrangement is which you tell me his Majesty has in contemplation, I suspected that something of the kind was in agitation, and I determined to go out of town. . . . I have always considered that the conversation which passed between his Majesty and me, like many others, as so many empty and unmeaning words and phrases; and I consider his Majesty perfectly at liberty to make any arrangement for the command of his army that may be thought proper by his government." ‡

Lord Liverpool found little difficulty in convincing the King that the objections to his assuming the office were insuperable, and his Majesty at once conferred it on the Duke of Wellington. In order that the Duke's services might not be lost to the Cabinet, it was arranged that he should retain the civil office of Master of the Ordnance, although drawing the salary of one only of these appointments. Simultaneously with his appointment as Commander-in-chief, the Duke received from the King the colonelcy of the Grenadier Guards.

Wellington becomes Commander-in-chief.

A very characteristic incident marked the Duke's advent to this new command. Sir Henry Torrens, who, it might be supposed, should have better understood the man with whom, as Military Secretary, he had been in correspondence for so many years, wrote to the Duke enclosing the draft of a general order which he suggested it would be proper to issue on the occasion. It was exceedingly long, containing an elaborate panegyric on the late Duke of York, and bore as little resemblance as possible to any general order that ever appeared above the signature "Wellington." In reply to Sir Henry, the Duke civilly declined to adopt his suggestion — "I dislike to come before the army and the world with this

\* *Civil Despatches*, iii. 531.

† *Ibid.*, 535.

‡ *Ibid.*, 532.

Æt. 57. — parade"—and enclosed the following pithy document, with the request that it might be published at once:—

"G. O.—In obedience to his Majesty's most gracious command, Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington assumes the command of the army, and earnestly requests the assistance and support of the general and other officers of the army to maintain its discipline, good order and high character."

Almost the first official act of the new Commander-in-chief deserves mention as showing his solicitude for his old brothers-in-arms, whom he has sometimes been accused of neglecting. The Duke of York had left debts to the amount of £200,000, and no means of defraying them. Lord Londonderry proposed to open a subscription among officers of the army to pay the creditors. The Duke emphatically condemned the project, and reasoning mercilessly, showed that although the honour of the royal family might be considered as involved in the contraction of these debts, it could not be redeemed by laying the burden on other shoulders.

"The creditors, indeed, will be satisfied, and their complaints will be silenced. So far, we shall hear no more of the fact of the Duke of York having died leaving his debts unpaid. But still the fact remains. Let us now see whether this subscription ought to be set on foot. . . . Let us only look at the situation of the General officers and officers of the army in general. There may be from a dozen to twenty of us capable of subscribing a sum of money for any purpose. But the great majority of General officers have from £300 to £400 a year. Those best provided for, among those not having private fortunes, have from £700 to £1,000 a year! The distress of the creditors relieved . . . would fall upon this meritorious body of men, who neither could nor would resist the call if made upon them, whatever might be the distress it would occasion to them and their families. . . . I earnestly deprecate it, and I may do it with the more freedom as there are two persons now alive who know that I was willing to come forward, if others would, to arrange

the Duke's debts some years ago, if he would allow of their being Ann. 1827. arranged."\*

The unnatural internal condition of the Liverpool Cabinet was brought to a crisis by certain events which occurred early in 1827. The old Parliament had grown more or less tolerant of the anomalous arrangement under which the Roman Catholic question, one of the most pressing topics of the day, was treated as an open one, pressed forward and resisted by Ministers sitting together on the Treasury bench. It was inevitable that a new House of Commons should exhibit restiveness under such ambiguous leading, and the Old Tories, owning Eldon, Wellington, and Peel as their chiefs, received a fresh shock in the attitude assumed by the Canningites on the question of the corn duties. The Ministry were pledged to a revision of these duties, but during the summer of 1826 Mr. Huskisson, President of the Board of Trade, had anticipated the proposals of the Cabinet by announcing to a meeting of shipowners in Liverpool that the duties were to be largely reduced, and committed himself and his colleagues to a policy of free trade or something very near it. This produced at the time a vigorous protest from the Duke addressed to Lord Liverpool, whose position between the two parties in his Cabinet was becoming intolerable. "I beg leave to recall to your recollection that you and your Government are pledged to this and no more, viz., that the Corn-laws shall be reconsidered in the next sessions of Parliament. There has been no decision of the Cabinet on the object and result of the intended revision of the Corn-laws . . . but you will see from this document that the head of the Board of Trade . . . tells his constituents and the world, in so many words, that the whole question is settled, that the trade in corn is to be free."† Lord Liverpool approached the King with a view to his resignation, but his Majesty's resentment against him had so far been overcome by his usefulness

Fresh  
differences  
in the  
Cabinet.

\* *Civil Despatches*, iii. 532.

† *Ibid.*, 342.



Æt. 57. — as a buffer on the Roman Catholic question, that he persuaded the Prime Minister to retain office at least during another session.\* The immediate difficulty was got over by taking the Government bill for amending the Corn Laws out of the hands of Huskisson, who, in the ordinary course, would have become responsible for its conduct through the House of Commons, and placing it in those of Canning. But Lord Liverpool's troubles had worn him out. On 17th February he had a fit of apoplexy, and although he lived for some time longer, he never recovered his faculties, and his long service in office was at an end.

Liverpool's  
last  
illness.

The question, of course, arose at once, and was eagerly canvassed, Who was to succeed him? Canning's debating powers set him head and shoulders above every ministerialist in either House of Parliament; but Canning had incurred the hostility, not only of the country party, wherein lay the Tory strength, on account of his henchman Huskisson's declaration on the corn duties, but, by his own intrigues with the Opposition, of those very colleagues who, in 1822, had wrung from the King unwilling consent to his re-entering the Cabinet.†

Canning  
regains  
the King's  
favour.

Canning's position, however, with the King was very different now to what it had once been. His Majesty's repugnance to the first acts of Canning's foreign policy had given way to a conviction that that policy "had placed this country in a position with respect to Europe in which it had never stood before."‡ And, in proportion as the King had adopted Canning's views on foreign policy, his former sentiments of personal resentment and distrust towards the Minister, arising out of the old affair of Queen Caroline's trial, had been exchanged for confidence and affection. In

\* Lord Londonderry's memorandum of his audience with the King (*Civil Despatches*, iii. 632).

† "I took great pains," the Duke told Lady Salisbury, "to persuade the King: but I did not know Canning then" (*Salisbury MSS.*, 1835).

‡ Memorandum by Canning of an interview with the King, 27th March, 1827 (*Stapleton*, 582).



proportion, also, to this change in relations with Canning, the King's intimacy with the Duke of Wellington had lessened: there was a cessation of the frequent conferences which he used to hold with the Duke on foreign affairs as long as "the continental system was in vogue;" \* and there is no doubt that the King found intercourse with his Foreign Minister far more easy and agreeable than with his formidable Master of the Ordnance, of whom he always stood in great awe.

Under these circumstances Canning would have been looked on as the natural successor to Lord Liverpool, but for a single consideration. The King could not entertain the idea of appointing at the head of his Government one who did not share his own views on the Roman Catholic claims. After a long interview with his Majesty on 27th March, Mr. Canning drew up the following minute:—

"FOR THE CABINET—

"That his Majesty is desirous of retaining all his present servants in the stations which they at present fill; placing at their head, in the station vacated by Lord Liverpool, some peer professing opinions upon whom his Majesty's confidential servants may agree, of the same principles as Lord Liverpool." †

This, then, was the understanding on which matters proceeded, and it was natural that the Duke of Wellington should be regarded, and regard himself, as most completely filling the part of a peer "of the same principles as Lord Liverpool." The Duke's subsequent conduct has been attributed, not, it must be confessed, without appearances to justify the inference, to chagrin at being passed over. The real cause, however, lay further below the surface; it was the Duke's indignation at what he considered insincere treatment. His distrust of Canning had deepened, as his correspondence with Liverpool

\* Memorandum by Canning of an interview with Sir W. Knighton, 27th April, 1825 (*Stapleton*, 443).

† *Stapleton*, 586.

Æt. 57. and Peel bears witness, in proportion as Canning had been gaining the King's favour. Canning owed his seat in the Cabinet chiefly, as the King himself testified, to Wellington's advocacy; and it has been held by some that he was galled by the sense of this obligation into undermining the Duke's influence with his Majesty. It is an unworthy imputation, not justified by anything that has come to light. On several important questions, on the Roman Catholic claims, on the corn duties, on certain points in foreign policy, the views of Canning were diametrically opposed to the policy pursued by the Duke. He could scarcely be blamed if, since his admission to the Cabinet, he had been industrious in advancing men of his own opinions, and to that extent thwarting the policy of his Eldonite colleagues. From the moment of his entry the Ministry had been practically a coalition. Canning was neither of the temper nor the intellectual stature to suffer his influence to be a passive one; in endeavouring to extend it over the King, which he succeeded in doing, he was acting very much as any other Minister—as Wellington himself—would have felt to be his duty, had the positions been reversed. Indeed, we have seen that the Duke's private judgment on the Roman Catholic question was much the same as Canning's, and it was not destined to be very long before he acted on the conviction that neither religious disabilities nor corn duties could be retained with safety to the country. Canning only anticipated his doughty colleague by a few years in trying to carry his convictions into effect.

But it is unjust to the Duke to impute to him the slightest attempt to intrigue for his own advancement to the head of the Government. So far from that, he discouraged those gentlemen who tried to induce him to put himself forward. The Duke of Buckingham wrote on his own behalf and Lord Londonderry's, as representing the anti-Catholic peers, expressing their wish to assist in forming "a balanced Government without Mr. Canning's assistance." Their advances were coldly received.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Duke of Buckingham.*

ANN. 1827.

"London, 21st March, 1827.

"MY DEAR DUKE,—I did not return from the House of Lords last night till after eight o'clock, when I did not perceive your letter; and I have therefore opened it only this morning.

"I hope you will allow me to return it to you, and to consider it *non avenue*!

"I am going to Windsor to dine and pass to-morrow with his Majesty. It is most probable that his Majesty will not talk to me upon any business; and that he will continue in that state of reserve in which he has kept himself towards all his Ministers, I believe without exception, upon the subject of his successor to his Prime Minister since the misfortune occurred which has deprived his Majesty of the services of Lord Liverpool.

"Believe me, etc.,

"WELLINGTON."

The King, however, who is certainly entitled to some sympathy in his difficulties, did discuss the situation with the Duke, telling him that he was prepared to name any head of the Government who might be agreed upon among Ministers, and bidding him take counsel with Canning and Peel. Unhappily the relations between Canning and the Duke had become very bitter by this time—witness, for example, a letter written by Canning to Lord Liverpool as early as 16th October, 1826, referring to a complaint by the Duke that "he knew nothing about the state of Portugal except what was to be learnt from the newspapers, which was not the state of information in which he ought to be to render his opinion of any use to Mr. Canning or anybody else," and requesting that papers might be communicated direct from the Foreign Office to Apsley House.\*

Quarrel of  
the Duke  
and  
Canning.

\* *Civil Despatches*, iii. 420. "I understand," wrote the Duke in this letter, "that it is true that my servants at Apsley House will not tell where I am to be found, though they always know. I conclude that they will not give the information because I have long and repeatedly given directions that they should not communicate my movements to the newspapers, and this from the desire of

Æt. 57. "The D. of W.," wrote Canning to Lord Liverpool, "will of course complain that despatches are anticipated by the newspapers; but I humbly answer, I cannot help it, until he can contrive to give me the command of wind and waves, or to put down the French telegraph.\* . . . I really do not understand what he would have. Is he contented that the despatches should go to him next in order after the King and yourself? They are ordered so to do; but then you let the F. O. know where you are—they can therefore judge when they are likely to have the despatches again. There is no such calculation to be made of the D. of W.'s movements; and so far from the despatch being always returned to a day——. But there is no use in discussing these by questions; there is something else, though I protest I know not what, at the bottom of the D. of W.'s temper. His extraordinary fretfulness upon this matter, his repeated reference, and those of his *alentours*, to the approach of critical times, and other language which I know both he and the Chancellor have held very lately about the state of the Government, satisfy me that there is a looking forward to some convulsion in the Government, not wholly unmixed, perhaps, with some intention of bringing it on. Be it so. I confess I have no idea how the Government will be carried on in the House of Commons, in the sense in which it has been carried on for the last three years, with the whole patronage of the law, the greater part of the Church, and all the Army in the Chancellor's and the D. of W.'s hands.

"I am aware, too, that the D. of W. is very angry at my coming here (Paris). Two years ago he interfered with the King to prevent my doing so. But I suppose he felt that after he had himself been here in the interval, and after Westmorland had been preaching here for two months his ultra and philo-Turkish principles, I was not likely to be again so easily turned from my purpose. I am right glad that I came, not only for the immediate and unforeseen advantage of my presence here

avoiding to be made the show in every part of England which I might visit: and I believe it has happened more than once that the runners of the newspapers have made enquiries about me at my house, professing to be the Queen's messengers."

\* Not the electric telegraph, but the semaphore.

during the discussion with Spain, but because I have been able ANN. 1827 to assure myself, to absolute conviction, that had the Government been rightly understood here in 1822-3, the invasion of Spain would never have taken place. In this faith I shall die."\*

Here were brewing many elements of the storm soon to break. Canning carried his principle of non-intervention between rulers and rebellious subjects to a greater extreme than the Tories could sanction. The Duke, while he would not raise a finger in support of despotism, could never feel indifferent to the overthrow of authority. After all, he had borne a large part in establishing the system of "continental balance" and maintenance of dynasties; and although he had consented at last to the recognition of the revolted colonies of Spain, not the less did he distrust and resist the extension of this precedent to European countries. The spectacle of the widening breach between these two strong spirits—Canning and Wellington—is a sorrowful one, all the more because it engendered personal distrust and dislike.

It becomes evident from this point how greatly the Duke's habit of command had unfitted him for acting as one of a The Duke's habits of command. Cabinet. He possessed mental grasp and penetration, almost unerring in matters of his own profession, but far from inflexible in his civil capacity. As a soldier, he had not been accustomed to have his will disputed; when he came to encounter opposition in the Cabinet to his view of the national policy, he held that view so strongly and clearly that he was unable to subordinate it to that of any other man, except the King or the Prime Minister. He owed no submission to any other; the very intensity of his own opinion was inseparable from a certain narrowness, and the opposition he encountered seemed to him to savour, if not of insubordination, at least of hostility. Upon colleagues unaccustomed to military obedience the Duke's brusque and peremptory intimation of

\* Stapleton, 527.

Æt. 57. his will acted with centrifugal effect. As he himself remarked to Lady Salisbury on a later occasion, "One man wants one thing and one another; they agree to what I say in the morning, and then in the evening up they start with some crotchet which deranges the whole plan. I have not been used to that in all the early part of my life. I have been accustomed to carry on things in quite a different manner; I assembled my officers and laid down my plan, and it was carried into effect without any more words."\*

It has been shown how quick Sir Walter Scott was to recognise the military genius of young General Wellesley; † with equal penetration he discerned how far that very genius unfitted him for political life. "Lord Liverpool holds much by . . . the Duke of Wellington, but the Duke is a soldier—a bad education for a statesman in a free country." ‡

As an illustration of the different methods and mental habits of the soldier and the statesman, an incident may be quoted from Mr. Stapleton's narrative. Canning, waxing impatient under the difficulty of conducting the House of Commons with the whole legal and military patronage in the hands of his ultra-Tory colleagues the Chancellor and the Duke of Wellington, wrote rather a fiery letter to Lord Eldon, and told Mr. Stapleton, his private secretary, to copy it and send it "immediately."

"It seemed, however, in the ticklish state in which one party of the Cabinet was towards the other, that, however just and reasonable the complaint, yet, unless it were intended (which I knew that it was not) to produce a crisis, it would be unwise to send a letter written under the influence of angry feelings; so I ventured to keep it back. A few hours afterwards I said to him, 'I have not sent your letter to old Eldon.' 'Not sent it!' he angrily inquired, 'and pray why not!' I replied, 'Because I am quite sure that you ought to read it over again before you send it.' 'What do you mean?' he sharply replied, 'go and ge

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1835.

† Vol. i. p. 127, *supra*.

‡ *Scott's Journal*, 8th October, 1826.

it.' I did as I was bid; he read it over, and then I saw the smile of good humour come over his countenance. 'Well,' he said, 'you are a good boy. You are quite right. Don't send it; I'll write another.' \*

ANN. 1827.

All the Duke's subordinates knew him too well to have ventured on such a proceeding. Compare Canning's behaviour in this instance, one of deliberate disobedience, to the Duke's treatment of Norman Ramsay after Vitoria, where the disobedience was unintentional and unconscious.

At his interview with the King on 27th March, Canning, finding his Majesty as resolutely hostile to the Catholic claims as ever, advised him to choose a Ministry "conformable" to his own determination. Canning next, on 2nd April, made a suggestion to the Duke of Wellington that Mr. Robinson, Chancellor of the Exchequer, should be removed to the House of Lords and become First Lord of the Treasury and Prime Minister; a proposal which, though the Duke does not appear to have expressed any opinion upon it at the time, found very little favour with him. A week of silence followed, during which Mr. Canning increased his influence over the King, and the following correspondence was the outcome.†

*The Right Hon. George Canning to the Duke of Wellington.*

"Foreign Office, 10th April, 1827, 6 p.m.

"MY DEAR DUKE OF WELLINGTON,—The King has, at an audience from which I am just returned, been graciously pleased to signify to me his Majesty's commands to lay before his Majesty, with as little loss of time as possible, a plan of arrangements for the reconstruction of the administration.

"In executing these commands it will be as much my own wish, as it is my duty to his Majesty, to adhere to the principles on which Lord Liverpool's Government has so long acted together.

\* Stapleton, 530.

† The notes in brackets are paragraphs from the memorandum drawn up by the Duke on 13th April, on which was founded his speech to the Lords on 2nd May.



Æt. 57. "I need not add how essentially the accomplishment must depend upon your Grace's continuance as a member of the Cabinet.

"Ever, my dear Duke of Wellington,

"Your Grace's sincere and faithful servant,

"GEORGE CANNING."

[“It will be observed that this note did not state of whom it was intended that the proposed administration should be formed, although I have since learned that this information was conveyed to my colleagues; nor who was to be at the head of the Government; nor was I invited as others were, to receive further explanations, nor referred to anybody who could give them; nor, indeed, did I consider the invitation that I should belong to the Cabinet to be conveyed in those terms to which I had been accustomed in my constant intercourse with Mr. Canning up to that moment, nor to have been calculated to induce me to continue in the administration about to be formed.”]

*The Duke of Wellington to the Right Hon. George Canning.*

“London, 10th April, 1827.

“MY DEAR MR. CANNING,—I have received your letter of this evening informing me that the King had desired you to lay before his Majesty a plan of arrangements for the reconstruction of the administration, and that in executing these commands it was your wish to adhere to the principles on which Lord Liverpool's Government had so long acted together.

“I anxiously desire to be able to serve his Majesty as I have done hitherto in the Cabinet, with the same colleagues. But before I can give an answer to your obliging proposition, I should wish to know who the person is whom you intend to propose to his Majesty as the head of the Government.

“Ever, my dear Mr. Canning,

“Yours very sincerely,

“WELLINGTON.”

[“It will be observed that I stated my anxious desire to form part of a Cabinet with *the same colleagues*; but that I postponed to give any answer to Mr. Canning's obliging proposition till



should know the name of the person intended to be recom- ANN. 1827.  
mended by Mr. Canning to his Majesty as the head of the  
administration."]

*The Right Hon. George Canning to the Duke of Wellington.*

"Foreign Office, 11th April, 1827.

"MY DEAR DUKE OF WELLINGTON,—I believed it to be so generally understood that the King usually entrusts the formation of an administration to the individual whom it is his Majesty's gracious intention to place at the head of it, that it did not occur to me, when I communicated to your Grace yesterday the commands which I had received from his Majesty, to add that, in the present instance, his Majesty does not intend to depart from the usual course of proceeding on such occasions.

"I am sorry to have delayed some hours this answer to your Grace's letter: but from the nature of the subject I did not like to forward it without having previously submitted it (together with your Grace's letter) to his Majesty.

"Ever, my dear Duke of Wellington,

"Your Grace's sincere and faithful servant,

"GEORGE CANNING."

["I will only observe here that this answer did not tend to remove the impression which Mr. Canning's first note had made upon my mind, viz. that he did not wish that I should belong to his Cabinet."]

*The Duke of Wellington to the Right Hon. George Canning.*

"London, 11th April, 1827.

"MY DEAR MR. CANNING,—I have received your letter of this day; and I did not understand the one of yesterday evening as you have now explained it to me. I understood from yourself that you had in contemplation another arrangement,\* and I do not believe that the practice to which you refer has been so invariable as to enable me to affix a meaning to your letter which

\* The advance of Mr. Robinson with a peerage to the head of the Government.

ÆT. 57. its words did not, in my opinion, convey. I trust that you will have experienced no inconvenience from the delay of this answer, which, I assure you, has been occasioned by my desire to discover a mode by which I could continue united with my recent colleagues.

"I sincerely wish that I could bring my mind to the conviction that, with the best intentions on your part, your Government could be conducted practically on the principles of that of Lord Liverpool; that it would be generally so considered; or that it could be adequate to meet our difficulties in a manner satisfactory to the King and conducive to the interests of the country.

"As, however, I am convinced that these principles must be abandoned eventually, that all our measures would be viewed with suspicion by the usual supporters of the Government, that I could do no good in the Cabinet, and that I should at last be obliged to separate myself from it at a moment at which such separation would be more inconvenient to the King's service than it can be at present, I must beg you to request his Majesty to excuse me from belonging to his councils.

"Ever yours, my dear Mr. Canning, most sincerely,

"WELLINGTON." \*

The Duke leaves the Cabinet.

Now, there is nothing surprising in this correspondence, nor in the first result thereof—the resignation of the Duke of Wellington, followed by that of Eldon, Bathurst, Melville, Westmorland, Bexley,† and Peel. It was only natural that the section of the Cabinet opposed to the Roman Catholic claims should refuse to serve under a Prime Minister who was their most eloquent and industrious advocate; but one is puzzled to detect in Canning's letters above quoted cause for the deep personal offence which the Duke received from them. Far more bewildering was his next act. On the day following the resignation of his seat in the Cabinet, the Duke wrote to the King resigning the offices of Master-General of the Ordnance and Commander-in-chief, in consequence, as he

And resigns command of the army.

\* *Civil Despatches*, iii. 636.

† Lord Bexley afterwards withdrew his resignation.

said, of ceasing to be in the Cabinet, and "adverting to the tenor of the letters which I have received from your Majesty's Minister by your Majesty's command." He persisted in reading "terms of taunt and rebuke" \* into Canning's second letter, and in considering that the rebuke came direct from the King, in which opinion he continued to the end of his days, though it is difficult for the ordinary reader to perceive in the letter anything more than a frigid and business-like civility.

"I remained still in the office of Commander-in-chief, which I might have continued to hold, whatever might be the difference of my political opinions with his Majesty's Minister. But in addition to political differences, the tone and temper of Mr. Canning's letters, and of that of the 11th particularly (which had been previously submitted to his Majesty, and which, therefore, was a communication from the King), were of a nature to render it impossible for me to retain the command of the army. I could not exercise that command with advantage to his Majesty, the Government and the public, or with honour to myself, unless I was respected and treated with that fair confidence by his Majesty and his Minister which I think I deserve; and nobody will consider that I was treated with confidence, respect, or even common civility, by Mr. Canning in his last letter." †

It is painful for all who have followed the Duke from height to height, in the course of his long service to his country, to be forced to admit that his action at this juncture was unworthy of himself and inconsistent with the principles he always avowed. He was right in refusing to join Mr. Canning's administration; he had carried compliance and forbearance with a policy he could not approve as far as he could do with honour. He expressed this to the King with perfect propriety in his letter of resignation.

\* *Civil Despatches*, iv. 51.

† The Duke's memorandum on leaving office (*Civil Despatches*, iii. 639).

Æt. 57. "To recommend to your Majesty to appoint Mr. Canning Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and to entrust to him all the conduct of your Majesty's Government in the House of Commons, is one thing; and to act under him as your Majesty's Minister is another."\*

But to throw up a command entirely disconnected with party politics was to import into the army that very spirit of party which he had earnestly denounced as its bane, not only at the beginning of the Peninsular war, but on many subsequent occasions; † and to land the King suddenly in the acknowledged dilemma of finding a successor to him in the command was to prove unfaithful to his own leading doctrine, that the maintenance of the King's government, military as well as civil, was paramount to all other considerations. It was the act of an angry man, a conclusion which is rather confirmed than dissipated by a passage from a subsequent letter to Mr. Canning.

"I considered your letters to me, and most particularly the one of the 11th of April, in which, be it observed, you state that you had previously submitted it to his Majesty, to have placed me in such a relation to his Majesty, and towards yourself as his First Minister, as to render it impossible for me to continue in my office of Commander-in-chief. . . . I am not in the habit of deciding upon such matters hastily or in anger, and the proof of this is that I never had a quarrel with any man in my life." ‡

When did an angry man ever admit that he was angry?

The public and the press were unanimous in surprise and disapproval of the Duke's action. Of his friends, Arbuthnot

\* *Civil Despatches*, iii. 631.

† "Easter Day, 1838.—At breakfast the Duke was speaking of the shameful use made by the Whigs of patronage in the Army and Navy for political purposes, and the contrast it presented to former practice. George IV., after the war, objected to giving a regiment to Sir Ronald Fergusson, a violent Whig; but I told him he *must*, and he *did*" (*Salisbury MSS.*)

‡ *Civil Despatches*, iv. 26.

and others, who desired nothing better than that Canning should be landed in a difficulty, applauded; but others, whose views were unclouded by party strife, deplored the construction which the newspapers put on the affair.

*Viscount Palmerston to the Countess of Jersey.*

"The only thing that I do grieve over is the D. of Wellington's abandonment of the army. That is a Loss which cannot be supplied, and which seems to me to have been quite unnecessary. I wish to God Hamilton Place had not been quite so near Apsley House.\* I am quite sure, too, that the Duke himself will repent it always. He must know that he is the only man fit for the situation, and when he sees, as he may do some Day, other Things doing which he may disapprove of, he will blame himself for having quitted his Post." †

The press was always on the side of Canning, who, by inclination as well as policy, had always cultivated its support. The London papers were unsparing in their imputations on the Duke's motives, insomuch that he, usually loftily indifferent to what was printed about himself, made an elaborate personal explanation in the House of Lords on 2nd May. He was especially anxious to remove the impression, which it cannot be doubted was a false one, that he had coveted the first place in the Government for himself. At the outset of his speech he committed the indiscretion and, as must be added, the injustice of alleging as his excuse for troubling their lordships, "the manner in which I have been treated by the corrupt press in the pay of the Government." Now, this was indiscreet, because no public man in this country could affect, even seventy years ago, to be above criticism in the public journals; and it was unjust because, having ceased only within three weeks to be himself a member of the Cabinet, if the newspapers were

\* Apparently alluding to Lord Londonderry's influence.

† Original at Middleton Park.

*Æt.* 58. corrupt he must be held responsible for the existence of such corruption.

The Duke's  
defence in  
the House  
of Lords.

"Do your Lordships suppose that, having raised myself to the highest rank in the profession which I had previously followed from my youth . . . I could be desirous of leaving it in order to seek to be appointed the head of the Government, a situation for which I am sensible that I am not qualified, and to which, moreover, neither his Majesty, nor the right honourable gentleman, nor any one else wished to see me called? . . . It must be obvious to your Lordships that, not being in the habit of addressing your Lordships, I should have been found, besides other disqualifications, incapable of displaying as they ought to be displayed, or of defending the measures of the Government as they ought to be defended in this House. . . . My Lords, I should have been worse than mad if I had thought of such a thing."

Renewed  
offer of the  
command  
of the  
army.

This speech, which the Duke had printed and circulated as a pamphlet, was followed by a wordy correspondence with Mr. Canning. Sir Herbert Taylor used his good offices, and elicited from the Duke the admission that the only bar to his resuming command of the army was the implied rebuke in Canning's letter of 11th April, and that he was willing to take it again if that rebuke were cancelled or withdrawn. Taylor showed this letter to Canning, who immediately got the King to write the following, without, however, laying the Duke's letter before the King:—

"St. James Palace, 21st May, 1827.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I learn from my government, as well as from other quarters, that you have obligingly expressed your readiness to afford your advice, if required, upon any matters of military importance or detail that might occur. These circumstances renew in me those feelings towards you, which God knows (as you must know) I have so long and sincerely felt, and I hope on all occasions proved; at least it was always my intention so to do. I cannot refrain therefore from acquainting you that the

command of the army is still open, and if you choose to recall ANN. 1827.  
that resignation which it grieved me so much to receive, you have  
my *sincere* permission to do so.

“Ever your sincere friend,

“G. R.”

Unhappily, from not having read the Duke's letter to Sir Herbert Taylor, the King missed the point on which the Duke laid so much stress—the withdrawal of the implied rebuke. It scarcely admits of doubt that Canning designedly suffered the King to remain in ignorance of the true root of the Duke's resentment. He and the Duke were now open enemies; and although Canning certainly desired the Duke's return to the Horse Guards as a strength to the executive, his temper was up, and he was as little disposed to admit himself in the wrong in having caused, as the Duke was to acknowledge his fault having made, the resignation. He was careful, however, to resist the King's revived desire to become Commander-in-chief of his own army.

Permission to resume the command was not what the Duke sought: he desired a complete removal of all shadow of reproach.

“I earnestly hope,” he wrote in reply to the King's letter, “that your Majesty will have the goodness to refer to the reasons which I stated to your Majesty on the 12th of April, and more fully to your Majesty's minister on the 6th of May, as having imposed on me the painful necessity of offering to your Majesty my resignation of the command of your Majesty's forces. I humbly entreat your Majesty to bear in mind that those reasons still continue in force, and that were I under such circumstances to recall my resignation, I should by that act admit that I had not been justified in retiring.”\*

Canning, having disarmed the Whig opposition, albeit he failed at first in his overtures towards a regular coalition,

\* *Civil Despatches*, iv. 37



Æt. 58.  
Recon-  
struction  
of the  
Cabinet.

succeeded during the Easter holidays in getting together a Ministry. His tenure of the post he had coveted so ardently and so honourably was stormy and brief; its close sudden and tragic. The hardest blow dealt to his administration came, though in a measure inadvertently, by the hand of the Duke. When the Corn Bill, prepared by Lord Liverpool's Cabinet, was in Committee of the House of Commons, the Duke wrote to Mr. Huskisson, the Minister in charge of the measure, suggesting an amendment to prevent corn being taken out of bond until the price had risen to 70s. a quarter. Huskisson objected on the ground that such a provision would enable any owner of foreign corn in a port "to lay a veto upon the sale of all corn warehoused subsequent to his in that port until the price reached 70s." He went on to say that personally he should not object to a proposal that no corn should be allowed to be entered for home consumption till the average price had touched 66s.; but he added that such an amendment would probably prove fatal to the bill in the Commons. When the bill came for consideration in the Lords, Wellington moved an amendment in the terms which he believed Huskisson to have approved. Lord Goderich\* declared at once that its acceptance would be fatal to the bill, upon which the Duke produced Huskisson's letter. The effect of this was that four subordinate members of the Government voted for the amendment, the exact majority by which it was carried on a division, and the bill was lost. Canning took his revenge on the Duke and the Peers by declaring in the House of Commons that "he could conceive no species of faction more inexcusable, more blameable, or more wicked than that which would make a subject touching the vital interests, and involving the prosperity of the whole community, a ground for exciting party feelings, or exasperating party animosities."

Defeat of  
the Go-  
vernment  
on the  
Corn Bill.

Peel, while giving Canning his support in re-affirming in the Commons the principles of the lost bill, warmly defended

\* Mr. Robinson had been raised to the peerage under this title.



the Duke of Wellington against the charge of factious ANN. 1827 opposition. Canning's speech was almost his last public utterance. The brilliant, stormy course was nearly run. Parliament was prorogued on 2nd July; on 8th August Death of Canning. George Canning expired in the Duke of Devonshire's house at Chiswick, in the very room where Fox had breathed his last twenty years before.

This event came with startling suddenness on the Ministry and the nation. All eyes turned upon the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel, one of whom it was thought certain would be called upon to lead the Government. The general opinion inclined to the Duke being the more probable, owing to an incident which took place while Canning was lying in his last illness at Chiswick. It had been intimated to the Duke, then at Strathfieldsaye, that the King felt some surprise that he had never waited on his Majesty since resigning his offices. The Duke, accordingly, interpreting this as a command, rode over to Windsor to pay his respects on Coronation Day. The King received him graciously, although the impression made on the Duke was that his Majesty's "displeasure against those who would not submit to be tricked by his Majesty and Mr. Canning last April was as strong as ever, although expressed in moderate terms." \* This visit, in the words of Sir Herbert Taylor, "excited very general hopes and expectations" of the Duke's return to the Horse Guards. This, and a knowledge that Canning's supporters were circulating reports that the Duke had visited the King without invitation, induced the Duke to draw up a fresh memorandum, which he placed in the hands of his brother, Lord Maryborough.

"26th July, 1827.

"It is my opinion that Mr. Canning is now endeavouring to prevail upon the King to adopt the new arrangement for the command of the army.† . . . The adoption of this arrangement

\* *Peel Letters*. ii. 5.

† That the King should become Commander-in-chief.

Æt. 58. will be forced on him, unless I consent to take command of the army unconditionally; that is to say, without an apology from Mr. Canning. This I neither can nor will do as long as Mr. Canning is the Minister. It matters not to me in what channel the apology comes, provided it is clear and distinct, and so conveyed that it can be communicated to all mankind. It is absolutely necessary that it should be as public as the offence has been, and as my return to office would be."\*

This deplorable wrangle was hushed in the silence of the death-chamber at Chiswick; but the Duke's recent visit to Windsor was not forgotten, and was taken by the Whigs as indicating his Majesty's reconciliation with his old servants. The Tories feared a patch-up of the existing Cabinet, and a renewal of the offer of the army to Wellington. Arbutnot wrote to Peel on 12th August—

"The King pretended great misery at not being reconciled to the Duke. The Lady † did the same, and Knighton ‡ went further, and said it was absolutely necessary to have the Duke to fly to in case of need. This case of need suddenly arrives. They think not of sending to him. They prove that all they wanted was to inveigle and cajole him back to the army, for the exclusive purpose of giving strength to Canning. . . . I shall die of despair if he allows himself to be so misused. . . . The truth is the King in his heart hates the Duke and he hates you, and like most kings he will try and surround himself with men of no name or power, because with such men he may do whatever he pleases."§

Lord  
Goderich  
becomes  
Prime  
Minister.

What Arbutnot and the Old Tories dreaded was exactly what came to pass. The King laid his commands on Lord Goderich, who placed a list of the new Ministry before his Majesty on 13th August. Two days later the King wrote to

\* *Civil Despatches*, iv. 65.

† Lady Conyngham.

‡ Sir William Knighton, the King's private physician, confidential secretary and keeper of the Privy Purse.

§ *Peel Letters*, ii. 4.

the Duke, offering his "dear friend" the command of the ANN. 1827. army; Lord Goderich wrote that "from the bottom of his heart" he hoped the Duke would accept the offer. These letters were brought together to the Duke at half-past seven on the morning of the 17th, and, without consulting any one or leaving his bedroom, he wrote his answers at once, accepting the appointment, which, indeed, he had no excuse nor motive for declining, Mr. Canning being no longer on the stage. Mr. Arbuthnot did not die of despair, but he expressed to Mr. Peel bitter chagrin at the result.

"I should have been rejoiced if the Duke had felt himself at The Duke resumes command of the army. Liberty to refuse. He had placed himself at the head of the great Tory party in the House of Lords, and in a way that had no connection with his military character. I trust the result for him will not be that he will be taken from his friends and given to his enemies. Should this unfortunately happen, his private happiness will be interfered with, and all those in the House of Lords who revered his great name . . . will be disappointed and displeased."\*

How imperfectly may a man's warmest friends take forethought for his welfare and renown! The Duke of Wellington was the man in all England for command of the army; had he been reserved for that alone, how peerless had remained the record, its lustre undimmed by those clouds which are never absent from the troubled firmament of party!

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 10.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE DUKE AS PRIME MINISTER.

1828-1829.

<p>Jan. 8, 1828. Resignation of Lord Goderich.</p> <p>9 . . . . The King sends for the Duke of Wellington. Repeal of the Tests and Corporations Acts.</p> <p>March . . . . The Corn Duties.</p> <p>May 20 . . . . Mr. Huskisson resigns. And is followed by four other Ministers. New appointments in the Cabinet. The Clare Election.</p> <p>August 11 . Peel alters his opinion on the Roman Catholic question, but desires to resign office.</p> <p>Jan. 12, 1829. Peel agrees to retain office.</p> <p>February 1 . The King consents to</p>	<p>repeal of the disabilities.</p> <p>February 23. The Attorney-General refuses to draw the Bill.</p> <p>March 4 . . . Interview of Ministers with the King and their resignation.</p> <p>.. 5 . . The King consents to the Bill proceeding; Ministers resume office.</p> <p>.. 21 . . The Duke's duel with Lord Winchilsea.</p> <p>.. 22 . . Dismissal of the Attorney-General.</p> <p>.. 31 . . The Relief Bill introduced in the Lords.</p> <p>April 2 . . . The Emancipation Bill in the Lords.</p>
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Lord Goderich resigns and resumes office.

**B**EFORE the close of his last session Mr. Canning had effected a formal coalition with the Whigs by inducing Lord Lansdowne and Lord Althorpe to join the Administration; but, with a new hand on the reins, the team soon became unruly. Early in December, Goderich, distracted by the disunion of his Cabinet and embarrassed by the consequences of the battle of Navarino, laid his resignation before the King, who accepted it, and sent for Lord Harrowby. That nobleman having declined the task he was invited to undertake, Goderich consented to remain at the head of affairs,

but with Wellington as an unfriendly critic on his flank. ANN. 1828.  
 Among the Duke's papers is a memorandum, comparing Goderich's position with that of Canning. Mistrust he had none of Goderich's sincerity, nor any of the personal dislike which he had borne latterly to Canning on the score of temper, spirit of intrigue, inclination to radical measures and alliances, and "avowed hostility to the landed aristocracy of the country." Not the less did the Duke consider Goderich's Government founded on "false pretences" as surely as that of his greater predecessor.

"There is in the Cabinet avowedly a majority of members of the Roman Catholic opinion; and they tell the King that the Roman Catholic question shall not be carried. How must they avoid it? by an agreement among themselves that it shall not be proposed. Will they proclaim this agreement to Parliament and the public? If they keep it concealed, as they must, they will be acting under a false pretence. Such a Government cannot conciliate the support of the public or of the gentlemen of the country. It must be weak. No man can avow his connection with those who are practising a deceit upon the public or acting upon a false pretence. There will not be against Lord Goderich the same personal objections as against Mr. Canning. It is true that he will be supported, for a time at least, by the Radicals here, and applauded by the discontented all over the world; but this will be as the friendly successor, and because he lends himself to keep out of office those who resigned rather than serve with Mr. Canning, and whose position and strength in Parliament kept him in check."\*

Goderich did not so lend himself for long. Probably the false position in which he felt himself had as much to do with his final retirement as his inability to reconcile the differences of his motley Ministry. On 8th January, 1828, he renewed his resignation, and the King, on Lord Lyndhurst's advice, sent for the Duke of Wellington, although the formation of

\* *Civil Despatches*, iv. 179.

Ær. 58. — a purely Whig administration under Lord Lansdowne was thought imminent.\* The Duke found the King at Windsor ill and in bed, wearing a dirty silk jacket and a turban night-cap, but in high good humour. "Arthur, the Cabinet is defunct!" he cried, and proceeded to give a ludicrous account of the behaviour of his late servants in taking leave of him, mimicking the peculiarities of each with much animation.†

The King lays commands on Wellington.

On receiving his Majesty's commands, the Duke craved leave to consult his friends, and at once sent for Mr. Peel, who personally was as much disinclined for the task as was the Duke, in view of the difficulties of the situation. The Duke, as he afterwards wrote to the Prince of Orange, felt that he had been summoned to a "most arduous situation and in most critical times; a situation for the performance of the duties of which I am not qualified, and they are very disagreeable to me."‡ Peel described himself as obeying, "though not without great reluctance, the summons thus received. I had no desire whatever to resume office, and I foresaw great difficulty in the conduct of public affairs, on account of the state of parties, and the position of public men in reference to the state of Ireland and the Catholic question."§

Again, in writing to Lord Eldon, Peel said—

"My return to public life has been no source of gratification to me. In common with the Duke of Wellington, hitherto at least, I have had nothing to contemplate but painful sacrifices, so far as my private feelings are concerned."||

Men called to mind the Duke's exaggerated declaration in the House of Lords, pronounced only nine months previously, that he felt his unfitness for the first post in the Government, and would "be worse than mad if he had thought of such a thing;" but the removal of Mr. Canning seems to have dissipated the Duke's own scruples upon that score.

The attempt to form a purely Tory administration having

\* *Croker*, i. 399.

† *Raske's Journal*.

‡ *Civil Despatches*, iv. 335.

§ *Peel Letters*, ii. 28.

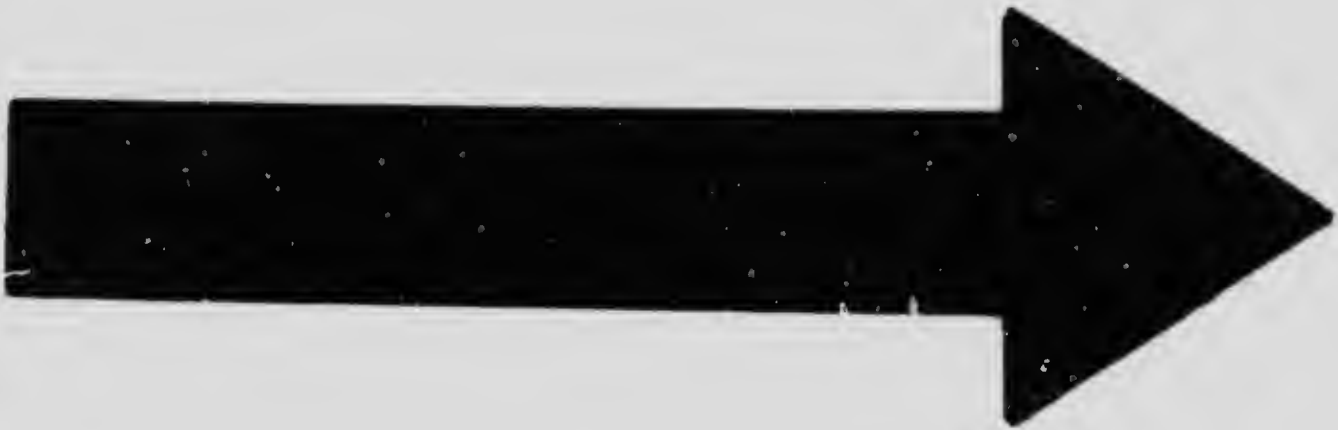
|| *Ibid.*, 33.

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# MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



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Wm. D. [unclear]

London January 12 - 1862

I have to thank you for your <sup>kind</sup> ~~very~~ note

and am much obliged to you for the following arrangements

and I am very glad to hear that you are in sympathy with

for an Administration in an emergency with

your Majesty's commands announced to me

on Wednesday last.

and I have now the honor to

acknowledge the arrival of the said

part and of the learning

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knows

your Majesty's

service



been dismissed as impracticable, Peel co-operated with the Duke in obtaining the assistance of the Canningites, and having secured the good-will of Mr. Huskisson, succeeded so well that, on 12th January, Wellington wrote to the King as follows:—

“London, January 12, 1828.

“I now submit for Your Majesty’s most gracious consideration the following arrangement for an Administration in conformity with Your Majesty’s Commands communicated to me on Wednesday last.

“Lord Chancellor Lord Lyndhurst.

“President of the Council The Earl Bathurst, K.G.

“First Lord of the Treasury

“Secretaries of State Home Mr. Peel.

Colonial Mr. Huskisson.

Foreign The Earl Dudley.

“I would humbly submit to Your Majesty that before Your Majesty finally determines upon this last appointment you should wait till we shall have seen the Instructions on the late Affairs in Greece. This delay will be creditable to the Gov’ as well as to Lord Dudley.

“President of the Board of Control Viscount Melville.

“Master General of the Ordnance The Earl of Rosslyn.

“The Lord Chancellor has according to Your Majesty’s desire seen the Earl of Carlisle to offer him to retain his Seat in Your Majesty’s Councils. Lord Carlisle was much flattered by Your Majesty’s most gracious recollection of him, as well as by the mode in which I had executed Your Majesty’s instructions; but he desired to delay to give his Answer till to-morrow. From the Lord Chancellor’s report of the Conversation I am apprehensive that he will decline to accept the offer. If he should accept I humbly submit to Your Majesty that he should fill the Office of Privy Seal. If not I would humbly submit to Your Majesty that your old Servant the Earl of Westmorland should be appointed to fill this Office.

“I would humbly submit to Your Majesty that Your Majesty would be most graciously pleased to grant a Pension of the

Æt. 58. first Class to Lord Bexley; and that His Lordship should be called upon to resign the office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; and that Mr. Herries should be appointed to that office; and that Mr. Goldborne should be appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer. This arrangement will greatly facilitate Your Majesty's Service.

"Lord Palmerstone to be Secretary at War with a Seat in the Cabinet.

"I humbly solicit Your Majesty's Permission to make communications to the persons interested in case these arrangements should obtain Your Majesty's most gracious approbation; and will submit those which remain for consideration upon another occasion, the various claims upon Your Majesty's favour having rendered it difficult to make them immediately.

"All of which is Humbly submitted for Your Majesty's pleasure by Your Majesty's most dutiful and devoted Subject and Servant

"WELLINGTON."

After some changes, the list finally stood as follows:—

Lord Chancellor . . . . .	Lord Lyndhurst †
Lord President . . . . .	Earl Bathurst
Chancellor of the Exchequer . . . . .	Mr. Goulburn
Chancellor of the Duchy . . . . .	Earl of Aberdeen
Secretaries of State	{ Home . . . . . Mr. Peel
	{ Foreign . . . . . Earl of Dudley †
	{ Colonial . . . . . Mr. Huskisson †
President Board of Trade . . . . .	Mr. Grant †
Lord Privy Seal . . . . .	Lord Ellenborough
Secretary of War . . . . .	Viscount Palmerston †
Master-General of the Ordnance . . . . .	Lord Beresford
India Board . . . . .	Viscount Melville
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland . . . . .	Marquis of Anglesey †

The common object of the Duke and Mr. Peel was thus far attained of effecting a continuity of the Liverpool policy.

\* *Apsley House MSS.* The Duke's original letter to the King (of which the first page is here given in facsimile) was returned to him on the death of George IV.

† Members of the Goderich Administration.

moderation and conciliation. But it was not effected without offence to the Old Tories. The admission of Huskisson, Ellenborough, and Palmerston was almost as distasteful to them as the exclusion of Eldon, Londonderry, Westmorland, and Buckingham.

ANN. 1828.  
Dissatis-  
faction of  
the Tories.

"It grieves me to think," wrote Lord Sidmouth, "that an opportunity of forming an Administration which would have given entire satisfaction to the country has been lost. The admissions and omissions are deeply to be deplored."

"I sincerely hope," wrote Wellington to the Duke of Newcastle, "that this Ministry, although not exactly in all its parts such as your Grace suggested, will conciliate your confidence, than which nothing will tend more to its stability and efficiency. I assure you that this reunion with the old servants of the Crown in Lord Liverpool's Administration has been made without any sacrifice of principle on either side, on any subject whatever." \*

But the Duke's imperious nature was not well calculated to conciliate critics. At an earlier stage Newcastle had communicated his views on the composition of the new Cabinet, and the Duke had treated them with scant consideration. "I was wrong," he said afterwards to Lord Salisbury on one of the few occasions when he admitted himself to have been in error; "Newcastle addressed me a letter on the subject of forming an administration, and I treated him with contempt. No man likes to be treated with contempt." † Newcastle made response—"Any Ministry which excludes Lord Eldon and includes Mr. Huskisson cannot gain my confidence."

To the following letter, Lord Londonderry, then British Ambassador at the Tuileries, replied, expressing his "bitter mortification" that his claim to high office had been overlooked, calling to mind the Peninsular days, and reproaching the Duke with forgetfulness of an old comrade.

\* *Apsley House MSS.*

† *Salisbury MSS.*

Æt. 58.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Marquis of Londonderry.*

"London, 21st January, 1828

"MY DEAR CHARLES,—You will have heard that on the dissolution of the late Ministry the King had sent for me to desire me to assist him in forming a new one, and I inclose the arrangement approved by H.M., which was finally concluded only last night.

"I hope that this arrangement will conciliate your confidence. It is not exactly the arrangement that you would have wished for perhaps; but we must observe that we cannot form a Ministry as we do a Dinner or a party in the Country: we must look to Stability, and its capacity to carry on the King's Business in Parliament, and to carry with it the respect of the Country and Ireland and of foreign Nations. . . .

"Yours most sincerely and affec<sup>ly</sup>,

"W." \*

Lord Hill  
appointed  
Com-  
mander-in-  
chief

Curiously enough it seems never to have occurred to the Duke that his position as Prime Minister was inconsistent with the retention of that of Commander-in-chief. When Peel and others made this clear to him, he recommended the King to appoint "Daddy" Hill, in writing to whom the Duke said—

"I certainly did not contemplate this necessity as being paramount when I undertook for his Majesty the service of forming his Government, . . . and it is useless to regret that I did not make the retention of my office a condition without which I would not serve his Majesty as he desired I should." †

It is certainly remarkable that the Duke, with his experience of civil and military business, should have thought it possible for one human being to discharge effectively the duties of both offices. Before he had been Prime Minister many months he was writing to Lord Camden—"If I could do in twenty-four hours the business that could be done

\* Original at Wynyard Park.

† *Civil Despatches*, iv. 253.



another man in seventy-two hours, I should not have time to ANN. 1828.  
do all that is required of me." \*

Huskisson's re-election at Liverpool gave rise to an incident ominous for the harmony of the Cabinet. He was reported as having explained his adhesion to the new Government by stating that the Duke of Wellington had given him "positive and special pledges that a particular line of policy should be followed, and that his Grace should tread in all respects in the footsteps of Mr. Canning." † Taken to task for this by Lord Eldon in the House of Lords, the Duke repeated the statement attributed to his colleague.

"If my right honourable friend had entered into any such corrupt bargain as he was represented to describe, he would have tarnished his own fame as much as I should have disgraced mine. No guarantee was required, and none was given on my part."

Huskisson afterwards explained to the House of Commons that he had been misunderstood; that the only guarantee he had sought and found was in the composition of the Cabinet itself. Not the less surely had the root of fresh bitterness been planted, nor was it long in bearing fruit.

However, before any outward severance took place, the Government had to deal with two important questions. Disabilities of Dissenters. Under the law as it stood, all persons, before taking any office, civil or military, under the Crown, were required to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the rites of the Church of England; whereby not only Dissenters, but members of the Established Church of Scotland were technically excluded from the public services. Although, this notwithstanding, many Dissenters and Presbyterians actually did hold such offices, they did so in virtue of the annual passage of an Indemnity Act, not inaptly described by Lord John Russell as one "passed yearly to forgive good men for doing good service to their country." Nevertheless,

\* *Civil Despatches*, v. 487.

† *Annual Register*, 1828.

Æt. 58. the system worked smoothly enough, and Dissenters submitted to the Test and Corporation Acts the more willingly because they foresaw in their repeal a precedent for concession to the Roman Catholics. The question, however, having been raised in Parliament in 1827, Lord John Russell took it up in 1828, and his motion was carried against Ministers, although most of them abstained from voting, by a majority of 44. The Government had to choose between resigning office and bringing in a bill to give effect to the resolution of the House of Commons. They adopted the simpler alternative. When Lord Eldon sought to amend the bill in the Lords by inserting a provision requiring every person accepting office to declare himself a Protestant, the Duke of Wellington withstood the amendment, using the memorable words—

“There is no person in this House whose feelings and sentiments are more decided than mine are with respect to the Roman Catholic claims, and I must say that until I see a great change in that question, I must oppose it. But no man, on the other hand, is more determined than I am to give his vote against any proposition, which, like the present, appears to have for its object a fresh enactment against the Roman Catholics.”

The significance of the last part of this quotation is clear enough: the Duke would not hear of anything to preclude Roman Catholics holding commissions in the army: his experience was there to prove that they were as loyal and true as officers of any other persuasion. But the expressions in the first part were affected by that exaggeration to which persons not eminent in public speaking are prone. The Duke's memorandum on the Roman Catholic claims, drawn up in 1825, was in existence to prove how far he was in advance of some of his colleagues in readiness for concession. His speech conveyed far more than it must be believed he intended; it allayed the suspicions of the anti-Catholics at the time; twelve months later it embittered their resentment at having been hoodwinked, as they considered, by the Duke.

For good or for ill—for ill as the Tory party long believed, ANN. 1828.  
 for good as the strictest Conservative is now constrained to admit—the first step had been taken in the long march of reform. The monopoly of the Church of England had been infringed upon, the advanced guard of more formidable invasion. In 1827 the House of Commons had thrown out by a majority of four the bill for the relief of Roman Catholics, in the teeth of Canning's eloquent advocacy; on 12th May, 1828, the same House affirmed a resolution in their favour by a majority of six. Three Cabinet Ministers voted Aye and three voted No, and Peel, feeling it impossible to continue leader of the House in which he was in the minority on "the most important of domestic questions," resolved on resignation at an early date.\* Circumstances, however, immediately followed which induced him to stand fast by the Duke's Ministry. The evil of divided counsels had gone far during the few months the Cabinet had been in existence. The Corn Duties The Corn Duties. had to be dealt with, and the following letter illustrates, perhaps more clearly than anything which has yet been published, how little considerations of revenue actuated the Tory party—how exclusively they were taken up with maintaining wheat at a remunerative price to the home producer.

*The Duke of Wellington to Lord Westmorland.*

"March 23rd, 1828.

"I have had some very disagreeable work with corn; but I hope that we shall bring forth a measure that will answer; though it will not give universal satisfaction, it will be much better than that of last year. The truth is that no measure that can be adopted will insure a high price of corn. If the measure adopted were a positive prohibition, whether by duty or otherwise, up to a certain high price, such as 70s. or 80s., the Gov<sup>t</sup> would be under the necessity of interfering at every moment in order to provide for the supposed wants of the country. . . . I think the proposed measure will give that security for nearly the

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 46.

Æt. 58. monopoly of the home market at a reasonable price, as will revive a trade in British-grown corn."\*

Already, before arriving at a common ground of agreement on the duties, the difference had become so acute that Huskisson took his resignation to the King, and only withdrew it on hearing, at the very time his interview was in progress, that Grant had agreed to compromise the dispute. In consequence, an Act was passed modifying the corn duties to 20s. a quarter when the average price of the quarter went as low as 60s., which landowners then considered the lowest price compatible with the existence of British agriculture.

Corrupt  
boroughs.

The storm was only dispelled in order to reappear in another and wholly unexpected quarter. Liberal as Mr. Canning had been in his views on many subjects, he was immovable on any proposal for change in the constitution of Parliament; and in 1827, when the flagrant corruption prevalent during the elections for Penryn and East Retford † occupied the attention of the House, he firmly opposed the motion for their disfranchisement. An amendment, however, was carried against him, whereby Penryn should lose its two members. The measure did not reach the House of Lords and was dropped; but in 1828 it was introduced again. The Cabinet failed to agree as to the disposal of the seats taken from the peccant boroughs, Peel wishing to swamp their corruption by throwing them into the adjacent hundreds, Huskisson having pledged himself to assign additional members to Manchester and Birmingham. The question was left an open one, with the result that Huskisson, Palmerston, and Lamb voted against their leader in the House of Commons. Immediately after the division, Huskisson wrote to the Duke

\* *Apsley House MSS.*

† It required a pretty strong scandal to disturb the conscience of an unreformed Parliament, and Penryn certainly had managed to supply one. It was proved that the recognised custom was that the two members returned for this village should disburse twenty guineas for every vote given them, so that the elector who voted for both the successful candidates received forty guineas.

to say that he would "lose no time in affording him an opportunity of placing his office in other hands." \* The Duke took Huskisson sharply at his word, and laid the letter before the King, upon which Huskisson wrote to explain that he had not intended to express his own intention of resignation, but merely to put it in the Duke's power to fill his place by making a fresh appointment. Lord Dudley and Lord Palmerston, loyally anxious to avoid a split, tried to convince the Duke that Huskisson had meant only to give him the option of his resignation; but the Duke, weary of perpetual bickerings with his Canningite colleagues, refused to make the slightest overture to retain Huskisson, to whom he wrote in exceedingly cold terms. The only expression in his two letters which could be construed as regretful was one to the effect that the resignation had "surprised him very much, and had given him great concern." † Huskisson's resignation was followed by that of Palmerston, Grant, Dudley, and Lamb. The affair was a blunder from beginning to end, little creditable to the Duke's statecraft. He would have been glad enough to get his colleagues back, but his punctilio, and perhaps a ruffled temper, restrained him from making the first move. "I told Dudley and Palmerston," he said to Croker, at that time Secretary to the Admiralty, "that I had no objection, nay, that I wished, that they and Huskisson could get out of the scrape, but that I begged on my own part to decline taking a roll in the mud with them."

The first thing to do was to replace the retiring Ministers. Sir Henry Hardinge took Palmerston's place at the War Office; another old war-comrade of the Duke's, Sir George Murray, followed Huskisson at the Colonial Office; Lord Aberdeen became Foreign Secretary instead of Lord Dudley; Lord Francis Leveson-Gower Chief Secretary for Ireland in place of Lamb, a berth greatly desired by J. W. Croker; and Vesey Fitzgerald went to the Board of Trade. Of these men the last-named was least known, yet was he destined by

ANN 1828.  
Huskisson  
resigns.

New  
appoint-  
ments to  
the  
Ministry.

\* *Civil Despatches*, iv. 449.

† *Ibid.*, 449.

ÆT. 59. a strange chance to become the most conspicuous figure in the crisis. A wealthy Irish landlord, he had always supported the Roman Catholic claims, and, in vacating his seat for County Clare on taking office, nobody dreamt of any obstacle to his return.

"We are going on very well here," wrote the Duke to his brother Henry, who had been raised to the peerage as Lord Cowley and was Minister at Vienna; "the Government is very popular, and indeed there is but little opposition."\*

The Clare election.

There ensued a prodigy and a portent. The Duke had no suspicion of the mine that was about to be sprung on his Ministry. Daniel O'Connell, with the whole Catholic Association perfectly organised at his back, with dramatic suddenness stepped into the ring as candidate for County Clare. Fitzgerald, after maintaining for some days† a contest which was hopeless from the moment his opponent appeared, threw up the sponge, and left the seat in possession of the Roman Catholic champion. O'Connell being debarred on account of his religion from taking the oaths, and thereby from taking his seat in the Imperial Parliament, the Roman Catholic question at once acquired an urgency which it had never possessed before. The franchise of Ireland was much wider than that of Great Britain. The forty-shilling freeholders, admitted by the Act of 1793, practically included the mass of the small tenantry of Ireland; hitherto they had voted with their landlords, but now it was clear that they were at the beck of the priests. What had happened in Clare would be repeated in every county in Ireland except in Ulster. Peel, as Home Secretary, was specially concerned, as the Cabinet was constituted in those days, with the affairs of Ireland.

"However men might differ," he wrote, "as to the consequences which ought to follow the event, no one denied its vast

\* *Civil Despatches*, iv. 499.

† At that period the polling-booths were kept open for fourteen days.

importance. It was foreseen by the most intelligent men that the Clare election would be the turning-point in the Catholic question, the point *ubi se via findit in ambas*.\* ANN. 1828.

Henceforth the Irish constituencies, hitherto returning three Tories for every Whig member, would send to Parliament nominees of the Catholic Association in the same proportion. Disfranchise the forty-shilling freeholder, cried irresponsible Tories, forgetting the impossibility of persuading the House of Commons to such a reactionary course. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Anglesey, was no coward; maimed of a leg at Waterloo, he was not the man to quail in the presence of danger, real or imaginary; yet he wrote to warn the Government that they were on the eve of civil war.

"There may be rebellion. You may put to death thousands. You may suppress it; but it will only be to put off the day of compromise. . . . The present order of things must not, cannot last. There are three modes of proceeding. 1st: That of trying to go on as we have done. 2ndly: To adjust the question by concession and such guards as may be deemed indispensable. 3rdly: To put down the Association and to crush the power of the priest..

"The 1st I hold to be impossible.

"The 2nd is practicable and advisable.

"The 3rd is only possible by supposing that you can reconstruct the House of Commons; and to suppose that is to suppose that you can totally alter the feelings of those who send them there. . . . I abhor the idea of truckling to the overbearing Catholic demagogues . . . but I do most conscientiously and after the most earnest consideration of the subject, give it as my conviction that the first moment of composure and tranquillity should be seized to signify the intention of adjusting the question." †

This letter was laid before the Cabinet by Peel, and it was determined that the King should see it. Peel, a consistent

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 47.

† *Civil Despatches*, iv. 521.

Æt. 59. opponent of Roman Catholic claims, announced his opinion to the Duke that the time was come when the question must be taken up and settled by concession, but he added that, in view of his past record, his was not the hand to conduct such a measure through the House of Commons. He volunteered his retirement from office, promising his hearty support to "a measure of ample concession and relief," and enclosing the draft of what he considered such a measure should be. Simultaneously with this declaration, which was dated 11th August, Mr. Dawson, member for Derry, brother-in-law of Mr. Peel, one of the staunchest Tories and hitherto most resolute in opposing concession, made a speech to his constituents in which he told them his conviction that resistance could be carried no further and that the disabilities must be removed. Wellington, retiring to Cheltenham to drink the waters, told Peel that he would be prepared to discuss the situation with him and Lord Lyndhurst in the month of September. That his mind was already made up is clear from the existence not only of a memorandum on the state of Ireland, submitted to the King on 1st August,\* showing the necessity of measures for the pacification of that country, but also of another long memorandum describing the nature of these measures, which, although prepared before 7th August for presentation to the King, was withheld on account of his Majesty's ill health till 16th November.

The Duke  
undertakes  
Roman  
Catholic  
emancipa-  
tion.

It has been commonly supposed and frequently stated that the Duke of Wellington was converted on the Roman Catholic question by the apprehension of a rebellion in Ireland. It is doing him a grievous injustice to associate his action with any such motive. He entertained, it is true, a passionate horror of civil war, but no man was less likely to alter his course under terrorism. His true motive was briefly expressed in a letter to Lord Camden written on 31st March, 1829, the day the Emancipation Bill came before the House of Lords, one of many written in answer to objections raised to the

\* *Civil Despatches*, v. 565.



change of policy. Lord Camden had written to tell the Duke ANN. 1828. that Lord Chatham considered the time unfavourable for dealing with the question.

"I don't know whether this letter will answer Lord Chatnam's objection as to the time. The truth is there was no time to be lost. Matters were getting worse every day. I don't think they were tending directly to rebellion. The leading agitators were too well aware of the relative strength of the parties, and of their own peril, to venture upon that extremity. But the state of society was becoming worse daily, and we should very soon have had the resident Protestants crying out for a settlement." \*

Another misconception of the true course of events is that under which warm admirers of the Duke attribute his changed attitude on emancipation to the timid counsels of Peel. Certainly Peel was not so bold as the Duke on this question, not in that he was more disposed than he to yield to the Roman Catholics, but because he hesitated to go so far. He had much rather have resigned his office than undertaken concession; it was fidelity to and confidence in his chief that induced him to face the task; having faced it, his influence on the Duke's scheme was to diminish its scope and to shear from it some of its most valuable safeguards. The Duke was prepared to subsidise the Irish priesthood to the extent of £300,000 a year; Peel could not approve of setting up a dual Church establishment in Ireland. In other respects the draft was modified to reconcile it to Peel's assent, and the measure submitted to Parliament was far less thorough and effective than the Duke, if single-handed, would have made it.

Reflection during his retirement at Cheltenham confirmed the Duke in his judgment that the position of a Cabinet, divided on what had become the chief question in domestic politics, was no longer tenable. None knew better than he

\* *Civil Despatches*, v. 561.

Æt. 59. the hazards of retreat in the presence of an enemy; almost more hazardous was a change of front. Yet the front must be changed before the next general election, else the Roman Catholic forces would be strengthened so as to carry all his defences. Steadily, silently, the Duke came to the conclusion that the King must be brought to brook concession. Did this imply any sacrifice of principle on the Duke's part? The answer must be—None. It has been shown that his private opinion had long been far from hostile to concession; practically it was identical with that of William Pitt, although he did not feel so strongly about it as to allow, as Mr. Pitt did, the King's opposition to concession to drive him out of office. Better, as we judge him now, had he done so; better for his reputation for consistency; better for his standing with anti-Catholic Tories who reposed their entire trust in him, and were filled with rage and dismay at his desertion of the post.

Having made up his mind that the position must be abandoned, the Duke set to work with Lyndhurst and Peel to arrange the order of retreat. But he allowed no suspicion of what was coming to leak out: just as when compelled to fall back from Quatre-Bras he concealed his movement to the last moment, so up to the close of 1828 all the indications pointed to defending what Peel and he had come to the conclusion was indefensible. Curtis, the Roman Catholic bishop of Armagh, for whom the Duke had conceived a high esteem, fully reciprocated, in the far-off days of Salamanca wrote earnestly and reasonably, urging that the question might be taken up and dealt with;\* the Duke replied that he was indeed sincerely anxious to witness a settlement, but that party had become mixed up with the matter to such an extent that he saw no prospect of one.† The troops in Ireland were reinforced and more guns sent over there. Lord Anglesey, who had shown some indiscreet encouragement towards members of the Catholic Association, was

\* *Civil Despatches*, v. 308.

† *Ibid.*, 326.

deprived of office, and the Lord Lieutenancy was conferred ANN. 1829.  
 on the Duke of Northumberland, who, having always voted  
 against the Roman Catholic claims, was not suspected of  
 entertaining the really enlightened views he expressed to  
 the Duke of Wellington on accepting the office.\* All the  
 symptoms on the surface indicated an inflexible policy of  
 repression; yet all the time, as often as the King's health  
 allowed of his attending to business, the Duke pressed on  
 him, by letter and interview, the necessity for giving up the  
 policy of *non possumus*. He wrung from his Majesty a  
 reluctant consent to lay his scheme of relief before the  
 Bishops; they proved as hostile as the King himself to  
 a settlement, or any attempt thereat.

The month of January arrived, and apparently no progress  
 had been made. The Duke was fighting almost single-  
 handed, for he had lost his Canningite colleagues in the  
 Cabinet—the great advocates of concession; Anglesey had  
 been recalled from Ireland, and Peel only held office pro-  
 visionally. Still the Duke worked incessantly with the  
 King.

"I make it a rule," he told Charles Greville, "never to  
 interrupt him, and when by turning the conversation he tries to  
 get rid of a subject in the way of business that he does not like,  
 I let him talk himself out, and then quietly put before him the  
 matter in question, so that he cannot escape from it."

At last Peel put his shoulder to the wheel.

"Being convinced that the Catholic question must be settled  
 and without delay: being resolved that no act of mine should  
 obstruct or retard its settlement; impressed with the strongest  
 feelings of attachment to the Duke of Wellington, of admira-  
 tion of his upright conduct and intentions as Prime Minister,  
 of deep interest in the success of an undertaking on which he  
 had entered from the purest motives and from the highest sense  
 of public duty; I determined not to insist on retirement from

\* *Civil Despatches*, v. 453.

Æt. 59. office, but to make to the Duke the voluntary offer of that official co-operation which he scrupled, from the influence of kind and considerate feelings, to require from me." \*

Peel assents to emancipation, and the King gives way.

Parliament was to meet on 6th February; on 12th January Mr. Peel drew up a memorandum to the King, strongly setting forth the reasons which had convinced him that the time had come when the barrier should be removed which prevented the Cabinet from considering the Catholic question. The poor King's last support had broken down; Peel—"Orange" Peel as the staunchness of his Protestant convictions had caused him to be named—had deserted the cause; the Duke of Cumberland, luckily for the public peace was abroad; his Majesty had no one but the Bishops to help him against his masterful servants—even among the Bishops Winchester was found advocating concession,† and the King succumbed. On 1st February he signed the draft of the Speech from the Throne, in which, after asking Parliament for additional powers for the repression of disorder in Ireland he was made to say—

"His Majesty recommends . . . that you should take into your deliberate consideration the whole condition of Ireland, and that you should review the laws which impose disabilities on his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects."

The bitterness of surrender was mitigated only by the mention of concurrent measures to disfranchise the Irish forty-shilling freeholder, and to regulate the assumption of ecclesiastical titles by Roman Catholics.

This must be regarded as the greatest of Wellington's acts as a Minister. No other man in England could have turned King George from the one principle to which he clung with all the intensity of his nature—from the one conviction he held from conscientious scruples. Well might Charles

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 79. † *Civil Despatches*, v. 436-440. ‡ *Ibid.*, 324.

Greville pronounce that the Duke was in a higher position ANN. 1829. than any subject had touched in modern times.

“He treats the King as an equal, and the King stands entirely in awe of him. . . . Whatever he may be, he is at this moment one of the most powerful Ministers this country has ever seen. The greatest Ministers have been compelled to bow to the King, or the aristocracy, or the Commons, but he commands them all.”

It needed all the strength of this ascendancy to stand the storm which arose on the announcement of the Government programme. The Tories were furious at what they denounced as their betrayal; all over the country the stout Protestant feeling was in arms. Peel pressed the Irish Coercion Bill through all its stages, the Opposition assenting on the faith of the Relief Bill which was to follow, and then gave his constituents an opportunity of pronouncing on his conduct by vacating his seat for Oxford. He was defeated at the Peel's defeat at Oxford. poll by 755 votes to 609, and was driven to seek refuge in the small rotten borough of Westbury, where he escaped another reverse only because his Protestant opponent came late upon the field. The Duke of Beaufort and Lord Westmorland both evinced their disapproval of the new departure by declining the office of Lord Privy Seal; Sir Charles Wetherell, the Attorney-General, refused to draft the bill, or to be any party to legislation of which his conscience disapproved, but was permitted, for the nonce, to retain office.

In the middle of February the Duke of Cumberland returned to England. Wellington, foreseeing unmixed mischief from his presence at the King's ear, had earnestly counselled him to stay away. “Your Royal Highness has been already so much mixed up in discussions on the Roman Catholic question that you cannot avoid interfering.” \* The remonstrance was in vain, and, personal difference arising, all intercourse shortly ceased between the King's brother and the Prime Minister.

\* *Civil Despatches*, v. 483.

**Æt. 59.** On 3rd March Peel gave notice that on the 8th he would make known what the Government proposed in regard to the clause in the King's Speech referring to the removal of disabilities. Next morning his Majesty sent for the Duke and Lord Lyndhurst, and Mr. Peel to Windsor, and desired an explanation of the proposed measure. The Duke of Cumberland had been diligent with his Majesty, had persuaded him that the Tories were strong enough to form a Protestant administration by themselves, and that nothing ought to induce him to violate his coronation oath by consenting to concessions to Roman Catholics. The interview between King George and his Ministers was a most distressing one. Peel, being in charge of the bill, proceeded to explain it to the King, who interrupted him by constant digressions upon irrelevant subjects, and was as often brought back to the point by the Duke. When they arrived at the clause framed to repeal the transubstantiation test and to modify the oath of supremacy, the King, loudly protesting that he had been misled and deceived,\* refused to give the Royal assent to such a measure, and asked Peel how he intended to act in the House of Commons under such circumstances. Peel replied that he should announce on the morrow his regret that it had been taken out of his power to bring forward the promised Relief Bill in his official capacity, as he had no longer the honour of being his Majesty's Minister. The Duke and Lord Lyndhurst likewise made their resignations, and the King closed the interview, which had lasted five hours and a half, by dismissing his Ministers with a kiss on each cheek.

The King  
changes  
his mind.

The Prime Minister, the Lord Chancellor, and the Home Secretary then returned to London out of office. That night there was a Cabinet dinner at Lord Bathurst's, where, of course, the situation was closely discussed. All concluded that the Government was out, except the Duke.

"Don't be afraid," said he; "before to-morrow morning

\* *Salisbury MSS.*

depend upon it I shall hear from the King again." \* The ANN. 1829.  
 words were scarcely spoken before the Duke was summoned The King  
 home to receive a letter from the King. withdraws  
 his assent.

"Windsor Castle, Wednesday evening,

"8 o'clock, 4th March, 1829.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—As I find the country would be left without an administration, I have decided to yield my opinion to *that* which is considered by the Cabinet to be for the immediate interests of the country. Under these circumstances you have my consent to proceed as you propose with the measure. God knows what pain it costs me to write these words.

"G. R."

*The Duke of Wellington to the King.*

"London, 4th March, 1829, at midnight.

"I have just received your Majesty's most gracious letter of 8 p.m., and I assure your Majesty that I sincerely lament the necessity which exists for urging your Majesty to sanction measures the adoption of which appears to occasion your Majesty so much pain. Mr. Peel will proceed with the Bills to-morrow, in the full confidence and with the full understanding that your Majesty's servants have your sanction and support, and that your Majesty will go through with us. I entreat your Majesty to give your gracious approbation to my letter of the 2nd instant, containing the Minute of Cabinet; or to inform me if my understanding of your Majesty's letter of this afternoon is not correct. Which is humbly submitted, etc.

"WELLINGTON."

*The King to the Duke of Wellington.*

"Windsor Castle, Thursday morning, quarter-past 7,

"from my bed, 5th March, 1829.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am awakened by the messenger with your letter, and as I know that you are much pressed for time, I send him off again immediately. *You have put the right construction upon the meaning of my letter of last evening; but, at the*

\* *Salisbury MSS.*

ÆT. 59. — same time, I cannot disguise from you that my feelings of distrust in consequence are such as I do scarcely know how to suppress myself under them.

“G. R.”

The Bill  
before Par-  
liament.

The Emancipation Bill went forward with the hearty support of the Opposition. Brougham agreed to the current disfranchisement of the forty-shilling freeholder, “the price, as the high price, as the all but extravagant price of this inestimable good. That price, to obtain that good, he, for one, would most willingly pay.” The first reading was carried by 348 votes to 160, the minority consisting of the irreconcilable Tories. Among them were two members of the Government, the Attorney-General and Lord Lowthion. The latter was the son of Lord Lonsdale—the “cat-o’-nine tails,” so named because he returned nine members to Parliament, obedient to himself. The Prime Minister, equally unwilling to forfeit irrevocably Lord Lonsdale’s support, and to bring about by-elections at such a critical time, allowed his recalcitrant subordinates to retain office; but on the second reading Sir Charles Wetherell made such a violent attack upon his colleagues that a few days later the Duke dismissed him from office.\* Greville gives currency to the report that Wetherell was drunk when he made this speech: “When he speaks, he unbuttons his braces, and in his vehement action his breeches fall down and his waistcoat runs up, so that there is a great interregnum.” The Speaker observed afterwards that Wetherell’s only lucid interval was between his waistcoat and breeches.

In the Commons, however, despite Wetherell’s escapade and the stiffness of the Old Tories, the Emancipation Bill was in the house of its friends; the real ordeal awaited it in the other Chamber. Macaulay, discussing its prospects there with Lord Clarendon, speculated how the Duke would explain his altered opinions and justify the bill. “Oh, that will be simple enough,” replied Clarendon. “He’ll say, ‘My lords

\* *Civil Despatches*, v. 547.



Attention! Right about face! Quick march!' and the thing will be done." ANN. 1829

My lords, as the event proved, obeyed the command with surprising alacrity, but not before an unpleasant incident took place, characteristic of the times. On 14th March a letter appeared in the *Standard* newspaper signed "Winchilsea and Nottingham," referring to the King's College of London, an institution which he and other supporters of the Church of England had founded in 1828 in the intention of establishing an educational counterpoise to the freethinking and radical influence of the London University.

The Duke's  
duel with  
Lord Win-  
chilsea.

"I was one of those who at first thought the proposed plan might be practicable, and prove an antidote to the principles of the London University. I was not, however, very sanguine in my expectations, seeing many difficulties likely to arise in the execution of the suggested arrangement, and I confess that I felt rather doubtful of the sincerity of the motives of some of the prime movers in this undertaking, when I considered that the noble Duke at the head of his Majesty's Government had been induced on this occasion to assume a new character, and to step forward as the public advocate of religion and morality. Late political events have convinced me that the whole transaction was intended as a blind to the Protestant and High Church party; that the noble Duke, who had for some time previous to the period determined upon breaking in upon the Constitution of 1688, might the more effectually, under the cloak of some outward show of zeal for the Protestant religion, carry on his insidious designs for the infringement of our liberties, and the introduction of Popery in every department of the State."

The Duke's attention having been called to this letter, the following correspondence ensued:—

*The Duke of Wellington to the Earl of Winchilsea.*

London, 16th March, 1829.

"MY LORD,—I have just perused in the *Standard* newspaper of this day, a letter addressed to Henry Nelson Coleridge,

ÆT. 59. Esq., dated Eastwell Park, March 14th, 1829, signed *Winchilsea and Nottingham*; and I shall be very much obliged to your Lordship if you will let me know whether that letter was written by you and published by your authority.

"I have the honour to be, etc.,

"WELLINGTON."

*The Earl of Winchilsea to the Duke of Wellington.*

"Eastwell Park, Ashford, 18th March, 1829.

"MY LORD,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Grace's letter of the 16th instant, and I beg to inform you that the letter addressed to H. N. Coleridge, Esq., was inserted in the *Standard* by my authority. As I had publicly given my approbation and sanction to the establishment of King's College, London, last year, by becoming a subscriber to it, I thought it incumbent upon me in withdrawing my name, also, to publicly state my reasons for so doing.

"I have the honour to be, etc.,

"WINCHILSEA AND NOTTINGHAM."

*The Duke of Wellington to the Earl of Winchilsea.*

"London, 18th March, 1829.

"MY LORD,—I have had the honour of receiving your Lordship's letter of the 18th instant. Your Lordship is certainly the best judge of the mode to be adopted in withdrawing your name from the list of the subscribers to King's College. In doing so, however, it does not appear necessary to impute to me, in measured terms, disgraceful and criminal motives for my conduct in the part which I took in the establishment of the college. No man has a right, whether in public or private, by speech, in writing, or in print, to insult another by attributing to him motives for his conduct, public or private, which disgrace or criminate him. If a gentleman commits such an act indiscreetly in the heat of debate, or in a moment of party violence, he is always ready to make reparation to him whom he may thus have injured. I am convinced your Lordship will, upon reflection, be

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THE RIGHT HON. SIR HENRY HARDINGE, G.C.B., M.P.,  
AFTERWARDS FIELD-MARSHAL VISCOUNT HARDINGE.

[Vol. II. p. 232.]



anxious to relieve yourself from the pain of having thus insulted ANN. 1829.  
a man who never injured or offended you.

"I have the honour to be, etc.,

"WELLINGTON."

The last letter was carried by Sir Henry Hardinge to Lord Winchilsea, with instructions to demand an apology. This Lord Winchilsea declined, though he offered to express regret for having mistaken the Duke's motives, provided the Duke would declare that when he presided at the meeting for the establishment of King's College, he had not in contemplation a measure of Roman Catholic relief. He appointed Lord Falmouth to conduct further communications with Sir Henry Hardinge acting for the Duke. The Duke, however, wrote once more to Lord Winchilsea.

"London, 20 March, 1829, 6½ p.m.

"MY LORD,—Sir Henry Hardinge has communicated to me a memorandum signed by your Lordship, dated 1 p.m., and a note from Lord Falmouth dated 3 p.m.

"Since the insult, unprovoked on my part, and not denied by your Lordship, I have done everything in my power to induce your Lordship to make me reparation;—but in vain. Instead of apologising for your own conduct, your Lordship has called upon me to explain mine. The question for me now to decide is this. Is a gentleman who happens to be the King's Minister to submit to be insulted by any gentleman who thinks proper to attribute to him disgraceful or criminal motives as an individual? I cannot doubt of the decision which I ought to make on this question. Your Lordship is alone responsible for the consequences.

"I now call upon your Lordship to give me that satisfaction for your conduct which a gentleman has a right to require, and which a gentleman never refuses to give.

"I have the honour, etc.,

"WELLINGTON."

A meeting having been arranged to take place the following morning in Battersea Fields,\* Hardinge desired Dr.

\* Not at Wimbledon as Charles Greville has it, vol. i. p. 192.

Æt. 59. Hume to be in attendance. The good man only knew that it was an affair of honour between gentlemen. In the interesting report of the circumstances which he drew up for the Duchess of Wellington, he has given an amusing description of his dismay when the Duke himself rode up with Hardinge.

"Well, doctor," said the Duke, laughing, "I dare say you little expected it was I who wanted you to be here."

"Indeed, my lord," replied the doctor, in great agitation, "you certainly are the last person I should have expected to see here."

"Ah, perhaps so," returned the Duke; "but it was impossible to avoid it; you will see by-and-by that I had no alternative, and could not have done otherwise."

The Duke, strange to say, had no duelling pistols; more strangely, it was the doctor who produced a pair for use, and afterwards loaded them, Hardinge having lost his arm at the battle of Ligny. Lords Winchilsea and Falmouth arrived late; their coachman having driven them to Putney Bridge instead of Battersea Bridge.

The five gentlemen walked across the first field to the fence on the other side, where, perceiving some people at work, they crossed a ditch into a second field.

"Now then, Hardinge," said the Duke, as soon as his opponent was on the ground, "look sharp and step out on the ground. I have no time to waste. Damn it!" he continued, "don't stick him up so near the ditch. If I hit him he will tumble in." \*

The gentlemen having taken their places, Hardinge advanced halfway between them, and summoned Lord Winchilsea and Lord Falmouth to listen to his protest against pushing matters any further, and a discussion ensued which certainly seems inconsistent with the traditional punctilio observed on such occasions. Hardinge represented the Duke

\* Not in Dr. Hume's narrative, though he mentions the ditch, but told him to the late Admiral Sir G. Seymour. The exact spot is supposed to have been in the hollow now filled by the Ladies' Pond.

Wellington, who was the challenger, and surely remonstrance ANN. 1829. at this stage on his part was not a little anomalous. However, it led to nothing; and Sir Henry, pointing to some people who had collected at the end of the field and were viewing the proceedings with curiosity, said, "We had better take our ground. The sooner this affair is over the better."

The seconds then stepped back: Lord Falmouth asked Sir Henry to give the signal, who, after a few seconds, called out, "Gentlemen, are you ready—Fire!"

The Duke levelled his pistol at once, but seeing that Lord Winchilsea did not move, seemed to hesitate for a moment and then purposely fired wide of him.\* Lord Winchilsea, smiling, then raised his arm and fired in the air. The Duke stood on his ground, but Lord Winchilsea and Lord Falmouth came towards Hardinge, and Falmouth said that his principal, having received the Duke's fire, was now in a position to make the reparation required. He then took a paper from his pocket and began reading it. The Duke, having drawn nearer, exclaimed in a low voice, "This won't do; it's no apology." Sir Henry then took the paper, walked aside with the Duke, and returned presently, saying, "My Lord Falmouth, it is needless to prolong this discussion. Unless the word *apology* is inserted, we must resume our ground." Further consultation took place, which ended in Lord Falmouth inserting in pencil the words "in apology" in the expression of regret already tendered, which was accepted as satisfactory, and the gentlemen exchanged formal salutes. Lord Falmouth, who had been in much agitation throughout the affair, then began to give to the Duke an explanation of his conduct, saying that he had always told Lord Winchilsea he was completely in the wrong.

"My Lord Falmouth," said the Duke, interrupting him,

\* *Brialmont*, iii. 361. It ought to be recorded that Lord Winchilsea had written to Lord Falmouth overnight to say that it was his determination not to fire at the Duke, and that after the first fire he should offer the expression of regret which he would then be ready to make (*Civil Despatches*, v. 539, note).

Æt. 59. "I have nothing to do with these matters." Then, touching the brim of his hat with two fingers, he added, "Good morning, my Lord Winchilsea; good morning, my Lord Falmouth," mounted his horse, and rode off with Sir Henry Hardinge, leaving Dr. Hume to pack up the pistols.

The Duke's  
justifica-  
tion of  
himself.

The affair was over with less mischief than might have ensued, a curious interlude in the hurricane of wordy warfare with which the country was torn; but no notice of it, however brief, would be complete without mention of the justification which the Duke offered to persons who took him to task for his conduct in it. A long lecture from Jeremy Bentham, beginning "Ill-advised Man!" and calling on him to stand up in his place in the House of Lords, confess his error, declare his repentance and his resolve never under any provocation again to give or receive a challenge, is summarily minutated "Compliments. The Duke has received his letter. But in reply to a remonstrance from the Duke of Buckingham he entered into full explanation.

—London, 21st April, 1829.

"MY DEAR DUKE,—I am very much obliged to you for your letter of the 6th, which I received this morning. The truth is that the duel with Lord Winchilsea was as much part of the Roman Catholic question, and it was as necessary to undertake it and carry it to the extremity to which I did carry it, as it was to do everything else which I did do to attain the object which I had in view. I was living for some time in an atmosphere of calumny. I could do nothing that was not misrepresented as having some base purpose in view. If my physician called upon me, it was for treasonable purposes. If I said a word, whether in Parliament or elsewhere, it was misrepresented for the purpose of fixing upon me some gross delusion or falsehood. Even my conversations with the King were repeated, misrepresented, and commented upon; and all for the purpose of shaking the credit which the public were inclined to give to what I said. The courts of justice were shut, and not to open till May. I knew that the Bill must pass or be lost before the 15th of April. In this state



of things Lord Winchilsea published his furious letter. I immediately perceived the advantage it gave me; and I determined to act upon it in such a tone as would certainly put me in the right. Not only was I successful in the execution of my project, but the project itself produced the effect which I looked for and intended that it should produce. The atmosphere of calumny in which I had been for some time living cleared away. The system of calumny was discontinued. Men were ashamed of repeating what had been told to them; and I have reason to believe, moreover, that intentions not short of criminal were given up in consequence of remonstrances from some of the most prudent of the party, who came forward in consequence of the duel. I am afraid that the event itself shocked many good men. But I am certain that the public interests at the moment required that I should do what I did. Everything is now quiet; and in Ireland we have full reason to be satisfied. We must, however, lose no time in doing everything else that is possible to promote the prosperity of that country."\*

ANN. 1829.

The Relief Bill came before the Lords on 31st March. The most practised politicians could form no estimate of its prospects. The Princes were divided; the Bishops were divided; the King made no secret of his hopes that the measure would be thrown out, and he was bombarded by innumerable petitions from Protestants in the country. The speech of the Duke of Clarence, the heir presumptive to the throne, had been strongly in favour of the bill, and the Duke of Cumberland told the King that it was believed outside to represent his Majesty's real feelings. This made the King very angry; in private audiences, to which he admitted the heads of the Protestant party, he constantly represented himself as having been misled and forced into measures for relief of the Catholics, and he even went so far as to write a letter to that effect to Lord Eldon, with a request that it should not be published till after his (the King's) death.†

The Relief  
Bill in the  
Lords.\* *Civil Despatches*, v. 585.† *Salisbury MSS.*

**Æt. 59.** "If I had known in January, 1828," wrote the Duke a months later to Sir W. Knighton, "one tithe of what I do and of what I discovered in one month after I was in office should never have been the King's Minister, and should I avoided loads of misery! However, I trust that God Almighty will soon determine that I have been sufficiently punished my sins, and will relieve me from the unhappy lot which befallen me. I believe there never was a man suffered so much and for so little purpose." \*

The King told the Duke that he might have his way so as passing the Emancipation Bill through Parliament, that the Royal Assent would be withheld. This the Duke plainly told the King would be a dishonourable proceeding both to Ministers and to the Opposition, seeing that the Coercion Bill had been allowed to pass only on the faith the Emancipation Bill to follow. The King had no alternative but to fulfil his pledge or to find new Ministers, which as even the Duke of Cumberland admitted, "could not be done in a few hours." †

The Emancipation Bill in the Lords. The Emancipation Bill came before the Lords for second reading on 2nd April; the division took place after three days' debate, in which Lord Eldon and the Archbishop of Canterbury led the opposition. The result justified Lord Clarendon's estimate of their lordships' discipline: the second reading was carried by a majority of 105—217 votes to 112. Out of twenty-nine Bishops voting, ten supported the bill. On 10th April the bill passed the third reading in the Lords; it was taken down to Windsor on the 11th, returned on the 12th with the Royal Assent; Parliament adjourned for the Easter holidays on the 16th, reassembled on the 28th, on which day for the first time since the Revolution, Roman Catholic peers took the oaths and their seats in the House of Lords.

\* *Civil Despatches*, vi. 294

† *Ibid.*

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE EVE OF REFORM.

1830-1831.

March 26, 1830.	Defeat of the Government on the Estimates.	November 15 . .	Defeat of the Government and resignation of Ministers.
April 5 . . . . .	Defeat of the Government on the Jews Relief Bill.	„ 20 . .	Lord Grey forms a Ministry.
June 26 . . . . .	Death of George IV. The Duke desires to retire.	March 21, 1831.	The first Reform Bill.
	William IV. keeps the old Ministry.	April 19 . . . .	Defeat of the Government.
	General election.		Dissolution of Parliament.
November 1 . .	Overtures from the Whigs and Canningites.	„ 25 . . . .	Death of the Duchess of Wellington.
„ 2 . .	The Duke puts down his foot on Reform.	„ 27 . . . .	The windows of Apsley House broken by the Reform mob.

PERSONALLY, as well as politically, the Duke had to pay a heavy penalty for dealing with the Roman Catholic claims. Some of his oldest associates and political supporters ranged themselves against him ; his Government was carried on by means of the precarious support of the Whigs ; the solid earth seemed to have failed beneath the feet of the Old Tories when their champions, Wellington and Peel, turned aside from the course they had steered for so many years. Regarding these men merely as supporters, the Duke may be supposed to have endured the parting without

The Duke's position after the Emancipation Act.

Æt. 60. great pain. It was the cost reckoned in advance of carrying on the King's Government in the only possible way. "The party!" exclaimed he to Lady Salisbury when, on a later occasion, she expressed apprehension of a split in the party. "The party! What is the meaning of a party if they do not follow their leaders? Damn 'em! let 'em go!" \*

In respect, however, to some old comrades and personal friends his feelings must have been acute, though it never led him to allow outward expression. Lord Anglesey, for instance, who, as Lord Uxbridge, had headed the cavalry at Waterloo so ably, so gallantly, and with such splendid effect, complained bitterly of his treatment. He had been removed from the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland on account of undue encouragement to the Roman Catholic agitation; five days later the Government produced a measure concerning the very object of that agitation. One cannot but sympathize with his indignation; yet the Duke could not overlook Anglesey's breach of duty in not administering the law as it stood, instead of anticipating the proximate change therein. The Duke cared nothing for popularity; he knew well that he had resisted the Roman Catholic claims, to quote his own words, "he might have made himself the most popular Minister that ever presided over the councils of a sovereign." But genuinely as he despised the incense of the masses, he was penetrated with a sense of duty in governing them justly and temperately, and, having made up his mind that the concession was just and for the advantage of the people, he neither shrank from the cost nor complained at having to pay it.

There was little at first to recompense Ministers for the effort and sacrifice involved in the emancipation of Roman Catholics. In Ireland the effect of conciliation was neutralized by the discontent arising out of severe agricultural depression. It was shorn of its grace by the refusal of the House of Commons, on technical grounds, to allow O'Connell to take

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1838.

his seat for Clare; \* the small freeholders were sore at being ANN. 1830  
disfranchised, the Protestants at being robbed of their  
supremacy. The practice of absenteeism became more general.  
From his earliest acquaintance with Irish politics Wellington  
had never ceased to deplore the effects of this evil; as head  
of the Government he was watchful in his endeavours to  
stem it.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Duke of Northumberland.*

"April, 1830.

" . . . If we cannot enforce residence in Ireland we must at  
least endeavour to encourage it, and this can be done only by  
prevailing upon the King to adhere to the rule of granting Irish  
offices, honours and distinctions only to those resident in that  
country. I have invariably adhered to this rule." † . . .

"7th July.

"I confess that the annually recurring starvation in Ireland  
for a period differing, according to the goodness or badness of  
the season, from one week to three months, gives me more un-  
casiness than any other evil existing in the United Kingdom. . . .  
It occurs every year for that period of time that elapses between  
the final consumption of one year's crop of potatoes, and the  
coming of the crop of the following year, and it is long or short  
according as the previous season has been bad or good. Now,  
when this misfortune occurs, there is no relief or mitigation,  
excepting a recourse to publick money. The proprietors of the  
country, those who ought to think for the people, to foresee this  
misfortune, and to provide beforehand a remedy for it, are  
amusing themselves in the clubs in London, in Cheltenham, or  
Bath, or on the Continent, and the Government are made  
responsible for the evil, and they must find the remedy for it  
where they can—anywhere excepting in the pockets of the Irish  
gentlemen. Then, if they give publick money to provide a  
remedy for this distress, it is applied to all purposes excepting

\* Relief under the Act was limited to those Roman Catholic members who  
should be returned after it had become law.

† *Apsley House MSS.*

Art. 60. the one for which it is given ; and most particularly to that one, viz. the payment of the arrears of an exorbitant rent. . . . You may rely upon it that you have judged correctly in refraining from giving the publick money to relieve the existing distress. The Irish gentlemen of all ranks must be made to feel, or we shall never have a permanent remedy." \*

In Great Britain, also, distress prevailed in many industries: at Rochdale, Manchester, Bethnal Green, and elsewhere there were formidable riots, and in agricultural districts wages sank to starvation level and poor rates were mounting to an alarming extent. Country gentlemen instinctively relied on the Tories to help them, for the Government was still Tory in name: their expectation was dashed when Parliament met on 4th February, 1830, by the cold comfort contained in the Speech which Ministers prepared for the King.

"It would be most gratifying to the paternal feelings of his Majesty to be enabled to propose measures calculated to relieve the difficulties of any portion of his subjects, and at the same time compatible with the general and permanent interests of his people. It is from a deep solicitude for these interests that his Majesty is impressed with the necessity of acting with extreme caution in reference to this important subject. His Majesty feels assured that you will concur with him in assigning due weight to the effect of unfavourable seasons, and to the operation of other causes which are beyond the reach of legislative control or remedy."

The resentment stirred by this chilly philosophical lecture took an unusual form. Fifteen years had passed since any amendment had been moved in Parliament upon the Speech from the Throne. In the Lords Lord Stanhope, in the Commons Mr. Knatchbull, Tory member for Kent, now moved amendments. The first was easily resisted by the help of the Whig peers; but the second was nearly fatal to the Duke's

\* *Civil Despatches*, vii. 111.

administration. The Government Whips had made up their ANN. 1830. books for defeat, which was only averted by the sudden and unexpected accession of Lord Howick, son of Lord Grey, who, chiefly out of dislike of Brougham, carried with him Hume and the Radicals into the Ministerial lobby. Matters mended for a while after this escape, but the session was marked by the rise of a formidable financial critic in the person of Sir James Graham, who, an industrious student of Adam Smith's writings and an able exponent of economical principles, induced the Government to undertake a revision of salaries, establishments, and pensions with the object of retrenchment in expenditure. The result was that although the national defences were already, in the Duke of Wellington's opinion,\* in a dangerously weakened condition, half a million was pared off the army estimates, and another half million off the estimates for the navy, ordnance, and miscellaneous service. The Government, however, in proposing to abolish some sinecures, thought it incumbent on them to provide pensions for those thrown out of office. Lord Bathurst drew a salary of nearly £4,000 a year as Teller of the Exchequer; Lord Melville one of nearly £3,000 a year as Keeper of the Privy Seal in Scotland. Neither office entailed any work, nor was it proposed to abolish either of them, yet when it was decided to abolish the office of Commissioner of the Navy, held by Lord Melville's son, and that of Commissioner of the Victualling Department, held by Lord Bathurst's son, the Treasury proposed that they should receive respectively pensions of £500 and £400 a year for life. Each official had only held his appointment for less than four years. This was too strong for the stomach even of an unreformed Parliament, and the votes were refused, against the Government, by a majority of sixteen.

The next defeat sustained by the Government, in resisting the introduction of a bill to admit Jews to Parliament, Second defeat of the Government.

\* See his long and elaborate memorandum to Lord Goderich in 1827 (*Civil Despatches*, iv. 106).

**Æt. 60.** revealed to Wellington yet more clearly the disaffection of his old supporters. Peel was away at Drayton, attending his father's death-bed.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Right Hon. Robert Peel.*

"London, 6th April, 1830."

"Goulburn will have written you an account of the disaffection of the House of Commons last night. It came upon me quite unexpected. As far as I could form a judgment from what I heard from others, as well as from what about sixty members of Parliament who dined with me on Saturday and Sunday said, I was inclined to think that we could not have carried the measure if we had wished it. It now appears, however, not only that there are many of our friends in the House in favour of it, but that, as usual, many, pretending that they do not like to oppose a measure for which they should afterward be called upon to vote, etc., stayed away."\*

The Ministry remained in office partly by grace of the King and partly because of its disorganisation. William Tierney, the nominal leader of the Whigs in the House of Commons, died in January, 1830, the party, distrusting the more brilliant Brougham, chose Lord Althorpe to act at the head, who set to work in businesslike fashion to organise the forces. The state of the King's health, however, had the effect of protecting Ministers from a systematic attack.

**The Duke's relations with George IV.** The Duke of Wellington had obtained a great ascendancy over George IV., who was by no means deficient in natural ability, though it was obscured and rendered capricious by his irregular habits of life. He could not fail to value the sterling qualities and unvarying sincerity of his services. During the negotiations for Canning's return to the Cabinet in 1822, in which the Duke took the foremost part, the King wrote to Lord Liverpool from Scotland, agreeing not to meddle with his mind about Canning till he saw his Ministers, and added in a postscript, "Upon no account delay a cert

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 145.



gentleman's departure for India," alluding to Canning's ANN. 1830. appointment as Governor-General. Lord Liverpool read this letter to his colleagues, suppressing the postscript. The other Ministers threatened to resign if Canning were not admitted.

"No," said the Duke, "we will not resign; if possible, we will persuade the King to take Canning; if not, we will do the best we can."

When the King heard this, he said to the Duke, "You are the only one who has treated me like a gentleman. I will follow your advice."\*

The King, however, was always subject to the influence of a steadier will than his own; intercourse with Canning had worked a great change on his feelings towards the Duke, which were greatly, and not unreasonably, embittered by the Duke's behaviour about the command of the army. Then came the Roman Catholic question, bringing on the scene the Duke of Cumberland, whose efforts to destroy the Duke of Wellington's influence were unceasing.† It has been shown above how far they were successful, but in his last illness King George conceived a dislike to the Duke of Cumberland, and it was with difficulty that Wellington persuaded his Majesty to see his brother. Unhappy King! his last days were distraught with suspicion, and disquieted by considerations which one would fain dissociate from a death-bed. Wellington was witness of some strange incidents in the

\* *Salisbury MSS.*

† In justice to the Duke of Cumberland it must be said that his motives in resisting the Duke were entirely founded on his own objections to Catholic emancipation. Writing to Colonel Cooke when the Duke first formed his administration, he said, "I look upon it as a most fortunate event for the country that His Majesty has made choice of the Duke of Wellington for the place of Premier; for, if you remember, when I had the pleasure of seeing you here [Berlin] last summer, I then ventured to say that had I been in England this time last year, when that calamity befell our country of Lord Liverpool's illness, I would have exerted every possible means to have persuaded the Duke then to have accepted his present situation, which, depend upon it, he is completely able to fill; for though not so *eloquent* as Mr. Canning, still, believe me, he is in everything else his *superior*" (*Civil Despatches*, iv. 262).

ÆT. 60. closing scenes.\* It became necessary, as the King weaker, to obtain an Act of Parliament authorising his Majesty to use a stamp, instead of affixing the sign manual to papers submitted by his Ministers. The Duke went down to Windsor to propose this to the King, who said he was too ill to receive him. Sir Henry Halford then walked on the terrace with the Duke. The King, hearing they were together, called his secretary, Sir William Knighton, and said—

“Go and see what that little snivelling fellow my physician has to say to my Prime Minister; find out, and bring me his word. Mind you tell me the truth!”

Incidents  
in George  
IV.'s last  
illness.

Service was read every morning during these last weeks in the King's bedchamber, Lady C—— being present with others, and it was his Majesty's extraordinary favour to pronounce the benediction himself at the close, as he had done in the Church of England. He sent word to Lady C—— by Sir William Knighton that he intended to leave her everything he had. When Sir William returned, “Well,” said the King, “how did she receive it?”

“She was very much affected, sir,” answered Knighton, “and burst into tears.”

“Oh, she did, did she,” was the King's reply; but although he lived six weeks longer, and although Lady C—— took the greatest care that pen and ink should always be at his bedside, the promised will was never made. The Duke of Wellington, who was very frequently at Windsor during his Majesty's illness, took every precaution that the will should not be executed.

Often it has been made the reproach of modern society that so much of its morality is conventional, but it requires an effort to realise that there was a good deal of conventional immorality also previous to the present reign. Puritanical austerity never prevailed to purge continental courts and society to the extent it did in England and Scotland; the Hanoverian dynasty there was reported a code

\* *Salisbury MSS.*

practice which European subjects had grown accustomed to accept as characteristic of monarchy. The great middle class in Britain continued to treat private irregularity as something disreputable, and the example of a pure domestic life set by George III. did much to endear that Sovereign to his people. Unfortunately the evil tradition was revived in the person of his son, who, during two-thirds of his father's long reign, maintained a rival Court according to the old and worst pattern. Royal licentiousness was not only winked at and condoned; receiving a kind of parliamentary sanction by the application of public money to the payment of the Prince Regent's debts, it assumed a semi-official character. Thus it had come to pass in his latter days that, although reduced by disease to a condition in which the orderly, quiet regimen of an invalid would have been natural and easy to George IV., he considered it inconsistent with his credit to be without a chief *liaison*, and scarcely less so to be without a rival. At first he professed to be jealous of Lord Ponsonby, but during his last illness he confided to the Duke of Wellington that his brother Cumberland was supplanting him in Lady C——'s affections. The King often complained, also, to the Duke about Lady C——'s covetousness; "but," said he, "at my age and with my infirmities it is not worth looking out for another."

Wellington's own morality in certain respects was far from rigid; but self-respect—pride, perhaps, were a fitter definition—made him keep his own foibles secret, and caused him to abhor cynical profligacy in others. George IV.'s habits were a severe trial to the Duke, though he admitted that his Majesty was often brilliantly witty in conversation. Of George III. he said to Lady Salisbury that he was the best king England ever had, and understood kingcraft the most thoroughly—a far superior man in real ability to his son, though he had not the same quickness and talent. However, he had no scruple in throwing over his friends or his instruments whenever it suited his purpose. But Wellington

The Duke's  
opinion of  
George III.  
and  
George IV.

ÆT. 61. passed a very different and far severer judgment upon George IV., in terms which that King's harshest censors scarcely exceeded. It avails not to repeat them, spoke they were under the seal of intimate friendship; yet with a knowledge that they *were* spoken—that this judgment pronounced—no man could rightly understand the nature of Wellington's loyalty to the Crown. Mistrusting the monarch and detesting his habits, the Duke never failed in duty to the monarch. Loyalty, esteem, and personal affection had gone hand-in-hand so long in this country, that no public man now living has ever been called upon to exercise the first without the support of the other sentiments. Statesmen are trained, or ought to be trained, to dissociate the Crown from the personal attributes of its wearer; yet in a period when thrones were shaking and institutions crumbling all over Europe, the unpopularity of George IV. added a small burden to the responsibilities of his Ministers.

Death of George IV. The King's last moments were not without dignity. Waking shortly before three on the morning of 26th June, he complained of faintness, and his attendant physician, Wathen Waller, prepared some sal volatile and water. His Majesty could not drink it, and Sir Henry Halford was sent for, but before he entered the room, the King pressed Sir Wathen's hands, saying, in a strong voice, "My boy, this is death." He never spoke again, but peacefully expired a few minutes later.

Relations of the Duke with William IV. With the Duke of Clarence, who succeeded to the throne as William IV., Wellington had passed through some very unpleasant experience, having had, as head of the King's Government, first to reprimand him sharply for the arbitrary exercise of his office of Lord High Admiral, and then to remove him from office altogether. The Duke, therefore, could scarcely expect that he should retain his Majesty's confidence; but King William was gifted with good temper and acted with commendable dignity on assuming the Crown. Bygones with him were bygones; he continued his late brother's Ministers in office, and the Duke found him to

a monarch far more worthy of confidence than George IV. ANN. 1830.  
 Moreover, William had done nothing to earn a share of the late King's unpopularity; indeed, as a sailor he enjoyed that kindly favour which the English people have always shown to those who go down to the sea in ships. All this was well, for the times were entering upon a troubled phase. A cyclone of revolution was raging almost within sound of our shores. In Paris, the attempt of Charles X. and his Minister Polignac ended in the revolution of July, the abdication of the King on 2nd August, and the proclamation of Louis Philippe by the Provisional Government on the 7th. In Belgium, the union with Holland imposed on the Belgians by the Congress of Vienna had never been a comfortable one. The affinities of the Belgians were far more French than Dutch, and scenes as violent as those in Paris began to be enacted in Brussels on 25th August. All the chief towns in Belgium demanded the dissolution of the union; the Prince of Orange, endeavouring to take possession of Brussels, was compelled after four days of street fighting to withdraw his forces to Antwerp. The King of Holland appealed to France and the Allies; a conference of the representatives of the Great Powers, held in London on 4th November, decreed an armistice and the withdrawal of all Dutch troops from Belgium, and the Belgian people obtained their independence.

Revolutions in France and Belgium.

In these disturbances the Duke of Wellington's efforts were consistently directed to the maintenance of constituted authority. Canning had created a popular interest in British foreign policy which it had never possessed before, by imparting thereto a novel character sympathetic with the general revolt against autocracy, a revolt to which Wellington, though a constitutional Minister and faithful to the British constitution as he knew it, would lend no assistance. Liberal institutions, even in the limited sense of pre-reform days, were well enough for Englishmen, but he disbelieved in their safety for Continental nations. Canning had exerted himself to obtain good terms for the Greeks, and had inspired

Æt. 61. many of his countrymen with a generous sympathy for the race with all its noble associations: Wellington, on the contrary, disapproved of Canning's Greek policy; \* the dominant note of his own was the same which, to this day, is so discordantly on Liberal ears, and was concisely expressed in one of his Cabinet memoranda in November, 1830. "The policy of the British Government has invariably been to prevent the overthrow of the Turkish Power in Europe, and the substitution for it of a Russian Power or a Power under Russian influence at Constantinople." †

The Duke had been the principal figure in the great treaty which rearranged the map of Europe in 1815; he had been the chief agent in making such a rearrangement possible, and was not disposed to have any hand in disturbing it out of consideration for national or social aspirations; Legitimists and Conservatives all over the Continent drew courage from his position as Minister of England. For the same reason, even before the first tremours of the great convulsion of Reform made themselves felt, the popular party in Britain had been gradually learning to look upon him as their implacable foe. Lord Durham, who owed his peerage to Wellington's confirmation of Goderich's recommendation, wrote to Brougham about the "odious, insulting, aide-campish, incapable dictatorship," and the struggles for freedom in foreign nations communicated an impulse of discontent and desire for change in the British and Irish constituencies, which augured ill for the prospects of the Government in the elections. Added to all this was the

Beginning  
of the  
Duke's un-  
popularity.

\* "It may be safely said by anybody that I did not approve of the Treaty (of London). The truth is that I did everything I could to prevail upon Mr. Canning not to enter into the Treaty; and he certainly negotiated it, as far as the negotiations went before the illness and secession of Lord Liverpool, without the knowledge of any of his colleagues except myself. But they and we all are highly blamable for having suffered the negotiation to move on after we had, and particularly I had, a knowledge of it" (Letter to Dr. Philpotts: *Civil Despatches*, vii. 170).

† *Civil Despatches*, vii. 335.

‡ *Ibid.*, iv. 188.

prevailing distress, arising, not as in 1816, 1819, and 1822 ANN. 1830. from the dearness of breadstuffs, but from their relative cheapness, which caused farmers to cut down wages, and to the substitution of machinery for hand labour.

The Duke was fully aware of the weakness of his position, and the necessity for reinforcing it by inducing the Canningites to re-enter the Cabinet; but he could not bring himself to invite them back himself. The Duke proposes to resign.

"I think we could get on in the House of Lords," he wrote to Peel on 30th June; "the question is, what is to be done in the House of Commons? I have as little feeling of political animosity as any man, but I don't think that I personally could or ought to sit in a Cabinet again as First Lord of the Treasury with Mr. Huskisson,\* Lord Palmerston, or Mr. Charles Grant. In considering this matter you and I must not look to what is personal to ourselves, but what is necessary for the King's service, and we must make sacrifices to provide for its security. I have long been of opinion that it is desirable that the power of the Government should be concentrated in one hand, and that hand that of the leader of the House of Commons. The affairs of the country cannot now be otherwise conducted with advantage, and I know of no person so capable of conducting them as yourself. I would earnestly urge, therefore, that I should take the opportunity of the King's death to retire from office; that you should undertake the Government as First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, forming your Government as you may think proper, in the several offices. I would support or serve any Government that you might form." †

The weakness of the Government became more apparent after the elections. The Tories, indeed, came back from the country in a majority; but the Old Tories had learnt to distrust Wellington and Peel, and were almost more hostile

\* Six weeks later Mr. Huskisson was killed in the presence of the Duke and Sir Robert Peel at the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway. He had left his seat in the train to shake hands with the Duke, and in returning to it, tripped and fell before a passing engine.

† *Civil Despatches*, vii. 108.

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than the Whigs. Affairs on the Continent had given notable impetus to the demand for parliamentary reform, an extension of the franchise. The Birmingham Political Union had taken its rise out of a gathering early in 1830 of a few persons who desired to repeal the Act of 1801 which established cash payments. Under the leadership of Mr. Attwood, whom Huskisson denounced as an agitator scarcely less formidable than O'Connell, this organisation acquired power and activity in an amazingly short space of time. It requires an effort to remember that under the constitution which gave two members to a corrupt borough or village like Penryn, and representation to many other places equally insignificant, Birmingham and Manchester, the centres of industrial activity in the country, were still not represented in Parliament. As the first step, then, towards obtaining their desires in regard to the currency, the Whig gentlemen turned their efforts to procuring a demand for equitable representation. The agitation—a perfectly constitutional one—spread like a prairie fire. Political unions on similar lines sprang into existence all over the kingdom. It was obvious to Wellington that in order to resist the movement, to which he had no intention of yielding, he must strengthen his Ministry.

Overtures  
from the  
Whigs and  
Canning-  
ites.

It was not so obvious to the Whigs and the public that the Minister who had carried Roman Catholic emancipation would prove inflexible about Reform; accordingly, Arbuthnot became the bearer of important overtures from the Opposition to the Government. Already, in July, 1830, Wellington had overcome his dislike of the Canningites so far as to sound Melbourne and Palmerston upon the feasibility of *rapprochement*, but had received no encouragement.

\* "The Duke told me," wrote Lady Salisbury in her journal, 22nd Oct. 1832, "that he had never regretted but one of the steps he took previous to leaving office in 1830, which was—making an overture to Lord Palmerston to join with the Canningites. Peel insisted upon it, saying that otherwise he could not go on in the House of Commons, and the Duke saw Lord Palmerston



Now, with the result of the general election before them, ANN. 1830. it was the other side who reopened negotiations. Mr. Littleton\* came to Arbuthnot on 1st November, and assured him that all that was necessary to secure the adhesion of Palmerston, Stanley,† Graham, and Grant was a satisfactory understanding on five points, namely, the Civil List, the Regency (in the event of King William's demise), the China trade, Parliamentary Reform, and the abolition of pluralities.

"Upon the subject of Parliamentary Reform the whole difficulty would turn. He (Mr. Littleton) could hardly suppose that the Duke of Wellington was not aware that the general sense of the country was now in favour of a moderate Reform, and he knew that strength to the Government could be obtained by consenting to Lord J. Russell's plan, or even to the giving members now to the three great towns, and hereafter to other great towns, whenever there should be such proof of corruption as would cause the disfranchisement of some borough. . . . In conclusion, he informed me," continues Arbuthnot, "that he had been commissioned by Lady Stafford to say to the Duke of Wellington that unless a moderate Parliamentary Reform was intended by the Government, Lord Stafford and all belonging to him must go into opposition." †

The above is an extract from Arbuthnot's letter to Peel, who must have shown it to Wellington, and taken counsel with him upon it; yet is there not the slightest reference to these friendly overtures in the correspondence of either statesman. On the very next day, the door held open so amicably, so reasonably, was violently slammed in the face of the friendly The Duke puts down his foot.

found his expectations were too high to be complied with. He not only proposed to bring in Melbourne and the Grants, but also Lord Grey and the Whigs; his expression was that there should be a considerable change both of measures and men" (*Salisbury MSS.*).

\* Created Baron Hatherton in 1835; married a natural daughter of Richard, Marquess Wellesley.

† Afterwards 14th Earl of Derby, the "Rupert of debate."

‡ *Peel Letters*, ii. 163.

Æt. 61. section of the Opposition by the Duke himself. The Speech from the Throne was under discussion in the House of Lords, it contained an ominous reference to the revolution in Belgium, and indicated that Great Britain probably would have to interfere to defend the Netherlands monarchy by force of arms.

"You see," said Lord Grey, leader of the Opposition in the House of Lords, "the danger around you: the storm is on the horizon, but the hurricane approaches. Begin, then, at once to strengthen your houses, to secure your windows, and to make fast your doors. The mode in which this must be done, my lords, is by securing the affections of your fellow-subjects, and—I will now pronounce the word—by reforming Parliament."

The Duke could never compare with Grey in eloquence; nobody expected it of him; yet in statecraft there were many who, especially in that assembly, who assigned to him a high place. Their hearts were chilled by the concluding sentences of his reply—those in which he dealt with his opponents.

"The noble earl has been candid enough to acknowledge that he is not prepared with any measure of reform, and I can have no scruple in saying that his Majesty's Government is as totally unprepared with any plan as the noble lord. Nay, I, on my own part, will go further and say that I have never read or heard of any measure up to the present moment which can in any degree satisfy my mind that the state of the representation could be improved, or be rendered more satisfactory than at the present moment. . . . I do not hesitate to declare unequivocally what my sentiments are. I am fully convinced that the country already possesses a legislature which answers all the purposes of good legislation. . . . I will go further and say that the legislature and the system of representation possesses the full and entire confidence of the country. . . . I will go still further and say that if at the present moment I had imposed on me the duty of forming a legislature for any country, and particularly for a country like this, in possession of great property of various descriptions, I do not mean to assert that I could form such a legislature as you possess now, for the nature of man is incapable

of reaching such excellence at once; but my great endeavour ANN. 1830. would be to form some description of legislature which would produce the same results. . . . I am not only not prepared to bring in any measure of the description alluded to by the noble lord, but I will at once declare that, as far as I am concerned, as long as I hold any station in the Government of the country, I shall always feel it my duty to resist such measures when proposed by others."

The Duke's vehemence was owing, no doubt, in some measure to his indignation at a taunt thrown out by Lord Grey that he had been intimidated into concession to the Roman Catholics.

"I really do not see the advantage of repeating against me the reproach of my having given way upon the Catholic question from motives of fear. I deny that I have been influenced, even in the very slightest degree, by any such motive. I gave way, if it can be termed giving way, solely because the interests of the country required it. I urged the question upon the views of policy, and expediency, and justice, upon these grounds I now justify the measure, and upon these grounds I shall ever defend my conduct."

"I have not said too much, have I?" asked the Duke of Lord Aberdeen as he sat down.

"You'll hear of it!" was the brief but pregnant reply.

Having pronounced his challenge the Duke flinched not from the conflict. With prompt military instinct he drew up a plan for the defence of Apsley House,\* and directed effective measures for putting down meetings which he regarded as seditious; that they assumed a seditious character under the menace of repression was inevitable, but neither Lyndhurst nor Peel seem to have possessed greater prescience than the Duke of the force and justice of the movement. They apprehended violence, indeed, and by a strange fatality the first act of the Ministry, denounced by Lord Wellesley, now amongst the severest critics of his

\* *Civil Despatches*, vii. 354.

**Æt. 61.** brother's administration, as "the boldest act of cowardice he had ever heard of," gave encouragement to lawlessness. The King and Queen had accepted the invitation of the Lord Mayor-elect to the annual banquet on 9th November. On Saturday the 7th the Lord Mayor-elect wrote to Wellington advising him to come with a strong escort: a Cabinet was immediately summoned to deliberate on this letter, and adopted the Duke's advice that the royal visit to the Commons should be postponed. Something like a panic was the result: the funds had already dropped 4 per cent. since the Duke's speech in the Lords; they fell further 3 per cent. on the morning of Lord Mayor's Day. In the end the disturbance in the metropolis proved so trifling that Ministers had to stand ridicule, more deadly to an administration than any hatred, for their unfounded apprehensions. The fate of the Government was imminent, but it was winged from an unexpected quarter. Brougham had given notice of a motion for Reform on 16th November, and the Whips on each side were diligent marshalling forces for a full-dress debate; but on the 15th a division, taken on an amendment moved by Sir Henry Parneil, an Irish member, on the Civil List, was carried against the Government by a majority of 29. Had the Duke been never so anxious to retain office he could not have done so in face of this defeat. It was no snap division—numbers were 233 to 204; Radicals, Canningites, and Tories; even the Duke's own nephew, Wellesley Pole, voted in the majority.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Duke of Northumberland.*

London, 16th November, 1830.

"MY DEAR DUKE,—After the decision in the House of Commons last night, which unequivocally shows the indisposition of the House towards the existing Government, you will not be surprised that we should have determined to retire from the King's service. . . . The King has, from the moment of his accession to this moment, conducted himself towards his Government in the most admirable manner; and the only regret I

is that I am under the necessity of quitting his service in times ANN. 1830.  
of such difficulty abroad as well as at home."

The Duke quitted office in the dusk of discredit and under  
the chill disapproval of all parties.

Resigna-  
tion of  
Ministers.

"The effect produced by this declaration exceeds anything I ever saw, and has at once destroyed what little popularity the Duke had left, and lowered him in public estimation so much that, when he does go out of office, as most assuredly he must, he will leave it without any of the dignity and credit which might have accompanied his retirement." \*

His old followers stood aloof, alienated by what they resented as their betrayal on the Roman Catholic question; he disdained to attract new ones by adopting the natural consequence of his first act of reform, in taking up and dealing with the demand for extended electoral rights and in purging the electoral system, as he was ready to do a few months afterwards, when, late in time, he came to recognise the inevitable.

The most painful consequence arising immediately out of this crisis as regarding the Duke of Wellington was the estrangement which it brought about between him and the ablest and faithfullest of his colleagues, Sir Robert Peel.

"There's that fellow in the House of Commons," quoth the Duke to Lady Salisbury; "one can't go on without him; but he is so vacillating and crotchety that there's no getting on with him. I did pretty well with him when we were in office, but I can't manage him now at all. He is a wonderful fellow—has a most correct judgment—talent; almost equal to those of Pitt, but he spoils all by his timidity and indecision." †

As to the coldness of some of his other friends, the Duke professed absolute indifference.

"There is nobody," he wrote to Lady Salisbury, "who cares so little as I do for an embarrassment such as you describe. I meet

\* *Greville*, part i. vol. ii. p. 53.

† *Salisbury MSS.*, 1831.

Æt. 61. with it every day, and I proceed as if there were no embarrassment, and no such persons existing as those who do not speak to me. The truth is that when people differ with me in politics they think proper not to speak to me or to oblige me towards me the common forms of society. They are then angry and very awkward because I don't care one pin, and do not put myself out of the way either to alter my relations with them, or to render those relations less embarrassing to them. I have sent a song for Lady Catherine Grimston. This is not the song, for which I have written; but I send it in order to let her know that I have not forgotten my promise."\*

Lord Grey forms a Ministry.

The King having laid his commands on Lord Grey, a Cabinet was formed on a comprehensive basis, including the Duke of Richmond, Lords Goderich and Palmerston from the Conservative ranks, Lords Lansdowne and Holland from the Whigs, and Lord Durham and Sir James Graham from the Radicals. Brougham was muzzled by raising him to the woolsack with the title of Lord Brougham and Vaux—*vox et præterea nihil*, as the wits had it.

The First Reform Bill.

It is unnecessary to dwell in detail upon the success of the bills introduced by the Government in fulfilment of their pledges of reform. The Tories, whose votes had expelled the last Ministry, listened with wry faces as Lord John Russell expounded the sweeping provisions of the bill introduced on the 21st March, 1831. The bill passed second reading by a majority of a single vote; but Ministers, defeated by 8 votes on a motion upon going into Committee upon it, sustained a second defeat the following night, when the House of Commons refused by 164 votes to 142 to grant supply, and requested his Majesty to dissolve Parliament.

They did more. They induced the King to come to the House of Lords in person, and to deliver a speech from the Throne explaining that he dissolved Parliament for the purpose of ascertaining the sense of my people in the matter in which it may be most constitutionally and authentically

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 9th December, 1832.

expressed, on the expediency of making such changes in the representation as circumstances may seem to require." ANN. 1831.

Great was the Duke of Wellington's disgust at what he considered the King's act of desertion; but his attention was withdrawn from public affairs at this juncture, and from the frantic jubilation which convulsed the nation at the announcement that Parliament was to be dissolved, by an event in his own household. The mob in London decreed a general illumination of London to take place on the night of 27th April, and proceeded to enforce their will by breaking the windows of Tory peers and others who declined to comply. Apsley House, a conspicuous feature in one of the main thoroughfares, stood dark and still without a sign of rejoicing: it was not to be expected that its proud owner would stoop to gain security by simulating sympathy which he did not feel, and volleys of stones began to crash through the windows. Some of the new police\* were on duty on the spot, all too few and feeble to interfere by force; but force was not required. An English mob is seldom unkindly or cruel; the police managed to inform the leaders that the Duchess of Wellington had died two days before, and that her body lay at that moment within the house. Immediately the crowd desisted from their mischief, moving off to smash Lord Londonderry's windows in Park Lane.

Apsley  
House  
assaulted  
by the  
Reform  
mob.

The Duke was with his wife when she died. Their married life leaves little matter for mention. It had not been unhappy, but it had been very far from ideal. Warmly affectionate, as Maria Edgeworth delighted to testify, and worshipping her husband to the end, the Duchess had not the mental qualities on which that husband could rely for light in perplexity or support in stress of action. A more serious defect was her want of tact, a gift which often serves women

Death  
of the  
Duchess of  
Wellington.

\* There never was a more thoroughly popular force than the London Police has become, yet the names "Bobby" and "Peeler" are not unfamiliar even at this day, reminding us of the dislike and ridicule attached to the creation of Sir Robert Peel.

Æt. 61. in place of higher attributes. If there was one thing which the Duke had more aversion than another it was to be "shown off;" yet the Duchess never learnt to avoid it, delighted in drawing attention to his great qualities and achievements. They formed a couple wholly unsuited to each other, and it avails not to scrutinise or criticise their relations more closely. It would be idle to pretend that the Duke's parting brought deep grief to the Duke; it is not so referred to in any of his correspondence; indeed, there never was a word from the wife, in her death as in her life, of whom her husband made so much rare mention in his letters. To Lady Salisbury, indeed, who, with the exception, perhaps, of the Arbuthnots, was his most intimate correspondent and confidante, the Duke did impart a very frank explanation of his infelicitous experience of married life; of the Duchess's extravagance, of her insincerity towards him, of his own mismanagement about the amount of her debts, about her flighty and injudicious treatment of her sons; and these observations are preserved in Lady Salisbury's journal.\* But they were never spoken several years after the Duchess's death; during the Duke's life the Duke never mentioned or treated her but with respect, and it would serve no good purpose to resuscitate the slumbering *griefs*. Wellington's life, with all its stirring and unceasing activity, was a lone one; his sense of having missed something in the lottery of marriage is revealed by a casual remark in one of his conversations. Lady Salisbury asked him whether Lady Peel had any influence over Sir Robert Peel. "No," he replied; "she is not a clever woman: Peel has no wish to marry a clever woman."

"It is very curious," remarked Lady Salisbury, "that a man of ability should not care to have a wife capable of entering into subjects in which he takes an interest."

"Aye," said the Duke, "and of anticipating one's means; that is what a clever woman does—she sees what you mean." †

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1837.

† *Ibid.*, 1834.



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE BATTLE OF REFORM.

1831-1834.

<p>June 24, 1831. The Second Reform Bill.</p> <p>October 8 . . . Thrown out by the Lords.</p> <p>Dec. 12 . . . . The Third Reform Bill.</p> <p>April 6 . 1832. Passes second reading in the Lords.</p> <p>May 9 . . . . . The Government, having been defeated in Committee, resign on the King's refusal to create Peers.</p> <p>„ 10 . . . . . The Duke undertakes to form a Government.</p> <p>„ 15 . . . . . Resigns the attempt. The Duke's great unpopularity.</p>	<p>June 18 . . . . . Attacked by a mob in the City.</p> <p>The Duke in the hunting-field.</p> <p>The Duke's letters to Miss J.</p> <p>January . 1834. The Duke and Sir Robert Peel are nominated for the Chancellorship of Oxford University.</p> <p>Estrangement between Wellington and Peel.</p> <p>The Duke's difficulties with his party.</p> <p>August 2 . . . . . Death of Mrs. Arbuthnot.</p>
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**I**N no uncertain tone came the reply of the constituencies to the appeal of a general election. Lord John Russell introduced his Second Reform Bill to the new Parliament on 24th June: on 8th July it received a second reading by a majority of 136 votes; and on 22nd September, after the Coronation of King William had taken place \* on the 8th, it was laid before the House of Lords. The Duke felt no doubts as to the course he should pursue as leader of the Opposition in the Upper Chamber.

\* William IV. was the first English king crowned in trousers!

Æt. 62. "I shall certainly vote," he wrote to Mr. Gleig, "against the second reading of the bill, and shall do everything in my power to prevail upon the largest possible number of Peers to do the same, and throw it out if I can. I am convinced that any Resolution of Parliament upon the principle of this bill will destroy this country. No evil can arise from the rejection of the bill equal to that which will arise from carrying it." \*

In opposing the bill in the memorable debate of the 10th of October, the Duke took his chief stand on the constitutional objection to the course pursued by Ministers of appealing to the country, not on a general principle—for the principle of reform had been affirmed by the late House of Commons—on the question of a particular plan of reform.

"I charge the noble lords with having excited the spirit of discontent which existed in the country at the period of the last general election, and with having been the cause of the unconstitutional practice hitherto unknown, of electing delegates for a particular purpose to Parliament—delegates to obey the daily instructions of their constituents, and to be cashiered if they should disobey them. This is an evil of which the country will long feel the consequences whatever may be the result of these discussions."

He persisted in regarding all reform as an attack on the constitution, and not as an attempt to amend and develop it.

"My noble friend (the Earl of Harrowby) regretted that I should have made the statement I did make to your lordships on the character and conduct of Parliament. My lords, I beg my noble friend to recollect that, when I spoke of Parliament, I spoke as the King's Minister, and that it is the duty of the King's Minister to support the institutions of the country: it had never been when I was in office, been the practice for the King's Minister to give up the institutions of the country and abandon them at the moment they were attacked."

The division took place at six o'clock on the morning of the 11th.

\* *Civil Despatches*, vii. 473.

October. By 199 votes to 158 the peers threw out the bill, and the country was immediately convulsed from end to end by an agitation of terrible violence. Macaulay's words—"I know only two ways in which societies can be governed—by public opinion and by the sword"—had not been spoken many days before the reality of the alternative they described was being realised. The history of 1831-32 contains ample evidence that anarchy, triumphant in Bristol, in Nottingham, and in many places in the north, was no more than matched in others by the armed forces of the Crown. The miserable condition of the country was intensified by the appearance of a novel disorder—the cholera, which, breaking out in London in February, 1832, is believed to have carried off 50,000 victims in the United Kingdom before the end of the year.

Wellington continued blind to the genuine force and depth of the cry for Reform; he suspected it to be partly manufactured by collusion between the Cabinet and the political unions at Birmingham and elsewhere. "You forget," he wrote to Lord Wharncliffe, "that the King and his Government have been apparently in a combination with the mob for the destruction of property."\* He believed that the true sense of the country was opposed to Reform.

"I am quite certain," he wrote in another letter to Lord Wharncliffe, "that I am well informed that the gentlemen and better description of yeomanry and others possessing property in this intelligent and opulent county (Kent), and in Hampshire, are against these measures. I believe I could name as many as a dozen others in this part of England. If I am not misinformed, there is no small reaction in Scotland; and in Ireland the Protestants are to a man against any change."

Fallacious as was the interpretation he put upon the signs of the times, still more so, though more pardonably, was the Duke's forecast of the future.

\* *Civil Despatches*, viii. 99.

ANN. 1831.  
The  
Reform  
Riots.

Æt. 62. "If we take the bill or even give improvements of it, understand it, you may rely upon it that neither Lord Grey any nobleman of his order, nor any gentleman of his caste, govern the country six weeks after the Reformed Parliament will meet, and that the race of English gentlemen will not long afterwards. That is my sincere opinion, founded upon what I see here and have seen elsewhere, and I earnestly recommend to your attention." \*

With truer prescience Lord Wharncliffe and Lord Harrowby were negotiating with Lord Grey for a compromise. The initiative had been with Lord Grey, but there were many Conservative peers—"Waverers" they were called— anxious to anticipate the irresistible and avoid further collision. Long, patiently, and eloquently Lord Wharncliffe laboured to prevail on the Duke to listen to reason; his letters are true statesmanlike and deserve careful perusal,† but his efforts were in vain. The Duke remained obdurate.

"I don't believe," he admitted on 3rd February, 1832, "we can go on without some Parliamentary Reform; but my passion for Reform, and particularly for *the bill*, no longer remains whatever may have passed at the meetings in the autumn: that fashion is gone by; and I firmly believe that when the bill passes, if ever it should pass, it will be to be forced upon the country. But as for civil war or any confusion being caused by another rejection of the bill, I'll answer for it that there will be no such thing if this Government, or any Government, only perform the duty of discountenancing it." ‡

"Lord Wharncliffe's communications with the Government are at an end," he wrote to Lord Londonderry. "Why, or whether it passed, I know not. But I conclude that he found the Radical party too strong for him. You may rely on it that I neither have nor shall have any communication with the Government."

\* *Civil Despatches*, viii. 110.

† *Ibid.*, viii. 92, 104, 110, 173, 210, et passim.

‡ *Ibid.*, viii. 206.

excepting in the way of advice in Parliament or through the ANN. 1831.  
King." \*

Earlier in the year Lord Salisbury had written to consult the Duke about the course he should pursue in prospect of a meeting of Whigs and moderate Reformers about to be held in Hertford. He himself was disposed to attend the meeting and negotiate with them.

"I should not like, however, to be the first to adopt the course I have suggested without your concurrence, for fear, if the example is followed, it should embarrass you or your party." †

The Duke's reply was the reverse of favourable to compromise.

"All reform is in my opinion bad and dangerous, and every reform would end by being Radical. I should think that a question of universal suffrage being carried against you at Hertford would not look well." ‡

Parliament, prorogued on 20th October, met again on 6th December. On the 12th Lord John Russell introduced his <sup>The Third Reform Bill.</sup> Third Reform Bill. It passed second reading by a majority of two to one. After an ordeal of twenty-two sittings in Committee, it left the House of Commons on 23rd March, and came before the Lords on the 26th. Early in the autumn the King had been urged by Brougham, Durham, and Graham to exercise his prerogative in the creation of enough peers to ensure the safety of the measure. His Majesty, though desiring a settlement of the great question, was averse from taking that course; so were the Government leaders in both Houses; indeed, Lord Grey's dislike to any scheme of swamping the Lords had been the origin of his overtures for a compromise with the Opposition. But when the overtures failed, Grey reluctantly fell back on the exercise of the prerogative, and the King gave his assent. The intention

\* *Civil Despatches*, viii. 119. † *Salisbury MSS.*, January, 1831. ‡ *Ibid.*

**Æt. 62.** was suffered to get wind; tho Waverers, anxious to  
 Read a  
 second  
 time in the  
 Lords. their order from the indignity which menaced it, assured  
 Government, through Lords Wharncliffe and Harrowby,  
 they would voto for the second reading, which was ca  
 on 6th April by a majority of nine.

The Waverers had saved the measure, but by such a sle  
 margin that Ministers could entertain no hopes of  
 fledgling bill surviving the perils of Committeo. The r  
 justified their worst apprehensions. On the first eve  
 after the Easter recess, the Government was beaten on  
 Lyndhurst's motion to postpone the clauses disfranch  
 the small boroughs. On 8th May the Cabinet advised  
 King to create enough peers (fifty, according to Greville,  
 was Clerk of the Council; sixty or eighty, accordin  
 Brougham, who was in the Cabinet) "as might ensure  
 success of the bill in all its essential principles." His Maj  
 whose favour towards the measuro had cooled since  
 second reading, refused to act on the advice of his Minis  
 who forthwith resigned on the 9th, and then, if it may  
 permitted to use a homely Scots expression, "the kail wa  
 the reek" with a vengeance. The King sent for  
 Lyndhurst, who advised him to send for a Minister  
 should be prepared for a moderate measure of Reform.  
 King, however, considered his honour pledged to an exte  
 measure, and Lyndhurst, assenting, conveyed his Maje  
 pleasure to the Duke of Wellington. Now, the Duke, at  
 successive stage in the fight for Reform, had pledged him  
 more deeply and vehemently against it; and, lest there sh  
 be any doubt of his sentiments, he reiterated his objectio  
 tho following remarkable letter:—

The Duke  
 undertakes  
 to form a  
 Govern-  
 nient.

*The Duke of Wellington to Lord Lyndhurst.*

"10th May, 1832, 10 p

"I shall be very much concerned indeed if we cannot at l  
 make an effort to enable the King to shake off the trammel

his tyrannical Minister. I am perfectly ready to do whatever his Majesty may command me. I am as much averse to the Reform as ever I was. No embarrassment of that kind, no private consideration, shall prevent me from making every effort to serve the King." \* ANN. 1832.

He was "as much averse to the Reform as ever he was," yet to save the Peers from the indignity of being swamped and to carry on the King's Government, he was able to sink his own convictions, swallow his repeated declarations, and take office on the understanding that he would carry an *extensive* measure of Reform. The undertaking failed, as one is forced to admit it deserved to fail. The Duke first approached Sir Robert Peel.

"I foresee," wrote Sir Robert to Croker, "that a Bill of Reform, including everything that is really important and really dangerous in the present Bill, must pass. For me individually to take the conduct of such a Bill, to assume the responsibility of the consequences, which I have predicted as the inevitable result of such a Bill, would be, in my opinion, personal degradation to myself. . . . I look beyond the exigency and peril of the present moment, and I do believe that one of the greatest calamities that could befall the country would be the utter want of confidence in the declarations of public men which must follow the adoption of the Bill of Reform by me as a Minister of the Crown. It is *not* a repetition of the Catholic question. I was then in office. I had advised the concession as a Minister. I should now assume office for the purpose of carrying the measure to which up to the last moment I have been inveterately opposed." †

Notwithstanding his own feelings on the subject, Peel paid a tribute afterwards in the House of Commons to the integrity of the Duke's motives.

"It was precisely on the same grounds, a sense of personal honour, that I could not take office to carry on the Reform Bill.

\* *Civil Despatches*, viii. 304.

† *Peel Letters*, ii. 205.

Æt. 63. These opinions separated me from some noble friends of who did not feel themselves placed in the same situation. I that separation, even though it be temporary, particularly separation from that man whom I chiefly honour; and anxious to declare that even that separation has only raised in my esteem." \*

Foiled in obtaining Peel to lead the House of Commons the Duke next tried Baring, who declined on the score of health, though he afterwards accepted office without leadership. The Speaker, Mr. Manners Sutton, was Wellington's next hope, whose reply was friendly, but not reassuring. "If no other arrangement can be made, I must give up, though with fear and trembling." † It soon became evident that the Duke had attempted the impossible in undertaking to form a Tory Government with an Opposition of nearly one to one in the House of Commons. Better for his reputation had he never set hand to the task. On Monday, 14th, Sir Robert Inglis declared in the House of Commons that he knew no difference between a code of public and private morals, and deplored the Duke's conduct in taking a measure which on every previous occasion he had vehemently reprobated. Inglis spoke with the greater effect because of the evident pain he suffered in condemning his own leader.

Peel at once declared the speech to be decisive against an attempt to form a Reform Government out of the anti-Reform party. The House rose at shortly before midnight, when the Speaker took Peel, Hardinge, and Croker in his carriage to Apsley House, where they were joined by Baring. An early consultation was held, lasting till nearly three in the morning, as to the course to be taken to save the King from being forced to create peers. At last, on Sir Robert Peel's motion it was agreed that the Duke should inform the King that he would form a Tory administration, pledged to extensive reform, if possible, and that to save his Majesty's personal hono-

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 207.

† *Civil Despatches*, viii. 315.



the matter of creating peers, the Duke would abstain, so far as he was concerned, from opposing the bill in the House of Lords." \* At nine o'clock the Duke went to Lord Lyndhurst and informed him that he was going to the King to throw up his commission. When he was gone, Lyndhurst said to his wife, "I wish I had prevailed on him to consult with his party first. I will go after him and detain him."

ANN. 1832.

The Duke resigns the attempt to form a Cabinet.

"You had better start at once," said Lady Lyndhurst, "or he will be gone."

"Plenty of time," replied Lyndhurst; "he must go home first, and he has to breakfast."

But when Lord Lyndhurst arrived at Apsley House the Duke was gone. Following him to St. James' Palace, he found that he had just been admitted to audience with the King, and the fate of the Tory Ministry was sealed. Lord Lyndhurst was admitted, however, and was present with the Duke while his Majesty, with perfect composure, wrote his letter to Lord Grey, after which he began to talk about trifling and indifferent matters.†

From their places in the House of Lords the Duke and Lord Lyndhurst on 17th May made explanatory statements, and quitted the House, followed by a large number of Tory peers, thus silently protesting against the measure which they had decided to oppose actively no longer.

How Lord Grey's Whig Ministry came in and carried their bill is part of the public history of the country; it is a page which the biographer of Wellington is fain to turn quickly, for the Duke's action at this crisis is the part of his conduct one dwells on with least admiration. His own defence of it comes nearer to casuistry than anything to which he ever lent himself before or afterwards, and contrasts ill with Peel's *meâ virtute me involvo*.

"I think that the mistake made by my friends is this: First, in not estimating the extent of the advantage of taking the King

\* Croker, ii. 167.

† Salisbury MSS., 1832.

Æt. 63. — out of the hands of the Radicals\*—that is, in reality, of giving the country the benefit of some Government; secondly, in not estimating the further advantage of diminishing the mischief of the Reform Bill, and particularly that of the Scotch Bill. In my opinion the advantage first mentioned more than compensates for all that would have been lost by our having anything to say to the Reform Bill." †

Yet on the very next day, 22nd May, the Duke was writing to Lord Eldon—

"I have always considered the Reform Bill as fatal to the Constitution of this country. It was a matter of indifference whether the House of Peers should be first destroyed by the creation of Peers to carry the bill, or should fall with the other institutions of the country." ‡

The Duke's great unpopularity. The gloomy anticipations entertained by the Duke were deepened, and to some extent justified, by the attitude of the people towards himself. From the pinnacle of fame and popularity he had been lowered to the depth of odium. Coarse reproach and bloodthirsty menace were yelled at him from the very throats which, only a few years before, had ached with unceasing cheers. His matchless services to King and Country were forgotten: for many months he had continued to receive warnings of the danger in which he went of his life; warnings which he put aside lightly enough, although causing the ground-floor windows of Apsley House to be protected by iron shutters, organising a complete system of domestic defence, and, when travelling, carrying loaded firearms in his carriage.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Countess of Jersey.*

"London, October 13, 1831.

"MY DEAR LADY JERSEY,—My House having been surrounded by a Mob all day yesterday, I don't think that I should have

\* A sentiment which, after the lapse of a generation, Lord Derby expressed more bluntly in regard to his own and Disraeli's Reform Bill—that "it had dished the Whigs."

† *Civil Despatches*, viii. 340.

‡ *Ibid.*, 341

acted very discreetly if I had gone out and had led it to yours, ANN. 1832.  
 nor would my visit have been very agreeable to you under the  
 circumstances. I knew that you dined out yesterday. I concluded  
 that you would be out in the Evening. It is really quite impossible  
 for me to fix a time to go out to see you. My House is constantly  
 surrounded. It is so at this moment. I am followed wherever  
 I go, and there a Mob collects. . . . Believe me ever yours,  
 "W:"\*

Matters did not mend even when the bill had become law.† On 18th June, the seventeenth anniversary of Waterloo, the Duke was riding back from a visit to the Mint, when he was set upon by a yelling mob who followed him from the Tower through the Minories to Fenchurch Street, where attempts were made to drag him from his horse. Against this danger he was protected by a couple of old soldiers who kept close to his stirrups, and faced about each time the pressure of the crowd brought the Duke to a halt. In Holborn the blackguards began to throw stones and dirt, but now two policemen ranged themselves one on each side of the horse's head, and the Duke, turning down Chancery Lane, rode to the chambers of his quondam Attorney-General, Sir Charles Wetherell. The gate of New Square having been closed behind him, and the mob thus kept at bay, the Duke, followed by his groom, quietly rode out into Lincoln's Inn Fields, and so home to Apsley House.

Mobbed  
 and in-  
 sulted in  
 the City.

How many street scenes must have passed through Arthur Wellesley's memory during this strange ride! Alleys, bulwarked and barricaded with corpses in sunburnt Seringapatam—drunken heroes firing ball cartridge unsteadily in his honour in the square of blood-steeped Badajos—flowers and waving scarves and *vivas* in Salamanca and Madrid—steady tramp of his own columns streaming into prostrate Paris—was this to be the end of it all—a scuffle—a rush—a well-aimed brick—the fresh cheek blanched, white hair

\* Original at Middleton Park.

† It received the Royal Assent on 7th June, 1832.

Æt. 63. dabbled in blood, the light of those brave old eyes quenched for ever? Or (for on his own life he bestowed no second thought) did not this mad tumult, this orgy of ingratitude betoken the overwhelming of his country in that hopeless, aimless anarchy he had striven so stoutly to ward from her shores? He believed it had all come to this. In countless letters he pronounces the conviction that King, Lords, and Commons had been hoodwinked into a conspiracy which should destroy the Constitution, and that social order must soon cease forever.

*The Duke of Wellington to H.R.H. the Duke of Cumberland.*

“Apthorpe, January 1, 1833.

“ . . . We are in a most critical situation. The Conservative Party have a Majority in the House of Lords. The Royal Ministers will be with them. The Royal Authority, the Administration, the Majority of the H. of Commons, and the decided sense of the County against them; at the same time we know now with a certainty that the Conservative Party consists of the infinite Majority of the landed Proprietors and the great Commercial and Manufacturing Capitalists throughout the three Kingdoms. We must be very cautious in our Measures. A false step might do the greatest injury to the Institutions and Interests of a description which it is our duty as well as our object and our Inclination to support and maintain. We must never forget that in times of Revolution such as those we have the misfortune of witnessing the passions of individuals have an Influence upon publick Affairs which in ordinary times they have not, and that it is the duty of those who wish to preserve what exists, not to dispute those passions unnecessarily, at the same time that they steadily persevere in their course, making no compromise of Principle or of any Interest.

“I think it very improbable that there will be any desire on the part of those who have the Power of the County in their hands to share it with their Rivals and those who entertain opinions so different from their own. I think that they are much more likely to find themselves under the necessity of making further

concessions to the Democratic party, and of forming a closer Union with the Radicals. It is my opinion that that is the tendency of the Policy of the day, and in my view of the situation of the County the Chances of the junction of the Whigs with the Radicals greatly increase the difficulties and embarrass all our proceedings." \*

There was not much material for hope even when the newly enfranchised began to exercise their rights. While the elections were in progress, Lord Stanhope's tenantry, indeed, drew the Duke's carriage with music into Chevening Park, but a band of miscreants waylaid him with volleys of stones between that place and Wildernesse.† The Duke could not pass unnoticed anywhere, but it was always uncertain at this stormy period whether the recognition would take the form of hoots or hurrahs.

"On Friday," he wrote to Lady Salisbury as late as 18th December, "I was hooted returning from hunting through Aldermarten. Luckily I am accustomed to it, and I rode through the town as quietly as I did through London. I was alone, having sent away my groom to look for my curriole." ‡

The Duke's eldest son, the Marquess of Douro, had offered himself as candidate for Hampshire, and encountered the full displeasure of the new electorate. At no time between the Duke and his son did there exist much easy confidence; the Duke was stern in judgment and prompt to pronounce it—the Marquess reserved, with the sensitive consciousness of inferior abilities.

"I regret that Douro resigned before he had polled his last man; § and I think those who are contesting other counties at this very moment have some reason to complain of his being in such a hurry to retire. He did so without consulting me; although he determined on the measure at Basingstoke; eight

\* *Apsley House MSS.*, 1833. † *Stanhope*, 177 ‡ *Salisbury MSS.*

§ Under the new Act the poll was kept open . . . days only, instead of fourteen as heretofore.

ÆT. 63. miles from hence. But we cannot always expect to find heads on young shoulders. This is certain: he could not have carried the election.\*

The Duke's  
action in  
Opposition.

However little hope the Duke was able to discern for monarchy in the future, he perceived that there was a duty for the Opposition in the Lords, and for the Duke to perceive a duty meant that he did his best to perform it. He was never of the opinion expressed by a statesman of more recent times,† that the chief duty of an opposition was to oppose, and he encountered much difficulty in restraining the activity of his peers and moderating their animosity against all the proposals of Lord Grey's Government.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Earl of Aberdeen.*

“Stratfieldsaye, 18th January, 1833.”

“I have received your letter and I confess that I find great difficulty in answering it. I have never relished, as you know, the seeking opportunities to carp at and oppose the measures of the Government; the whole course of my life has been different. I dislike such conduct at present more than I did heretofore. In truth we do not know what sort of Constitution we have got—whether a Monarchy or a Republick, or that best (?), the Republick—la Democratie Royale! . . . The principal field of the battle of the campaign will be Ireland; and if they are at all fair upon that subject we must support them. . . . I consider Lord Grey's Government as the last prop of the Monarchy, however bad it is and however unworthy of Confidence. After it comes Lord (? ) † probably, and chaos! It will not be wise for us to endeavour to break down Lord Grey, without knowing what is to follow him. . . . The course, then, which I would recommend on the whole is one of attentive observation rather than of action . . . that we should not oppose and bring our opposition to a division, excepting in a case of paramount importance essential to the best interests of the country.” §

\* *Salisbury MSS.*

† Illegible in original.

‡ Lord Randolph Churchill.

§ *Apsley House MSS.* 1833.

He was not solicitous for the attendance of the Old Tories, ANN. 1833. with the Duke of Cumberland at their head, in the House of Lords.

*To the Marquess of Londonderry.*

"Stratfieldsaye, March 7, 1833.

"I do not see any prospect of the Necessity for an attendance in the House of Lords. In truth the Revolution is effected. . . . Property, and the House of Lords in particular have lost their political Influence. Any Deliberative body composed of Men of Cultivation, of Habits of Business and of Talent may by their Discussions have a moral (influence) in Society and over the Legislature and the Mob. But their Discussions must be opportune; and those of the House of Lords in Particular, which still possesses Legislative Power, but no political Influence, ought to be very cautiously managed.

"I have been here generally amusing myself with the Foxhounds." \*

*To Lord Roden.*

"Stratfieldsaye, March 13, 1833.

". . . There is no man who dislikes more than I do the principles and the policy of the existing administration; or is more opposed to their course of action. But I cannot shut my eyes to the state in which parliament and the country are. That there is no power in it excepting to do mischief; and I cannot wish to remove from office men who profess at least to have good intentions in order to place the power in the hands of those who have not the grace even to make such professions. . . . I wish therefore, as far at least as I am personally concerned, to afford no ground for the charge of 'Faction.' Other noble Lords may entertain a different opinion. But I confess that it appears to me that it behoves those who possess large properties and who must feel that the political influence over the councils of the country is in the hands of those who possess nothing, to consider well the course which they ought to follow particularly in the House of Lords." †

\* Original at Wynyard Park.

† Apsley House MSS.



ÆT. 64.*To the Marquess of Londonderry.*

"London, June 6, 18"

" . . . We must consider of the real situation of the Country and of that which is best to be done to save our Properties from Destruction. As for Office or Power, both are out of the Question." \*

*To H.R.H. the Duke of Cumberland.*

"Walmer Castle, October 1st, 18"

" . . . I must say I have always felt myself in a very awkward and I must add false Position in opposition to the King's Government. I am connected with the Government in many ways scarcely a day passes on which I am not under the Necessity of communicating with them on some subject or other. I have been in office and have served the King throughout my life ; I know all the Difficulties in which the Government are placed. I cannot enter upon an opposition to Government without knowing what it is I am to oppose, and with a view to impede the course by increased difficulties. I would diminish those difficulties if I could. Neither could I oppose the Gov<sup>t</sup> with the view to break up the Administration and form a new one. Nobody has a worse opinion of, or less Confidence in, the Existing Ministers than I have. Under their Guidance we have been on the Point of Ruin, we have made some Progress already, and we shall certainly make more. But for the sake of the King and his Family, as well as the Country, I cannot take upon myself the Responsibility of breaking up the Gov<sup>t</sup> without knowing how far for whom another is to be formed, whether it can be supported whether it can even claim support : and what the King thinks he wishes. Since the year 1830 I have forseen and lamented the state of things to which we were coming. But I confess that I cannot see the Remedy in the formation of what is called a determined and active opposition to the King's Government especially in the House of Lords." †

The Duke, oppressed though he was by the conviction that ruin had descended on his country, resumed the ordinary

\* Original at Wynyard Park.

† *Apsley House MSS.*



avocations and amusements of an English country gentleman, ANN. 1833.  
 dividing his time between Strathfieldsaye and Walmer Castle. Always a warm supporter of the chase, he subscribed liberally to the Vine and the Bramshill hounds in his own neighbourhood,\* and attended their meets as often as he possibly could.

The Duke  
 in the  
 hunting-  
 field.

"Nim South," a writer in the *New Sporting Magazine*, has left some interesting notes of the Duke's appearance and performance in the field, having apparently been as unfavourably impressed by the one as by the other. He tells how one wet day in 1831 he was waiting for Sir John Cope's hounds at Hartley Row Gate, when he perceived a red coat approaching through the drizzle. As the new-comer drew near, "Nim South" took stock of his attire, which included a scarlet frock coat, a lilac silk waistcoat, kid gloves, a pair of fustian trousers strapped tightly down over a pair of Wellington boots! "And certainly they were Wellingtons in every sense of the word, for the wearer was neither more nor less than the illustrious Arthur himself."

"We had," says Nim, "just the sort of day's sport to please a man like the Duke of Wellington, who, though mighty in the field of war, cuts no great figure in the hunting-field. Indeed, to do him all due justice, I have seldom seen a man with less idea of riding than he has. His seat is unsightly in the extreme, and few men get more falls in the course of the year than his Grace. Nevertheless he seemed to enjoy the thing amazingly, and what with leading over occasionally and his groom's assistance, he did very well."

The Duke gave much attention also to the improvement and management of his estate of Strathfieldsaye, spending liberally on the land and laying by all the surplus rents for his successors, who he knew would not enjoy all the sources of emolument which he did. He also spent much of his time at Walmer Castle, his official residence as Warden of the Cinque Ports, an office which he by no means regarded as a sinecure.

\* At one time his subscription to the Vine was £400 a year.

Æt. 64.

*Lord Mahon to the Countess of Jersey.*

"2nd October, 1833.

"Yesterday I dined at Walmer Castle. The Duke is an amazing force. We were to meet their R<sup>l</sup> Highnesses of Cumberland, and sat waiting for them from seven till a quarter to nine. . . . Some country neighbours, being little used to late hours, appeared half dead at the delay."\*

Correspondence  
with  
Bishop  
Philpotts.

A correspondence between the Duke and Dr. Philpotts, Bishop of Exeter, took place about this period, throwing some interesting light on the view the Duke took of the obligation of church-going.

"Let me beseech your attention to one particular," wrote the prelate, "in which you may do honour to God, and, by His grace, do much spiritual good to men—I mean, by regularly attending His public service; by showing before the world that you *glory* in being the servant of God; by setting an example, the value of which will be proportioned to the greatness of your earthly renown."†

The Duke took the Bishop's long lecture very meekly, recognising that his admonitor was only discharging the duty of his office.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Lord Bishop of Exeter.*

"London, 6th January, 1832.

"MY DEAR LORD BISHOP,—I am very grateful for your letter. It is highly creditable to your Lordship, and most suitable for you to write it in these times to any individual, more particularly to me, afflicted with sickness as I have been. . . . What I am particularly anxious to remove from your mind is the notion that I am a person without any sense of religion. If I am so, I am unpardonable; as I have had opportunities to acquire, and have acquired, a good deal of knowledge on the subject. I don't make much show or boast on any subject. I never have done so. The consequence is that, in these days of boasting, I have been se

\* Original at Middleton Park.

† *Civil Despatches*, viii. 146.

down from time to time as the most ignorant and least qualified ANN. 1833.  
 public man of my time, and this even upon professional matters,  
 upon which it might be imagined that from the commencement  
 of my career I had been sufficiently tried. Then in private life  
 I have been accused of every vice and enormity; and when those  
 who live with me, and know every action of my life and every  
 thought, testify that such charges are groundless, the charge is  
 then brought, 'Oh, he is a man without religion.' As I said  
 before, I am not ostentatious about anything. I am not a  
 'Bible Society man' upon principle, and I make no ostentatious  
 display either of charity or of other Christian virtues, though  
 I believe that, besides enormous sums given to hundreds and  
 thousands who have positive claims upon me, there is not a  
 charity of any description within my reach to which I am not  
 a contributor, although I am convinced, and indeed know, that  
 many of them are gross jobs.

"The next objection is 'He does not go to church!' Whenever  
 or wherever my presence at church can operate as an example, I  
 do go. I never am absent from divine service at Walmer or  
 when I am in Hampshire, or in any place in the country where  
 my presence or absence could be observed. But it must be  
 recollected that some ten years ago I met with an accident which  
 affected my hearing, and, in point of fact, I never hear more  
 than what I know by heart of the Church service, and never one  
 word of the sermon. Then observe that during at least eight  
 months of the year I should have to sit for two hours every week  
 uncovered in a cold church: this would certainly have the effect  
 of depriving me of my sense of hearing altogether. For some  
 time I did attend divine service early in the morning at St.  
 James's, which lasted only an hour; but I found it too cold for  
 me, and it is true that I do not attend divine service in any  
 parish in London. But excepting that duty, which I never fail  
 to perform in the country, I don't know of any that I leave  
 unperformed. There is room for amendment in every man, in me  
 as well as in others; and there is nothing better calculated to  
 inspire such amendment than such a letter as that from your  
 Lordship. In answering it as I have done, I hope you will  
 believe that I don't reject the advice. On the contrary I thank

Æt. 64. you for it; and I assure you that it will not be thrown away upon me. But if you have believed what you have read and heard of me, I must tell you that these reports do not do me justice.

Of the extraordinary energy shown by the Duke of Wellington in private correspondence many examples might be quoted, although he was very scrupulous in destroying during his life almost all the letters he received of an exclusively private nature, especially those from ladies. A few instances may suffice to show the prodigious fluency of his pen at this period.

Mr. Croker having sent him, in September, 1833, a number of pamphlets on foreign affairs with a request for his criticism, the Duke sat down at Walmer Castle and replied on six sides of large letter-paper! †

The Duke's  
letters to  
Miss J.

The Duke's correspondence with Miss J. has been published, ‡ and the authenticity of the letters purporting to have been written by him to that lady was hotly disputed some ten years ago. There remains now not a shadow of doubt that they are genuine, § and they must take rank among the most remarkable littlenesses of great men. Miss J. was the daughter of English parents of the class of smaller gentlemen, fashionably educated, possessed of great beauty, highly energetic, and a religious zealot. Having succeeded in making

\* *Civil Despatches*, viii. 147.

† The draft of this document at Apsley House is not, as is usual, in his handwriting, but in a small, close feminine hand. Had he written it himself it would have covered one hundred and twenty pages.

‡ *The Letters of the Duke of Wellington to Miss J.*, 1834-1851. London, 1851.

§ Lady de Ros was of opinion that the first two or three of the series were genuine, and the rest fictitious. It was not until after the first edition of this work had been printed that I was given an opportunity of examining the originals, which, together with Miss J.'s diary, have come into the hands of a private collector. Indubitably all the letters are in the Duke's handwriting, most of them being addressed to

Miss A. M. Jenkins,

No. 42, Charlotte St.,

Portland Place,

a few having been sent to the care of a tradesman in the same street.

convert of a convicted murderer, and persuaded him to make a full confession before he was taken to the gallows, she conceived that she had a mission to arouse the most prominent public characters to a sense of their sinfulness, and selected the Duke of Wellington as the first subject, without even knowing that he was the conqueror of Napoleon. She wrote to him on 15th January, 1834, and received an answer by return of post, the beginning of a correspondence which, alternating with interviews, lasted till a few months before the Duke's death in 1852. Miss J.'s letters are full of religious fervour, earnest exhortations to seek salvation, and feminine resentment of the slightest want of ceremony in addressing her. Thus on one occasion she took deep offence because the Duke took to sealing his letters with a plain seal instead of with his coat of arms.

"I take this opportunity," she writes in 1835, "of making two enquiries respecting which my mind is not at all satisfied. The first is: Why am I to receive a change of style in the appearance of your letters with regard to the Seal thereof? and the next, *called forth thereby*: Why you ever ceased to sign your Name at the conclusion of your letters. If either of these changes sprang from disrespect or want of confidence in my integrity, confidence, Christianity and friendship, I shall without hesitation or delay return Your Grace every letter I have in my possession, as in that case they will cease to have any value in my estimation. I will also beg to decline all further intercourse, knowing that the sincerity and purity of my friendship merits both consideration and respect."

The Duke's answer to this effusion may be given as an example of the style of his share in the correspondence.

"Strathfieldsaye, September 17, 1835.

"MY DEAR MISS J.,—I always understood that the important parts of a Letter were its Contents. I never much considered the Signature, provided I knew the handwriting; or the Seal, provided it effectually closed the letter. When I write to a

Æt. 66. Person with whom I am intimate,\* who knows my handwriting  
 I generally sign my Initials. I don't always seal my own  
 Letters; they are sometimes sealed by a Secretary, oftener by  
 myself. In any Case, as there are generally very many to be  
 sealed, and the Seal frequently becomes heated, it is necessary  
 to change it; and by accident I may have sealed a Letter to you  
 with a blank Seal. But it is very extraordinary if it is so, as I  
 don't believe I have such a thing! You will find this Letter  
 however signed and sealed in what you deem the most respectful  
 manner. And if I should write to you any more, I will take  
 care that they shall be properly signed and sealed to your  
 Satisfaction. I am very glad to learn that you intend to send  
 back all the letters I ever wrote to you. I told you heretofore  
 that I thought you had better burn them all. But if you think it  
 proper to send them in a parcel to my House, I will save you  
 the trouble of committing them to the flames.

"Believe me, Ever Yours most sincerely,  
 "WELLINGTON."

And this sort of twaddle went on for the space of seventycor  
 years, for it was all twaddle except the fervid and fanatical  
 exhortations on the lady's part. They were perpetually  
 quarrelling, and as often making it up, till, in the later years  
 the correspondence became more material, and the question of  
 pecuniary assistance came on the carpet. No more tiresome  
 or futile intercourse can be imagined for a man of affairs  
 constantly occupied in the discharge of the highest functions  
 of a subject. The tenour of Miss J.'s letters can only be  
 gathered from those extracts which she has preserved in her  
 diary, for the Duke always scrupulously destroyed all letters  
 of a private nature from ladies. They are made up chiefly of  
 religious lectures and discussions which one would have said  
 were of the very kind to bore the Duke, whose religion was  
 of a somewhat conventional type; to account for his having  
 been at the pains to indite three hundred and ninety epistles  
 to Miss J., one is thrown upon the conclusion that, although

\* He had not seen her a dozen times.

there is a total absence of amatory expressions, he found ANN. 1833. recreation in intercourse with a pretty young woman of unconventional ways. The whole episode affords a curious psychological study, not without its counterpart in the lives of some other men of note; but it is one upon which it profits not to dwell. It is barely comprehensible when regard is had to the volume of the Duke's daily correspondence.

"The Duke," wrote Lady Salisbury in 1837, "complained to me terribly of the incessant persecution of notes and letters on all subjects from everybody—told me he had written fifty notes or letters that morning, although he had a secretary, an assistant and a librarian. 'I declare that I dread going into my own house, from the heaps of letters that are ready to receive me there. The other morning I had a visit from a man who had made repeated applications to see me on business of importance—a baronet—who has published a pamphlet or two. The interview began with high-flown compliments on his side, which I soon put an end to by saying, 'We did not meet to make compliments. You stated that you had something to say to me.'

"'Yes, my lord,' said the baronet, 'I have a question to put. I wish to ascertain whether, if your Grace were to return to office, you would support principles of moderate reform.'

"'That is your question, is it?'

"'Yes, my lord.'

"'Then allow me to put a question in return—what right have you to ask me?'" \*

It was not with ladies alone, however, that the Duke was ready to correspond. Postcards, in which the late Mr. Gladstone was so amazingly fecund, were not at his disposal; but it is no exaggeration to say that he used up hundred-weights of gilt-edged letter and note-paper in replies on the most trivial subjects, the drafts being duly retained, endorsed, and filed, usually, as in the following case, *in his own handwriting*. Some unknown quack had sent him a box of salves; he replied as follows:—

\* Salisbury MSS., 1837.



Æt. 69.

"Stratfieldsaye, 26th January, 1833

"SIR,—I have received your letter and the box of salves, which you have sent me. This last will be returned to you the coach of Monday. I beg you to accept my best thanks for your attention. I think that you and I have some reason to complain of the Editors of Newspapers. One of them thought proper to publish an account of me, that I was affected by Rigidity of the Muscles of the Face. You have decided that the disorder must be the *Tic douloureux*, for which you send your Salves as a remedy. I have no disorder in my face. I am affected by the Lumbago or Rheumatism in my Loins, should my neck, and back, a disorder to which many are liable who have passed days and nights exposed to the Weather in bad Climate. I am attended by the best medical Advisers in England, and must attend to their advice. I cannot make use of Salves sent to me by a Gentleman however respectable of whom I know nothing, and who knows nothing of the Case excepting what he reads in the Newspapers." \*

A few more characteristic illustrations may be taken almost at random from the pyramids of manuscripts at Apsley House, where, gazing upon the high desk at which the Duke used to work, one is staggered at the evidence of energy sufficient to drive the quill over so many acres of hard rough paper, and to retain autograph drafts of the most trifling communications. It is well, however, to bear in mind the warning contained in one of these letters.

To Lord Mahon.

"September 18th, 1833

"You are quite right to avoid to publish what you may learn in your Private Correspondence or Private Conversation with anybody. We converse loosely; we may say nothing that we do not think, or know to be true. But if I was to think that every Word I ever say or write was to be brought before the Publick, I should hesitate before I dared to write or talk at

\* *Apsley House MSS.*



and I should take care so to explain myself as that I could not ANN. 1833.  
be misunderstood."

*To a Clergyman who deplored Roman Catholic Emancipation.*

"Walmer Castle, 29 September, 1839.

"F.M. the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Mr. Anderson. Everybody has a right to write to the Duke what he pleases; the Duke hopes that he will be permitted to answer to one as he pleases. Mr. Anderson has thought fit to attribute to one cause the state in which the country is at present. The Duke, who is an actor in the affairs of the Day, would attribute these unfortunate circumstances to the conduct of a powerful Party, of which, if the Duke is not mistaken, Mr. Anderson is one, to the course which this party followed subsequently to the almost unanimous adoption by Parliament of the measure to which Mr. Anderson has referred, and most particularly to the course which many belonging to the same party followed in the course of the years 1830, 1831, and 1832. This is the answer which the Duke has to give to Mr. Anderson: he had better write to somebody else. Before Mr. Anderson refers to the authority of Scripture in relation to the Acts for Catholic Emancipation in correspondence with others, the Duke would recommend to him to peruse the Acts of Parliament establishing the Reformation of the Church of England in England and Ireland. He will judge for himself whether these in any manner affected the civil privileges of Roman Catholics; whether such privileges were affected till the enactment of the Corporation and Test Acts in the reign of Charles II.; whether the authors of these Acts, the founders of the Church and its doctrines, left for two centuries in existence and in exercise privileges forbidden by the word of God."

*Ordering a Pair of Post-horses.*

"Stratfieldsaye, November 24, 1846.

"F.M. the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to the Landlord of the Norfolk Arms Inn. The Duke has been invited to Arundel Castle during the period of the visit of H.M.

Æt. 78. — the Queen to His Grace the Duke of Norfolk. He will start at Arundel by the Rail Road on Tuesday the 1st of December by the train which will quit the Station London Bridge at eleven a.m. and reach the Station Arundel at 1.39. He will bring his Carriage with him, and he requests the Landlord of the Norfolk Arms Inn to give orders, and if necessary to take Measures, that he may find a pair of Horses at the Arundel Station at half-past one on Tuesday the 1st of December to draw his Carriage from thence to the Castle.

"The Duke will have with him two Saddle Horses, and he requests the Landlord of the Norfolk Arms Inn to give orders that Stabling may be ready for them at the Norfolk Arms if possible; if not, in the Town in the immediate Neighbourhood.

"If the Landlord of the Norfolk Arms Inn should have occasion to write to the Duke of Wellington, it is requested that he will address the letter to Piccadilly, London."

*Endorsed*—"To the Landlord of the Norfolk Arms Inn, Arundel, desiring him to have a pair of horses to draw the Carriage to the Castle." \*

*To one who asked the Duke for a Certificate of Respectability*

"London, July 21, 1818"

"F.M. the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Mr. Oliver. He declares distinctly that he knows nothing of Mr. Edward Oliver, and that he is astonished at the Insolence of any person requiring him to certify to Messrs. Coutts and Co. or any other person, that of which the person who makes the requisition must know that the Duke has no personal knowledge."

*To a Washerwoman.*

"London, September 1, 1818"

"The Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Mrs. Herrick. His son, the Marquis of Douro, is a housekeeper at Belgrave Street. He is not responsible for the payment of any bills."

\* The whole of this, including the endorsement, is in the Duke's own handwriting.

washing bills, even to the wife of a soldier. It appears to the Duke that the regular mode of proceeding would be to apply to the debtor himself, and, if payment should be refused or omitted, to enforce the same by all means sanctioned by law. This would be a regular mode of proceeding. That adopted is *impertinent*, in the real and not offensive meaning of that word." ANN. 1833.

*To a Lady who sent a Box to Apsley House.*

"Walmer Castle, 3rd November, 1849.

"Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Miss Jane Fyffe. He has this morning received in a deal box her letter of 3rd October. He has long been under the necessity of preventing his house being made the deposit of all the trash that is manufactured or made up. Giving money is one thing—receiving into his house all the trash made up is quite a different one! To the latter he will not submit. He invariably returns everything sent to his house without his previous permission, if he can discover the mode of doing so. But there is no direct communication between this place and Edinburgh. The deal case was brought down here from the Duke's house in London, the Duke is ignorant in what manner. He desires Miss — to inform him in what manner it is to be returned to Edinburgh. He gives notice that if he does not receive an answer by return of post, the box and its contents will be thrown into the fire. He will not allow things to be sent to his house without his previous consent."

In his later years the Duke had a variety of forms of refusal lithographed in facsimile from his own handwriting, for such purposes as declining invitations to dinners and parties, declining to give orders to the gallery of the House of Lords or to send an autograph signature, and, especially, explaining the limitation of his patronage as Commander-in-chief.

In his last years his handwriting became almost illegible; so much so that in 1852, when Lord Derby, then in office,

Æt. 63. — received a letter from the Duke which no one in Down Street could decipher, he sent his private secretary, Colonel Talbot, to ask the Duke to explain his own letter. The Duke took it, looked at it, and, handing it back to Colonel Talbot, observed with a smile, "It was my business to write that letter, but it is *your* duty to read it!"

Returning to the year 1833—for the ordinary incidents and social obligations of political life the Duke at this time felt a strong disinclination, all the more marked because he was usually so conscientious in meeting them.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Marchioness of Salisbury.*

"S.S., March 28th, 1833."

"MY DEAR LADY SALISBURY,—I have received your note about dining with the Lord Mayor, which is a ceremony which I consider that I am anxious to avoid unless you wish it very much. I wish to avoid for three reasons. First, I think that all in the City, Conservatives \* as well as the others, behaved most shamefully to me in the year 1830 on the occasion of the King's intended visit to the City. I then determined that I would not go again either to the Mansion House or to dine at the Guildhall. Secondly, I am very anxious to avoid to meet the Ministers at any place where; but particularly in the City at the Lord Mayor's, where they must be toasted, applauded, etc., etc. Thirdly, it is quite clear to me that if the Ministers knew, as they must, that I intended to be present, they would not favour me by having a mob ready to receive me on arriving at, or going away from the Mansion House, as Mr. Canning's Government had on the occasion that I attended a dinner given by the East India Company when he was present. My own inclination, therefore, would induce me not to go." †

It is rather lamentable to find the Duke entertained a suspicion that English Ministers and gentlemen would stir

\* The earliest example which I have noted of the use by the Duke of the modern term for what remained of the Tory party.

† *Salisbury MSS.*

to wrest the Lord Mayor's hospitality into the occasion for a ANN. 1834. hostile demonstration against a political opponent, but this was not the only symptom of how much his spirit had been embittered and his judgment warped by resentment against the authors of the legislative revolution. Unhappily, he allowed his resentment to extend to some who deserved censure from him least of all.

Early in 1834 the Chancellorship of the University of Oxford became vacant through the death of Lord Grenville, and the Conservatives of the University approached the Duke with the view of inducing him to consent to be put in nomination. He told them that he "knew no more of Greek and Latin than an Eton boy in the remove; that these facts were perfectly well known, and that he must be considered incapable and unfit,"\* and he urged them to look elsewhere, naming the Duke of Beaufort and the Lords Bathurst, Mansfield, Sidmouth, and Talbot. Yielding, however, to the urgent pressure of his proposers, the Duke consented to be put forward, considering himself "in all instances of this kind an instrument to be used by the public."† Meanwhile another party in Convocation had invited Sir Robert Peel to allow his nomination, and Mr. Hayward Cox wrote to the Duke suggesting that it would be a gracious act if he were to withdraw in favour of his colleague, who, by his conscientious action at the time of the Roman Catholic legislation, had lost his seat for the University. The Duke replied, declining to withdraw on the ground that the appeal had come too late, and that it would be unfair to the gentlemen who, at his request, had first reconsidered, and then repeated, their invitation to himself.

Accordingly, the Duke was installed as Chancellor of the University on 10th June. With Croker, who accompanied him, he stipulated for an avoidance of display.

\* *Apsley House MSS.*

† *Ibid.*

Æt. 64. — "I intend to send a footman and coachman and horses to Oxford; but as for a magnificent entry, etc., I must enter the city as I have always entered that and others—as an individual." "I could not make the Duke," Croker wrote to his wife, "take off his hat to any one, not even the ladies; he kept saluting me like a soldier. I, however, made him show himself occasionally, and take notice here and there; but he is a sad hand at popular hunting. . . . Mr. Arnould repeated some very good verses from the Hospice of St. Bernard; and, after alluding to Buonaparte's passage of the Alps, and praising his genius, etc., and recounting all his triumphs, he suddenly apostrophised the Duke, and said something equivalent to—'invincible till he met *you!*' At that word began a scene of enthusiasm such as I never saw; so that the people appeared to me to go out of their senses—literally to be mad. The whole assembly started up, and the ladies and gentlemen in a semicircle of doctors became as much excited as the boys in a school-gallery and the men in the pit. Such peals of shouts I never before heard; such waving of hats, handkerchiefs and caps I never saw; such extravagant clapping and stamping so that at last the air became clouded with dust. During all this the Duke sat like a statue; at last he took some notice, took off his cap lightly and pointed to the reciter to go on; but this only increased the enthusiasm, and at last it ended only from the exhaustion of the animal powers." †

Now it may easily be believed how little the Duke, loaded already with all the honours which human ingenuity has ever devised to indicate human gratitude, coveted for himself the honorary office of Chancellor; nevertheless, Peel was deeply hurt that the Duke, in suggesting the names of other persons, should not have mentioned him as one who had deserved so well of the University.‡ He was not aware, as appears from an unpublished letter from the Duke to Lord Aberdeen, that the Duke "had done everything in his power to prevent"

\* *Croker*, ii. 225.

† *Ibid.*, 228.

‡ Peel was afterwards informed by Sir Henry Hardinge that the Duke "had been urging Mr. Wintle to force the office upon you (Peel) by a junction of parties;" but the Duke was informed that a peer was indispensable.

on them to take Sir Robert Peel,"\* but in vain. Peel ANN. 1834. therefore withdrew, and the Duke was unanimously elected. Such a trifle as this would never have disturbed the intercourse of men who were on confidential terms, but such, unhappily, no longer prevailed between the two leaders of the Opposition.

"Peel complains," wrote Lady Salisbury in her journal, "that he has asked the Duke three years running to Drayton, but he has never been asked to Strathfieldsaye. There certainly never were two men less fitted to go on well together in the intercourse of private life. The only way to deal with the Duke is by perfect openness and candour, and Peel is always stiff, reserved, and unfathomable." †

"Why won't you go to Drayton?" asked Lady Salisbury.

"Ah, that is the way!" returned the Duke. "Why does the Duke not do this, and why does the Duke not do that? It is very hard if the Duke is to be the only man who may not do as he likes." ‡

On another occasion Lady Salisbury, after listening to some complaint by the Duke about Peel's tiresome ways, remarked, "Never mind; he is a thoroughly honest man and devoted to you."

"In the first position, you are quite right," replied the Duke—"he is thoroughly honest. I never saw a man who adhered more invariably to truth on all occasions. As to the second, I have my doubts of that." §

It was one of the Duke's peculiarities that he was very slow—unconquerably slow—to change an opinion he had once formed. It was the work of years to convince him that he had been mistaken in his original belief that Peel disliked him. On 1st May, 1834, they met at dinner at Mr.

\* *Apsley House MSS.*

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Salisbury MSS., 1836.*

§ *Ibid.*

Æt. 65. — Arbuthnot's, and their host was so struck by the absence of the old cordiality between them, and so apprehensive of an open rupture was imminent, that he wrote to express his anxiety to Lord Aberdeen, as the only man able to set matters right.

"I know not which of the two is in fault. Perhaps there is no fault on either side, merely misconception. . . . The Duke, I know, imagines that Peel does not like him. In this I am in error. If there is one subject upon which, when I was seeing Peel daily, he spoke to me more than upon all other subjects, it was in praise and admiration of the Duke. . . . It seems therefore to me that the one thing wanted is that they should understand each other." \*

Now, Lord Aberdeen was equally friendly with the Duke and Sir Robert, and it is significant that, instead of going straight to the Duke, who was in the habit of grumbling to him confidentially about Peel, he forwarded Arbuthnot's letter to Peel. The fact is that the Duke was rather an imprudent person in delicate negotiations; he was so impatient of any want—not of sincerity, for he always gave Peel the utmost credit for absolute truthfulness—but of frankness in manner and directness of expression, that his friends found it difficult to induce him to use those little attentions and considerations which do so much to make intercourse run smoothly. Aberdeen found that chief among two or three other causes for Peel's soreness was the remembrance of Wellington's words when, in 1832, he had been explaining to the Lords his action and motives in endeavouring to form a Ministry which Peel had refused to join. They certainly were barbed expressions, and it is not surprising that they rankled in a spirit so sensitive as Peel's.

"For myself, my Lords, I cannot help feeling that if I had been capable of refusing my assistance to his Majesty, if

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 232.



been capable of saying to his Majesty—'I cannot assist you in this affair,' I do not think, my Lords, that I could have shown my face in the streets for shame of having done it, for shame of having abandoned my Sovereign under such distressing circumstances. I have indeed the misfortune of differing from friends of mine upon this subject, but I cannot regret the steps I have taken." ANN. 1834.

The faithful Arbuthnot did not relax his efforts to bring about a reconciliation. He was determined to remove the misunderstanding between these men, not only from the deep admiration and affection in which he held them, but because he looked upon them as essential to the welfare of the country. The Ministry was crumbling to pieces; were it to fall, it were lamentable that there should exist anything short of the fullest confidence between Wellington and Peel. To Peel, therefore, Arbuthnot wrote on 12th May--

"The Duke told me yesterday that he had met Hardinge, and that he said to him that things were in that state which might make it necessary for you to make up your mind at a moment's warning what course you would pursue. I don't think he said much more . . . except that the Minister must be in the House of Commons. . . . Supposing that the King had to form a new Government, I should hope that he would send for you and the Duke at the same time. The Duke would represent the absolute necessity of having the Minister in the House of Commons, and he would exert himself most strenuously in aiding you to form a Government. It would then be settled between you what share in it he was to take; but I know that his object is the Horse Guards." \*

The misunderstanding and coldness, however, were not so easily removed. It endured for years, despite the closer relations into which political changes brought the Duke and Sir Robert, and although Arbuthnot, Croke, Lady Salisbury,

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 240.

Æt. 64. — and other friends used their best offices to put matters on more comfortable footing. Complete reconciliation—*red gratio amoris*—did indeed come at last, but not before the end of both these great lives was at hand.

The Duke's difficulties with his party.

The Duke's efforts during 1834 were chiefly directed to restraining the indiscretions of his own party. "I understand," he wrote to Lord Aberdeen before the opening of the session, "that our zealous friends are very unreasonable. I shall have some trouble with them." \* Writing on the same day to the Duke of Buckingham, one of these "zealous friends," he indulged in a little jeremiad on the times.

"The truth is that all government in this country is impossible under existing circumstances. I don't care whether it is a monarchy, oligarchy, aristocracy, democracy, or what they please. The government of the country, the protection of the liberties, privileges, and properties of its subjects and the regulation of a thousand matters which require regulation in an advanced and artificial state of society, are impracticable as long as such a deliberative assembly exists as the House of Commons, with the powers and privileges which it has amassed in the course of the last two hundred years." †

It was with Lord Aberdeen that the Duke took counsel in leading the Opposition in the Lords. Church reform was in the air, and Ministers were being urged to take it up, without, however, showing much inclination for the task.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Earl of Aberdeen.*

"17th January, 1834."

"... There is a good deal of alarm about the Church, principally among the dignified clergy, and the politicians of the world. My friends the country gentlemen don't seem to me to think much about that or anything else excepting their hares and foxes." ‡

\* *Apsley House MSS.*, 1834.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Apsley House MSS.*

*The same to Lord Roden.*

ANN. 1834.

"17th January, 1834.

"It is impossible for me to tell what will be the course of events in Parliament. From the moment that the word 'Reform' was mentioned in Parliament I never doubted of the consequences which must follow from it. We have not half done with them yet. My opinion has been invariably that we ought to descend from our high station by the most gradual road, in order to avoid any great shock to our complicated Machine, and that we might each of us take our Station in the new system according to which it has pleased Gentlemen to be governed. I therefore have done and will do all that I can to prevent any sudden or general mischief. People are telling me every day that noblemen and gentlemen like to be consulted, and to know the opinion of each other. I thought that I could not adopt a better mode of consulting than to invite to dine with me on the day preceding the Meeting of Parliament every Nobleman in the habit of speaking in the House of Lords, or whose opinion was likely to have weight with others. I have invited as many as fifty; from some I am sorry to say I have not received very civil answers. Many have not answered at all; some have excused themselves for not attending; very few have said that they will attend. I confess that I should find it difficult to give a Reason for having sent these invitations. If a meeting was desirable, those who should wish it might have met at a club, or at the house of any other noble lord."\*

"I am persuaded," wrote Charles Greville in his journal, "that the Duke deludes himself with some extraordinary false reasoning, and that the habits of intense volition, jumbled up with party prejudices, old association, and exposure to never-ceasing flattery, have produced the remarkable result we see in his conduct. Notwithstanding the enormous blunders he has committed, and his numerous and flagrant inconsistencies, he has never lost confidence in himself, and,

\* *Aspley House MSS*

Æt. 65. what is more curious, has contrived to retain that of a  
— of followers." \*

Death of  
Mrs.  
Arbuthnot.

The political convulsion anticipated as immediate by Duke and Mr. Arbuthnot was postponed for a few months and before it came about the Duke was fated to sustain a severe loss in the death of Mrs. Arbuthnot, one of his intimate friends. Gossips loved to point an inquisitive finger at this friendship, which began when the Arbuthnots were in Paris after the peace of 1815; and, in whatever degree indiscretion the acquaintance may have had its rise, it ripened with years into a friendship very dear to the Duke. He was at Hatfield when the news came, and Lady Salisbury has described the scene in her journal.

August 2nd, 1834.—“Lord S. came down with Lds. Ellborough and Rosslyn, the Clanwilliams and the G. Somers. They had a splendid division last night in the Lords on Admission of Dissenters Bill—majority 102—greater than a division of the Opposition in this century. At least this trust, will put swamping the H. of Peers out of the question. The Duke came down to dinner in high spirits. He told us Mrs. Arbuthnot had been ill at Woodford with an attack of cholera—nature of cholera—but was better. I had just gone to bed, with the other ladies, when an express arrived to the D. with intelligence of Mrs. Arbuthnot's death. He threw himself on the greatest agitation on the sofa, as Ld. S. told me, and threw a letter on the floor; and then rose and walked a few minutes about the room, almost sobbing, after which he retired. In the morning Lord S. got a note from him, saying he must go to Woodford; he left for Woodford about half-past eight on Sunday morning. It is a dreadful loss to him; for whether there is any foundation or not for the stories usually believed about the early part of their *liaison*, she was certainly now become to him no more than a tried and valued friend, to whom he was sincerely attached. Her house was his home; and with all his glory and greatness, *he never had a home*. His nature is domestic

\* Greville, 2nd series, iii. 173.

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MRS. ARBUTHNOT.

*From a Miniature at Apsley House.*

*Vol. ii. p. 296.*



and, as he advances in years, some female society and some <sup>Ann. 1834.</sup> fireside to which he can always resort become necessary to him." \*

Mr. Arbuthnot, who was slightly older than the Duke, shortly after he became a widower, was induced to make his London residence in Apsley House, and the friendship between these two men continued without change or abatement, till it was severed by Mr. Arbuthnot's death in 1850.

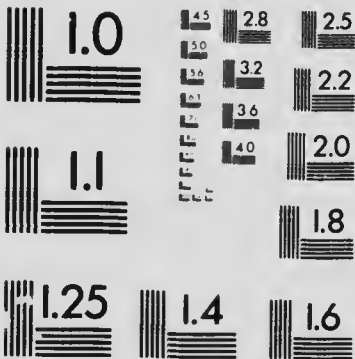
\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1834.





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## CHAPTER X.

### AFTER THE STORM.

1834-1839.

<p>1834. Gloomy apprehensions of the Tories.</p> <p>July . . . . . Resignation of Lord Grey.</p> <p>November 12 . Fall of the Melbourne Ministry.</p> <p>    "    15 . The King sends for the Duke of Wellington.</p> <p>            The Duke becomes First Lord of the Treasury, Home, Foreign, and Colonial Secretary.</p> <p>            Lord Stanley declines office.</p> <p>            Sir R. Peel's first Cabinet.</p> <p>April . . 1835. Defeat and resignation of Ministers.</p> <p>            The Duke's relations with his party.</p> <p>            <i>Rapprochement</i> of Canningites and Moderate Tories.</p> <p>            Municipal Corporations Bill.</p>	<p>September. . . Renewal of coldness between the Duke and Peel.</p> <p>June 20, 1837. Death of William IV.</p> <p>1837-8. The Duke's forbearance in Opposition.</p> <p>January . 1838. The Canadian Rebellion.</p> <p>June 28 . . . . Coronation of Queen Victoria.</p> <p>May . . 1839. Resignation of Lord Melbourne.</p> <p>            The Queen sends for the Duke of Wellington.</p> <p>            Who recommends Majesty to lay commands on Robert Peel.</p> <p>            The Bedchamber dismissed.</p> <p>            Lord Melbourne called to office.</p> <p>October 15 . . Death of Lady Salisbury.</p> <p>November 18 . Sudden illness of Duke.</p>
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Gloomy apprehensions of the Tories. **T**HE old order was changing fast; in the Duke of Wellington's opinion it was passing away altogether. Gloomy apprehensions continued of the gloomiest.

"I think," said he to Lady Salisbury, "that persons of property in this country are coming to their senses; but while the Reform Act is in force they have no influence. Formerly there were certain places given up to the democratic interest, and it was very proper, in a constitution like ours, that there should be such; the rest were in the hands of the property of the country. But the Act has brought home democracy to every man's door. I doubt whether, even if the Reform Act were repealed,\* the country could again enjoy its ancient constitution without further changes. The House of Commons has of late swallowed up all the power of the State; the rotten boroughs moderated this power by the infusion of aristocratic influence; to restore them would be impossible. It remains to be considered in what manner to re-establish the ancient balance, whether by giving to the House of Lords more power by controlling the money bills and so on, or by giving the King a real and effectual veto. If there were a revolution in this country, it must end by a military dictator; I am too old, but there would be one." †

The Duke was not alone in anticipating a violent revolution; his apprehensions were shared by some of the Whigs. On hearing that the Duke of Bedford had declared that, in his opinion, the choice lay between despotism and anarchy, the Duke remarked, "I can tell Johnny Bedford that if we have anarchy, I'll have Woburn!" ‡

Bitterly as he disapproved of Lord Grey's policy, still his Cabinet was the King's Government, and Wellington could not be induced by Buckingham, Londonderry, and the other Tory *frondeurs* to offer any factious opposition to their measures. Least of all was he disposed to take issue with them upon the new Poor Law.

\* It is a singular thing that, as shown by many expressions in the Duke's letters at this time, he contemplated partial repeal of the Reform Act as a possible and desirable thing.

† *Salisbury MSS.*, 1834.

‡ *Ibid.*

Æt. 65.

*The Duke of Wellington to the Marquess of Londonderry.*

"17 June, 1834

The Tory  
Fronde.

"MY DEAR CHARLES,— . . . In the last session of Parliament I fought *several fair stand-up fights* throughout the Dog Days and till the end of August, with the support of not more than a dozen Peers; upon questions of the greatest Publick and personal interest, even to the Duke of Buckingham himself; but I do not recollect that I had the Advantage of the Duke's support on any one of these occasions. . . . I decline to make the Poor Law Bill a Party Question, or to oppose any provision in it of which when I see it, I shall approve. . . . I do not choose to be the first Person to excite a quarrel between the two Houses of Parliament. This quarrel will occur in its Time; and the House of Lords will probably be overwhelmed. But it shall not be owing to any act of mine."

"London, June 19, 1834

"If I am to carry on a Warfare with the Duke of Buckingham by Letter, he must write Legibly. I can scarcely read one Word of his Letter. Indeed not one Word beyond the first Page.

"In answer to that Page I assert that I was left almost alone to fight the Battle in the House of Lords in the last Session of Parliament! We consequently lost many Questions. . . . To talk of my being Leader of a Party or anything but the Slave of a Party, in other Words the Person whom any other may bore with Letters or his Visits upon publick Subjects, when he pleases, just what I call *Stuff*." \*

During the summer of 1834 Lord Grey's Ministry staggered on under increasing difficulties. Their popularity out-of-doors suffered from the disappointment of those who had imagined that all kinds of benefits would immediately flow from the establishment of a people's Parliament. They were at issue among themselves on the proposals for dealing with the revenues of the Irish Church, which brought about in May the resignation of the Duke of Richmond, Lord Ripon

\* Originals at Wynyard Park.

Sir James Graham, and Mr. Stanley.\* Grey himself was only restrained from retiring at the same time by the remonstrance of Brougham; he did resign in July, and was succeeded as Prime Minister by Lord Melbourne, Parliament being prorogued at the same time. ANN. 1834.

Lord Melbourne accepted office, relying chiefly on Lord Althorpe's influence as leader of the House of Commons; † but on the death of his father, Earl Spencer, on 10th November, Althorpe went to the House of Lords, and Lord Melbourne, feeling that the position was seriously modified, asked the King whether it was his pleasure that he "should attempt to make such fresh arrangements as might enable his Majesty's present servants to continue to conduct the affairs of the country; or whether his Majesty deems it advisable to adopt any other course." It has usually been understood that the King dismissed his Ministers on this occasion by the exercise of his prerogative, ‡ but the above extract from Lord Melbourne's letter to the King on 12th November shows that, technically, he placed his resignation in his Majesty's hands. In his reply the King replied that, looking to the effect on the strength of Ministers of the withdrawal of Lord Althorpe from the House of Commons, and also to the division of opinion in the Cabinet on the question of the Irish Church, "he did not think he would be acting fairly or honourably by his Lordship if he called upon him for the continuance of his services in a position of which the tenure appeared to the King so precarious." The dismissal by the King of his Ministers, for such it was in effect, § gave rise to a situation wholly without parallel. Melbourne, after

Fall of the  
Melbourne  
Ministry.

\* Became Lord Stanley on the death of his grandfather, the twelfth Earl of Derby, 21st October, 1834.

† See Melbourne's letter to the King (*Peel Letters*, ii. 253).

‡ Brougham industriously circulated the unfounded report that the Ministry had been dismissed as the result of an intrigue between the Tories and the Queen.

§ And so the King believed it to be, avowing it as "his own immediate and exclusive act" in a subsequent letter to Sir Robert Peel (*Peel Letters*, ii. 288).

**Æt. 65.** a personal interview with his Majesty at Brighton, offered to convey to the Duke of Wellington his Majesty's commands, and actually waited while Sir Herbert Taylor wrote

The King sends for the Duke.

letter.\* The Duke was just starting from Strathfieldsaye hunting on 15th November, when the King's letter was brought to him. He started at once for Brighton, arriving there late at night. He told the King that the House of Commons was the chief difficulty in the way of a new Government, that the head of the Government ought to be chosen by the House of Commons, and he recommended his Majesty to name Peel as First Minister. Peel was absent in Italy, and the Duke undertook to conduct the Government till he should return, filling up no offices so as to leave Peel entirely free hand when he came home. The King, greatly incensed with the reports circulated in the press by Brougham, and eager to get rid of his old Ministers at once, appointed

The Duke administers all the chief offices.

Wellington First Lord of the Treasury, and committed to him in addition the seals of the Home, Foreign, and Colonial Offices. The Duke wrote a letter of four lines to Lord Brougham, stating that "he had his Majesty's commands to request him to deliver up the Seal on Friday next at 2 o'clock." Brougham replied on four sides of *letter paper* after perusing which the Duke remained in doubt whether he meant to give up the seal or not—an incident very characteristic of both men.†

The Whigs and the Whig press affected great indignation at this concentration of offices and patronage in the hands of one subject; they declared it to be unconstitutional; but the cloud of unpopularity had passed away from the hero of Waterloo; nobody suspected the Duke of serving his private interests at this juncture; his character was far too simple and downright to admit of the faintest imputation on the

\* *Croker*, ii. 224.

† *Salisbury MSS.*, 1834. I have been able to verify the exactness of the statement. The originals of these letters are at Apsley House, and exactly correspond in dimensions to those quoted by Lady Salisbury.

score; people were proud of the veteran who rode from door ANN. 1834. to door, methodically discharging the routine business of four public departments, "worked as no post-horse at Hounslow ever was," as he expressed it himself.

"It was really a moment worth living for," wrote Lady Salisbury in her journal, "to see that great man once more where he ought to be, appreciated as he deserves by his King, and at the head of this great country—if it does but last! But one must not embitter such moments by thoughts like these." \*

King William was in great glee at having got rid of the Whigs, and urged on Wellington to anticipate Peel's return by filling up the offices. But the Duke was firm.

"The King," he wrote to Lord Melville on 23rd November, "is in great spirits, but he is, thank God between ourselves! gone out of town; he is becoming a little in a hurry, and I am afraid that I should not have kept him quiet." †

The King's summons reached Peel at a ball in Rome on 25th November; he reached London on 9th December, having, as he afterwards noted, taken exactly the same time over the journey as the Emperor Hadrian did. His first act after assuming the office of Prime Minister was to invite Lord Stanley to take office in the new Ministry. This was in accordance with Wellington's suggestion, who had included the names of Stanley and Graham in a list of Ministers which he had forwarded to Italy for Peel's consideration, expressing doubts at the same time whether they would accept office. The Duke had convinced himself that the party must move with the times.

"I think that you will find the Tories, my Lords in particular, very well disposed to go all reasonable lengths in the way of reform of institutions. . . . I have been astonished at their being so docile." ‡

Stanley declined office on the ground that, however possible it might be for him to serve with Peel, the circumstance that Lord Stanley declines office.

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1834.

† *Apsley House MSS.*

‡ *Ibid.*

Æt. 63. the Duke of Wellington was the person who received the first mark of the King's confidence "must stamp upon the Administration about to be formed the impress of his mind and principles." Lord Stanley was mistaken in supposing that the Duke had any ulterior views about the conduct of the Government. Misunderstandings between him and the Government there certainly had been and were to be, but nothing more complete than the Duke's loyal deference to Peel, and his resolve that the Administration should be Peel's and no other.

"It is impossible," wrote Mr. Dawson to Sir Robert before his return to England, "to praise too highly the delicate chivalry of the Duke towards you. I dined with him on Wednesday, and he told me that he should take no step, that he should not give an opinion until your arrival; that he looked upon you as the only man to steer the country through its difficulties; that he occupied his present position solely to resign it in the future way to you; and that on your arrival you should not find a single thing done to fetter your judgment." \*

Indeed, the Duke's action in this crisis—his perfect loyalty to the absent Peel and his discretion in recognising the limitations of his own power, as shown by his failure to form a Ministry in 1832—affords one of the best features in his whole political career.

That Stanley and his friends, representing the moderate Reformers or Liberal-Conservatives, should hold aloof was a keen disappointment to Peel. "It will be the Duke's Cabinet over again," he said querulously to Mr. Croker; † so it was in effect, with Lyndhurst on the Woolsack, Abercrombie at the Colonial Office, Goulbourne Home Secretary, and Hardinge Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Peel's first  
Cabinet.

Lord Stanley's apprehensions, however, that the policy of the new Cabinet would be high-and-dry Tory, were speedily dispelled by a manifesto issued by Peel, with the approval

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 260.

† *Croker*, ii. 249.



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, ii. 249.



THE RIGHT HON. SIR ROBERT PEELE, BART., M.P.  
(After a Painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence.)

*Vol. ii, p. 304.*



his colleagues,\* to the electors of Tamworth, in which the ANN. 1835 Reform Act was referred to as "a final and irrevocable settlement of a great constitutional question," and a programme of economy, of deliberate and dispassionate reform of every institution which stood in need of it, and of steady redress of grievances. Immediately upon this Parliament was dissolved; but although the Ministerialists, who could only reckon 150 votes in the first reformed Parliament, came back greatly reinforced, they still formed but a minority of the House of Commons.

A characteristic letter from Benjamin Disraeli explained to the Duke his view of the causes for his defeat in the contest for High Wycombe.

"I have fought our battle and I have lost it by a majority of fourteen. . . . Had Lord Carrington exerted himself even in the slightest degree in my favour, I must have been returned. But he certainly maintained a *neutrality*—a neutrality so strict that it amounted to a blockade. . . . Grey made a violent anti-ministerial speech, and I annihilated him in my reply; but what use is annihilating men out of the House of Commons? . . . I am now a cipher; but if the devotion of my energies to your cause, IN and OUT, can ever avail you, your Grace may count upon me, who seeks no greater satisfaction than that of serving a really great man." †

The life of the Ministry was short and troubled. Beaten on the election of a Speaker and again on the Address, Peel persevered ‡ until he had sustained six defeats in the

\* Mr. Walpole speaks of the Tamworth manifesto as if it had been a disagreeable surprise to the Tory Cabinet (*History of England*, iii. 281). We have, however, Peel's own assurance that he submitted the draft to his colleagues, and that it had their approval (*Peel Memoirs*, ii. 58).

† *Apsley House MSS.*

‡ The Duke strongly urged Peel not to give up. "I should not be your friend," he wrote, "if I did not advise you and entreat you not to give up till your retaining your position becomes wholly impossible. A week more or less cannot signify much either way, in any view whatever, excepting to your high

Apr. 65. Commons, the last of which happened in April, w  
 Ministers were in a minority of 27 on Lord John Russ  
 Defeat and resolution for dealing with the surplus revenues of the  
 resignation of Church. While the debate was in progress the Duke  
 of Ministers. entertaining the Austrian Ambassador at dinner at Ap  
 House. Lord Lyndhurst offered to send early informa  
 of the result of the division.

"I am quite satisfied," said the Duke, "to have it w  
 the newspapers come in at ten o'clock. If I could do  
 good by having it earlier, I would; but as I can't, I'd ju  
 soon wait."

"You always take things coolly," interposed Lady S  
 bury. "I suppose you never lie awake with anxiety?"

"No," replied the Duke, "I don't like lying awake; it  
 no good. I make a point never to lie awake."\*

The first attempt at a Conservative Administration  
 failed, but Conservatism, as expounded by Peel, had c  
 manded such wide sympathy that thoughtful people be  
 to recognise in it the policy of the future. Only among  
 Old Tories was there rending of garments. In the Duk  
 Wellington, despite his abandonment of them on Ro

The Duke's Catholic Relief and, ineffectively, on Reform, they had  
 relations recognised their brightest hopes of resisting further chan  
 with his party. though they never regarded him as a good "party man,"  
 now the Duke had gone in scot and lot with the r  
 fangled Conservatism.

"The Duke," notes Lady Salisbury, "has certainly a ner  
 horror of the annoyances he endures from the ultra-Tories;  
 greater than any he feels of the Radicals. . . . He told m  
 was convinced we should soon see a new party formed in  
 House of Lords, consisting of Lords Brougham and Londond  
 and the Duke of Buckingham." †

character, and to the contentment of those who have supported you; a  
 earnestly recommend you to bear with the evils of your position, till the  
 viction will be general that you cannot longer maintain it."

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1835.

† *Ibid.*

There was a wild project of overthrowing the Government ANN. 1835 by an adverse motion in the House of Lords which elicited from the Duke the following memorandum addressed to the Duke of Cumberland, the Duke of Buckingham, and the Marquess of Londonderry:—

“ May 5, 1835.

“ . . . The House of Lords is now in a position very different from that in which it stood previous to the Reform Bill. The effect of that measure has been to exclude the influence of the Crown, of the members of the H. of Lords, and of property in general in the Election of Members of the H. of Commons. . . . The consequence is that the H. of Lords have no influence over the proceedings of the Government, or of the H. of Commons. Indeed, in the last, the influence of the House of Lords is considered very much in the same light as the influence of the Master is over his emancipated slaves. It is sufficient for the H. of Lords to approve of and recommend a measure to induce the H. of Commons to reject it. But . . . it must be observed that the H. of Lords still possesses constitutionally great power over the Legislature of the Country; in the exercise of which it will be supported by the Country, and which it ought to exercise with diligence, with wisdom, and discretion. It must not be supposed, however, that this power will be left in the hands of the Peers, or that they will be allowed to exercise it with independence (in other words, that they will not be swamped) if they exercise it lightly and without deliberation, or if they should render their House contemptible by interfering in discussions in the H. of Commons and in measures not in a legislative form, and not regularly before them, or in the details of the administration of the Govt., over which it must be obvious that they can have no control, as they have none over the Finances of the State. I recommend these few observations to the attention of the Duke of Cumberland, the Duke of Buckingham, and the Marquis of Londonderry. I cannot hope that they will induce them to alter their course. They contain the reasons for my own.

“ W. ” \*

\* Original at Wynyard Park.

Æt. 66.  
*Rapprochement* between Canningites and Peelites.

Municipal Corporations Bill.

The estrangement of the Old Tories was balanced by a decided *rapprochement* between the Canningites—the Liberals—Conservatives under Stanley—and the regular Opposition—the Peelites as they may be called by anticipation—under Peel and Wellington. The principal measure before Parliament in 1835 was one dealing with the reform of municipal corporations, a subject which roused passions almost as intense and apprehensions almost as gloomy as those excited by parliamentary reform. The Duke, despite the advance in his views which had so much dismayed the Old Tories, detected grave dangers in the proposals of the Government.

“The worst of the Corporation Bill,” said he, “is that it would form a little republic in every town, possessing the power of raising money. In case of anything like a civil war, these would be very formidable instruments in the hands of the democratic party. Charles I. was ruined by the money levied by the Corporation of London.” \*

It almost seems as if it required familiarity with the steam engine, not yet universally known, to awaken the minds of the most practised and thoughtful politicians to the beneficent action of the safety-valve. The Duke, even after the reassuring result of the second general election under the Reform Act, could discern security to the State only in its institutions only in centralisation of power and political action. Peel was gifted with greater prescience. He hung back at a time when Wellington was prepared to go forward in the path of reform, but once entered upon, saw that the path must be followed. He had assisted the Corporation Bill in the Commons, confining his opposition to certain important points; but his influence over it ceased with its entry into the House of Lords, and, led by Lyndhurst, the Tories played sad havoc with its provisions, and a collision between the two houses seemed inevitable. A compromise, however, was effected in September, the 11th

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1835.

cordially co-operating with Peel to save the measure of which, ANN. 1835 privately, he entertained so much disapprobation.

Nevertheless the friends of both leaders were distressed to perceive a return of that estrangement between them, which had prevailed before the formation of the Administration of 1834. When the Duke asked Peel's advice about the best means of dealing with the Corporation Bill in the Lords, Peel drily replied that "the Lords must do as they pleased," and left London without giving notice to the Duke of his intentions.\* Indeed, communications entirely ceased between the two colleagues, although Sir Robert continued to express his views on the Bill to Hardinge and others. The Duke was deeply offended and hurt, and it was chiefly the incessant good offices of Lady Salisbury with the Duke and those of Mr. Arbuthnot with Peel, through Sir Henry Hardinge, that a good understanding was eventually restored, never again to be seriously shaken.

Renewed coldness between the Duke and Peel.

"I could not help," wrote Lady Salisbury, "expressing to Sir Henry Hardinge my concern and disappointment at Peel's conduct, which must end in utter ruin to the Monarchy; and I particularly urged Sir Henry to induce Peel, if possible, to alter his *manière d'être* with the Duke, and treat him with more confidence and cordiality. 'The truth is,' said Sir Henry, 'that Peel has no respect for any man's opinion but the Duke's, for whom he has the highest possible veneration. . . . When one speaks to him, he meets one with such a flow of words, and such knock-me-down arguments, it is impossible to reply. When he knows his opinions are contrary to those of the Duke, he avoids coming into collision with him, and will not enter into the subject personally, but transmits it through a third person. That is the reason of his apparent reserve: it is a mixture of habitual reverence for the Duke and obstinacy and *mauvaise honte*.'

"Next day, the Duke came to me. I repeated to him what Sir Henry had told me of Peel's high respect for him and dislike

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1835.

*Æt.* 66. of coming into direct collision with his opinions. He listened with great attention, and made no answer.\*

Neither Wellington nor Peel were deficient in common sense; the representations of their friends had a more felicitous effect than sometimes rewards the exertions of the best intentioned persons, and by the beginning of 1836 the friendly relations of country gentlemen were restored between them.

"I shall certainly be at Drayton on Wednesday," wrote the Duke to Sir Robert on 18th January, 1836. "I will see Jonathan down to-morrow, and I will bring my red coat, and am prepared to do whatever you please. In respect to business, a few words that passed between us already show that we are of the same opinion as to the course to be pursued in Parliament."

The Duke wrote to Lady Salisbury after this visit—

"Upon the whole, between ourselves, I think him (Peel) disposed to act more rationally than I have ever known him before. I conducted myself towards him as I always have done; with unaffected good temper and cordiality." †

And thus ended a disagreement between two men whose concord was of so great importance to their country at a time when the classes and masses were settling, not without friction, which might have engendered conflagration, into new relations with each other. It is agreeable to read the close and constant correspondence which arose out of their joint conduct of the opposition; there was now no longer any frigid "The Lord must do as they please," nor testy references by the Duke to the vacillation of "that fellow in the House of Commons;" but close co-operation in restraining, on the one hand, the extreme members of their own party, and resisting resolutely the most objectionable measures of the other.

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1835.

† *Peel Letters*, ii. 321.

‡ *Salisbury MSS.*, 1836.



Lord Melbourne's Ministry was placed between a vigilant ANN. 1837. Opposition and an unruly Radical "tail."

*The Duke of Wellington to Sir Robert Peel.*

"23rd March, 1837.

" . . . Is not the probable resignation of the Government the great question of the day? It is obvious that they are surrounded by difficulties, abroad and at home, in colonies and everywhere. . . . Their resignation is a great misfortune, but I cannot doubt that it will take place. How does the expectation of this event affect the question under consideration? It is very desirable that the public should understand clearly what the difference of opinion between the two parties is—that you are determined to uphold the Protestant religion, the Church of England in Ireland as well as in England; that you are determined to maintain the independence of the House of Lords. I think that a debate upon the third reading might bring out these points very forcibly, and that men might be induced to look a little further than the mere question of the municipal administration of towns which are bankrupt in property. I shall be satisfied with whatever course you may decide upon. I may have a little more or less facility by your adopting one or the other; but in the consideration of the great interests involved in the decision, such trifles must be laid out of the question." \*

The "great misfortune" was averted by an unforeseen <sup>Death of</sup> event. Chief among Lord Melbourne's difficulties was the <sup>William</sup> intense dislike which the King had conceived against, and <sup>IV.</sup> took no pains to conceal from, his Whig servants. On 20th June took place what Spencer Walpole unkindly terms the most important political circumstance in the life of William IV., namely, his death. With the new monarch Melbourne at once found himself on a very different footing, both personally and politically; for the Princess Victoria was fond of Lord Melbourne as a friend, and had been sedulously educated in

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 342.

ÆT. 68. Whig principles by her mother, the Duchess of Kent is curious to note, considering what the Duke's relations to his Queen became in after years, that almost the first public act of her Majesty met with his disapproval. A royal review was to be held in July, at which the young Queen made it her mind to appear on horseback, in spite of the remonstrances of her Ministers. Somebody to whom the Duke imparted his views bluntly enough, his objection to what he regarded as a display of theatrical display, conveyed what he said straight to the Queen's Majesty, but this did not in the least affect her resolve. The Duke had misgivings about the Queen's horsemanship, which proved to be groundless. "Much better come in her carriage," he said grimly to Lady Salisbury. "I would not wish a better subject for a caricature than this young Queen, alone, with any woman to attend her, without the brilliant cortege of young men and ladies as ought to appear in a scene of this kind, and surrounded only by such youths as Lord Hill, Lord me, Lord Albemarle and the Duke of Argyll! And if it rains, and she gets wet, or if any other *contretemps* happens, what is to be done? All these things sound very little, but they must be considered in a display of that sort. As to the soldiers, I know *them*; they won't care about it one sixpence. It is a childish fancy, because she has read of Queen Elizabeth at Tilbury Fort; but *then* there was threat of foreign invasion, which was an occasion calling for display; what occasion is there now?" †

Much occasion, as the Duke himself lived to realise. The nation was just awaking to political life. This act of the young Queen was the first in a long series of gracious appearances which were to endear her to her people in a degree never attained by any preceding British monarch—the initial step in a reign, of which the character has done more than all the precautions of politicians to avert the dangers which

\* Either the Duke was mistaken, or the British soldier has changed his character in the last sixty years.

† *Salisbury MSS., 1837*

Duke foresaw, and which undoubtedly were impending over ANN. 1837. the ancient institutions of the country.\*

Lord Melbourne's moderation and the irritation it occasioned among his Radical followers, not unnaturally suggested the expediency of a coalition between parties. The Duke recognised no merit in the idea.

*The Duke of Wellington to Lady Burghersh.*

"Walmer Castle, 31st August, 1837.

"There is nearly an equality of Members in Parliament, which renders the House of Commons a Curiosity as a deliberative assembly; and the management of which by what is called Government must be found hereafter, as it has been lately, impracticable. Then comes your Gentleman from the moon who says you must have a fusion—a junction—a Coalition of Parties. That is the remedy. He may give it what name he pleases; it *will be a Coalition!* will be so called, and detested accordingly! This difficulty would be sufficient. But is there no other? Since the great coalition of 1782-3 we have had others. The great whig Leaders joined Mr. Pitt in 1794 in support of his Anti-Revolutionary Policy in the French war. They had supported him long before they coalesced with him in Government. He was strong, and did not depend on their Support. Mr. Canning made a sort of Coalition with the Whigs and he died; but if he had lived, he could not have gone on. The truth is that *Coalitions* have a bad name! Everybody on all sides must be against them, that does not profit by them: excepting the very small numbers indeed who sometimes think of the *Intérêt de la Chose!* But it is said that after my declaration there can be no difference of opinion. My declaration was neither more nor less than the application to a particular set of Questions of the Principle on which I have been acting for years. But there is a great distance between my declaration and a general concurrence

\* Nor of this country alone. It was wisely observed by Lord Rosebery on a recent occasion (1899) that the example of Queen Victoria as a constitutional ruler has had an influence far beyond these shores in reconciling European nations to monarchy as a form of government.

**Æt. 68.** of opinions, much more a Coalition founded upon the existence of such agreement. It is my opinion that the only chance that the Government has in England in these times is to take a moderate course; and to take its chance of support from moderate men of all sides, if there are any such." \*

The Duke's political faith.

The above letter, were there no other testimony in evidence, were sufficient refutation of the prevalent idea that the Duke was a cut-and-dried Tory. The truth is that, he welcomed some reforms, such as Roman Catholic Emancipation, he hated and dreaded others, such as parliamentary reform and the abolition of the corn laws, and only yielded when he recognised, as the bulk of his party did not, that the forces behind them were irresistible, and, if longer resisted, would, by the accumulation of energy, sweep away a deal that might and ought to be preserved. He has been denounced by Reformers as an impracticable Tory—by Tories as a mere Opportunist. In fact, he was neither. An Opportunist is one who will adopt the policy of the majority at the moment, in order to keep his party or himself in power. The Duke had no party, and was absolutely independent and independent of office. But he was strongly convinced that the security of Crown and country were involved in keeping the Radicals out of office, and, in order to do this, he was prepared to accept and even to promote—he would accept and promote—measures which as a Tory he detested. He was a Possibilist—if a new term may be coined—rather than an Opportunist, prepared to resist change as long as possible, but to give way rather than throw the power into the hands of those who, he honestly believed, would ruin the realm.

Impatient Tories.

The Opposition, acting under the direction of Peel and Wellington, who now understood and respected each other thoroughly, preserved an attitude of forbearance towards the Government which was not entirely to the taste of all

\* *Apsley House MSS.*

party. Lord Wilton having written to complain of Sir ANN. 1838.  
Robert Peel's lukewarmness, the Duke replied—

" 31st October, 1837.

" I do not like to interfere in the affairs of the House of Commons, first, because I have nothing to say to them, and next because I really do not understand them. Old men ought not to chatter of things that they don't understand any more than *charming women!* . . . I generally find that without much communication of any sort, Sir Robert Peel and I find ourselves pretty nearly on the same ground." \*

During the winter the Tory rank and file grew still more impatient. Many friends, personal and political, beset the Duke with appeals to attack the Government, but he never varied the spirit of his reply.

*The Duke of Wellington to Lord Redesdale.*

" January 28th, 1838.

" . . . I daresay that I am in the wrong. There is nobody who dislikes, so much as I do, and who knows so little of Party Management. I hate it; because in my opinion it is the cause of all that we are suffering at present. It destroyed the Parliament of 1830. It caused the Reform Bill. It prevented the Alteration of the Reform Bill in the House of Lords in the Year 1832 and the formation of the Parliament in May of that Year. It had nothing to say to the Events of 1834. It destroyed the Parliament formed by those Events. That which I cannot and will not do is to become a Party to any vote which is to involve the Honor of the Country or that of the House of which I am a Member. But I have no objection to others doing what they please. I am afraid that my opinions are very displeasing to many; as well Members of our House as out of doors—I am sorry for it; but if I am to act it must be according to my own opinions." †

\* *Aspley House MSS.*

† *Ibid.* The drafts of these and innumerable other letters are usually in the Duke's own handwriting.

Æt. 68.

*The same to Mr. Arbuthnot.*

"15th February, 1838.

"If I was to decide for myself I should say don't engage in a vote which is to turn out the existing Government. . . . Let us avoid to involve the country in the difficulty of having no Government at all, in order to get out of the difficulty of having a very weak one. To this you answer, Let Peel dissolve the Parliament. I doubt the measure having the effect of giving him a majority to enable him to carry on the Government. We can't carry on a Government with a working majority of 30, as the existing Government do. Our people will not attend to support us. All theirs attend to support them in Government and will attend to oppose us in Government. But there is an element in this case which is a novelty since the year 1831—that is the objection to change on the part of the Queen. I dined yesterday at the Palace, and passed there the evening. Lord Melbourne was there. I sat on her right, he on her left, at dinner. I entertain no doubt that her Majesty is quite satisfied with him. My opinion is that she does nothing without consulting him, even upon the time of quitting the table after dinner and retiring to bed at night. I must say that if the adoption of a course in Parliament which is to break up the existing Government is doubtful, supposing the Queen to be favourable to our views, or at least neutral, the circumstances are still more complicated if we are not only to force ourselves upon the House of Commons and the publick, but likewise upon the Queen herself. . . . I have always been and always shall be in front of the Battle. I cannot hold back. But it is a little too much for Noblemen and Honble. Gentlemen to call upon Sir Robert Peel and me to put ourselves at their Head to carry into Execution a course of policy of which we disapprove and see the danger; trusting to their support; when we have found in this very Session that we cannot rely upon their support in any opinion of ours; or upon any Measure whatever."\*

The  
Canadian  
rebellion.

In truth, the Government were experiencing plenty of difficulties within their own camp. The first announcement

\* *Apsley House MSS.*

by Ministers on the meeting of Parliament on 16th January, ANN. 1838.  
 1838, had referred to the provinces of Upper and Lower  
 Canada, which had been in active rebellion for several months.  
 The Government had determined to suspend the constitution  
 of Lower Canada, and to invest Lord Durham with almost  
 plenary powers to restore the authority of the Crown. The  
 Radicals vehemently opposed this proposal, which was  
 objectionable also from a Conservative point of view; but  
 Peel agreed with Wellington that it would never do to join  
 the Radicals in an attack on the Government. There was  
 perfect harmony between the Opposition leaders of the two  
 Houses on this question, and Lord Stanley entirely concurred  
 with them. Stanley wrote to Peel, exceedingly indignant  
 with Brougham, who, ever since his exclusion from office  
 in 1835, had been a thorn in the flank of the Administration.  
 Brougham had written to Stanley—

“I am in wonderment at the extreme self-denial of your Con-  
 servatives. I thought I had opened the door of the closet for  
 them, and put the Government in a fire that would destroy them,  
 when the Duke steps forward and shuts the door in his own face,  
 and protects them from my battery. I must say he was their  
 only defender, and that he has never helped them since; but  
 a Government has ninety-nine lives if its adversaries help it as  
 soon as it is in peril.”

Far different was Wellington's conception of the duty of  
 a loyal Opposition. Although opposed in party to Lord  
 Melbourne, he appreciated the advantage of having at the  
 head of the Government a statesman who was accustomed  
 to meet all proposals for reform by the chilling inquiry—  
 “Why not leave it alone?”

*The Duke of Wellington to Sir Robert Peel.*

“London, 22nd February, 1838.

“I concur in opinion with Lord Stanley that you may be  
 forced to a vote upon Sir W. Molesworth's resolution, whatever



Æt. 68. may be the course that you will take. If that resolution should be carried, the Administration must go, and you will have to consider whether you will or will not undertake the Government. . . . I am certain that the greatest evil that can befall the country is to have the Conservative party forced upon the Queen at the present moment. . . . Do what you may your Conservative Government, however Liberal, will not be supported by the adherents of Lord Melbourne. Then observe how we shall stand. We have a rebellion in Canada, which must occupy our whole force for the next two years—or more if the United States should think proper to avail themselves of that opportunity of settling boundaries, Texas, Mexico, etc.\*—leaving not troops in sufficient numbers for the peace establishment anywhere. Suppose that O'Connell should, as he has threatened, avail himself of that opportunity to agitate repeal. What does he mean by agitating Repeal? Not repeal of the 40th George III. (the Act of Union). He means to agitate non-payment of rents, as he has agitated non-payment of tithe, and to force others to repeal the law. Have we the means of enforcing good order in Ireland? Would Parliament grant us the means, or enable us to use them? These are the obvious questions of the day. There are hundreds of others which a Conservative Government could not even look at. Would it be fair to force ourselves on the Queen and the country under these circumstances?" †

Peel was not so sure as the Duke about the expediency of supporting Ministers. He laid stress on the importance of keeping the Conservative party together, which he considered would be difficult if it was called on to defend Ministers against their own people.‡ In the end the expedient was adopted of framing to Molesworth's motion an amendment which the Radicals could not support, thereby affording to the Government a loophole of escape from a vote

\* This seemed probable at the time, owing to the action of armed bodies of American "sympathisers;" but the United States Government acted in a most friendly manner, and interfered to prevent hostilities on the part of their own people.

† *Peel Letters*. ii. 364.

‡ *Ibid.*, 365.



of censure. The Government Bill suspending the constitution of Canada having passed the House of Commons, met with vigorous opposition from Brougham in the Lords. In the course of the debate thereon the Duke expressed his opinion in terms which have passed into an aphorism—"A great country like this can have no such thing as a small war."

Although Wellington emphatically declined Lord Stanley's invitation to enter upon a general course of concert with the Government,\* he freely gave them the benefit of his professional experience, and, at Lord Melbourne's request, prepared an elaborate memorandum on the conduct of operations in Canada.

The Duke's relations with Lord Melbourne.

The rebellion was suppressed by the vigorous action of Sir John Colborne,† but the difficulties of the Government were intensified by the arbitrary action of their Commissioner in Canada, Lord Durham. Although an active and advanced Radical, Durham far exceeded the power entrusted to him, and violated the law by transporting persons without trial, and sentencing others to death should they venture to show themselves in Canada. His administration was a glaring failure; nevertheless, the honour is his of having given his sanction to the scheme of a constitution for Canada which was ultimately carried into effect in 1840, with the felicitous result to both colony and mother-country which is apparent at this day.

In this year the Duke declined the invitation of the

\* *Apsley House MSS.*

† Afterwards Lord Seaton. He commanded the 52nd at Waterloo. Wellington was no unfriendly critic of the performances of his successors in the army. He expressed high admiration of the handling of the forces in Canada, and especially of the "journey of the 88th and 43rd regiments from New Brunswick to Quebec by sledges, which he observed was a great proof of the improvement of regimental system and arrangements within the last twenty-five years. It showed the excellence of the subaltern officers, of their notions of duty, and determination to employ all their energies and resources when called upon for exertion. He considered it to have been a very arduous undertaking and highly creditable to the commanding officers" (*De Ros MS.*).

*Æt.* 69. University of Glasgow to allow himself to be nominated Lord Rector; he reiterated the objections on the score of his want of learning which he had made when the Chancellorship of Oxford University was offered to him, and explained that the circumstances in that case were exceptional.\*

Coronation  
of Queen  
Victoria.

The Queen's Coronation in 1838 brought together a group on which a London crowd gazed with intense interest, and bestowed hearty applause. The representative sent to represent Louis Philippe was the Maréchal Soult, Duc de Dalmatie. Some of the chief features in the rejoicings are well described in Lady Salisbury's journal.

*22nd June.*—"The Duke and Soult met in the music room at the Queen's concert for the first time for many years and shook hands. Soult's appearance is different from what I expected. He is a gentleman-like old man with rather a benevolent cast of countenance, such as I should have expected in William Penn at Washington; tall, and rather stooping, the top of his head bald. . . . The Duke, though the lines on his face are deeper, has a fresher colour and a brighter eye. The Duke is extremely annoyed at Croker having brought out that article in the Quarterly on the battle of Toulouse just at this moment. . . . He had written twice to endeavour to prevent him doing so." †

On the evening of the Coronation Day the Duke gave a ball at Apsley House, which was attended by Soult and the other distinguished foreigners.

"I was amused," wrote Lady Salisbury, "to hear the Duke d'Ossuna complimenting the Duke upon the applause he had met with in the Abbey.

"'Vous avez eu un accueil très flatteur, monseigneur, ce matin.'

"'Oui,' replied the Duke, with the utmost indifference, 'on me reçoit toujours très bien dans ce pays-ci.'

\* *Apsley House MSS.*

† The publication of the eleventh (Toulouse) volume of Gurwood's edition of the Wellington Despatches had been purposely postponed by the Duke's instructions to avoid giving offence to Soult.

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LE MARÉCHAL SOULT, DUC DE DALMATIE.

[Vol. II, p. 320.]



"I think, however, though he always despises *mob* popularity, ANN. 1838. that he was gratified with the applause which came from the most respectable people—judges and privy councillors included—which attended his leaving the Abbey. But a feeling—real and sincere, though almost a romantic one—that the chief attention and homage is on all occasions due to the Sovereign when present (the effect of that extraordinary devotion to the Crown which I never saw approached in any other person) diminished his gratification and even gave him a degree of annoyance. He looked back to see if the Queen was coming with an air of vexation, as if to say, 'This is too much—this belongs of right to her.' . . .

2nd July.—"Dined at Lord Londonderry's: the Austrian, Russian, Prussian, and Swedish Ministers, the Duke, Peel, Lyndhursts, etc., in all eight and forty. . . . The first time the Duke has been asked to dine there these three years, but I suppose they have at last seen the folly of their conduct, and he is always ready to be reconciled.

3rd July.—"A ball at home. . . . I saw the Duke present Hardinge to Soult—'J'ai l'honneur de vous présenter le chevalier Hardinge qui était avec l'armée quand—'

"'Tout ce qui me vient de votre main,' replied Soult, 'm'est toujours agréable' (to which Lady Salisbury added a malicious note of interrogation).

"The Duke is disinclined to give the foreigners a dinner because Soult must necessarily be among them, and he does not like to ask him to a table covered with trophies won against the French. . . .

6th July.—"Soult's ball; another great mob: he asked everybody who had left their names with him.

10th July.—" . . . Went to the House of Lords. . . . Brougham opened the debate (on the orders given to attack Sardinian vessels conveying arms to Don Carlos) with a capital speech. Lord Melbourne's reply weak, or rather no reply at all; Lord Ripon good; Lord Minto a wretched speech, in which he laid down the doctrine that such orders would be justified by the Quadruple Treaty. This induced the Duke to abandon his first intention of not supporting Brougham's motion, and to resolve

Æt. 69. upon dividing—very few of our Peers in the House—messengers sent off in all directions to collect them—Lord Redesdale \* running to and fro—when up gets Lord Melbourne and throws over Lord Minto and his doctrine entirely. This induces the Duke who forgets that he is not at the head of troops who can wheel about and retire, to rise again and recommend their Lordship *not* to divide; after delivering which word of command he retired, followed by Lord Aberdeen, to dine with Soult. The Peers on our side were furious, and though some abstained from voting, a great number, among whom I regret to say was Lord Salisbury, divided in support of Brougham's motion, which was lost by the numbers being even. . . . There is no doubt the Duke was right in the principle of policy, but in a party view nothing could be more fatal than such a change after the Duke had been summoned from all parts for a division. . . .

13th July.—“ . . . Lord Salisbury went with the Duke to the City dinner—that City dinner which I have been moving heaven and earth to get the Duke to go to, by having the Beresford dinner put off. And a pretty result it has had! After a long delay in giving the Duke's health, the Lord Mayor at last gave his and Soult's united!! His Grace the Duke of Dalmatia and his Grace the Duke of Wellington!!! Lord Londonderry instantly got up and left the room, observing to those about him that he would not stay to be insulted. Lord Salisbury would have followed him, but that he depended on the Duke, who got up and made an excellent reply in very good taste. But he could not do otherwise than feel the insult, and expressed it to Lord Salisbury on the way home. It was proposed to the Duke to give the French army. 'D—n 'em!' he said. 'I'll have nothing to do with 'em but beat 'em.'

Monday, 16th July.—“Went early to see the Duke. He is going to have the foreigners to dinner on the 28th, and showed me some vases he intended as ornaments on the table: they are presents from Louis XVIII., and therefore *trophies*, but they have no inscriptions or representations to betray their origin.

28th July.—“The Duke's great dinner to the foreigners. . . . We dined in the gallery, altogether about 48. . . . Prince George

\* Conservative Whip.

of Cambridge sat next me and a delightful neighbour he was. . . . ANN. 1839.  
Curiously enough, when Soult entered the house, the band  
played *Vive Henri Quatre!* . . . Soult went away rather early.  
There was no taking leave between the Duke and him." \*

During this summer a reconciliation, or rather a renewal of  
intercourse, took place between the Duke and Lord Wellesley.  
It is melancholy to reflect on the degree in which these  
brothers, once so affectionate and relying so much on each  
other, had become estranged, especially when it is remembered  
how helpful the elder had been to the younger in his early  
days. It is not easy to discern the exact causes of the  
coldness; perhaps it arose as much as anything out of the  
appointment of Lord Anglesey as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland  
in 1828. At all events, on 16th May, having received a  
message from Lord Wellesley through Lady Wellesley, the  
Duke rode down to see him at Fulham. "There was no  
*explanation*, but the brothers met most cordially," † the first  
time for several years.

Reconcilia-  
tion of  
Wellington  
and  
Wellesley.

The Government had weathered the rough weather from  
the Canadian quarter; it was a far less threatening disturbance  
which caused them to founder in the spring of 1839. The  
Ministry was strong in the favour of the Queen; no young  
monarch could have been more fortunate in the character of  
the chief adviser of the Crown, and her Majesty repaid Lord  
Melbourne's services with her affection and confidence. But  
out-of-doors the Government were losing such remnant of  
esteem which they had preserved hitherto, and their growing  
unpopularity soon found reflection in the action of their  
supporters in the House of Commons. The bill for the  
suspension of the constitution of Jamaica, where the House  
of Assembly had declared against Imperial control or inter-  
ference, was carried on 6th May by a majority of only five  
votes. The Ministry resigned, and the Queen at once sent  
for the Duke of Wellington, who begged to be excused from

Lord  
Melbourne  
resigns.

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1838.

† *Ibid.*

**Æt. 70.** forming a Cabinet on account of his advanced age, and recommended her Majesty to send for Sir Robert Peel. The Duke's apprehensions about the difficulty of becoming Queen's Minister were amusing. "Peel has no manner and I have no small talk." He wished to be in the Cabinet without office, but Peel did not approve of this.

*Mr. Arbuthnot to Sir Robert Peel.*

"Apsley House, 8th May, 1839.

"Fortunately I caught the Duke ready dressed and sitting in his room. I repeated to him what you said against his being in the Cabinet only as a Privy Councillor. He said—'Very well. I am quite ready to have the Foreign Office'—which I had named to him in the way that you wished I should—and added 'that he had promised the Queen to serve her in any way that would be thought most advisable, and that he would keep his promise.'\*

The Bed-chamber difficulty.

Lord Melbourne resumes.

The formation of the Cabinet was not difficult, but it is well known how Peel had to resign his commission when it became a question of filling certain offices which he did not even know existed. He made out a list by the aid of a Red Book of new appointments to all the Household offices, except those below the rank of Lady of the Bedchamber. On this list being submitted to the Queen, she declined to hear of the removal of any of her ladies; Peel, "unable to recognise any distinction in respect to public appointments provided for by Act of Parliament and instituted for purposes of State, on account of the sex of the parties holding them," † could not yield the point, and, on this curiously trivial difference, the formation of a Ministry broke down, and Lord Melbourne with his colleagues was recalled.

The Duke had completed the allotted tale of threescore

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 391.

† *Ibid.*, 406.



and ten years. Except his deafness,\* which was a severe trial to him, and a rheumatic affection of the muscles of the neck, which was the cause of the stooping head which marred his military carriage, he had enjoyed a singular immunity from ailments of all kinds. But he had touched the milestone which is associated with so many partings; he stood at the point whence the earthly landscape seems empty and drear; and now the circle of his intimate friends was about to be lessened by the loss of one of the most cherished. A few days after the entry last quoted, Lady Salisbury's journal stops abruptly. She fell into ill health, which, continuing all winter, was the occasion of her going to Broadstairs for sea air in the spring of 1839. On her way thither she stayed some weeks at Apsley House, and it is touching to note the sedulous care bestowed by the Duke on arrangements for her comfort. In July Lady Salisbury was recommended to go to Carlsbad, the Duke, as Master of the Elder Brethren, placing at her disposal the Trinity House steam yacht. His anxiety about the invalid is manifested by frequent letters both to her and Lord Salisbury, and at the same time he provided for her amusement a commentary on all the current gossip of the day. The Duke was still apprehensive about the Queen's tendency to Whiggism, which he was afraid was being strengthened by the combined influence of her mother, Lord Melbourne, and King Leopold of Belgium; although the Whigs suspected her Majesty of being a Tory at heart.

ANN. 1839.

Lady  
Salisbury's  
illness.

*June 29.*—"I took my daughter-in-law (Lady Douro) to Court yesterday. She was much admired by everybody, especially by the Queen, who was very gracious to me there, as well as at Lady Westminster's at night.

*September 19.*—"On the day that I arrived at Windsor Castle, the Queen desired me to ride with her. . . . I rode with her,

\* On 14th May, 1838, Lord Melbourne postponed the second reading of the Poor Law Bill which was down for that day at the Duke's request, because he was suffering from an access of deafness (*Apsley House MSS.*).

Æt. 70. was out two or three hours, was wet to the skin—as wet as if had been drawn through the river Thames; experienced inconvenience therefrom; was at a ball at night, and travelled here (Walmer) from Windsor in a day, as well as I ever was. God bless you! Believe me, ever yours most Affectionately,  
“W<sup>N</sup>.” \*

As the autumn went on, the news of Lady Salisbury's health became less favourable; she could write no more, and letters passed only between the two men.

*October 3rd.*—“The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, with twenty followers and servants, are coming here (Walmer) this day. I am never very partial to the part of Boniface! I am less equal to the performance of it this day than I have ever been.” †

Death of  
Lady  
Salisbury.

Early in October the Salisburys returned to England, and Wellington's letters to his lordship were daily; then they ceased suddenly on 15th October, till, on the 28th, he writes—

“I have not written to you since the fatal Tuesday. I was aware how little of consolation anything I could write could be to you; that you must have been sensible that there was no individual in existence who could have known as well as myself the extent of the loss which you and yours have sustained, and that I sincerely felt for you. It would have been impertinent to write on such topics at such a moment. I write to you, however, in order to continue our old habits; which is the course which I feel convinced the Departed would have wished that you should follow. . . . I entreat you to reflect that you are of an age and in a station which render it necessary that you should exert yourself; that your family require much attention and much exertion from you; that there are important public questions to which you must attend; and that you cannot give way to the affliction which you so naturally feel.” †

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1839.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*

The Duke felt the shock very severely, although he does not seem to have confided his grief to anybody. A few weeks later, on 19th November, he had an alarming seizure at Walmer. On returning from a ride, he sat down to write some letters, and, feeling unwell, caused Dr. M'Arthur to be sent for. Before the doctor could arrive, the Duke's bell rang again; his valet, Kendall, found him speechless, with his jaw dropped, but the Duke signed to him to leave the room. He did so, but, remaining behind the door, heard a heavy fall, and, on entering again, saw his master on the floor. On coming to himself the Duke was both blind and speechless, but he gradually recovered all his faculties, and Lord Mahon, who was the first friend to arrive at his bedside, had the satisfaction of remaining to watch his steady restoration to health. The doctors attributed the attack to the Duke's habits of extreme abstemiousness. On the day of his seizure he had eaten nothing but a morsel of dry bread at breakfast, and a piece of Abernethy biscuit on coming in from his ride, and for some months he had left off wine altogether. On the 22nd he had recovered so as to be able to go to London and attend the Privy Council to which the Queen announced her intended marriage.\*

\* Stanhope, 196-214.

ANN. 1839  
Sudden  
illness of  
the Duke.

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*Ibid.*

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE CORN LAWS.

1840-1846.

- |                                                                                      |                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jan. 16 . 1840. The Queen's betrothal. Renewed coldness between Wellington and Peel. | December 6 . . Lord John Russell se for. Peel resumes.                            |
| May 27 . 1841. Defeat of the Government.                                             | Jan. 4 . 1846. The Duke's letter Lord Salisbury.                                  |
| June 23 . . . . Dissolution of Parliament.                                           | „ 22 . . . . Peel proposes to repeal the Corn Law.                                |
| Peel's second Administration.                                                        | February 17 . . The Duke considers his position, and explains it to Lord Stanley. |
| The Corn Duties.                                                                     | June 25 . . . . The Corn Bill passes the Lords.                                   |
| General relaxation of tariffs.                                                       | Defeat of Ministers of the Irish Coercion Bill.                                   |
| The Duke's intercourse with early associates.                                        | They resign, and Lord John Russell takes office.                                  |
| August . 1845. The potato disease appears.                                           | <i>Appendix C.</i> . "The Duke's principles in Opposition.                        |
| November . . . Lord John Russell's manifesto.                                        | <i>Appendix H.</i> . "National Defence.                                           |
| December 2 . . Difference in the Cabinet.                                            |                                                                                   |
| „ 5 . . Sir R. Peel resigns.                                                         |                                                                                   |

The Queen's betrothal.

WHEN the Queen opened Parliament on 16th January, 1840, her speech contained the official announcement of her betrothal to Prince Albert. In the House of Lords it fell to the lot of the Duke of Wellington to take exception to the omission of the word "Protestant" in reference to the Prince. It was inserted upon the Duke's amendment, although Lord Melbourne expressed the opinion that it was superfluous. In the House of Commons more

serious difference arose over the Ministerial proposals for the marriage. On Lord John Russell moving that £50,000 a year should be provided out of the Consolidated Fund for the Queen's Consort, an amendment reducing the allowance to £30,000 was moved by Colonel Sibthorpe, supported by Peel, the Tory Opposition, and the Radicals, and carried against the Government by a majority of 104. Lord Melbourne pocketed the affront, but the fate of his Ministry was not long deferred.

The Duke showed manifest traces of his severe illness. "He looked better than I expected," noted Greville, "very thin, and his clothes hanging about him, but strong on his legs and his head erect. The great alteration I remarked was in his voice, which was hollow, though not loud, and his utterance, though not indistinct, was very slow. He is certainly now only a ruin."\*

The Irish Municipal Corporation Bill and the Bill for uniting the two Canadas proved the occasion of fresh difference between the Duke and Sir Robert Peel. Sir Robert felt that the honour of the party was involved in adhering to that engagement,† but the Duke did not share his view of the obligation, and announced his intention of destroying the measure in the House of Lords.

In regard to the Union of the two Canadas, Peel had expressed himself strongly in favour of that policy, and he adhered to his opinion. "I cannot expect others, who take a different view of this question, to adopt my opinions, but I adhere to my own, and I cannot undertake any responsibility should views adverse to mine be taken, and prevail."‡ The Duke as strongly held the view that the union of the two provinces would lead to the separation of Canada from the mother-country, and he determined to use his power with the Lords to prevent it. All intercourse ceased between him and Sir Robert; their friends, especially Sir James Graham,

\* *Greville*, 2nd series, i. 103.

† *Peel Letters*, ii. 434.

‡ *Ibid.*, 438

Renewed  
coldness  
between  
Wellington  
and  
Peel.

Æt. 72. were apprehensive of a split in the party; Lady Salisbury was no longer on the scene to bring about reconciliations; recourse was had to the patient influence of Arbuthnot.

"It is impossible," wrote Graham to Peel on 9th June, "to make great allowances for the age and infirmities of the Duke. He probably is aware that life with him is drawing to a close, and is honestly and naturally afraid lest concessions made to him against his judgment should lead to fatal results, which the opinion of posterity, might cast a shade over the lustre of his fame." \*

Herein Graham misjudged the Duke's motives, though he was right about the infirmities. There never was an actor on the great stage so indifferent about the judgment of the contemporary public and of posterity. It is true that he was always at great pains to explain his motives to his colleagues, but for the rest he cared nothing. In this he was a striking contrast to Peel, who desired, and was wise to desire, to carry public opinion with him, and was sedulous to leave an elaborate *apologia* in his autobiography. Can anybody imagine Wellington sitting down to write his memoirs?

*Mr. Arbuthnot to Sir James Graham.*

"Apsley House, 13th June, 1841"

"I hope you will not now suppose that I say it from vanity, but in truth I believe that my presence here has been useful. It has been of use to let the Duke know what the leaders thought, and wished, and this I have done in our several conversations. He has never actually said that he should take the course which was expected of him, but I have seen his mind turning in several degrees to that course, and of this I was so convinced yesterday morning that I wrote to Lord Aberdeen that, in my opinion, he had better not talk to the Duke, as he had said to me that he would, but leave it all now to the workings of his own mind."

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 440.

. . . Rely upon it that the party will not break up. . . . What ANN. 1841.  
 I have most lamented was that I could not get Peel to call on  
 the Duke. I could not presume to press it, but I told him that  
 in my opinion it would have the best effect."\*

History, when written, seems to be composed of the acts of a few public men, upon whom the influence of unobtrusive individuals is scarcely observed, yet this is often of lasting effect. Arbutnot's quiet and discreet pressure gradually led the Duke away from a course of action whence no amount of argument or invective could have deterred him. When the Canada Bill came before the Lords for second reading on 30th June, Wellington declined to vote for it as "a measure entirely dangerous to the stability of the Colonial Government," yet he advised the House to allow it to go into Committee. With even greater inconsistency, which it is impossible to palliate or explain away, he adduced twenty-seven reasons against the measure on its third reading on 27th July, but recommended his party to remit it to the House of Commons for further consideration. The fact is that this was one of the occasions on which the Duke sank his private judgment rather than bring about a rupture in the Conservative party, in the early return to power of which he believed the security of the monarchy and the welfare of the country to be involved. Lord Aberdeen told Greville that he considered that the Duke had never rendered greater service in his whole life to the public good than he did this session, by moderating the violence of his own party and keeping them together. They chafed at the restraint; they vowed the Duke was in his dotage, but they could not refuse obedience.†

"I cannot contemplate," wrote Sir James Graham to Arbutnot on 27th July, "a Conservative Government without the active aid and co-operation of the Duke of Wellington, and though he may be dissatisfied with Peel's recent conduct, yet

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 413.

† *Greville*, 2nd series, i. 296.

Æt. 72. approving his general principles, and acknowledging his integrity and general worth, he will not, if the necessity should occur, refuse to act with a body of gentlemen entitled to his confidence and support in a great crisis of public affairs, on account of passing difference, the causes of which are practically at an end." \*

Greville speaks much at this time of the failure of the Duke's powers. "He is a ruin," says he; yet was the spirit still strong within him. A Continental war seemed imminent in 1840; the King of Prussia commissioned Lord William Bentinck to ascertain if the Duke would consent to take command of the German Confederate armies; he replied that he was as able as ever, and as willing!

Arbuthnot's good offices.

Arbuthnot the indefatigable succeeded during the autumn of 1840, finally restoring that cordial intercourse between Wellington and Peel which moderate Conservatives regarded as indispensable to their continuance as a party. Much of the misunderstanding had been caused by the Duke's increasing deafness; of this, Arbuthnot succeeded in convincing both him and Peel, so that on 13th November one finds the Duke once more writing in the old strain of intimacy to his colleague about his sailor son William Peel.†

"Encourage him by all means to write down his observations of the operations of which he is the witness, or in which he is actor; and above all to revise them after writing them, and correct any error into which he may have fallen, leaving on the face of the paper the error and its correction. This habit will accustom him to an accurate observation and report of facts which are most important, destined as he most likely is to direct and carry on great operations." ‡

Thus when, in the summer of 1841, repeated defeats of the Government betokened an approaching crisis, not a cloud

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 445.

† Afterwards Captain Sir William Peel, K.C.B., who commanded the Naval Brigade in the Crimea.

‡ *Peel Letters*, ii. 452.



remained between the Opposition leaders in the two Houses ANN. 1841.  
of Parliament.

"The truth is," wrote the Duke to Sir Robert, "that all I desire is to be as useful as possible to the Queen's service—to do anything, to go anywhere, and hold any office, or no office as may be thought most desirable or expedient for the Queen's service by you. . . . I don't desire even to have a voice in deciding upon it." \*

Peel moved a vote of no confidence in the Government on 27th May; it was carried by a majority of a single vote, and on 23rd June Parliament was dissolved. The fortune of the polls favoured the Opposition: the Conservatives who went to the country in a minority of thirty, were returned in a majority of seventy-six. It would have been greater but for the imminence of disruption in the Scottish Church, and the refusal of Wellington and Peel to pledge themselves to support the Duke of Argyll's bill dealing with ecclesiastical affairs in Scotland; but it was sufficient, and Peel had no difficulty in forming a Cabinet of fourteen ministers. Wellington entered it without holding a department, and the character of the Administration was marked by Sir James Graham taking the seals of the Home Office and Lord Stanley those of the Colonial Office. The Old Tory party drew consolation from the inclusion of the Duke of Buckingham, although Lord Londonderry's indignation at being left out in the cold and sent as ambassador to Vienna was bitter and freely expressed.† "The Duke," wrote Arbuthnot to Sir Robert Peel, "said at Vienna Metternich would know Lord Londonderry well, and prevent him from doing mischief; and that for his part he would rather have him in the House of Lords without any office, and prepared to do his worst, than see him at the Board of Ordnance; but that you must dispose of him as you thought best." ‡

In the disposal of offices outside the Cabinet, Peel duly

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 461.

† *Ibid.*, 484.

‡ *Ibid.*, 483.

Defeat of  
Ministers  
and  
General  
Election.

Peel's  
second  
Adminis-  
tration.

ÆT. 72. recognised the ability and energy of one, at least, of the most promising of the younger Conservatives, William Ewart Gladstone, who was appointed Vice President of the Board of Trade and Master of the Mint, with the rank of Privy Councillor. His services were soon in request in a matter with which his capacity was peculiarly well fitted to deal. The Conservatives had succeeded to an embarrassing heritage in the accumulated deficits of the five years of Queen Victoria's reign. The deficit for 1841-2 had been £2,334,000; that estimated for 1842-3 was £2,470,000; but before bringing in his budget, Peel dealt with the Corn Law. Under the law of 1828, when wheat was quoted at 59s. or 60s. a quarter, a duty of 27s. was exacted on foreign corn, which fell as the price rose until, at the quotation of 73s. a quarter, foreign corn was only taxed at 1s. Peel proposed a 20s. duty upon corn when quoted at 50s. to 51s., to be reduced till the 73s. limit was touched, when the duty was 1s. as before. The Corn Law League scouted this measure as an insignificant relief, and Peel was burnt in effigy as an oppressor of the people; the country Tories denounced it as not giving enough security to profitable agriculture; the Duke of Buckingham and Lord Hardwicke resigned office. Lord John Russell moved the rejection of the Bill in favour of a fixed as against a fluctuating duty. Mr. Gladstone led the resistance to Russell's amendment, and, after the rejection of Mr. Villiers's proposal to repeal the Corn Laws altogether, Peel's sliding scale was adopted by the House of Commons; but it did not help him in dealing with the prospective deficiency. He fell at himself at the parting of ways, and he proved not unequal to the momentous decision to be made. He produced the most sensational budget of the century. He had the courage to impose a 7d. Income Tax, which, accustomed as the present generation has become to the weight of the burden, was at that time an unprecedented manner of raising revenue in time of peace. Ireland was exempted from the tax, except the absentee landlords but was called on to pay an additional 1

Mr. Gladstone joins the Ministry.

The Corn Duties.

a gallon on spirits, bringing her on an equality in this respect with Scotland. By these and other subsidiary means he turned his deficit of £2,470,000 into a surplus of £1,900,000. So far, though there was much ground for grumbling, there was none for alarm on the part of the high Tories. But when he went on to explain the proposed application of his surplus to lowering of duties on seven hundred and fifty out of twelve hundred articles taxed on import, then the Protectionists indeed beheld Pelion upon Ossa piled against them—the lowered tariff on imported goods as well as the modified tax on foreign corn. Would the Duke, once their pride and fearless champion, stand this? nay—would he actually have a hand in it? The Duke was to stand this and a great deal more, as time was to prove; but there was one part of the financial scheme which pleased him little, namely, the continued reductions in the military and naval establishments for purposes of economy.\*

ANN. 1841.

Relaxation  
of tariffs.

Many lifelike descriptions have been made by eye-witnesses of the Duke's appearance and habits in Parliament during the last ten years of his life. The invariable blue frock-coat was relieved by a white neckcloth fastened behind by a large silver or steel buckle. White trousers for summer wear gave place to dark cloth in winter; the waistcoat was white in summer, and buff or some brighter hue in winter. During the last session of his life, 1851-2, his chest and shoulders were protected by a short cape of white fur, singularly unlike ordinary masculine attire, but harmonising admirably with the Duke's clear complexion and white hair. He generally rode to and from the House,† but sometimes drove in a four-wheeled chaise designed by himself. In those days it was still the privilege of peers to vote by proxy, and of such proxies as many as sixty were sometimes entrusted to the

The Duke's  
appear-  
ance in  
Parlia-  
ment.

\* See Appendix II, p. 356.

† "The neat, white-haired old gentleman, whom we have all seen rolling upon his horse in the Park and Pall Mall—a wonder to all bystanders that he did not topple over" (*Punch*, vol. ix. 1845).

Æt. 72. Duke's disposal, rendering him, had he chosen to be less scrupulous in using his power against the Government of the day, a truly formidable personage in opposition.

The Duke's attention to the business before the House was unflagging. He listened, in spite of his disabling deafness, to every speech from beginning to end, seldom leaving the House before it adjourned. His style in speaking was vehement, but the reverse of fluent, and, like many imperfect orators, he used exaggerated phrases to impress his opinions upon his hearers. His speeches abound in repetitions and contradictions, singularly at variance with the lucidity of at least his military despatches. Sir Walter Scott described his method in debate as "slicing the argument into two or three parts and helping himself to the best." "He usually sits down, wrote a contributor to *Fraser's Magazine*, "in a state of abstraction; his arms folded, his head sunk on his breast, his legs stretched out: he seems to be asleep. But, in a very few moments, he shows that he has not been an inattentive observer of the debate. He suddenly starts up, advances (sometimes with faltering steps) to the table, and, without preface or preliminary statement, dashes at once into the real question in dispute." In the Cabinet, Charles Greville, who as Clerk to the Privy Council had good opportunities of observation, notes in 1844 the extraordinary deference paid to the Duke by all his colleagues. Each Minister went to sit next to him before speaking, so that the Duke might hear him; but he adds that the old gentleman was very irritable and never would alter anything he had written.

The Duke and his early associates.

Most of the Duke's biographers, even his most ardent panegyrists, have reproached him with indifference towards the forgetfulness of his old comrades of campaign, but to do so reveals a want of insight into the exigencies of political life. Had the Duke been merely one of those who

"Lean'd on the walls and basked before the sun,  
Chiefs who no more in bloody fights engage,  
But wise through time and narrative with age  
In summer days like grasshoppers rejoice"—

had he, at the close of one career, assumed his well-earned leisure instead of entering upon another, not less arduous than the first—then, indeed, he might have been blamed if he did not constantly and by preference seek the society of those officers who had enabled him to achieve such greatness. It can scarcely be doubted that, left to make his own choice, he would have indulged his inclination for repose; his letters abound in proof that, in accepting civil office, he was acting solely under a cogent sense of duty. It shows remarkable unfamiliarity with the calls upon one in the higher spheres of political life, to suppose that a statesman has the disposal of his own time or the choice of his own associates.

When Mr. W. H. Smith, having been First Lord of the Admiralty in the last Disraeli Administration, was offered the Chairmanship of the London and North-Western Railway in 1881, he asked the advice of his chief. Lord Beaconsfield replied, "Politics is a jealous mistress," and dissuaded Smith from accepting the desirable post. However open his lordship's syntax may be to criticism, none who have experience of the exactions of political life can question the truth of his sentiment. Every hour in every day must be lived; in office hours and while Parliament sits the man is a slave; the day's work over, multitudes of social obligations—literally obligations—sadly interfere equally with the cultivation of private friendship and the ordinary courtesies of acquaintanceship. No man ever threw himself more unreservedly into the discharge of duty than did the Duke; he carried into civil life that concentration of energy on the matter in hand which had given him ascendancy in military operations. "Exclusiveness of purpose," said Napoleon, "is the secret of great success and of great operations;" it was that exclusiveness—that concentration—which made Wellington seem a hard man, and drew upon him the unfavourable comments of Greville upon his inattention and want of affection to his mother and elder brother. There is nothing so chilling to friendship—nothing which friends and relatives resent so much—as

Æt. 76. preoccupation; yet pre-occupation—the withdrawal of attention from those not engaged in a common pursuit—inseparable from great performance. Larpent noticed this in Wellington during the Peninsular war. Writing from the Pyrenees on 9th August, 1813, he said—

“You ask me if Lord Wellington has recollected — with regard. He seems to have had a great opinion of him, but scarcely has ever mentioned him to me. In truth, I think Lord Wellington has an active, busy mind, always looking to the future, and is so used to lose a useful man that, as soon as gone, he seldom thinks more of him. He would be always, I have no doubt, ready to serve any one who had been about him who was gone, or the friend of a deceased friend, but he seems not to think much about you when once out of the way. He has so much of everything and everybody always in his way to think much of the absent.”\*

It must ever be so in accordance with the limitations of human nature. When the head is incessantly occupied, the emotions of the heart cannot find expression; and, although this does not imply that the heart is cold or hard, it is inevitable that men who had been closely associated with Wellington previous to 1815 should find their intercourse with him interrupted, and access to him straitened, after he set his hand to work in which they had no share. Naturally, some of his old friends felt sore, and complained of the Duke's heartlessness. Frequent reference occurs in the Duke's correspondence to the constant drafts on his leisure, when his party was in opposition, and the Duke found it difficult to revise the despatches, and the Duke found it difficult to revise the proofs with punctuality—

“The truth is that there is no impediment to any serious occupation like a house full of company; particularly when part

\* *Larpent*, ii. 48.

the company is a member or members of the Royal family. To ANN. 1845.  
 some men, more time than twenty-four hours are necessary in a  
 day ; others are under the necessity of what is called *killing time*.  
 But when they require that the first should assist them with  
 their company, the mischief that is done to everything like a  
 serious occupation is immense." \*

When Parliament was prorogued on 9th August, 1845, the  
 Peel Administration seemed to be floating on summer waters. Peel's  
 Adminis-  
 tration.  
 No boding clouds betokened the storm that was brewing ; the  
 prosperity of the country was advancing ; the revenue, if not  
 progressing with the leaps and bounds by which its movement  
 was described in later years, was each year in excess of the  
 expenditure : the evil days of deficit had been thrown behind.  
 Some discontent, indeed, there was in the ministerialist ranks ;  
 Mr. Gladstone had seceded from the Government on account  
 of their Maynooth College policy, and Protectionist *frondeurs*  
 muttered their displeasure at the growing inclination of  
 the Prime Minister to Free Trade. Sometimes the mutter-  
 ing assumed the volume of an angry roar, as when Lord  
 Essex, speaking at St. Albans, denounced the Anti-Corn Law  
 League as "the most cunning, unscrupulous, knavish, pestilent  
 body of men that ever plagued this or any other country."  
 "Every act we have done," Peel had said on Mr. Villiers's  
 motion for the repeal of the Corn Law, "has been an act  
 tending to establish the gradual abatement of purely pro-  
 tective duties." But the movement in Peel's own opinions  
 had been so gradual and unobtrusive, it had found reflection  
 in the minds of so many other public and business men, that  
 no visible schism could be traced in the Conservative phalanx.  
 Not the less surely did a fissure exist, and a convulsion was  
 at hand which was to convert it suddenly into a chasm.

At the very moment when legislators were going off with The potato  
 disease.  
 light hearts to their holiday retreats, news came that a  
 mysterious disease had affected the potato crop in the Isle of

\* *Apsley House MSS.*



Æt. 76. **Wight.** Soon after it was found to be prevalent through the southern English counties as well as in France and the Low Countries. Now, potatoes had come to be to the Irish countryman what wheat was to the Englishman—far more than oatmeal was to the Scotsman. The destruction of the crop in England might mean ruin to a few hundreds of farmers, in Ireland it would bring millions to the brink of starvation. Before the Cabinet met on the last day of October the disease was rampant in Ireland. Ministers were to grapple with a dilemma caused by the destruction of one-third of the whole crop in that country, and the prospective disappearance of the rest. Peel advised his colleagues that Parliament should be summoned before Christmas, and called on them to decide between the “determined maintenance, modification, and suspension of the Corn Laws.” Peel recommended the last, as following the precedent of 1817, but he was too honest to disguise his doubts, amounting practically to conviction, that, once suspended, it would not be in the power of any Ministry to revive them. Only two of his colleagues, Aberdeen, Graham, and Sidney Herbert, agreed with their chief. The Duke of Wellington opposed to the policy of opening the ports to corn, and declared his intention of not deserting his chief if he considered the repeal of the Act necessary for his position in Parliament and in the public view.

Lord John  
Russell's  
manifesto.

The discussions in the Cabinet continued through November; the crisis was rendered more acute by a manifesto addressed by Lord John Russell, hitherto a stout defender of the Corn Laws, to his constituents in the City of London, announcing his conversion to the policy of abolishing the fixed duty on corn, and calling on them to put an end to “a system which had proved to be the blight of commerce and the bane of agriculture.” Public interest, excited by the adoption on the part of the leader of the opposition of the whole programme of the Anti-Corn Law League, was intensified by rumours that the Prime Minister had done so also.



In reply to Peel's Cabinet memorandum circulated on Ans. 1845.  
26th November, the Duke wrote—

"My only object in public life is to support Sir Robert Peel's administration of the Government for the Queen. A good government for the country is more important than Corn Laws or any other consideration; and as long as Sir Robert Peel possesses the confidence of the Queen and of the public, and he has strength to perform his duties, his administration of the Government must be supported."

At first Peel believed that Wellington's example would carry the Cabinet; but on 2nd December, when he laid before his colleagues the outlines of his proposals, whereby the Corn Duty was to be reduced annually so as to disappear finally in eight years, Lord Stanley and the Duke of Buccleuch announced their intention of resigning rather than have any hand in such a measure. Two days later, the *Times* announced that Parliament would meet early in January, and that the Government would introduce a measure modifying the Corn Laws, with a view to their repeal. The *Times* was wrong. Sir Robert Peel, his Cabinet maintained by the retirement of two Ministers and, as to the rest, deeply divided in opinion, had made up his mind to resign, which he did on the following day, 5th December. On the 6th the Queen sent for Lord John Russell, and the *Times*, on realising its blunder, cast all the blame of the crisis on the obstinacy of the Duke of Wellington! Russell had to reckon with a Conservative Parliament, in which the majority might be expected to be hostile to free trade in corn; but that difficulty was resolved by Peel, who assured the Queen that he intended to support such measures as might be "in general conformity with those which he had advised as a minister." The Duke, as leader of the Opposition in the Lords, might be reckoned upon to take the same course; nevertheless Russell advised the Queen to lay her commands first on those Ministers who had seceded

Difference  
in the  
Cabinet.

Peel  
resigns.

Æt. 76 from Peel. This her Majesty did, but Stanley and Buccleuch declined the attempt; Russell resumed his task, and encountered this difficulty in his own party, that, where Palmerston would not accept any post except the Foreign Office, Grey would not consent to enter a Cabinet in which that department was entrusted to one in whom he had little confidence. While these negotiations were in progress the Queen wrote to the Duke on 12th December expressing her strong desire, whatever might be the outcome of the crisis, "to see the Duke of Wellington remain at the head of the Army. The Queen appeals to the Duke's so often proved loyalty and attachment to her person, in asking him to give her this assurance." In reply, the Duke begged the Queen not to press him to retain the command of the army, unless with the entire approval of her responsible advisers.

Peel  
resumes  
office.

As matters turned out, the difficulty solved itself. Russell having finally abandoned his endeavour to form a Cabinet, the Queen once more sent for Peel and desired him to withdraw his resignation. He did so at once, and, returning to London, summoned his colleagues to meet him at half past nine in the evening, announced to them his intention of proceeding with such measures in Parliament as he believed to be necessary for the public safety, and left the issue in their hands. What followed is succinctly described in his letter to the Queen.

"There was a dead silence, at length interrupted by Lord Stanley's declaring that he must persevere in resigning; that he thought the Corn Law ought to have been adhered to, and might have been maintained. The Duke of Wellington said he thought the Corn Law was a subordinate consideration. He was delighted when he received Sir Robert Peel's letter that day, announcing that his mind was made up to place his services at your Majesty's disposal. The Duke of Buccleuch behaved admirably—was much agitated, thought new circumstances had arisen—would not then decide on resigning. All the other members of the

Government cordially approved of Sir Robert Peel's determination not to abandon your Majesty's service." \* ANN. 1846.

The Duke of Buccleuch ultimately withdrew his resignation, and the vacancy caused by Lord Stanley resigning the Colonial Office was filled by the admission of Mr. Gladstone.

The Duke of Wellington was actuated throughout this critical time by the single consideration of the best means of carrying on the Queen's Government, but it was not to be expected that he should not have to defend himself against vehement, and even violent, reproaches from members of his own party.

*J. W. Croker to the Duke of Wellington.*

"West Moulsey, 4th January, 1846.

"I firmly believe that the only trust of the country is in your Grace's consistency and firmness; and I confess I cannot see what right Sir R. Peel can have to drag your Grace through the mire of his own changes of opinion. He may say, with truth and candour, that *his* opinions are changed, but can your Grace say so? . . . Why prefer *his* character and consistency to *your own*? You marked your dissent to Free Trade quite as strongly as *he* marked his assent. Why are you, and the rest, to forfeit all your pledges in order to help him to keep his *last*? I intreat, I implore your Grace to reconsider your position as to stirring *one inch* in a course, the end and object of which is avowed and visible to every eye. I was in hopes that your authority might have stopped the movement; if you too join it, even, as I have said, for one inch, all is lost. . . . Your Grace, if you have read so far with patience, may perhaps say that, if you retire from the Cabinet (not from the Horse Guards), the Government will be broken up, as others must go with you. I hope so—that is the natural and straightforward result—but then you ask, where is a Government to be found? I reply—let Peel answer *that*. Let him make a Government of those who agree with him in opinion, and not of those who *don't*." †

\* *Peel Letters*, iii. 284.

† *Croker*, iii. 50.

Æt. 76. The public have long been in possession of the Duke's reply to this appeal,\* in which occurs the remarkable sentence—"I am the *retained* servant of the Sovereign of this empire. Nobody can entertain a doubt of this truth, as applied to my professional character. I have invariably, up to the latest moment, acted accordingly." But the Duke had to endure remonstrance from persons whose opinions he respected more highly than Croker's.

"Stratfieldsaye, 4th January, 1846.

"MY DEAR LORD SALISBURY,—I have long thought of writing to you; in truth matter comes upon one so thickly every day, that explanation will be impossible if longer delayed; and I feel that even now it will be difficult to explain to one not an actor in the scene all that has occurred in the last few months. It can be understood only by never losing sight of the different epochs, at which the various events occurred.

"I think that the potatoe disease had occurred, and apprehensions of the consequences were seriously felt, before you quitted Walmer Castle. I never felt those apprehensions; and I believe that your feelings were very much the same! This however was not the feeling of others! In the end of October and beginning of November great apprehensions were entertained of the consequences of this disease, that famine might prevail in Ireland within a year from the time, and that it was necessary without loss of time to consider of the measures which it should be necessary to adopt. As for me, I never doubted of the inconvenience which would be produced in Ireland by the potatoe disease, not from the want of food, because there was abundance of food of other descriptions, the produce of last year's harvest in Ireland, as well as in England and Scotland; and in granaries a supply for more than a year's consumption of all descriptions of grain; but the difficulty founded upon the social habits of nearly the whole of the lower class of the Irish population in raising each for his own family the provisions which it should consume, and paying the rent of the land out of what provisions should be

\* It is printed at length in the Croker papers.

raised : and by mortgaging his labour for months or even a year, ANN. 1846. left each of them without food, without money, or the facility of earning it by his labour, already mortgaged, to enable him to buy food in the market, however plentiful it should be ! That which was required for Ireland was the organisation of means to find employment for those in want of food. This, it is true, was likely to be expensive, but still practicable ; and there was nothing which apparently required any augmentation of the quantity of food in the country, excepting possibly in one article—maize—which might have been substituted in some cases for potatoes. The first determination of the Government was to wait and see what the nature and extent of the disease was, to prorogue Parliament till the 16th December, and afterwards to consider of the course to be taken. The Cabinet accordingly met again early in December, but the alarm appeared rather to have increased. It was thought by some that even the measures recommended to be adopted in Ireland with a view to apply a remedy to the peculiar local evil there existing, would occasion additional resistance to the Corn Laws ; that a reconsideration of them would at all events be necessary, and certain relaxation the consequence. The majority of the members of the Cabinet was of a different opinion. But the most influential, particularly in the House of Commons, felt strongly the necessity of making an alteration.

“ After several discussions it was found, that the adoption of a plan upon which all should agree was hopeless ; and, after full consideration, it was felt that the most advantageous plan of proceeding for the Queen's service, for Her Majesty personally, and for the landed interests in general, was that the Minister should inform Her Majesty that, finding he could not go into the House of Commons and propose a plan with the consent of his colleagues, he recommended to Her Majesty to consider of the formation of another administration. This communication was made on Saturday the 6th of December, on which day H. M. sent for Lord John Russell. The Ministers attended H. M. Council at Osborne on Wednesday the 10th December and Parliament was further prorogued to the 31st December, and from that day forward H. M. servants continued in office only till a new

ÆT. 76. administration should be formed. Lord John Russell saw H. M. either on Wednesday the 10th or Thursday the 11th, undertook the commission of forming an administration, and continued his efforts to form one till Saturday the 20th, on which day he resigned the commission. I beg you to bear in mind all the dates, as they are important.

"During the interval between the 10th and 20th December those members of the Cabinet who had objected to the plan proposed by the minister were required to state whether they, or any of them, were prepared or disposed to form an administration on the principle of maintaining the corn laws as they are. I, and I believe all, answered that they were not; and I must add that, however much we read and hear of protection, we have never heard of any individual approaching the Queen with the advice that she should form an administration on that principle.

"When Lord John resigned his commission on the 20th December, H. M. sent for Sir Robert Peel, and, before he went, he wrote to me and informed me that if the Queen should desire it he would resume his office; and, even if he stood alone, would, as Her Majesty's minister, enable H. M. to meet her Parliament rather than that Her Majesty should be reduced to the necessity of taking for her minister a member of the League or those connected with its politics. As soon as I heard of this determination I applauded it; and declared my determination to co-operate in the execution. The question was not then to be considered what the corn law should be, but whether the Queen should have a Government, and I felt then bound to stand by the Sovereign as I had done in 1834. At the same time I saw very clearly that the result of what had happened made a great alteration in the position of the question of the Corn Laws.

"As soon as Lord John Russell undertook on the 10th or 11th December to form an administration for the Queen, he was entitled to demand, and he obtained, a knowledge of the cause of the dissolution of the preceding administration; and he became acquainted with the opinion of Sir Robert Peel and the difference between him and a majority of his Cabinet. Of course then (he knows) that Sir Robert Peel can no longer go into Parliament as the defender of the corn law!

"The members of the Cabinet likewise who differed from Sir Robert, previous (to) the 6th and 10th of December—how do they stand? They must feel that, although with numbers to vote in support of the existing corn law, they cannot reckon upon maintaining it in debate, and they must look to some other system which shall provide for the interests of the land equally with the existing law; although differing from it in the provisions which it should propose to enact.

"What I desire is, considering what has passed, the dates and facts stated, and the situation in which the Government stands at present—let the great landed proprietors and the landed interest consider well what is proposed to them, and not separate themselves from the Government till they should see, and have considered what it is. I see some of them have already loudly declared against such a course as being the same as locking the stable door after the steed should have been stolen. Be it so! If they will not adopt that reasonable, manly course, let them agree among themselves to form a Government for the Queen. Let one or more of them solicit an audience of Her Majesty, and solicit Her Majesty to select for her servants men who will maintain at all events the existing corn law! But let them prepare immediately to produce to Her Majesty the names of the persons to fill the different offices of the State, who will be responsible for carrying on the Government. If not prepared to do that, they must either support the Government of Sir Robert Peel, or be prepared to consider of the measures of one formed under the ——\* of Cobden and Co.! There can be no other course!

"I entreat you to consider of all these circumstances; the order of their concurrence; their dates; and the peculiar events in operation at the period at which each existed. And I entreat you to exert your influence over these who like yourself are great landed proprietors; and to take a course upon this occasion which will be worthy of your station, your talents and your patriotism. Don't be in a hurry; consider maturely what will be submitted for the consideration of Parliament; it can never be too late for the great landed interest to take its course.

\* Illegible in original.



Æt. 71. But if it is to take any course now excepting that of waiting to see what is proposed, it should be to solicit a commission for the formation of a Government.

“ Believe me ever yours most affectionately,

“ WELLINGTON.” \*

Peel proposes to repeal the Corn Laws.

The omens were adverse to the resuscitated Peel Cabinet. In the elections consequent on the re-distribution of Government posts, Ministerialists suffered defeat in the southern constituencies at the hands of Protectionist candidates, while electors in the north returned Whigs or Radicals. Not less boldly did Peel face Parliament when it assembled on 22nd January, 1846, and explained the situation as one which could only be relieved by the repeal of the Corn Laws. Therein truth, the country party knew that impious hands had been laid on the Ark of the Covenant; mutely they listened to their doom—mutely, because it transcended the power of any of them to confute Peel's well-marshalled arguments, or deny the urgency of the situation created by the failure of potatoes in Ireland—mutely, save for the vehemence of Lord George Bentinck and the virulence of Benjamin Disraeli against “the sublime audacity” of the minister who had just avowed his abandonment of the position entrusted to his defence. Almost mutely, therefore; but if country gentlemen could not be eloquent they could vote; it was clear they had the destiny of the Administration in their hands—equally clear that there was no place for merey in their hearts. The Protectionists organised themselves into what would now be termed a “cave” under the lead of Lord George Bentinck with Disraeli as his lieutenant.

The Duke considers his position.

The Duke, in view of the probability of his party being thrust from office, had to consider his position. As Commander-in-chief, he was, as he had told Croker, the “retained servant” of the Crown. To assume the leadership of the Opposition in the House of Lords would be to enter upon

\* *Salisbury MSS.*



a contest with the other servants of the Crown. In conversation with Lord Stanley, who had been raised to the peerage, he explained his own situation, and made the remarkable proposal that Stanley should succeed him as leader of the Conservative party in the Lords. It was a remarkable proposal, not because Stanley was not the ablest man for the task, but because he had seceded from the Cabinet on the very point of policy which seemed about to be fatal to Peel's Government. It was a remarkable proposal, therefore; as remarkable as it would have been had Mr. Gladstone, foreseeing defeat on his Home Rule Bill in 1886, retired from the leadership and invited the Marquess of Hartington to take his place. A few extracts from correspondence well illustrate the peculiar situation.

ANN. 1846.  
—  
His offer  
to Lord  
Stanley.

*Lord Stanley to the Duke of Wellington.*

"18th February, 1846.

"... We cannot disguise from ourselves that the unfortunate measure now under consideration has, for the time at least, completely dislocated and shattered the great Conservative party in both Houses; and that the sacrifice of your own private opinion which you and others have made for the purpose of keeping it together, has failed, as I feared it would, to effect your object. . . . I think it very doubtful whether even your great name and influence will induce the Lords to sanction the Bill. . . . I am obliged to add frankly that I think confidence has been so shaken in Sir Robert Peel, that in spite of his pre-eminent abilities and great services, he can never reunite that party under his guidance. Nor do I see any one in the House of Commons of sufficient ability and influence to do so. . . . In the House of Lords the case is widely different. There, your influence and authority are, and must be, paramount; and much as many of your followers may regret the course which a sense of duty has led you to take on this occasion, they still regard you with undiminished personal respect and attachment, and will follow no other leader, if any were ill-judged enough to set himself up in opposition to you. . . . When, with that disregard

Æt. 76. of yourself which you have shown throughout your life, you advise that I should now endeavour to rally the Conservative party, I am forced to remind you that in the present state of affairs and feelings, they could only be rallied in opposition to measures of your own Government."\*

Lord Stanley then proceeds to explain that, inasmuch as he himself will probably feel it his duty to give his vote against the measure, he wishes to do so in the manner least likely to give him the appearance of putting himself in competition with the Duke, and adds that, in his opinion, the Conservative party can only be reunited as the result of a long period spent in opposition to a Whig administration. In this opinion the Duke concurred, and wrote next day, giving at great length his reasons for feeling unable to continue as leader of the Conservative party in the House of Lords and for desiring to see Lord Stanley in that position. He admits that Peel's influence has been destroyed, and that there is "no chance of its revival."

"That which I look for, therefore, is the holding together in other hands the great and at this moment powerful Conservative party, and this for the sake of the Queen, of the religious and other antient institutions of the country, of its resources, influence and power. . . . It is quite obvious that I am not the person who can pretend to undertake, with any chance of success, to perform this task. It is not easy to account for my being in the situation which I have so long filled in the House of Lords. Its commencement was merely accidental."†

He then recalls how he had succeeded to the position held by Lord Liverpool, but that he felt that his influence, "if it has not already terminated, must terminate in a very short period of time."

"You will see, therefore, that the stage is entirely clear and open for you. . . . For many years, indeed from the year 1830

\* *Apsley House MSS.*

† *Ibid.*

when I retired from office, I have endeavoured to manage the ANN. 1846. House of Lords upon the principle on which I conceive that the institution exists in the constitution of the country. . . . I have invariably supported Government in Parliament upon unimportant occasions, and have always exercised my personal influence to prevent the mischief of anything like a difference or division between the two Houses. I am the servant of the Crown and People. I have been paid and rewarded, and I consider myself retained, and that I can't do otherwise than serve as required when I can do so without dishonour. . . . The stage is quite clear for you, and you need not apprehend the consequences of differing in opinion from me when you will enter upon it; as in truth I have, by my letter to the Queen of 12th of December, put an end to the connection between the Party and me, when the Party will be in opposition to H. M.'s Government. . . . I don't despair of carrying the Bill through. You must be the best judge of the course which you ought to take, and of the course most likely to conciliate the House of Lords. My opinion is that you should advise the House to vote that which would lead most to publick order and would be most beneficial to the immediate interests of the country. But do what you may, it will make no difference to me; you will always find me aiding and co-operating in the road of good order, conservation and government, and doing everything to establish and maintain your influence."\*

Such were the broad, unselfish principles on which the Duke brought to an end his formal connection with the party with which he had been so long identified—principles for which he received no credit from the leading newspapers, which represented him as clinging to power long after his own powers had failed. It is unnecessary to say that his moral influence with the peers remained, as Stanley predicted, paramount; that when the Corn Bill came before the House of Lords in May he explained to them that they had no choice in the matter; a measure

\* *Apsley House MSS.*

ÆT. 76.

The Corn  
Bill passes  
the Lords.

recommended by the Crown and sent up by the Commons would not be rejected, because "without the House of Commons and the Crown the House of Lords could do nothing." "Privilege!" muttered some, who relished not the introduction of the Sovereign's authority as an argument; but Stanley had expressed no empty compliment when he told the Duke he was paramount, for he carried the peerage with him. "I am aware," he said in the course of his speech, "that I address your lordships with all your prejudices against me. . . . I never had any claim to the confidence that your lordships have placed in me. But I will not omit," he continued in faltering accents, "even on this night possibly the last on which I shall ever venture to address you my advice, I will not omit to counsel you as to the vote you should give on this occasion. . . . I did think, my lord, that the formation of a Government in which her Majesty would have confidence was of greater importance than an opinion of any individual upon the Corn Law or any other law." Their lordships listened, unconvinced and sore in spirit, many of them, but as little disposed to disobey the order to retire from the position pronounced untenable by their chief as any general of division to hesitate on receiving the command to retreat from Talavera. They divided at half-past four in the morning, and gave Ministers a majority of forty-seven.

"God bless you, Duke!" cried one of a small crowd of early workmen who gathered round the door of the House of Lords on that summer morning, and the rest began to cheer. "For Heaven's sake, people, let me get on my horse!" was the Duke's only acknowledgment, which in any one else would have passed for ungracious.

The Lords gave the Bill a third reading on 25th June without a division, but on that very day burst the hurricane which had been brewing in the House of Commons. In the words of Benjamin Disraeli, whose rise as a politician dated from this crisis, "Vengeance had succeeded in most breaches."

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FIELD-MARSHAL THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON,  
c. 1846.

*(From a Miniature at Apsley House.)*

[Vol. II, p. 352.]



to the more sanguine sentiment: the field was lost, but at any rate there should be retribution for those who had betrayed it." Sir Robert Peel must be turned out, and his enemies were not squeamish about the means to be employed for the purpose. Early in the session the Government had introduced a Coercion Bill for Ireland, one of that long and doleful series of temporary measures for the repression of recurrent outbreaks of violence which it fell to successive ministries to propose, until Lord Salisbury had the hardihood in 1887 to place a permanent measure on the statute book. The Whig opposition led by Lord John Russell, and the Conservative *frondeurs* guided by Lord George Bentinck, were both deeply committed to support of the Government Bill, but no scruples restrained them from a change of front. Lord George advised his followers to "kick out the Bill and her Majesty's Ministers with it," and Russell announced his intention to go into the "No" lobby "on grounds satisfactory to himself." It may easily be imagined how indignant was the Duke at conduct so different from the principle he always followed. "If I was in your position," he wrote to Peel, "I would not allow this blackguard combination to break up the Government. I would prefer to dissolve the Parliament, and if your Government is to fall, it will at least fall with honour."\* Peel did not fancy an appeal to the country on an Irish question, and on the same day that the Corn Bill passed the Lords, Ministers were placed in a minority of seventy-three on the second reading of the Coercion Bill and resigned office.

Lord John Russell, having been commissioned to form a Government, approached the Duke of Wellington with the view of obtaining the services and support of some of the Peelites. The Duke told him that, although he had always been willing to give every professional assistance to the Government of the day, whatever had been its politics, he would have nothing to do with a coalition of parties, because

\* *Peel Letters*, iii. 333.

Æt. 77. "such arrangements were viewed with distrust by the public were not creditable to the Parties, and could not be useful any."\* On the other hand, he assured Lord John, and a members of the Conservative party who sought his advice that, so long as he held the office of Commander-in-Chief he could not act in concert with any party opposed to the Government. Similar overtures on the part of Lord John were declined by Lord Dalhousie, Lord Lincoln, and Sidney Herbert.

## APPENDIX G.

*The Duke's Principles in Opposition.*

In order to throw as much light as possible upon the principles of the Duke's conduct in opposition, it may well to give an extract from his correspondence with Lord Londonderry, the most active *frondeur* in the House of Lords at this period.

"July 7, 1830

" . . . From the commencement of Sir Robert Peel's Government until he resigned it, I have been the person charged by the Queen's command to represent in the House of Lords the conduct of the Affairs of the Queen's Government in the House. As a friend of Sir Robert Peel's, you was in constant relation with me, setting aside all other causes for the moment. Sir Robert Peel's Gov<sup>t</sup>. is now broken up; and since I stated the fact to the House of Lords I have had no communication with him to enable me to form an opinion what course he proposed to take in Parliament, or in what relation I stand to the existing Administration, or what course he would wish his friends to take in either House of Parliament. And I add that if I had received such information, I should not, and indeed could not, have acted on it myself; nor could I have endeavoured to influence the conduct of others, the friends of his Administration when in power.

\* *Apsley House MSS.*



"The inclosed paper will shew you the Professional Position ANN. 1846. in which I stand, and will give you the Relation of the circumstances which have placed me in it; and will define the exact political position in which I am placed. I communicate it to you *confidentially*.

"You will see from that the position I filled heretofore. What it may have been, and (be) the existing state of Affairs what they may, I can take but one course—that of avoiding to act in concert with any political Party in opposition to the Gov'. . . . This anomalous position is the result of my peculiar relations with the Sovereign of this Country on account of Services for Years, and the great Rewards and Favors I have received."

Of the confidential paper referred to, the following are the most important passages :-

*Memorandum on the Conservative Leadership in the House of Commons.*

" . . . Bygone circumstances have placed me in a situation which renders it impossible for me to act with a party in Parliament; but I have always been sensible of the advantage and even necessity for the sake of Government itself of keeping together the Conservative party, and most particularly when sitting in the Queen's councils I have endeavoured to attain that object. I stand thus at the present moment—the Queen having called upon me to give her Majesty the advantage of my professional assistance in the command of the Army, I told her Majesty that I could not become a member of her councils nor have anything to say to the political —? under existing circumstances, but that I would serve under those who should be her Majesty's servants, and that I felt in taking that course that I ought to cease to act in concert in Parliament with any political party in opposition to the Government. I have acted accordingly, but this course does not prevent my seeing the advantage to the publick interests, and principally to the Crown itself, of the strength and consolidation of the Conservative party in the State. . . . I am *most anxious* for Lord Stanley's success. . . . My position is certainly anomalous, and I can feel

Æt. 77. — myself liable to be misunderstood. . . . But even when I was sitting in the House of Lords as leader of the Opposition against the Government of Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne, these same feelings in favour of Government *qua* Government have induced me personally to interfere to support the Government, in opposition to the party in Parliament with which I was acting, which I thought it was going too far."

## APPENDIX H.

*National Defence.*

No reflection has been cast so frequently on the Duke of Wellington's public acts, none has been refuted more feelingly than that, after he took to political life, he allowed the call of office to quench his active interest in the army and to relax his vigilance about national defence. The unprepared state of the British land forces when the long peace was broken by the outbreak of war with Russia in 1854, and the sufferings and loss entailed thereby on the British army in the Crimea have been cited as the result of actual laches on the part of him who was so long responsible as Commander-in-chief. That there had occurred a terrible degree of disorganisation, that the sword of England had been allowed to rust in its scabbard—no one will deny; and this seems a fitting plea to inquire how far the Duke must be held answerable for allowing this to come about, because it was in August, 1854, that he became once more Commander-in-chief, in succession to Lord Hill, who had become exceedingly infirm.\* The Duke's own inclination in resuming the command-in-chief was to leave the Cabinet, partly because of the disability of his deafness, and partly because of his unwillingness to impart anything of a party character to the administration of the army. But he yielded to the warm remonstrance

\* Lord Hill died 10th December, 1842.

Sir Robert Peel, actuated not a little by a wish to avoid all ANN. 1838. suspicion that, had he quitted the Cabinet, he had done so on account of any disapproval of its policy.\*

The Duke's anxiety regarding the weakening of the national defences had been expressed long before his return to the Horse Guards in 1842. In 1827, when the Treasury was pressing for reductions in the peace establishment of the army, the Duke submitted to Lord Goderich a long memorandum which he had prepared three years before at the instance of Lord Palmerston. In this, although he expressed the opinion that steam power could never be applied to ships of war, he considered that its application to transports "would give a certainty to the movements of an expedition . . . which such expeditions have never had before, and is well deserving the consideration of the Government in the discussion of all questions of military establishment and defence."† He protested against the false economy of reductions at the expense of efficiency, and held strongly that *any* reduction must be followed by hasty augmentation.

At no time during the present century have the British land forces been at such a low ebb as during the reign of William IV., and the danger continued to weigh on the Duke's mind, although during the stormy period of Catholic Emancipation and Reform he could not get Ministers to give attention to the subject.

*The Duke of Wellington to Sir Willoughby Gordon.*

"Stratfieldsaye, 11th December, 1838.

" . . . As for my part, I have always been of opinion that nothing would enable us to settle our affairs in a short space of time, or at all (because if we don't settle them in a short space of time we shall not settle them at all), excepting to convince the World that we were in earnest in our Intentions to settle them by making a real efficient augmentation of both Army and Navy, so as to meet all difficulties and opposition as a great

\* *Peel Letters*, ii. 537.

† *Civil Despatches*, iv. 114.

Æt. 73. Nation ought. Instead of *dribbling* as we are, we ought to augment all the *dépôts* in this Country and in Ireland to 1000 Men each. This augmentation would give you an early Command of some Thousands. It would cost but little more than the Pay of the Men, and would be a real efficient Measure. It would be followed by no expense thereafter. It would convince Friends and Enemies that we intend to be Master in Canada. I do not now believe that that is the Intention of all in the Cabinet. There ought to be corresponding and permanent augmentation of the Navy, which I am positively certain is inadequate in Strength to the Wants for its Service. . . .

"We should really look seriously at our Position and take Steps to make our Enemies feel that we are determined to maintain it. In this Denomination I am sorry to say that I consider the whole World. With the exception possibly of some in the Austro-Government, we have not a Friend left in the World. I ought to add to this Letter that there should be a corresponding augmentation of the dismounted Men of the Cavalry."

"27th Decemr 1805"

"The state of our military force is very distressing. The Government will not—they dare not—look our difficulties in the face, and provide for them. I don't believe that any Government that could be formed in these days would have the power."\*

Passing on to the year 1844, Wellington is found urging Peel to deal with the defenceless state of British arsenals, the dangers of invasion "aggravated beyond all calculation by the progress of steam navigation, its threatened application to maritime warfare, and the known preparations of our neighbour and naval State in this peculiar equipment."† He admits that all the Administrations since the peace of 1801 are to blame for the state of neglect of which he complains, and he acknowledges the difficulty of inducing Parliament to vote the necessary outlay, without laying before it a statement of the lamentable state of the case, which would be to exp

\* *Apsley House MSS.*

† *Peel Letters*, iii. 199.

to foreign nations the helplessness of Great Britain against ANN 1845. attack and invite their cupidity; but he adds, "we shall do no good by shutting our eyes to the danger."

Time went on; nothing or little was done, and the Duke's uneasiness increased. The attitude of France had become distinctly menacing. In 1845, on the part of the Opposition Lord Palmerston and Sir Charles Napier charged the Government with allowing the national defences to decay. Peel, in defending his colleagues, and concerned that the weakness of the nation should be published abroad, expressed himself in terms so optimistic that the Duke determined he should know the truth. He therefore addressed to Sir Robert a letter which he had at first intended to send to Lord Stanley as War Minister, containing a complete scheme of defence by the land forces, including the organisation of the Militia, and requests that naval officers should be desired to explain what the movements and disposition of the fleet should be if war broke out. On the precise recommendations made it is unnecessary to dwell at this time; to show the earnestness of the warning a few passages may be cited.

"I sincerely wish that I could prevail upon you to consider calmly this great and important subject, compared with which all other interests of the country are mere trifles. All admit the great change made in the system of maritime warfare. Lord Palmerston and you call it a bridge across the Channel between France and this country. I say it is rather a multitude of bridges, from a base in France extending from Bordeaux to Dunkirk. . . . Her Majesty's dominions are in a situation for defence worse than that of the frontier in any State of Europe contiguous to France . . . every port open to attack, for the defence of which we have not one disposable soldier, and we must depend for our safety upon the operation of our fleets. . . . I put the hypothetical case of the enemy landing 25,000 men near one of our great naval arsenals, attacking, succeeding in taking, and destroying the arsenal. This hypothesis is not the representation of an impossibility, or even extravagant, considering what I have seen

ÆT. 76. done myself, having at the time superior armies in the field opposed to me. In this case you would not have a man. . . . a body of troops were landed in the neighbourhood of one of our places, of a sufficient force to invest the place, say 25,000, then I defy all the fleets of England to save it, without the assistance of an army in the field. I entreat you to weigh all this well. . . . I tell you fairly that I consider the danger so certain and so imminent that I conceive that, if there existed an absence of party and prejudice in our Imperial councils, that which ought to be recommended is an alteration in the military policy of the country. . . . It is my duty to tell you all this. I entreat you to investigate the subject maturely—admit nothing as true or false because I state it—and then decide whether you will incur the risks of leaving matters as they are. I beg you to believe that when I decide what you may, it is my wish and intention to aid and assist the Government in anything upon which you may decide after due examination.”\*

In a long reply, Peel admitted the truth of the Duke's representations; but the financial difficulty was more immediately present in his mind than in that of the Commander-in-Chief.

“The country is encumbered with a debt of 787 millions. The annual interest of that debt raised by taxation amounts to 28 millions. There has been peace in Europe for the long period of thirty years, and but little progress has been made in the reduction of that debt.”

In the Budget for that year a million was added to the Navy Estimates, but the army remained the same.

Next may be noted a letter to Mr. Goulburn, dated 30th January, 1846, strongly urging an increase in the artillery, and stating that more engineer officers were absolutely necessary. He recommends the formation of a battalion of engineers (up to this date the pioneers of infantry regiments had been almost the only sappers), notwithstanding

\* *Peel Letters*, iii. 205.

the professional opinion of a certain admiral whom he quotes ANN. 1846.  
 "that Gibraltar was impregnable, if the officers of engineers  
 did not spoil it." \*

On the fall of the Peel Administration in 1846 the Duke addressed to Lord John Russell, as head of the new government, a strong memorandum on the necessity for strengthening the defensive forces.† Finally, in 1847, came his famous letter to Sir John Burgoyne, which is too long to insert at length, and, besides, immediately found its way into print, much to its writer's disgust.‡ Nevertheless, of such vital and present importance is the subject to the people of these islands that some of its paragraphs deserve to be quoted once more.

"You are aware that I have for years been sensible of the alteration produced in maritime warfare and operations by the application of steam to the propelling of ships at sea. This discovery immediately exposed all parts of the coasts of those islands which a vessel could approach at all, to be approached at all times of tide, and in all seasons, by vessels so propelled, from all quarters. We are, in fact, assailable, and at least liable to insult, and to have contributions levied upon us, on all parts of our coast; that is, the coast of these (islands), including the Channel islands, which to this time, from the period of the Norman conquest, have never been successfully invaded. I have in vain endeavoured to awaken the attention of different administrations to this state of things, as well known to our neighbours (rivals in power, at least former adversaries and enemies) as it is to ourselves. . . . We hear a great deal of the spirit of the people of England, for which no man entertains higher respect than I do. But unorganised, undisciplined without systematic subordination established and well understood,

\* *Apsley House MSS.*

† 12th August, 1846. *Apsley House MSS.*

‡ Charles Greville (2nd series, iii. 107) tells how "Pigou, a meddling zealot, who does nothing but read blue books and write letters to the *Times* and *Chronicle*," got hold of this letter and communicated it to the press, to the Duke's great indignation.



Æt. 77. — this spirit opposed to the fire of musketry and cannon, and sabres and bayonets of disciplined troops, would only expose them animated by such spirit to confusion and destruction."

Here follows an elaborate plan for reorganising, strengthening, and disposing of the existing defensive forces, after which the Duke proceeds—

"The measure upon which I have earnestly entreated different administrations to decide, which is constitutional, and has been invariably adopted in time of peace for the last eighty years, is to raise, embody, organise and discipline the militia, of the same numbers for each of the three kingdoms, united as during the late war. This would give a mass of organised forces amounting to about 150,000 men, which we might immediately set to work to discipline. This alone would enable us to establish the strength of our army. This, with an augmentation of the force of the regular army, which would not cost £400,000, would put the country on its legs in respect to personal force; and would engage for its defence, old as I am. But as we stand now, and if it be true that the exertions of the fleet alone are not sufficient to provide for our defence, we are not safe for a week after the declaration of war.

"I am accustomed to the consideration of these questions, and have examined and reconnoitred, over and over again, the whole coast, from the North Foreland, by Dover, Folkestone, Beachy head, Brighton, Arundel, to Selsey Bill, near Portsmouth; and I say that, excepting immediately under the fire of Dover Castle, there is not a spot on the coast on which infantry might not be thrown on shore, at any time of tide, with any wind, and in any weather, and from which such a body of infantry, so thrown on shore, would not find, within the distance of five miles, a road into the interior of the country, through the cliffs, practicable for the march of a body of troops; that in that space of coast (there is, between North Foreland and Selsey Bill,) there are not less than seven small harbours, or mouths of rivers, each without defence, of which an enemy, having landed his infantry on the coast, might take possession, and therein land his cavalry and



artillery of all calibre and establish himself and his communications with France. . . . ANN. 1847.

"The French army must be much altered indeed since the time at which I was better acquainted with it, if there are not now belonging to it forty *Chefs d'Etat-Majors-General* capable of sitting down and ordering the march to the coast of 40,000 men, their embarkation, with their horses and artillery, at the several French ports on the coast; their disembarkation at named points on the English coast,—that of the artillery and cavalry in named ports or mouths of rivers, and the assembly at named points of the several columns; and the march of each of these from stage to stage to London. Let any man examine our maps and road-books, consider the matter, and judge for himself.

"I know no mode of resistance, much less of protection, from this danger, excepting by an army in the field capable of meeting and contending with its formidable enemy, aided by all the means of fortification which experience in war can suggest.

"I shall be deemed fool-hardy in engaging for the defence of the empire with an army composed of such a force of militia. I may be so. I confess it, I should infinitely prefer, and should feel more confidence in, an army of regular troops. But I *know* that I shall not have these; I may have others; and if an addition is made to the existing regular army allotted for home defence of a force which will cost £400,000 a year, there would be a sufficient disciplined force in the field to enable him who should command to defend the country. . . .

"You will see from what I have written that I have contemplated the danger to which you referred. I have done so for years. I have drawn to it the attention of different administrations at different times. You will see, likewise, that I have considered of the measures of prospective security, and of the mode and cost of the attainment. I have done more. I have looked at and considered these localities in quiet detail, and have made up my mind upon the details of their defence. These are the questions to which my mind has not been unaccustomed. I have considered and provided for the defence—the successful defence—of the frontiers of many countries. . . .

"I quite concur in all your views of the danger of our position,

Æt. 77. — and of the magnitude of the stake at issue. I am especially sensible of the certainty of failure if we do not, at an early moment, attend to the measures necessary for our defence, and avoid the disgrace, the indelible disgrace of such failure—putting out of view all the other unfortunate consequences, such as the loss of the political and social position of this country among the nations of Europe, of all its allies, in concert with, and in aid of whom, it has, in our own times, contended successfully in arms for its own honour and safety, and the independence and freedom of the world. When did any man hear of the allies of a country unable to defend itself? Views of economy of resources, and I admit that the high views of national finance of other nations, induce them to postpone those measures absolutely necessary for mere defence and safety under existing circumstances, forgetting altogether the common practice of successful armies in modern times, imposing upon the conquered enormous pecuniary contributions, as well as other valuable and ornamental property.

“I am bordering upon seventy-seven years of age, passed in honour. I hope that the Almighty may protect me from being the witness of the tragedy which I cannot persuade my contemporaries to take measures to avert.

“Believe me, ever yours sincerely,

“WELLINGTON.”

Against evidence so eloquent, so convincing, how is it possible to maintain the charge that, during his political life, Wellington was indifferent to the efficiency of the army and careless about the national security? He continued throughout the last years of his life to press the matter on the attention of the civil government by means of letters to Lord John Russell and technical memoranda. But why, it may be asked, if the Duke's sense of the country's danger was so clear, was he so angry at the publication of his letter to Sir John Burgoyne? why was he invariably silent when national defence was discussed in Parliament? It was because, despising public opinion in regard to himself, he dreaded bringing it to bear upon the Government of the Queen.

could not conceive anything but evil arising out of demo- ANN. 1843.  
cratic interference with affairs of state, and this is most  
clearly expressed in the following letter.

*The Duke of Wellington to Lady Shelley.*

"30th January, 1848.

"Upon the subject of the defences of the country, I have formed and have given opinions to several administrations; but it is well known that my opinion has been that the subject would be considered with advantage by the Government alone in the first instance. The rules of procedure so require, and it is quite certain that the House of Lords, of which I am a member, is *the* place in which it would be least advantageous to suggest a discussion on such a subject. . . . It is well known that in the course of the last session of Parliament a discussion did take place in the House of Lords on the state of the defences of the country. Lord Ellenborough spoke; others spoke; I did not say one word! . . . I objected to the movement on the part of any, excepting the servants of the Crown, and positively declared that I would not move in it. By the diligence of Lady and Miss Burgoyne, assisted by your ladyship, the confidential letter of the Commander-in-chief of the Army to the Chief Engineer (Sir John Burgoyne) has been pretty generally circulated, and has at last been published in the newspapers! . . . Look at what is passing all over the country in consequence of the ill-timed and indiscreet measures adopted by the ladies—your ladyship, Lady and Miss Burgoyne among them, and the gossips of the world, in order to bring it under discussion. I foresaw this consequence: but I must say that my principal view in desiring to keep the subject in its regular channel was that I knew it was the only efficient one, and moreover the only safe one for the public interests!"\*

In the light of later days we recognise in the "ill-timed and indiscreet measures adopted by the ladies" a real service to the country by rousing it to a sense of peril. Half a

\* *Apsley House MSS.*

Æt. 78. century has gone by since the Duke wrote his last formal warning; the empire has increased in extent and wealth beyond the dreams of statesmen of those days, and the people—that democratic power which Wellington held in such dread—have awakened to the duty of defending the mighty fabric. No Government could stand for ten days which should be convicted of incurring the risks to which Great Britain lay exposed in the 'forties. Yet the popular mood is proverbially fickle; there may come a time, as there have come times in the not distant past, when the nation's vigilance shall be lulled, the martial spirit slumber. Well shall it be then if some heedful eye retraces the lines written by one who had such wide experience of princes and peoples; who never exaggerated a military risk and never flinched in the presence of peril.

## CHAPTER XII.

### LAST DAYS.

1848-1852.

April 8, 1848. The Duke's precautions against the Chartists.	August . . . . And of Mr. Arbuthnot. The Duke in private life.
„ 10 . . . The Kennington meeting dispersed.	His personal habits.
„ 3, 1850. The Duke proposes that Prince Albert should command the Army.	Feb. 20. 1852. Defeat and resignation of the Russell Cabinet.
July 2 . . . . Death of Sir Robert Peel.	„ 27 . . . . Lord Derby's first Administration
	September 14 . Death of the Duke of Wellington.

ON 8th April, 1848, the Duke of Wellington once more found himself present at a Cabinet council. Dissociated from party and holding no political office, he attended on the invitation of the Prime Minister to advise measures for the protection of the metropolis. From no foreign quarter loomed the menace. For many years apprehension of invasion had been justified by the attitude of the French government. The first French revolution had plunged England into the mightiest war in her history; in the third French revolution, the fall of Guizot and the abdication of Louis Philippe, Palmerston read the disappearance of external danger to the United Kingdom. Not the less was there danger within the Queen's realm. Smith O'Brien's caricature of rebellion in Ireland, to be extinguished ingloriously among Widow Cormack's cabbages, had not yet taken shape; the centre of

The  
Chartista.

Æt. 78. disturbance lay nearer the seat of Government. The Chartists had not been quenched by the repeal of the Corn Laws; they had accepted that as an instalment, but the five points of their charter were still unsatisfied; and now their ranks swelled by the industrial depression which followed in the path of the commercial crisis of 1847, were marshalled by Feargus O'Connor, whom appearance, eloquence, and ancient lineage rendered an ideal demagogue. A mass meeting was summoned to assemble on Kennington Green on 10th April, half a million Chartists were to march thence upon Westminster, and overawe the House of Commons into accepting a monster petition said to contain 5,706,000 signatures.\*

The state of public apprehension may be estimated by the expressions in a letter from a member of the Cabinet.

*Lord Campbell to Sir George Campbell.*

“Friday night, 7th April, 1848.

“... The public alarm increases every hour, and many believe that by Monday evening we shall be under a Provisional Government. . . . Yesterday evening the Duke of Wellington beckoned to me to cross over to him, and he said to me: ‘Lord Cammell, we shall be as quiet on Monday as we are at this hour, and it will end to the credit of the Government and the country. But he was never famous for knowing the state of the public mind. . . .’”

“Sunday night, 9th April, 1848.

“... This may be the last time I write to you before the Republic is established. I have no serious fears of revolution, but there may very likely be bloodshed. I have had some recompense for my anxiety in a scene I witnessed yesterday. . . . We were considering in the Cabinet how the Chartists should be

\* The Select Committee appointed to examine this petition reduced the number of genuine signatures to 1,975,406. The names of the Queen and Prince Albert, Lord John Russell, Sir Robert Peel, Wellington himself, and other public individuals had been appended scores of times, interspersed with those of “Cheeks the Marine” and other imaginary characters.

dealt with, and when it was determined that the procession ANN. 1848. should be stopped after it had moved, we agreed that the particular place where it should be stopped was purely a military question. The Duke of Wellington was requested to come to us, which he did very readily. We had then a regular Council of War, as upon the eve of a great battle. We examined maps and returns and information of the movements of the enemy. After long deliberation, plans of attack and defence were formed to meet every contingency. The quickness, intelligence, and decision which the Duke displayed were very striking, and he inspired us all with perfect confidence. . . . It was not I alone who was struck with the consultation of yesterday. Macaulay said to me that he considered it the most interesting spectacle he had ever witnessed, and that he should remember it to his dying day."

To the Duke, then, was committed the task of stopping the procession and defending the metropolis from the irruption The Duke's precautions. of a dangerous rabble. He was hard on fourscore, yet he betrayed no signs of failure either in discretion or military instinct. Injudicious display of force might easily have precipitated a bloody riot, the tragedy of Peterloo have been re-enacted on a grand scale. The London police, a force of which the Duke had first urged the creation,\* numbered nearly four thousand; the Duke determined that the mob should first encounter the civil force, and that the military should only be employed if the policemen failed. Nevertheless his arrangements were as complete as if he had been preparing defence against an army of invasion. The Guards and Household cavalry were reinforced by the 17th, 62nd, and 63rd Foot, brought in from country quarters; steam-vessels were in readiness in the river and the Channel to bring other troops if need should arise; guns were placed near Westminster Bridge and neighbourhood, with strict orders that commissioned officers only were to discharge them if necessary. The Bank of England, Somerset House, the Mint, and other public

\* See *ante*, p. 153.



Æt. 80. buildings were put in a state of defence and secretly garrisoned: the 12th Light Dragoons were billeted in Chelsea. Yet no appearance of military preparation was allowed to alarm the public; only the police were *en evidence*, five hundred forming an advanced post at Kennington, and a like number on each of the bridges of Westminster, Hungerford, Waterloo, and Blackfriars, with reserves amounting to 1,600 on the north side of the river. So perfect were the precautions—so great the dread of the Duke's prowess—that all ended pacifically. The meeting dissolved at the instance of a few police-inspectors, and the monster petition was conveyed constitutionally but ignominiously, to Westminster in a hackney cab.

The Duke proposes that Prince Albert should command the Army.

The dread of the growing power of the democracy, and the menace which he discerned therein to the Monarchy and Constitution, weighed heavily on the Duke to the end of his days, and he attached supreme importance to the control of the Army remaining in the hands of the Sovereign. So long as *he* was Commander-in-chief, there was nothing to fear; he could trust himself; but with the weight of fourscore years on his shoulders he could not remain much longer at the post. Accordingly on 3rd April, 1850, he laid before the Queen and Prince Consort the project he had long cherished, namely, that the Prince should assume the office of Commander-in-chief. He told the Queen that so long as he (the Duke) remained Commander-in-chief, the duties of all the offices in his department were attended to by himself, which the Prince Consort could not undertake, and he proposed the appointment of a separate Chief of the Staff, uniting the offices of Adjutant-General and Quartermaster-General. When the Prince raised the question whether, as the Queen's Consort, he would be acting within the Constitution in taking command of the Army, the Duke replied that it was precisely that consideration which made him most anxious to see the Prince become Commander-in-chief, "as with the daily growth of the democratic power the executive got weaker and weaker, and that it w



of the utmost importance to the Throne and the Constitution ANN. 1850. that the command of the Army should remain in the hands of the Sovereign, and not fall into the hands of the House of Commons." He saw no security, were he gone, except in the Sovereign, or, as in the case of her Majesty, the Sovereign's Consort assuming the command. "It is a pleasure," wrote the Queen to Baron Stockmar in reference to this interview, "and a wonder to see how powerful and how clear the mind of this wonderful man is, and how loyal and kind he is to both of us. His loss, when it comes, will be a thoroughly irreparable one."

The letter in which the Prince Consort gave his reasons for declining the appointment has been published already.\* They consisted in the interference which he foresaw the duties of the Command-in-chief would cause with those "most important duties connected with the welfare of the Sovereign . . . which nobody *could* perform but myself." Nobody can doubt that the Prince's decision was a wise one. On constitutional grounds, it is strange that the Duke declined to admit the objection raised by the Prince that it was undesirable to place the Sovereign or the Sovereign's Consort in such a position that it might become his duty, under certain circumstances, to direct personally operations against subjects of the Crown; on professional grounds it is still stranger that the Duke did not perceive the disadvantage to the service of placing at its head an individual without military experience in the field.

During the summer of 1850 the Duke sustained the loss of two of his few remaining friends. On 2nd July Sir Robert Peel expired from injuries received in a fall from his horse on Constitution Hill. It has been shown that perfect harmony did not always prevail between Peel and Wellington; that there were intervals when, owing to misunderstanding, to the Duke's deafness, and to the impatience of a military spirit with the more deliberate and circuitous courses of a politician,

Death of  
Sir Robert  
Peel.

\* Martin's *Life of the Prince Consort*, ii. 259.

Æt. 81.

all intercourse between them was interrupted. Yet there is no room to doubt that the Duke entertained profound respect and warm personal regard for Sir Robert Peel. But the Duke was not eloquent. Occasions which moved him most deeply supplied him only with words almost uncouth in their rugged plainness. Thus, in referring in Parliament to Peel's death he was at first so much overcome that he could utter no words at all ; when they did come, they were almost grotesquely simple.

"In all the course of my acquaintance (a greater master of rhetoric would surely have said 'friendship') with Sir Robert Peel I never knew a man in whose truth and justice I had more lively confidence, or in whom I saw a more invariable desire to promote the public service. In the whole course of my communications with him I never knew an instance in which he did not show the strongest attachment in truth ; and I never saw in the whole course of my life the slightest reason for suspecting that he stated anything which he did not believe to be the fact."

Death  
of Mr.  
Arbuthnot.

Higher, fuller testimony this, than could be truthfully borne to the veracity of many a statesman who has filled a large place in the world's history.

Less conspicuous than Peel's was the other figure that passed from the stage during this summer, yet one whose loss caused deeper personal sorrow to the Duke. Arbuthnot, ever since the death of his wife, had resided constantly at Apsley House, Strathfieldsaye, or Walmer. Gentle, patient, sympathetic, and inconspicuous, he was the very opposite to the Duke in all things but his love of truth. Men and women trusted him entirely ; he became a perfect magazine of state secrets and personal confidences. Wholly devoid of personal ambition, his influence with the Duke and the part he played in removing differences between the Duke, his colleagues, and his party, had a more important effect on the political history of his time than could be claimed for many more prominent personalities. When Arbuthnot died in August, 1850, he left

the Duke without a single intimate friend with whom he could discuss, as with a contemporary, his political past. ANN. 1850  
 Fitzroy Somerset was still a constant visitor at Apsley House, and Alava had a room there as often as he chose to occupy it; but the gallant Somerset was a soldier and indifferent to politics and party; Alava, though a charming and cultivated companion, was an inveterate gossip, not over scrupulous about the way he obtained information,\* than which nothing could be more odious in the Duke's eyes.

If between the Duke and his sons, Lord Douro and Lord Charles Wellesley, relations could never be described as other than friendly, neither can they be considered as intimate or confidential. The barrier of age, which no conscious diligence avails to surmount, was heightened and hardened between the father and his sons by the contrast of an arduous, indefatigable activity on the one part with the easy-going indolence of well-born, well-endowed young men on the other. In truth they had not much in common, and it was not till after the close of the Duke's life that his elder son set to work with praiseworthy diligence to prepare his father's civil correspondence for publication, whereby, at immense cost, he erected his own monument, as he said himself, to the memory of his sire. But between age and childhood there is no such barrier, and the Duke's fondness for children, the infinite pains he took to give them pleasure, and the love he received from them in return, are the subject of innumerable anecdotes, and of affectionate remembrance by those who experienced them in early days.

Many details, also, are remembered of his old-fashioned carefulness as a host. The Duke as a host. When guests arrived at Strathfieldsaye or Walmer, each one, even were he a subaltern just joined, was shown to his bedroom by the Duke himself. The bedrooms at Strathfieldsaye were all supplied with the same furniture, regardless of the size of the room; hence the large ones looked bare, while the small were somewhat inconveniently crowded.

\* *Salisbury MSS.*, 1835.

The Duke had many devices for the comfort of his guests and household; he bestowed special attention to the heating apparatus, which at one time was so powerful as nearly to cook the inmates. On the breakfast table there was a teapot over a hot-water jug, the Duke's own invention, put in front of every third place, the result not infrequently being that guests unfamiliar with the arrangement used to capsize the whole affair.

His conversation.

It was natural that in his later years younger men were eager to obtain information about a life so full of remarkable experience, and the Duke was exceedingly good-natured in indulging their legitimate curiosity. Lord Mahon, of whom the Duke was very fond, was one of the most industrious of these, and his notes have been given to the public in the shape of his well-known *Conversations*. The Duke, after dinner, used to sit reading the paper with a lamp on a table beside him. Lord Mahon generally contrived to get round this table, and engage him in conversation. On one occasion the ladies at Strathfieldsaye, thinking the Duke might be wearied with this pardonable importunity, arranged, as they thought without his perceiving it, a sofa and other furniture so as to bar Lord Mahon's usual access; but his lordship was not to be baffled; he managed to scale or thread the defences, and presently was deep in interrogation. That night when, as usual, the Duke was handing the ladies their bedroom candlesticks, he remarked to one of them, with a twinkle in his eye, "Your fortifications were not very effective after all!" He had seen through the little scheme, and was much amused at the amiable enemy's determination.

His relations with women.

The love-stories of men of mark have an irresistible attraction for the rest of the world, but there remains very little to tell about Wellington's after the sunset of his early romance. His passion for Catherine Pakenham, absorbing and heart-whole as it was, did not survive the strain of severance and silence; it perished with the lapse of years. A man less scrupulous—less rigid in fulfilling the obligations

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FRANCES MARY, FIRST WIFE OF THE 2ND MARQUIS OF SALISBURY

*(From an Engraving of the Picture at Hatfield)*

*Vol. II. p. 175.*



of duty and honour as he interpreted them—would have pronounced its *requiescat*, and no reproach could have lain against him because he bowed to the lawful opposition which had prevented his marriage. But this was a man who was never satisfied by merely fulfilling what the world exacted of him: his own conscience and sense of justice had to be at ease, be the cost what it might; in marrying Catherine Pakenham the cost was a heavy one, but it was paid without hesitation as a just debt. Wellington's relations with other women have been the subject of endless gossip. It must be admitted that they were numerous and, with two or three notable exceptions, not of a kind on which it profits to dwell. Unlike many men who have played great parts in the world's history, Wellington never submitted his will to a woman's; although very susceptible of the influence of beauty and wit, he treated women either as agreeable companions or as play-things. He never allowed them to control his actions, nor, with two exceptions, did he feel acute sorrow when death or other circumstances put an end to intimacy.

The two exceptions were women in whom Wellington reposed complete confidence and with whom his friendship was absolutely without reserve. With one of these—Mrs. Arbuthnot—a *liaison*, if current reports are to be credited, was the means of revealing qualities in her which far outli.ed the fleeting influence of her physical charms.\* In the case of the other—the second Marchioness of Salisbury—no whisper of reproach was ever uttered. From first to last there existed between her and the Duke an ideally helpful friendship and *camaraderie* of common interest. Numerous references in this work to Lady Salisbury's journals and correspondence show how useful she was in smoothing away such difficulties as were created by the Duke's austere and peremptory habits of command, and illustrate the solace which his lonely spirit

\* There is at Apsley House a miniature of Mrs. Arbuthnot which, it is said, the Duke constantly wore round his neck, suspended by a chain of her hair. The hair is black or dark brown.



Æt. 68. derived from constant exchange of thought with one who thoroughly understood the world and his relations with it.

After the death of his duchess in 1831, it was natural that many rumours should get afloat of Wellington's intention to marry again; but only in one case does he seem to have entertained any apprehensions on the subject—that of the Hon. Mary Ann Jervis, daughter of the 2nd Viscount St. Vincent. With this young lady he certainly had a pretty strong flirtation, and the gossips made the most of it.

"The Duke," notes Lady Salisbury, "laughs extremely at the notion of his being in love with Miss Jervis. 'What is the good of being sixty-seven if one cannot speak to a young lady?' He says she is mad, but she has talent and intelligence, though with less powers of conversation than any educated person he ever saw."\*

The flirtation went on for some years, and in the end assumed a serious phase. The Duke, in writing to Lady de Ros, always referred to Miss Jervis as "the Syren."

*To Lady de Ros.*

"London, August 17, 1837.—I go to Walmer Castle on Saturday . . . I spoke to the Syren about coming. . . . I don't know what to do with her if you should be gone. If you should still be there, I shall be delighted to have her. . . . *Walmer Castle, October 7, 1837.*— . . . Between Lord Lowther and me the Syren appears on the road to get married. . . . *S. S. (Stratfieldsaye), December 3, 1837.*—You may tell the Syren that I have got the clock here but am sadly in want of a clockmaker. . . . *December 10.*— . . . It is very hard upon me to be obliged to repair my clock myself! However, it is done, and I hope to escape being loaded with shawls! . . . *S. S., January 14, 1838.*— . . . I am sorry to tell you the clock is broken again. The housemaid, being, I conclude, in a conspiracy to have it repaired, broke it during my absence. . . . *S. S., February 11.*— . . . I have had two or three notes from the Syren, but they were about a protégé of hers for the Orphan Asylum, or about the

\* *Salisbury MSS., 1836.*



music for the organ here, and the mode of execution, upon which ANN. 1838.  
 subject I have five sheets of paper which poor Gerald \* and Miss  
 Walmesly are to read. . . . *S. Saye, February 25.*— . . . I have not  
 heard from the Syren lately. I don't think it necessary to consult  
 Buzfuz upon any letter written as yet. . . . *London, March 5.*—  
 . . . I saw the Syren last night at Lady Salisbury's. . . . She was  
 looking in great force, and says she is much improved in musick,  
 and there is an organ on the tapis; but this is not so dangerous  
 as a clock, though, by-the-by, it is at the clockmaker's. . . .  
*London, May 9.*— . . . I am afraid that the concert, instead of  
 costing 19 guineas, will give us a deal of trouble. She came to  
 town from S. S. and, contrary to my intentions and request,  
 settled a programme with Mr. Knivett. I have been under the  
 necessity of altering it, and she will come up in a fury, and I shall  
 have to ask pardon. This, to be sure, is very dangerous. . . . I  
 will let you know if the concert should produce any *extraordinary*  
*esclandre!* . . . *May 31.*—I dined with the Syren last week. It  
 was the day of the Queen's ball, and I returned from thence to  
 the music; but Lady Jersey was there and talked so much that  
 she was interrupted. I therefore came away. . . . I hope that  
 I shall not get into any scrape to render necessary my giving  
 a retainer to the great lawyers in such cases. . . . *August 13.*—  
 . . . I have presented a pianoforte in exchange for the old  
 Walmer one, which I am going to hear on Sunday evening.  
 This will give Rogers † fresh food for jokes; but I enjoy them  
 myself as much as I do H. B.'s caricatures. . . . *August 11.*— . . .  
 I should like to see the Syren married to Lord Lowther or any-  
 body excepting myself—God bless her! I cannot conceive how  
 she came to think of me; I am old enough to be her great-grand-  
 father. I am going to give her a crown for singing the trio in  
 the Cenerentola (?); mind—not a coronet! Louis Philippe gave  
 her a crown for being the best dancer in the school at Paris; I  
 give her one for singing a trio single-handed. . . .”

In a subsequent letter the Duke expresses his dismay at  
 the Syren having taken up her quarters in Walmer village,

\* The Duke's nephew, rector of Strathfieldsaye, afterwards Dean of Windsor.  
 † Samuel Rogers the poet.

and refers to "the gossip which it creates." Finally, in 1840, Miss Jervis married Dyce Sombre, an Indian nabob, and the Duke writes to Lady de Ros greatly relieved at "the lucky coincidence of the Black Prince appearing."

It is well known from Mr. Gleig's narrative and other sources that the Duke was liberal—lavish—in bestowing money in charity. So far as he subscribed to hospitals and other well-regulated schemes, his money was bestowed to a good purpose; but in response to private applications—which were innumerable—he was not careful to satisfy himself of their genuine nature, and there can be no doubt that he allowed himself to be frequently imposed upon. Not less doubt can there be that money given in this indiscriminate way has a mischievous effect; but had the Duke been at the pains to examine into the circumstances of all his applicants, he would have had no time to devote to other affairs; he preferred to give petitioners all and sundry the benefit of every doubt.

The following anecdote, told by Stocqueler, is well authenticated, and illustrates at once the Duke's great love of children, and his thoughtfulness for their welfare. The son of Kendall, the Duke's valet, was at school near Strathfieldsaye, and was spending a day with his father at Apsley House. The Duke's bell rang; Kendall, answering it, was followed by the lad into the study.

"Whose boy is that?" asked the Duke quickly.

"Mine, your Grace," replied Kendall, "and I humbly ask your Grace's pardon for his coming into the room, not knowing your Grace was here."

"Oh! that is nothing," quoth the Duke; "but I didn't know you had a son, Kendall. Send him in and leave him with me."

So the boy—greatly trembling—was sent in to the Duke, who asked him if he knew to whom he was speaking.

"Yes, sir—your Grace, I mean."

"Oh, my little fellow," answered the Duke, "it will be

easier for you to call me 'sir.' You call your schoolmaster 'sir,' don't ye? Call me 'sir' too, if you choose. Now I wonder if you can play draughts."

"Yes, sir."

"Come on then; we'll have a game, and I'll give you two men."

Down they sat; the boy said afterwards that he really thought he was going to win the second game, but his doughty antagonist laid a trap for him, and chuckled mightily when he fell into it.

The games over, the Duke asked the boy a lot of questions in geography, and then said—

"Well, you shall dine with me to-day; but I shall not dine yet: would you like to see my pictures?" and he trotted him round the great gallery. Then the Duke took him among the statues—"important fellows" he said they were—but the boy said he preferred the pictures.

"I thought so," observed the Duke; "but tell me—which of these is most like your schoolmaster?"

Young Kendall picked out a bust without moustaches, which happened to be a likeness of the Duke himself.

"Oh! well," laughed the Duke, "that is a very good man of his sort. Come now, we'll go to dinner. I have ordered it early, as I suppose you dine early at school."

"At one o'clock, sir," said the lad.

"A very good hour," said the Duke. "I used to dine at one when I was at school."

They sat down *tête-à-tête*, the anxious father being told that the bell would ring when he was required. Having said grace, the Duke told the boy that he would give him a little of every dish, as he knew boys liked to taste all they saw. Dinner over, the lad was dismissed with the injunction—

"Be a good boy; do your duty; now you may go to your father."

About four years later the Duke was detained on the South Eastern railway for two hours, when travelling to

attend a meeting of the Privy Council. He was exceedingly indignant, and communicated his complaint to Mr. Macgregor, chairman of the company. Nothing more is known of the incident, except this, that immediately afterwards young Kendall was appointed to a clerkship in Mr. Macgregor's bank at Liverpool, after which he was transferred to the Ordnance Department in Ireland. The presumption is far that the Duke supplemented his income during the early years of his clerkship, which is always insisted upon in a bank, and which must have been far beyond the means of his father to do.

The Duke's  
personal  
habits.

It is natural that those who apprehend the magnitude of the work accomplished in a single lifetime, and the almost invariable success of every enterprise undertaken therein, should endeavour to ascertain the means by which such results were attained. A strong will, extraordinary clearness of decision and tenacity of purpose, a vigorous frame, abstemious habits, keen common sense, powerful interest at the outset—all these we recognise, but of such Wellington enjoyed no monopoly. Goethe's prescription for becoming great he followed also, as every great man has followed it unconsciously.

“ Wer grosses will muss sich zusammenraffen,  
In der beschränkung zeigt sich erst der Meister.”

But what was the secret economy which enabled him so to use these means as to make himself for nearly half a century the most conspicuous man in Europe? In truth, one part of it was a habit so simple, so homely, that one runs perilously near bathos in defining it. Arthur Wesley was born in that rank of life the members of which usually wait to begin their daily amusement or business till the world has been aired and warmed for them, till carpets have been swept, morning papers laid out, and a variety of other trivial offices performed, the sum of which insensibly becomes essential to what most of us set greatest store by—comfort. To secure

this, well-to-do people are generally content to surrender to the majority of their fellow-creatures a start of about three hours in each day—a sacrifice confirmed into invincible habit by the accumulated sanction of generations. The world at large loses nothing by lazy people lying in bed; idle folk out of the way are at least out of mischief. But Wellington, setting no store by comfort, knew that to get through his work would take all the time he could give to it: he rose at six every morning, thereby adding three hours to each working day. Think what this daily increment amounted to, reckoning from the time he went to India, for there is no evidence to show that he practised early rising before that period. Three hours a day for fifty-five years (allowing for leap years) amount to 61,359 hours—2,556 days—almost exactly seven years of wakefulness and, constituted as he was, of activity, filched from fashion and added to his life—undoubtedly a large factor in the volume of his life-work, even if the quality thereof be attributed entirely to his intellectual powers. The greater part of those wonderful despatches, much also of his private correspondence, was penned before most of the writer's friends had left their breakfast tables. Here is the secret of his command of leisure for hunting in the Peninsula, for parties and balls which he attended so regularly, for constant presence when the House of Lords was sitting.

It may be urged that few men have strength to sustain such long days and short nights. Perhaps so, but how many of us have tested our powers systematically—how many have tried resolutely to acquire the practice of compressing sleep into six hours out of the twenty-four, recouping ourselves at odd moments, such as Wellington's snatches of slumber between the acts at Talavera and Salamanca or on the way-side at Quatre-Bras? Those who should break down under this training could never remain seventeen hours and a half in the saddle, as Wellington did at Waterloo, his mind all the time being filled with work of such poignant and critical kind as few men's minds are ever applied to. Still

Early  
rising.

Æt. 82. less could one of them face such a day's duty as Wellington discharged in the last, the eighty-third year of his life. The anniversary meeting of the Elder Brethren of the Trinity House fell on a very wet day. Wellington, Master, joined his colleagues on the Tower Hill, and went with them to Deptford, where a carriage was in waiting to carry him to the Trinity Almshouses. "I prefer walking," said the Master; and despite all remonstrance, taking a mackintosh cape out of his pocket, trudged off at the head of the Brethren through the streets of that comfortless borough a march of nearly an hour. It is the custom to present each of the Brethren with a bouquet at the Almshouses, and the Duke always used to give his away on leaving. The privilege was greatly coveted by the girls, who had a tradition that she who received it was sure to be married first, and they crowded eagerly round the Master at the end of the proceedings. The Duke, entering into the spirit of the thing, kept them for some time in suspense, and then, diving into the throng, handed it to a pretty girl standing behind the others. The Duke returned to the annual banquet at the Trinity House, observing, as he sat down, that he must get away early, as he had to attend a juvenile party that night at Windsor Castle. He remained at table till nearly ten, returned to Apsley House to change his dress, and made his obeisance to the Queen at Windsor before midnight. No mean performance this, for anybody, let alone an octogenarian!

The Duke's last political act.

On 22nd February, 1851, Lord John Russell, after the defeat of his party in the House of Commons on Mr. Loeb's King's County Franchise Bill, placed the resignation of himself and his colleagues in the hands of her Majesty, who once sent for Lord Stanley. He, however, being unable to command the support of the Peelite Conservatives, in turn advised the Queen to retain her present Minister; but, just as the Peelites held aloof from Lord Stanley because of his avowed policy of Protection, so they declined to support

a Whig Cabinet pledged to a measure aimed against Papal aggression. Lord Aberdeen, leader of the Peelites, next was sent for, but he declined the attempt on the ground that no Ministry could stand which should decline, as his must do, to proceed with the Ecclesiastical Tithes Bill. Under these circumstances, to relieve the deadlock, Lord Stanley undertook, on the 25th, an attempt to form a Government, but by the 27th he had realised that it was impossible, and he resigned. In this dilemma—unprecedented since the Prince Regent's difficulties after the assassination of Mr. Perceval in 1812—the Queen resorted for advice to her old and well-tried servant. A memorandum of the circumstances, drawn up by the Prince Consort, was laid before the Duke on 1st March, ending with this sentence—"The Queen requests the Duke of Wellington's opinion upon the problem here proposed." The Duke's conclusion was that "the party still filling the offices, till her Majesty's pleasure shall be declared, is the one best calculated to carry on the Government at the present moment," and in accordance therewith, Lord John Russell was sent for once more, resumed office, and the *impasse* was at an end.

Yet the Duke was destined to see one more Ministry in office, this time a Conservative one. His reiterated warnings and Prince Albert's wise foresight, combined with the thinly veiled threats of invasion contained in the speeches of the new ruler of France, Napoleon III.,\* to rouse Ministers to a sense of responsibility for the security of the country. There were at that time not more than 24,000 regular troops in the United Kingdom, absolutely without any reserve. The Militia had ceased, after the peace of 1815, to exist except in name; Lord John Russell's Cabinet so far adopted the Duke's advice as to devise a scheme for creating the force afresh, with provision for fourteen days' drill in each year, the service of each regiment to be confined to the limits of its own county.

\* The French Ambassador had been recalled from the Court of St. James.







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Et. 82. Both Prince Albert and the Duke of Wellington perceived that the scheme was miserably inadequate; it was a beginning however, in the right direction, and was duly embodied in a bill. But there was a lion in the path. In the previous

Defeat of  
the Russell  
Ministry.

December Lord John Russell had been under the disagreeable necessity of conveying to Lord Palmerston the Queen's desire that he should surrender the seals of the Foreign Office, in consequence of his indiscretion in expressing approval of Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état*. Palmerston, therefore, quitted the Cabinet, and soon appeared as an enemy on the flank of his ancient colleagues. On 20th February, 1852, he persuaded the House of Commons to reject the Militia Bill by a majority of eleven votes, and the following day Ministers resigned. Lord Stanley, who had become Earl of Derby in June, 1851, on the death of his father, undertook to form a Government, which, as the Peelites still held aloof, was in a hopeless minority in the House of Commons. Except Lord Malmesbury, who took the Foreign Office, and Mr. Disraeli, who entered office for the first time as Chancellor of the Exchequer, the new Ministry was composed of men untried and unknown. It derived its distinctive name from a conversation between the Duke and the Prime Minister in the House of Lords. The Duke was eagerly inquiring of Lord Derby the names of his new colleagues, some of which he had never heard before. "Who? who?" he asked repeatedly, and the "Who-who?" Ministry was a name that stuck to the Cabinet throughout its brief existence.

The Duke  
and the  
Militia.

Brief as that existence was, for it survived the July elections only a few weeks, it succeeded in framing and carrying a Militia Bill which met the Duke's requirements more fully than the rejected measure, thereby laying the foundation of the existing organisation of auxiliary land forces. It was in support of this measure that the Duke of Wellington made his last speech in the House of Lords. The Militia of the United Kingdom have had to pass through a good deal of official discouragement and popular ridicule, but all practical

soldiers recognise how fully the force has justified the Duke's ANS. 1852.  
forecast of their value.\*

"Take the battle of Waterloo: look at the number of British troops at that battle. I can tell your lordships that in that battle there were sixteen battalions of Hanoverian Militia just formed, under the command of a nobleman, late the Hanoverian Ambassador here, Count Kielmansegge, who behaved most admirably. . . . I say, my lords, that however much I admire highly disciplined troops, and most especially British disciplined troops, I tell you you must not suppose that others cannot become so too; and no doubt if you begin with the formation of militia corps under this Act of Parliament, they will in time become what their predecessors in the militia were: and if ever they do become what their predecessors in the militia were, you may rely on it they will perform all the services they may be required to perform. My lords, I recommend you to adopt this measure as the commencement of a completion of a peace establishment. It will give you a constitutional force: it may not be at first, or for some time, everything we could desire, but by degrees it will become what you want, an efficient auxiliary force to the regular army."

Brief as was the life of the Derby Ministry, it outlasted the days of him whom Disraeli aptly described as "the sovereign master of duty." On Monday, 13th September, the Duke was in excellent health and spirits, took a walk through the grounds of Walmer Castle, entered his stable and spoke to his groom about the horses. On returning to the castle he wrote a note to his niece, Lady Westmorland, telling her that he would meet her at six o'clock the following evening on her arrival at Dover. He dined in company with his son and daughter-in-law, Lord and Lady Charles Wellesley, and went to bed about ten o'clock. His servant called him next morning shortly after six, but the Duke did not rise at once as was

Death of Wellington.

\* A week later he moved for a return of the troops carried in the ill-fated Birkenhead transport.

Æt. 83. his custom, and the man returned at seven. About what followed there have been printed as many conflicting accounts as there have been writers. The following is from a letter written two days later by the Hon. Mrs. Boyle to Lady de Ros:—

“I think you may like to hear all Lady Westmorland told Henry \* last night as to the last days of the Duke’s life. She had given him a rendezvous at Dover the day before yesterday, and when his servant went into his room at seven, he said to him he should want the carriage to go to Dover. On the servant going again into his room soon after, he said, ‘I feel very ill, send for the apothecary.’ These were the last words he spoke. They think he was conscious for some time after, for he followed them with his eyes about the room, and motioned that he should like to sit in the armchair into which he was moved, and where he remained. Expresses were sent for doctors, but all were out of town, and M’Arthur † attended him to the last. There seemed to have been no pain, and when Lady Westmorland came, just after all was over, she went into his room, and her impression was that he looked as she had often seen him, having a little sleep in his chair. The day before he appeared quite as usual, and was playing with his grandchildren the evening before.”

Such was the peaceful end.

“O motus animarum! atque o certamina tanta!  
Pulveris exigui jactus.”

After a life so full of accomplishment—after a service long and devoted—it avails not to dwell on the closing scene. Of the obsequies which followed, the departed, had he had the ordering of them, would have dispensed with the pomp of a simple grave, a prayer, a volley over the sod, such had been the Duke’s parting with many a tired comrade in the field; we may rest assured that he wished no more elaborate ceremony for himself. But the nation would not forego the utmost tribute of reverence. The Queen, setting aside the

\* The Duke’s nephew, afterwards first Earl Cowley.

† The doctor at Walmer.

precedent of Nelson, for whom the Sovereign himself decreed ANN. 1852. a public funeral, decreed that the Duke's remains should be guarded until Parliament should meet in November, in order that "such honours should not appear to emanate from the Crown alone, and that the two Houses of Parliament should have an opportunity, by their previous sanction, of stamping the proposed ceremony with increased solemnity, and of associating themselves with her Majesty in paying honour to the memory of one whom no Englishman can name without pride and sorrow." The Army was ordered to wear mourning in the usual way, with the addition that officers on duty were to wear a black crape scarf over the right shoulder, black crape over the sash, and black gloves. The funeral took place on 18th November, all the European powers, even France, sending their representatives—except Austria, whose uniform had recently been insulted in London on the person of Marshal Hainau. But Wellington was a Field-Marshal of Austria, and although no Austrian representative accompanied the remains to their last resting-place beside those of Nelson in St. Paul's Cathedral, a funeral parade was held in Vienna in presence of the Emperor, and twelve batteries sounded the requiem of the great commander.

Few things are more wearisome than unstinted panegyric; yet was there never an occasion which justified the most ample tribute of praise of a public servant and of mourning for his loss. In all the abundance of speeches and obituary notices at the time, perhaps nothing more felicitous can be found than the parallel drawn by Mr. Disraeli—the leader, since the death of Lord George Bentinck in 1848, of the revolt against the Duke's authority in Parliament—when he moved the vote for the funeral expenses. Recalling another soldier-statesman, Stulich, the great Captain and Minister of the Emperor Honorius—"Who," he asked, "can ever forget that classic and venerable head, white with time

Æt. 83. and radiant with glory—*Stilichonis apex, et cognita fulsi-  
canities!*" \*

Several years before, the following lines had appeared in  
the *Morning Post* over the signature of B. Disraeli:—

*"To the Duke of Wellington.*

"Not only that thy puissant arm could bind  
The tyrant of a world, and, conquering fate,  
Enfranchise Europe, do I deem thee great ;  
But that in all thy actions do I find  
Exact propriety : no gusts of mind  
Fitful and wild, but that continuous state  
Of ordered impulse mariners await  
In some benignant and enriching wind,  
The breath ordained by Nature. Thy calm mien  
Recalls old Rome, as much as thy high deed ;  
Duty thine only idol, and serene  
When all are troubled ; in the utmost need  
Prescient ; thy country's servant ever seen,  
Yet sovereign of thyself whate'er may speed."

\* Claudian's allusion to Stilicho's abundant white hair.

## INDEX.

- ABERDEEN**, Earl of, in Wellington's Cabinet, ii. 212; approaches Peel to effect reconciliation with Wellington, ii. 292; Wellington's letter regarding Church reform, ii. 294; in Peel's first Cabinet, ii. 304; opinion on Wellington's action regarding the Canada Bill, ii. 331; supports Peel's Corn Duties policy, ii. 340; declines to form a Ministry, ii. 383
- Abrantès**, Duc d'. *See* Junot
- Adour**, passage of the, i. 363
- Albert**, Prince, Wellington's proposal regarding Command-in-Chief, ii. 370; his reply, ii. 371
- Albuera**, battle of, i. 234
- Alexander**, Emperor, sends joint appeal with Napoleon to George III., i. 129; Wellington's opinion of, i. 386; his designs on Poland, i. 387; alliance with Murat, i. 388; subsidy asked from Great Britain, i. 389; his dislike of Louis XVIII., ii. 100; invites Wellington to preside over the Commission of Arbitration and Finance, ii. 110, 111; suggests settlement of International disputes by International Royal Conferences, ii. 120; his views at the Congress of Vienna, 1822, ii. 171
- Allan**, William, enters Verona as Wellington's courier, ii. 171, 172
- Almeida**, capitulation to the French, i. 191; escape of French garrison, i. 232, 233; defences repaired by the Allies, i. 248
- "Ancient abuses," Wellington's views on, ii. 149
- Anglesey**, Lord (Lord Uxbridge), son's letter on transport ships, i. 18; Wellington's opinion of his action at Genappe, ii. 40, 41; asks Wellington's plans, ii. 50; with Lord E. Somerset's brigade at Waterloo, ii. 71 *and note*, 75; Wellington's comment on his loss of a leg, ii. 89, 90; Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, ii. 212; advises concession, ii. 221; deprived of office, ii. 224, 225; anger at treatment by Wellington, ii. 240
- Angoulême**, Duc d', requests Wellington's support for Royalist party, i. 362, 368
- Arbuthnot**, Mr., approaches Wellington's party for the Opposition, ii. 252; efforts to reconcile Peel and Wellington, ii. 292, 293, 330-332, 372; makes Apsley House his London residence, ii. 297; death of, ii. 372
- Arbuthnot**, Mrs., death of, ii. 296; Wellington's attachment to, ii. 375
- Argenton**, Adjutant-Major d', seeks secret interview with Wellesley, i. 138, 139 *note*
- Army**, British. (*For particular officers and regiments, see their titles.*)
- Arms**, Wellington's conservatism in, ii. 136, 137

Cavalry, deficiency of, in Peninsular War, i. 106, 112, 115, 145, 217, 225; reconnoitring admired by Marbot, i. 216, 217; disorder and excessive speed of, i. 217, ii. 71, 137-139; inadequate drill of, i. 217 *and note*; Wellington's views on a peace establishment, ii. 109

Confidence in Wellington, i. 192, 224, ii. 124

Equipment and dress, Wellington's views on, i. 318 *note*, ii. 135

Health of, in Peninsular War, i. 112; fever, i. 244; improvement, i. 249

Infantry, efficiency of, ii. 91, 109, 137

Names of regiments, i. 114 *note*

National defence, ii. 335, 356-365

Non-commissioned officers, Wellington's opinion of, ii. 125-127; drunkenness of, ii. 126

Officers—

“Croakers,” Wellington's opinion of, i. 192 *note*

Incomes, average, ii. 186

Inefficiency and low standard of professional attainment, i. 9, 13, 92, ii. 121-123, 127; improvement shown in Canadian campaign, ii. 319 *note*

Mufti, fashion of, set by Wellington, ii. 125

Promotion by patronage, i. 206, ii. 122, 200 *note*; by seniority, ii. 123

Rewards and honours, ii. 134 *and note*

Snoking, Wellington's G.O. against, ii. 124

Rank-and-file—

Artillery, misbehaviour of, at Waterloo, ii. 74-5 *note*

Behaviour in action commended by Wellington, i. 117, 144, 165, 197, 215, 242, 324, 335, 359 (not in action), ii. 91

Desertions in the Peninsula, i. 254 *and note*, 347

Drunkenness, prevalence of, i. 209, 253, 262, 343, ii. 129

Duration of service, ii. 133, 134

Mutiny in the Guards, 1820, ii. 153

Pigtails abolished, i. 105 *note*, ii. 136

Plucky spirit of, i. 313

Plundering, prevalence of, i. 144, 145, 169, 200, 225, ii. 130, 301, 324, 341-343

Punishment, corporal, ii. 127-133

Quitting the ranks at Waterloo, ii. 78 *and note*

Rewards and medals, ii. 134 *and note*, 135

Wellington's opinion of, ii. 129

care for, i. 218, ii. 133; unpopularity amongst, i. 200, 201, ii. 124, 127

Reputation of, in 1807-8, i. 86, 91, 92; prestige acquired under Wellington, i. 238, 253

Supplies, scarcity of, i. 144, 158, 162, 169, 170

Transport service, deficiency of, i. 101, 106, 158, 297, 306

Assaye, battle of, i. 56-60

Astor, Colonel, dnels and death of, i. 27, 28 *note*

Austria, alliance with Prussia against France, 1793, i. 10; Congress of Vienna, 1815, i. 385-389, 391, 392, 397; subsidised by Great Britain, i. 389; struggle against Murat, i. 392, 395; Congress of Vienna (Verona), 1822, ii. 166 *and note*, 169-172; not represented at Wellington's funeral, ii. 387

BADAJOS, invested by Soult, 27th January, 1811, i. 211; surrenders, 11th March, i. 212; besieged by Beresford, 4th May, i. 233; re-invested, 25th May, i. 236; siege raised, 12th



- eninsula, i.  
 nce of, i.  
 i. 129  
 133, 134  
 s, 1820, ii.  
 05 *note*, ii.  
 e of, i. 141,  
 i. 130, 301,  
 ii. 127-133  
 Waterloo,  
 i. 134 *and*  
 of, ii. 129;  
 133; un-  
 t, i. 200,  
 7-8, i. 86,  
 ired under  
 3  
 144, 158,  
 ciency of,  
 06  
 death of, i.  
 sia against  
 ongress of  
 9, 391, 392.  
 Britain, i.  
 Murat, i.  
 of Vienna  
*and note*,  
 ed at Wel-  
 June, i. 237; besieged and stormed,  
 March, 1812, i. 256-262  
 Baird, Major-General (afterwards  
 Lieut.-Gen. Sir David Baird), rivalry  
 with Wellesley, i. 29, 30, 36;  
 Seringapatam stormed by, i. 34;  
 ordered to attack Sultanpettah, but  
 recalled, i. 33 *and note*; Wellesley's  
 opinion of, i. 36 *note*; appointed to  
 command force for Egypt, i. 42;  
 information supplied by Wellesley,  
 i. 45  
 Bathurst, Lord, at War Office, i. 248;  
 suggestion for Wellington's armorial  
 bearings, i. 293; reproached by  
 Marquess Wellesley for the failure  
 at Burgos, i. 297; confidence in  
 Wellington, i. 306; despatch re-  
 garding proposal to give Wellington  
 a German command, i. 323; heated  
 correspondence with Wellington re-  
 garding naval support, i. 339; Wel-  
 lington's despondent letter on arrival  
 at Brussels, i. 393; instructs Wel-  
 lington to leave Paris, ii. 118;  
 Wellington's reply, ii. 119; tribute  
 to Wellington, ii. 120, 121; refuses  
 to hold office under Canning, ii. 198;  
 joins Wellington's Cabinet, ii. 211,  
 212  
 Bedford, Duke of, apprehensions of  
 despotism or anarchy, ii. 299  
 Belgium (*see also* Brussels), Napo-  
 leonic sympathies of troops from,  
 i. 393; revolts from union with  
 Holland, ii. 349  
 Bentham, Jeremy, censures Wellington  
 for duelling, ii. 236  
 Bentinck, Lord George, Wellington's  
 indignation at his desertion of Peel,  
 ii. 353  
 Bentinck, Lord William, expected by  
 Wellington from Sicily, i. 273, 274;  
 hampers Wellington by change of  
 plan, i. 278, 288; arrives on east  
 coast of Spain, i. 338; receives in-  
 structions from Wellington, i. 347  
 Beresford, General, Portuguese Army  
 reformed by, i. 133 *and note*, 136,  
 175, 245; despatched to Lamego, i.  
 140; delayed in blockading Badajos,  
 i. 217; captures Campo Mayor and  
 Olivenca, ordered by Wellington to  
 besiege Badajos, i. 223; begins the  
 siege, i. 233; despondency at Al-  
 buera, i. 234; loyalty to Wellington,  
 i. 253 *note*; begins third siege of  
 Badajos, i. 256; wounded at Sala-  
 manca, i. 284, 287; Wellington's  
 despatch to, regarding siege of  
 Badajos, i. 296; Wellington's trust  
 in, i. 310; recalled to Lisbon, i. 347;  
 admirable generalship under Wel-  
 lington at the Nive, i. 356; enters  
 Bordeaux, i. 369; recalled, i. 369;  
 visited by Wellington in a dangerous  
 position at Toulouse, i. 370 *and note*;  
 created a peer, i. 381; writes an  
 account of Waterloo, ii. 90; his  
 superiority, ii. 122; Wellington's  
 reply to his complaints about false  
 reports, ii. 124; joins Wellington's  
 Cabinet, ii. 212; mentioned inci-  
 dentally, i. 142, 350, 359, 360, 363,  
 364, 365  
 Berthier, Marshal, extracts from de-  
 spatches to Marmont compared with  
 replies, i. 264-270; struck off roll of  
 marshals, i. 398; succeeded as chief  
 of the staff by Soult, i. 399; Wel-  
 lington's estimate of, i. 400 *note*.  
 Bessières, Marshal, ordered to co-  
 operate with Masséna, i. 223, 224;  
 insubordination of, i. 224, 228; in-  
 humane edict of, i. 231; incidentally  
 mentioned, i. 226, 240  
 Bevan, Colonel, Wellington's unfair  
 treatment of, i. 233, 325  
 Bexley, Lord, resigns from Canning's  
 Cabinet and withdraws resignation,  
 ii. 198 *and note*; his resignation of  
 the Chancellorship of the Duchy  
 of Lancaster proposed by Wellin-  
 gton, ii. 212  
 Blücher, Prince, force under command  
 of, i. 401; comes to an understand-

- ing with Wellington, ii. 1; disposition of forces, ii. 2; General Bourmont coldly received by, ii. 8; Wellington's letter to, regarding disposition of forces, ii. 19; visited by Wellington at Ligny, ii. 19; narrow escape in cavalry charge, ii. 20; defeated at Ligny, ii. 26; retires to Wavre, ii. 29, 37; staunchness and loyalty to Wellington, ii. 29, 45, 87, 88; joins Bülow's 4th Corps, and directs attack on French right, ii. 77, 79; meets Wellington, ii. 87; Wellington's tribute to, ii. 88; pursues the French, ii. 88; joins Wellington in declining suspension of hostilities, ii. 99; severe intentions regarding France checked by Wellington, ii. 101, 102
- Bourmont, General, desertion from Napoleon, and reception by Blücher, ii. 7, 8
- Brennier, General, taken prisoner at Vimereio, i. 116; borrows £500 from Wellington on leaving London, i. 233 *note*; escapes from Almeida, i. 233
- Brougham, Lord, Lord Chancellor in Grey's Ministry, with title of Lord Brougham and Vaux, ii. 258; urges special creation of peers, ii. 274; circulates unfounded report on fall of Melbourne Ministry, ii. 301 *note*; requested by Wellington to deliver up the seal, ii. 302; extreme views held by, ii. 306, 307; sarcastic comment on Wellington's action in Opposition, ii. 317; opposes Bill for suspending constitution of Canada, ii. 319; incidentally mentioned, ii. 244, 256, 321
- Brussels, state of affairs before Waterloo, ii. 9, 10; panic and confusion in, ii. 30-32, 36; not Wellington's base, ii. 47, 48; "la vieille garde," ii. 87 *note*; conspiracy against Wellington among refugees in, ii. 113
- Buckingham, Duke of, advances coldly received by Wellington, ii. 190, 191; Wellington's explanation regarding the duel, ii. 236; Wellington complains of lack of support from, 300; Wellington's complaints to regarding House of Commons, i. 294; extreme views of, disapproved by Wellington, ii. 294, 306, 307; joins Peel's second Cabinet, ii. 333; resignation, ii. 334
- Bülow, General von, announces to Wellington his arrival at Chapelle Saint Lambert, ii. 66 *and note*; Napoleon's anxiety regarding, i. 73, 77
- Buonaparte, Napoleon, rapid promotion of, i. 6; message to Tipu, i. 27; treatment of Spain and Portugal, 1808, i. 93-95; makes Joseph King of Spain, i. 95; comments and despatches on proceedings in the Peninsula, i. 119, 165, 193, 170, 171, 180 *note*, 210, 211, 223, 232, 254, 263-270 (parallel extracts), 287, 288; appreciation of Wellington, i. 128; address to army after Wellington's Vimereio campaign and joint appeal with Russia to King George i. 129; enters Madrid, i. 130; importance assigned to protection of communications, i. 137; domestic affairs, i. 182; celebrations on birth of son, i. 221; orders Bessières to support Masséna, i. 223; reported intention of visiting the Peninsula, 1811, i. 240; makes King Joseph cancel his abdication, i. 254; Russian disasters, i. 306; withdraws best troops from Spain, i. 307; armistice of Plesswig, i. 313; victories of Lützen and Bautzen and appointment of Soult in Spain, i. 329; disaster at Grossbeeren, etc., August 1813, i. 351; defeat at Leipsig ("l'affaire est finie"), i. 356; treaty with Ferdinand VII., i. 361, 362; abdication, i. 372; escapes from Elba, i. 389; significance of escape under-

- ii. 190, 191;  
 n regarding  
 nton com-  
 rt from, ii.  
 nplaints to,  
 mmons, ii.  
 disapproved  
 306, 307;  
 net, ii. 333;  
  
 nounces to  
 at Chapelle  
 and note;  
 garding, ii.  
  
 d promotion  
 tipú, i. 27;  
 d Portugal,  
 osephe King  
 ats and de-  
 gs in the  
 3, 170, 171.  
 232, 254,  
 s), 287, 288;  
 on, i. 128;  
 Wellin-  
 and joint  
 ng George,  
 130; im-  
 otectioe of  
 ; domestic  
 ns ou hirth  
 Bessières to  
 ; reported  
 Peninsula,  
 ing Joseph  
 254; Rus-  
 withdraws  
 n, i. 307;  
 313; vic-  
 en and ap-  
 ain, i. 329;  
 ce., August,  
 at Leipsig  
 356; treaty  
 361, 362;  
 from Elba,  
 ape under-  
  
 rated by Wellington, i. 389, 391;  
 enters Paris, i. 392; his strong posi-  
 tion and military arrangements, i.  
 396-401; skilful manœuvres and  
 proclamation to soldiers, ii. 3; plan  
 of campaign, ii. 4, 5 *and note*; in-  
 terference with D'Erlon detrimental  
 to Ney, ii. 21-23 *and note*, 26, 27,  
 38; habit of reckoning odds, ii. 29  
*and note*, 58, 66, 67; health, ii. 38,  
 39; visits Ligny, ii. 39; activity in  
 pursuing British, ii. 41; rides round  
 his advanced posts, ii. 57; breakfast  
 party, 18th June, ii. 58, 59; contro-  
 versy regarding despatch to Grouchy,  
 ii. 60-62; arrangements and anxiety  
 on the field, ii. 64-67, 73, 76-81, 83,  
 84; despatch from Grouchy from  
 Walheim, ii. 73; steadfastness, ii. 84,  
 85; leaves the field, ii. 86; second  
 abdication and surrender, ii. 98;  
 legacy to Cantillon, ii. 118  
 Burgos, siege of, i. 294-296; siege  
 raised, i. 296, 297; abandoned by  
 the French, i. 312  
 Burgoyne, Sir John, Wellington's  
 letter to, on national defences, ii.  
 361 *and note*, 364  
 Burrard, Sir Harry, Wellesley's de-  
 spatches to, i. 107, 108; arrives in  
 Portugal, i. 112; countermands  
 Wellington's instructions, i. 113;  
 action after Vimeiro, i. 116, 124;  
 career damaged, i. 125  
 Busaco, battle of, i. 194-198  
 Byron, vindictive verses ou Cintra  
 Convention by, i. 122  
  
 CANADA, Rebellion, ii. 317, 318 *and*  
*note*, 319 *and note*; Peel and Wel-  
 lington opposed on question of  
 Union, ii. 329; Wellington's attitude  
 towards bill in the Lords, ii. 331  
 Canning, George, appointed to Foreign  
 Office, i. 81; Danish expedition, i.  
 85, 86; loyalty to Spain, i. 130;  
 disapproval of Sir John Moore's  
 appointment to command, i. 131  
*note*; intimacy with Wellesley, i.  
 132; rivalry with Castlereagh, i.  
 132, 151, 178; advises concentra-  
 tion in the Peninsula, i. 151; Wel-  
 lington's tribute to, i. 179; British  
 Minister at Lisbon, i. 395; resigna-  
 tion on Bill of Pains and Penalties,  
 ii. 157; movement for recall of, ii.  
 160-163, 166-168; Wellington's  
 esteem for, ii. 161, 172; at Foreign  
 Office, 1822, ii. 168; foreign policy  
 of, ii. 171, 249 *and note*; views on  
 the Roman Catholic claims, ii. 175,  
 189; Russian feeling towards, ii.  
 181; rupture with Wellington  
 feared by King, ii. 182; causes of  
 Cabinet hostility to, ii. 188; dis-  
 trusted by Wellington, ii. 189;  
 quarrel with Wellington, ii. 191,  
 192, 195-205; letter to Lord Liver-  
 pool about Wellington, ii. 192;  
 incident of the detained letter, ii.  
 194; instructed to form a Ministry,  
 ii. 195-197; in favour with King,  
 ii. 188-190; supported by Press, ii.  
 201; death, ii. 204; compared with  
 Wellington by Duke of Cumber-  
 land, ii. 245; Greek policy, ii. 181,  
 249  
 Cantillon, attempts assassination of  
 Wellington, ii. 117; Napoleon's  
 legacy to, ii. 118  
 Caroline, Queen, popular sympathy  
 with, ii. 145; King seeks divorce,  
 and prohibits her name appearing  
 in Prayer-book, ii. 151; returns to  
 England, ii. 152, 153; negotiations  
 with, ii. 154, 155; Bill of Divorce  
 introduced, ii. 155; trial, ii. 156,  
 157; annuity voted, ii. 157; at  
 coronation of George IV., ii. 159;  
 death, ii. 160  
 Castlereagh, Lord, advises Wellesley  
 to enter Parliament, i. 79; appointed  
 to War Office, i. 81; persuades  
 Cabinet to reinforce Wellesley, i.  
 103; incident of the levée, i. 123;

- directs Sir H. Burrard and Sir H. Dalrymple to consult Wellesley, i. 126; Sir John Moore expresses misgivings to, i. 131 *note*; George III.'s letter regarding Peninsular expedition of 1809, i. 134; Wellesley's complaints, i. 155 *note*; supports Wellesley, i. 125, 134; rivalry with Canning, i. 132, 151, 178; expedition to Holland planned by, i. 151-153 *and note*; explanation to Wellesley about reinforcements, i. 154; confidence and friendship for Wellesley, ii. 163-165; temporary coldness, ii. 165; his principles adopted by Wellesley at Congress of Vienna, ii. 169-171; Wellington's tribute to, i. 179; at Foreign Office, i. 247; proposes French Embassy to Wellington, i. 378; at Congress of Vienna, i. 385-388; receives news of Waterloo, ii. 97; British Minister in Paris, ii. 101 *note*; harmony with Wellington, ii. 108; unpopularity of his coercion policy, ii. 146; illness and death, ii. 163-165; Liverpool's despatch on British eagerness for peace, i. 390; Wellington's despatch on Napoleon's escape from Elba, i. 389; on desirability of restoring Louis XVIII., i. 395, 396
- Cathcart, Lord, Wellesley appointed to command brigade under, 1806, i. 76; invasion of Denmark, i. 86-88
- Catholic Emancipation. *See* Roman Catholic disabilities
- Cato Street plot, ii. 149, 150
- Chapman, Captain, work on the lines of Torres Vedras, i. 201; superiority of, ii. 122
- Chartists, Wellington's precautionary measures against, ii. 368-370
- Cintra, Convention of, i. 118, 119, 121
- Ciudad Rodrigo, siege and surrender to Masséna, 1810, i. 189; blockaded by the Allies, 8th August, 1811, i. 240; blockade resumed, i. 244; siege and capture, January, 1812, 249-253; festivities at, i. 303; Napoleon's despatches regarding, i. 264, 266, 269
- Clarendon, Lord, caricatures Wellington's summary methods, ii. 230
- Clausel, General, at Salamanca, i. 284, 285; Wellington's admiration of his retreat, i. 289, 290; concentrates on the Douro, i. 294; appointed to command Peninsular Army of the North, i. 308; summoned to support Joseph, i. 313; arrives to find Vitoria lost, i. 326; escapes to France, i. 327; entrapped at Sorauren, i. 335; withdraws across the Bidassoa, i. 345; at Ascain and Ametz, i. 353, 354; at the Nivelle, i. 354, 356; at the Nive, i. 360; mentioned incidentally, i. 337, 362
- Clive. *See under* India
- Cole, General the Hon. Lowry, wounded at Salamanca, i. 284, 287; made K.B.—festivities at Ciudad Rodrigo, i. 303; mentioned incidentally, i. 195, 330-332, 335, 336, 344, 355, 365
- Colville, General the Hon. C., at Ciudad Rodrigo, i. 242; at Badajoz, i. 255; at Waterloo, ii. 42
- Congreve rockets, Wellington's opinion of, i. 363 *note*, ii. 136
- Connaught, Duke of, Wellington's sponsor to, i. 3
- Conyngham, Lady, relations with George IV., ii. 161, 246, 247
- Conyngham, Lord, proposed appointment as Lord Chamberlain, ii. 167
- Corn Laws, Wellington's protest against Huskisson's statements in Liverpool, ii. 187, 188; Wellington defeats the Government measure, 1827, ii. 204; Wellington concerned for home producer, ii. 217; proposals by Peel and others, ii. 334; Wellington opposed to suspension, ii. 340; repeal proposed by Peel,

- 348; Wellington's speech on bill in the Lords, ii. 352
- Corrupt boroughs, ii. 218
- Cowley, Lord (Henry Wellesley), appointed private secretary to Lord Mornington, i. 22; on committee for pensioning Tipu's family, i. 38; sympathetic advice to Arthur Wellesley, i. 46; Wellington's copious correspondence with, i. 245; Wellington's despatch regarding Spanish troops, i. 299; Wellington's letter on Napoleon's doings after the escape, i. 391; Minister at Vienna, ii. 220
- Crauford, General Robert, remarkable march effected by, i. 166; disregards orders at Almeida, i. 190; rash skirmishing at Busaco, i. 194, 195; repulses Ney, i. 197, 198; goes on leave, i. 206; at Fuentes de Oñoro, i. 226; disobeys orders at the Agueda, i. 243, 244; killed at Ciudad Rodrigo, i. 253 *note*
- Cuesta, General, incapacity of, i. 145, 156-159, 163, 167, 168
- Cumberland, Duke of, absent during discussion of Catholic Emancipation, ii. 226; return and rupture with Wellington, ii. 227; opposition to Catholic Emancipation, ii. 245 *and note*
- DALRYMPLE, Lady Hamilton, account of the Brussels ball, ii. 13; account of confusion in Brussels after Quatre-Bras, ii. 36
- Dalrymple, Sir Hew, co-operation of, requested by Junta of Seville, i. 96; appointed to chief command in the Peninsula, i. 104; supersedes Sir H. Burrard, i. 117; Convention of Cintra, i. 118, 119; political settlement of the Peninsula, i. 120, 121; imputation on Wellesley at Court of Inquiry, i. 124; career damaged, i. 125
- Delaborde, General, first practised modern tactician encountered by Wellington, i. 111
- Denmark, invasion of, i. 85-88; the Marquis Romana's escape from, i. 147, 148
- Derby, Earl of (Lord Stanley), resigns from Lord Grey's Ministry, ii. 301; declines to join the Peel Ministry, ii. 303; indignation against Brougham, ii. 317; at the Foreign Office in Peel's second Cabinet, ii. 333; determines to resign on Corn Law question, ii. 341, 342; Wellington proposes Conservative leadership to, ii. 349-351; attempts unsuccessfully to form a Ministry, ii. 382, 383; forms a Ministry in 1851, ii. 384
- Dhoondia Waugh, insurrection and death of, i. 39-41
- "Dirty Half-Hundred, the," Wellington's opinion of, i. 114
- Disraeli, Benjamin, letter to Wellington, ii. 305; advice to W. H. Smith, ii. 337; violent opposition to Peel, ii. 348; tribute to Wellington, ii. 387, 388
- Donro, Baron, Wellesley created, i. 171
- Douro, Marquess of, relations with his father, ii. 273, 372
- Douro, passage of, and combat at the seminary, i. 141-143; recrossed by Allies, i. 299
- Durham, Lord, dislike of Wellington, ii. 250; advises special creation of peers, ii. 265; given full powers in Canada, ii. 317; his failure there, ii. 319
- EGYPT, Wellesley not of rank to command expeditionary force to, i. 42
- Eldon, Lord, opposed to Canning joining Ministry, ii. 168; opposed to Catholic Emancipation, ii. 174, 233; opposed to Corn Law repeal, ii. 187, 215; leaves the Cabinet, ii.

- 198; King George's letter to, ii. 237
- Erskine, Sir William, Wellington's disapproval of his appointment, i. 206, 207
- Ferdinand**, King of Spain, Napoleon's proposed treaty with, i. 362; resumes crown of Spain, i. 379; Wellington's diplomatic mission to, i. 379, 383; Wellington dissuades Louis XVIII. from attacking, ii. 160
- Fletcher, Lieut.-Colonel Richard, lines of Torres Vedras constructed for Wellington by, i. 185, 201; directs siege works at Badajos, i. 257; killed at San Sebastian, i. 341; his superiority, ii. 122
- Fouché, won over to Royalist side, ii. 100; his career, and Wellington's estimate of his influence, ii. 103, 104
- France—  
Army—  
Conscription originated by Jourdan, i. 398; its continuance deprecated by Davout, i. 399
- Manœuvring, system of, i. 98 *note*, 222, 223; superiority in, i. 279, ii. 64
- Peninsular War, sufferings and privations in, i. 143, 144, 203, 210, 212, 294 *note*, 353; licence allowed, i. 201, 203; treatment of inhabitants, i. 203, 215 *and note*, 216; discord among generals and officers, i. 137-140, 212, 213, 219, 220 *and note*, 254, 289
- Requisitioning, system of, i. 102, 137
- Waterloo, dress of Guards at, ii. 63 *note*
- Egypt, position in, i. 27, 42
- India, influence in, in 1798, i. 23, 27; in 1802, i. 51
- Louis XVIII. *See that title*
- Revolution of 1830, ii. 249
- Frederick, Prince of Orange, Hanoverian Corps under, in the Netherlands, i. 389; commands 1st Corps under Wellington, i. 402; absent in Brussels during attempt on Quatre Bras, ii. 7, 8, 12-14; struck down at Waterloo, ii. 77; "la vieille garde" in Brussels devoted to, ii. 87 *note*; implicated in conspiracy against Wellington, ii. 113, 113 *note*; Wellington's letter to, on becoming Prime Minister, ii. 210; reverse in the struggle of 1830, ii. 249; mentioned incidentally, ii. 19, 21, 24, 42, 46, 55
- Freyre, General, effect of Wellington's supervision on, i. 344; at Birnie's fords of the Bidassoa, i. 348, 349; Wellington supplies food to troops of, i. 354; recalled by Wellington to France, i. 364; supports Beresford at Toulouse, i. 371
- Fuentes de Oñoro, battle of, i. 226, 228
- GAZAN**, Madame, Wellington's account of lost child incident, i. 322
- George III., cordial reception of Wellington after Convention of Cintra, i. 123; Napoleon's appeal to, i. 129; letter to Castlereagh regarding Peninsular expedition of 1809, i. 134; madness of, ii. 144; death of, ii. 151; hostility to Roman Catholic claims, ii. 175, 176; Wellington's appreciation of, ii. 247
- George IV.—  
*As Prince Regent*, receives news of Waterloo, ii. 97, 98; instructs Wellington to leave Paris, ii. 113  
*As King*—  
Canning in favour with, ii. 188-190  
Catholic Emancipation, views on, ii. 176-179, 180, 225, 237; assent to measures of, ii. 226; withdraw



- assent, ii. 228; renews assent, ii. 229
- Coronation of, ii. 159 *and note*
- Illness and death of, ii. 246-248
- Liverpool, Lord, persuaded to remain in office by, ii. 187, 188
- Queen Caroline, separation from, ii. 145; desires divorce from, ii. 151; prohibits reference to, in Prayer-book, ii. 151, 155; Wellington's part in the proceedings, ii. 157
- Scandalous life and unpopularity of, ii. 145, 152, 155, 161
- Wellington, relations with, ii. 157, 158; visits field of Waterloo with, ii. 160; letters to, ii. 167, 168; audience with, regarding Spanish Colonies, ii. 174; explains Canning's Russian proposal to, ii. 182; confers Command-in-Chief on, ii. 185; discusses the situation with, ii. 191; instructs him to form a Ministry, ii. 210; influenced by, ii. 244, 245; estimate formed by, ii. 247, 248
- Germany and Germans—
- Command of Allied forces in Central Europe offered to Wellington, 1813, i. 323; of Confederate armies, 1840, ii. 332
- Cruelty of, in Danish War, i. 87, 88
- Hanoverian Militia, Wellington's praise of, ii. 385
- King's German Legion, fine cavalry charge by, i. 286; veterans in Wellington's army at Waterloo, i. 403, ii. 43
- Nassau brigade joins Wellington's army, i. 361, ii. 43 *note*; repulsed at Hongoumont, ii. 65; fires on Wellington, ii. 43
- Saxon contingent under Wellington, mounting, 2nd May, i. 403
- Gladstone, W. E., in Peel's second Administration, ii. 334; succeeds from the Government, ii. 339; at the Colonial Office, ii. 343
- Gneisenau distrusts Wellington, ii. 44, 45; pursues French after Waterloo, ii. 88
- Goderich, Lord (Mr. Robinson), Wellington's disapproval of proposal to make him Prime Minister, ii. 195; offers Wellington Command-in-Chief, ii. 206; Wellington's view of Government of, ii. 209
- Gordon Highlanders, raising of the regiment, ii. 11 *note*
- Gordon, the Hon. Alexander, accompanies Wellington after Ciudad Rodrigo ball, i. 303; accompanies Wellington to Ligny, ii. 19; sent to Prussian head-quarters, ii. 29; sent to reconnoitre from Quatre-Bras, ii. 37; laid in Wellington's tent, ii. 88; death of, ii. 92; superiority of, ii. 122
- Goulbourne, Mr., in Wellington's Cabinet, ii. 212; in Peel's first Cabinet, ii. 304; Wellington's advice regarding increase of artillery officers, ii. 360
- Graham, General, on sick leave during Salamanca campaign, i. 282 *note*, 309; Wellington's reliance on, i. 310; advises Wellington not to cross the Ebro, i. 313; at Vitoria, i. 316, 317, 319, 320; invests San Sebastian, i. 326, 328; resumes siege of San Sebastian, i. 339; Wellington's instructions after capture of San Sebastian, i. 342 *note*; allows General Rey the honours of war, i. 343; second absence on sick leave, i. 347 *note*; created Lord Lynedoch, i. 241 *note*, 381; defeated at Bergen-op-Zoom, i. 382; his superiority, ii. 122
- Graham, Sir James, urges special creation of peers, ii. 265; leaves Lord Grey's Ministry, ii. 301; fears open rupture between Wellington and Peel, ii. 329, 330; Home Secretary in Peel's second Cabinet, ii. 333; supports Peel's Corn Duty policy, ii. 340
- Greville, Charles, Wellington's remark

- to, regarding Perceval, i. 154 *note*; estimate of Wellington's attitude, ii. 295; notes Wellington's failing powers, ii. 332; notes deference of Wellington's colleagues to him, ii. 336; comments on Wellington's inattention to his family, ii. 337
- Grey, Lord, Wellington's reply to proposal of Reform by, ii. 253, 254; forms a Ministry, ii. 258; carries the Reform Bill, ii. 269; Wellington's attitude towards Government of, ii. 274-276; resignation of, ii. 301; declines to join Russell's Cabinet, ii. 342
- Grouchy, Marshal, appointed commander-in-chief of cavalry, i. 398, 401; age of, i. 401 *note*; given command of right wing, ii. 7; battle of Ligny, ii. 21; instructed to pursue Prussians, ii. 40; forces of, ii. 43; first despatch to Napoleon from Gembloux, ii. 57, 66; absence from Waterloo deplored by Soult, ii. 59; controversy as to responsibility of, for defeat of Waterloo, ii. 60-62; hears the guns of Waterloo, ii. 61, 65; Napoleon's despatch to, ii. 66; 11.30 a.m. despatch to Napoleon received at 3 p.m., ii. 73; ordered to march on Laon, ii. 98; meets Wellington at dinner, ii. 115
- Guarda, capture of, i. 220
- Gurwood, Colonel Wellesley's correspondence with, i. 66, 67 *and note*, 404, 405
- HARDINGE**, Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry, met by Wellington at Ligny, ii. 19; Wellington's second at Winchelsea dnel, ii. 233-235; part taken by, in reconciling Wellington and Peel, ii. 290 *note*, 293, 309; in Peel's first Cabinet, ii. 304; presented to Soult by Wellington, ii. 321
- Harris, General (afterwards Lord), Governor of Madras, 1798, requests Wellesley to remain in Madras, i. 24; commendation of Wellesley's troops, i. 28; Wellesley's criticism of, i. 29; tact shown by, in dealing with Wellesley and Baird, i. 30, 36; march hampered by followers, i. 30 *and note*; orders Wellesley to attack Sultanpettah, i. 32, 33
- Hatherton, Baron. *See* Littleton
- Henry V.'s severity against plunderers compared with Wellington's, i. 353 *and note*
- Hill, General (afterwards Field Marshal Viscount), Wellington's instructions at Busaco, i. 197; Wellington's approval of discipline of, 209; Wellington's instruction about fox-hounds, i. 298; joins Wellington at Adaja, i. 299; Wellington's appreciation of, i. 310; advises Wellington not to cross the Ebro, 313; admirable generalship at the Nivelle, i. 355, 356; wins battle of Saint Pierre without Wellington reinforcements, i. 361; created peer, i. 381; commands 2nd Corps, i. 40, ii. 55; Wellington's memoranda 16th June, ii. 15 *note*, 16; superiority of, ii. 122; Wellington's letter on promotion by seniority, ii. 123; appointed Commander-in-Chief, 214; death of, ii. 356 *note*; mentioned incidentally, i. 114, 193, 223, 240, 248, 250, 255, 256, 257, 273, 274, 294, 301, 310, 311, 317, 327, 333, 336, 337, 350, 353, 360, 363, 364-366, 369, 370, 371, ii. 19, 79
- Hobart, Lord, Wellington's visit to, i. 24
- Holland—
- Campaign of 1793-4: Wesley commands a brigade under Lord Moira, i. 10; affair of Bostel, 11, 12; retreat through Holland, i. 12; Wesley's post on the Waal, i. 12-14
- Expedition to Walcheren under Lord Chatham, 1809, failure of



Wellesley's  
y's criticism  
7, in dealing  
rd, i. 30, 36 ;  
lowers, i. 31  
ley to attack

ittleton  
st plunderers  
ton's, i. 352,

Field Mar-  
on's instruc-  
7; Welling-  
ipline of, i.  
instructions  
; joins Wel-  
9; Welling-  
310; advises  
the Ebro, i.  
lship at the  
ins battle of  
Wellington's  
created peer,  
Corps, i. 402,  
emoranda of  
16; superi-  
ngton's letter  
rity, ii. 123 ;  
in-Chief, ii.  
note; men-  
14, 193, 227,  
5, 256, 258,  
0, 311, 316,  
7, 350, 359,  
9, 370, 371,

n's visit to,

Wesley com-  
nder Lord  
of Boxtel, i.  
gh Holland,  
n the Waal,

meren nder  
, failure of,

i. 151, 152; Wellington's opinion  
of, i. 153 *note*; effect of, on  
British troops, i. 154, 180, 244

Expedition under Sir T. Graham,  
1813; Wellington inspects Nether-  
land defences, i. 382

Hope, Sir John (Earl of Hopetoun),  
Wellington's appreciation of, i. 347  
*note*; commands the left from Man-  
dale to the sea, i. 350; masterly  
generalship at the Nivelle, i. 356 ;  
surprised at Barroilhet, i. 360 ;  
repulses the French, i. 361 ; passage  
of the Adour, i. 363; wounded and  
made prisoner at Bayonne, i. 373 ;  
created a peer, i. 381 ; his superiority,  
ii. 122

Hougoumont, real name of, ii. 56  
*note*; attack and defence of, ii. 65  
72, 73, 76, 77, 79

Huskisson, Mr., Wellington's protests  
against statements of, on Corn  
Duties, ii. 187, 188; proposes to  
Wellington amendment to Corn  
Bill, ii. 204; joins Wellington's  
Cabinet, ii. 211; his Liverpool  
statement repudiated by Wellington,  
ii. 215; votes against Peel, ii. 218 ;  
resigns office, ii. 219; death of, ii.  
251 *note*

Hyderabad, Wellesley advises surprise  
of, i. 26

#### INDIA—

Administration of, Wellington's  
advice on, i. 256 *note*

Clive, Lord, administration of Ma-  
dras, i. 24; Wellington's relations  
with, and opinion of, i. 24 *and*  
*note*, 29; requests that Wel-  
lington be left to administer  
Mysore, i. 40; forwards to Wel-  
lington Secretary of State's re-  
quisition for Egypt, i. 43; fortune  
amassed in India by, i. 49 *note* ;  
despatches corps of observation,  
i. 52

Dhoondia, insurrection and death of,  
i. 39-41; Wellington maintains  
son of, i. 41 *note*

Dual government of British posses-  
sions in, i. 22, 23

French influence in, i. 23

Hindu dynasty restored in Mysore,  
i. 38

Marching in, Wellington's descrip-  
tion of, i. 72

Marhattá confederacy, Mornington's  
treaty with, i. 27; share of Tipú's  
territory given to, i. 37; Wellesley  
opposes aggressive operations  
against, i. 51, 53; Wellesley sent  
against Holkar, i. 52; appointed  
to chief command, i. 53; negotia-  
tions with Sindhia, i. 54; battle  
of Assaye, i. 56-60; incident of  
"Col. Stevenson's dust," i. 61,  
62; Stevenson's division praised  
by Wellesley, i. 63; Wellesley  
disperses Marhattá brigands, i.  
64

Mornington, Lord, succeeds Sir  
John Shore as Governor-General,  
i. 22; concludes treaty with Ma-  
rhattás and declares war against  
Tipú, i. 27; dissuaded by Wel-  
lesley from visiting camp at  
Vellore, i. 28; success of his  
administration, i. 48; censured  
in regard to Marhattá War, i. 75,  
79; Wellesley enters Parliament  
in defence of, i. 81

Tipú's conspiracy: Wellesley averse  
to a rupture, i. 25, 26; surprise of  
Hyderabad, i. 26; war declared, i.  
27; Wellesley commands Nizam's  
contingent, i. 29; Wellesley's  
lack of money, i. 30; battle of  
Malavelly, i. 31; Wellesley's  
reverse at Sultanpettah, i. 32;  
retrieved, i. 33; Wellesley's letter  
to Gurwood on Sultanpettah, i.  
404, 405; siege of Seringapatam  
and death of Tipú, i. 34; Wellesley  
appointed commandant, i. 35, 36;

- Wellesley's share in subsequent arrangements. i. 38
- Inglis, Sir John, deplors Wellington's changed attitude towards Reform, ii. 268
- Ireland—  
 Patronage, importance of, i. 82, 83  
 Potato disease, Corn Law repeal hastened by, ii. 240  
 Rebellious temper of the people in, i. 82, 154, 155  
 Roman Catholic claims. *See that title*  
 Wellington's feeling towards, i. 5, ii. 175; appointment as Chief Secretary, i. 81; suggested military precautions, i. 83, 84; view of absenteeism, ii. 241
- "Iron Duke," origin of title, i. 304 *note*
- J., Miss, Wellington's correspondence with, ii. 280-283
- Jervis, the Hon. Mary Ann, Wellington's intimacy with, ii. 376-378
- Junot, General, in Portugal, i. 93, 95; strength of force under, in Spain, i. 100 *note*; at Torres Vedras, i. 112; defeat of, i. 117 *and note*; accepts Convention of Cintra, i. 117; evacuation of Portugal by, and censure by Napoleon, i. 119; wounded in Torres Vedras campaign, i. 209; insubordination of, i. 228
- KELLERMANN, General, Convention of Cintra signed for Junot by, i. 118
- Kielmansegg, General, Wellington's praise of troops at Waterloo led by, ii. 385
- Kinnaird, Lord, implicated in conspiracy against Wellington, ii. 114-117
- LA RHUNE, attack on, i. 349, 350
- Lambert, Major-General J., Wellington's memorandum of 16th June, ii. 15 *note*
- Larrent, Mr. S., appointed Judge Advocate-General to relieve Wellington, i. 292
- Léry, General, comments on Wellington's capture of Badajoz, i. 267-271
- Ligny, Wellington's objection to exposed position, ii. 19, 54 *note*; battle of, ii. 21, 26; Gneisenau's opinion regarding Wellington's responsibility for Blücher's defeat at, ii. 45; Napoleon's visit to, ii. 39
- Linsingen, General, Wellington's censure of unpunctuality of, ii. 87
- Littleton, Mr. (afterwards Lord Hatherton), attempts to persuade Wellington to policy of moderate reform, ii. 253
- Liverpool, Earl of, confidence in Wellington, i. 178, 306; advises Wellington to be cautious, i. 180; Wellington's encouragement to, i. 181, 238, 273; becomes Prime Minister, i. 248; advised by Wellington to recognise the Bourbon King, i. 367, 368; attempts to recall Wellington from Paris, i. 384-386; informs Wellington of the British eagerness for peace, i. 390; expresses wish for Napoleon's execution, i. 101; offers Wellington a seat in his Cabinet, ii. 141, 142; coercive policy of, ii. 148; Queen Caroline asks an allowance from, ii. 157; dissuades Wellington from resigning, ii. 174; disregards Wellington's advice to dissolve Parliament, i. 180; dissuades King from holding post of Commander-in-Chief, i. 185; resignation not accepted by King, ii. 187, 188; last illness of, ii. 188

- 349, 350  
 J., Wel-  
 16th June,  
 Judge-  
 believe Wel-  
 s on Wel-  
 dajos, i. 262,  
 ejection to  
 9, 54 *note*;  
 Gneisenau's  
 Wellington's  
 ichter's de-  
 n's visit to,  
 Wellington's  
 ality of, i.  
 wards Lord  
 to persuade  
 of moderate  
 nfidence in  
 06; advises  
 ous, i. 180;  
 ement to, i.  
 mes Prime  
 ed by Wel-  
 e Bourbons,  
 s to recall  
 i. 384-386;  
 the British  
 0; expresses  
 ecution, ii.  
 n a seat in  
 42; coercion  
 en Caroline  
 m, ii. 157;  
 rom resign-  
 Wellington's  
 rliament, ii.  
 rom holding  
 n-Chief, ii.  
 accepted by  
 illness of, ii.
- Lloyd, Captain, recommended by Wel-  
 lington for promotion, ii. 122
- Londonderry, Marquis of (Lord  
 Stewart), intrigues against Wel-  
 lington, i. 253, ii. 165 *and note*,  
 166 *note*; on sick leave, i. 298;  
 Wellington complains of his Nether-  
 land army to, i. 394; Wellington  
 opposes his proposal for paying Duko  
 of York's debts, ii. 186; advances  
 coldly received by Wellington, ii.  
 190; mortification at exclusion from  
 Wellington's Cabinet, ii. 213;  
 Wellington's letter to, ii. 214;  
 extreme views of, ii. 306, 307;  
 action at City dinner, ii. 322;  
 appointment of, as Ambassador to  
 Vienna, ii. 333; Wellington's letter  
 to, explaining his own principles in  
 Opposition, ii. 354-356
- Louis XVIII., Wellington's refusal to  
 recognise, i. 362, 367, 368; restored  
 to throne, i. 378; regards Wellin-  
 gton's presence as a security, i. 383;  
 unpopularity of, i. 384, 399, 400, ii.  
 100, 104; impatient for Murat's  
 dethronement, i. 388; escapes to  
 Netherlands, i. 392; advised by  
 Wellington to proceed to Autwerp,  
 ii. 46; joins British head-quarters at  
 La Cateau, ii. 98; returns to Paris,  
 ii. 100; action in regard to Nether-  
 land pictures, ii. 105; dissuaded by  
 Wellington from invading Spain, ii.  
 160, 170; abdication of, ii. 249
- Lyndhurst, Lord, advises King to  
 send for Wellington, ii. 209; in  
 Wellington's Cabinet, ii. 211, 212;  
 assists Wellington in Catholic  
 Emancipation policy, ii. 224;  
 summoned to Windsor and resigns  
 office, ii. 228; motion on Reform  
 Bill, ii. 266; in Peel's first Cabinet,  
 ii. 304
- MADAN, Rev. Spencer, Wellington at  
 Brussels described by, ii. 10
- Malcolm, Colonel John, influence on  
 Wellington exercised by, i. 68;  
 urges Wellington to return to India,  
 i. 90
- Marbattás. *See under India*
- Marlborough, Duke of, Wellington  
 contrasted with, i. 396 *note*
- Marmont, Marshal, succeeds Masséna  
 in the Peninsula, i. 232; goes into  
 cantonments at Salamanca, i. 235;  
 advances on Estremadura, i. 237;  
 retires north of the Tagus, i. 238;  
 introduces a convoy into Ciudad  
 Rodrigo, i. 241; retires on Talavera,  
 i. 243; concentrates at Toledo, i.  
 248; goes to Valladolid and Sala-  
 manca, i. 250; difficulties from  
 contradictory instructions (extracts  
 from despatches), i. 263-270;  
 severely censured by Napoleon, i.  
 263-270, 287, 288; retires before  
 Wellington, i. 273; numbers of his  
 force, 15th May, 1812, i. 274; eva-  
 cuates Salamanca, i. 275; retires  
 towards the Douro, i. 276, 277;  
 wounded at Salamanca, i. 283;  
 struck off roll of marshals, i. 398
- Masséna, Marshal, takes command of  
 Army of Portugal, i. 182; Wel-  
 lington's appreciation of, i. 182  
*note*; invests and captures Ciudad  
 Rodrigo, i. 189; account of Busaco,  
 i. 194 *note*; battle of Busaco, i. 195-  
 198; plunders Coimbra, i. 199;  
 licence allowed among troops of,  
 i. 201, 203; retires to Sautaren, i.  
 204; requests reinforcements, i. 210,  
 223, 224; insubordination of officers  
 under, i. 212, 213, 219, 220 *and*  
*note*, 228, 231; masterly retreat of,  
 i. 212-214, 219, 232; evacuates  
 Portugal, i. 222; moves to Ciudad  
 Rodrigo, i. 224; at Fuentes de  
 Oñoro, i. 226; removed in disgrace,  
 i. 232; restored to favour, i. 296;  
 superannuated, i. 398
- Maya, Soult's success at, i. 330, 331
- Melbourne, Lord, Wellington's over-

- tures to, ii. 252; Ministry and fall of, ii. 301; position towards the Queen, ii. 311, 316, 323; resigns, ii. 323; recalled to office, ii. 324; defeated on proposed allowance for Queen's Consort, ii. 329; defeated on Peel's "No Confidence" motion, ii. 333
- Melville, Lord, consults Wellington about Indian administration, i. 256 *note*; despatch to Wellington regarding naval support, i. 339, 340; refuses to hold office under Canning, ii. 198; joins Wellington's Cabinet, ii. 211, 212
- Moir, Earl of, Wesley joins Netherland expedition under, i. 10, 11; on Court of Inquiry regarding Spanish expedition, i. 123 *note*, 125
- Monson, Colonel, Wellesley's views of his defeat by Holkar, i. 69, 70
- Moore, Sir John, ordered to the Peninsula, i. 104; ordered by Burrard to land at Maceira, i. 113; Sir Walter Scott's opinion of, i. 127; Commander-in-Chief in the Peninsula, i. 130; misgivings as to expedition, i. 131 *note*; advances on Madrid, i. 131; retreat and death, i. 132; quick step invented by, i. 167 *note*; work at Shorncliffe, ii. 122
- Mornington, Baron, grandfather of Wellington, i. 2
- Mornington, first Earl of, father of Wellington, i. 2
- Mornington, Countess of, mother of Wellington, marriage of, i. 2; statement regarding Wellington's birthday, i. 3 *note*; attitude towards Wellington, i. 4; Wellington's alleged neglect of, ii. 337
- Mornington, second Earl of. *See* Wellesley, Lord
- Muffling, General, receives General von Zieten's express from Charleroi, ii. 8 *and note*; learns Wellington's arrangements, ii. 9; summons Zieten to Mont Saint-Jean, ii. 80; appointed Governor of Paris, ii. 100
- Municipal Corporation Bill, Wellington's opinion on, ii. 308
- Murray, Lieut.-General Sir George, goes on leave, i. 248; Wellington's reliance on, i. 310; advises Wellington not to cross the Ebro, i. 313; directs Captain Ramsay to join General Anson's brigade, i. 323; despatched by Wellington to suspend movement of troops on Pamplona, i. 332; accepts command in America, i. 394; receives notice of plot against Wellington, ii. 114; superiority of, ii. 122
- Murray, Sir John, at Douro encountered, i. 142, 143 *note*; occupies Suchet's attention, i. 356; failure of, and departure for England, i. 327; impending trial of, i. 338
- NAPIER, Sir Charles, military superiority of, ii. 121, 122; corporal punishment in army described by, i. 128, 129; accuses the Government regarding national defence, ii. 359
- Napier, George, loses an arm at Ciudad Rodrigo, i. 252; military superiority of, ii. 121, 122
- Napier, Sir William, British Minister, severely censured by, i. 153, 154 *note*, 339; inaccuracy of, regarding Blücher's message to Wellington, i. 8 *note*; military superiority of, i. 121, 122
- Napoleon. *See* Bonaparte
- National defence, Wellington's anxiety and advice regarding, ii. 335, 356, 365
- Naval support, Wellington's complaints regarding, i. 339, 340
- Nelson, Lord, Wellington's one meeting with, i. 75 *note*, 76
- Netherlands. *See* Holland
- Newcastle, Duke of, slighted by Wellington, ii. 213

- Ney, Marshal, at Ciudad Rodrigo, i. 188; engagement with Craufurd, i. 190; invests Almeida, i. 191; at Busaco, i. 195-197; at Thomar, i. 212; opposed to Masséna, i. 213; at Redinha, i. 214; at Foz d'Aronce, i. 215; dissensions with Masséna, i. 219, 220; removed from command, i. 220; declares for Napoleon, i. 391, 392; remains without a post, i. 399; given command of left wing, ii. 6; embarrassment of unknown staff, ii. 7, 17; inaction at Quatre-Bras, ii. 17, 27; battle of Quatre-Bras, ii. 20-27; rejoined by D'Erlon after Quatre-Bras, ii. 32, 37; delays reporting failure at Quatre-Bras, ii. 38; Napoleon determines to support, ii. 39; urges Napoleon to hasten attack, ii. 58, 59; at Waterloo, ii. 66, 67, 73, 74, 76, 77, 79, 83, 85; Wellington refuses to intercede for, ii. 106-108 *note*
- Nicolas, Emperor, accession of, ii. 181; Wellington's mission to, on the Græco-Turkish question, ii. 181, 184
- Nive, passage of the, i. 359
- Nivelle, battle of the, i. 354-356
- O'CONNELL, DANIEL, Catholic Association organised by, ii. 176; elected for Clare, ii. 220; disqualified from taking his seat in Parliament, ii. 240, 241
- Orthes, battle of, i. 364-367
- PAKENHAM, General, brother-in-law of Wellington, shatters Thomière's columns at Salamanca, i. 282, 283; left at Medina de Pomar, i. 315; success at Sorauren, i. 336
- Pakenham, the Hon. Catherine. *See* Wellington, Duchess of
- Palmerston, Lord, deploras Wellington's resignation of the Command-in-Chief, ii. 200; in Wellington's Cabinet, ii. 212; votes against Peel, ii. 218; intervenes with Wellington on Huskisson's behalf, and resigns office, ii. 219; Wellington's overtures to, ii. 252 *and note*; declines any post but the Foreign Office, ii. 342; accuses Government regarding national defences, ii. 359; his view of third French Revolution, i. 367; indiscretion regarding Louis Napoleon, 384
- Pamplona, Wellington's orders to Don Carlos regarding, i. 351
- Paris, Convention of, ii. 99
- Peel, Sir Robert, at the Home Office, 1822, ii. 168; hostility to Catholic claims, ii. 175; a leader of the Old Tories, ii. 187; refuses to hold office under Canning, ii. 198; his reluctance to resume office, ii. 210; Home Secretary under Wellington, ii. 211, 212; resolves to resign on Catholic Emancipation Bill, ii. 217; his views on the corrupt boroughs, ii. 218; advocates concession to Roman Catholic claims, ii. 221, 222, 225, 226; his attitude on the Catholic question compared with Wellington's, ii. 223; decides to retain office, ii. 225; memorandum to the King on Catholic question, ii. 226; summons to Windsor and resignation, ii. 228; absent during Wellington's second Ministerial defeat, ii. 244; asked by Wellington to form a Government, ii. 251; estrangement from Wellington, ii. 257; Wellington's remark on Lady Peel, ii. 260; refuses to join a Reform Ministry, ii. 267; his tribute to Wellington, ii. 267, 268; confers with Wellington, ii. 268; renewed estrangement from Wellington, ii. 289-294; Wellington's opinion of, ii. 291; reserve of, ii. 291, 309; esteem for Wellington, ii. 292; sent for, from Italy, to form a Ministry, ii. 302; his first Cabinet, ii. 304;

defeats and resignation, ii. 305, 306; attitude towards the Municipal Corporations Bill, ii. 308; renewed estrangement from Wellington, ii. 309; cordiality restored, ii. 311; the Bedchamber difficulty, ii. 324; Canadian policy, ii. 329; renewed coldness with Wellington, ii. 329-332; regard for public opinion, ii. 330; cordiality restored with Wellington, ii. 332; second Administration, ii. 333, 339; proposes relaxation of tariffs, ii. 335; resigns, ii. 341; resumes office, ii. 342; proposes repeal of Corn Laws, ii. 348; dissuades Wellington from leaving the Cabinet on resuming the Command-in-Chief, ii. 357; attitude towards national defence, ii. 359, 360; death of, ii. 371; Wellington's tribute to, ii. 372

Peninsular War—

*Campaigns in Chronological Order:*

Expedition of June, 1808, i. 97-102

Vimeiro, 1808. Reinforcements despatched, i. 103, 104; Wellesley superseded by Sir H. Dalrymple, i. 104; King Joseph's flight, i. 105; Wellesley's lack of transports, i. 106; advance by coast road, i. 107; combat of Roliça, i. 110-112; Sir H. Burrard's arrival, i. 112; battle of Vimeiro, i. 113-116; Sir H. Dalrymple's arrival, i. 117; Convention of Cintra, i. 118, 119, 121; French evacuate Lisbon, i. 119; political settlement of Portugal, i. 120; Wellesley returns to England, i. 121; Court of Inquiry on the three generals, i. 123-125; thanks and honours bestowed on Wellesley, i. 126

Talavera, 1808-9. Napoleon sends reinforcements, and appeals to King George, i. 129;

enters Madrid, i. 130; Sir J. Moore takes the field, i. 131; his retreat, i. 132; treaty with Spain, and position in Portugal, i. 133; position of French and Spanish armies, i. 135, 136 *and note*; strength of force under Wellesley, i. 136; incident of Captain d'Argenton, i. 138, 139 *note*; Soult's retreat, i. 139, 140; passage of the Douro, and combat at the Seminary, i. 141-143; Soult's retreat northwards, and sufferings of the French, i. 143, 144; British advance, i. 144, 146, 155; difficulties of British troops in Spain, i. 156; battle of Talavera, i. 159-165; British go into cantonments at Badajos, i. 170

Torres Vedras, 1809-10. Wellington adopts defensive policy, i. 179; Masséna commands army of Portugal, i. 182; Wellington recrosses the Tagus, i. 183; secrecy in preparation of the lines of Torres Vedras, i. 183, 185, 201, 202; all military resources of Portugal called out, i. 186; Masséna's advance, i. 188; siege and surrender of Ciudad Rodrigo, i. 189; capitulation of Almeida and proclamations by Wellington and Masséna, i. 191; Masséna invades Portugal, i. 193; battle of Busaco, i. 194-198; its effects on the Allies, i. 198, 199; retreat of the Allies, i. 199, 200; Allies entrenched in the line of Torres Vedras, i. 203; Masséna retires to Santarem, i. 204

Overthrow of Masséna, 1810-11. Position and condition of the two armies, i. 209, 210; Bajado invested, i. 211; surrenders, i. 212; British reinforcements, i. 212; combat of Redinha, i. 214



- 10; Sir J. ...  
 ... i. 131;  
 ... treaty with ...  
 ... Portugal,  
 ... French and ...  
 ... 136 and ...  
 ... force under ...  
 ... incident of ...  
 ... i. 138, 139  
 ... at, i. 139,  
 ... Douro, and ...  
 ... ary, i. 141-  
 ... northwards,  
 ... French, i.  
 ... advance, i.  
 ... difficulties of ...  
 ... ain, i. 156;  
 ... 159-165;  
 ... onments at
10. Wel-  
 ... sive policy,  
 ... commands  
 ... 182; Wel-  
 ... Tagus, i.  
 ... paration of ...  
 ... Vedras, i.  
 ... all military  
 ... gical called  
 ... 's advance.  
 ... urrender of ...  
 ... 89; capitu-  
 ... and pro-  
 ... ington and  
 ... Masséna in-  
 ... 193; battle  
 ... 3; its effects  
 ... 8, 199; re-  
 ... i. 199, 200;  
 ... n the lines  
 ... 203; Mas-  
 ... arem, i. 204  
 ... a, 1810-11.  
 ... tion of the  
 ... 10; Bajados  
 ... urrenders, i.  
 ... rcements, i.  
 ... inha, i. 214;
- affair of Foz d'Aronce, i. 215;  
 Soult returns south, i. 219;  
 capture of Guarda by the Allies,  
 i. 220; combat of Sabugal, i.  
 221; Masséna evacuates Por-  
 tugal, i. 222; Wellington visits  
 Alemtejo, i. 223; battle of  
 Fuentes de Oñoro, i. 226-228;  
 incident of Captain Love, i.  
 229; retreat of the French, i.  
 229; Marmont supersedes Mas-  
 séna, i. 232; French garrison  
 at Almeida escapes, i. 232, 233;  
 Badajos besieged, i. 233; battle  
 of Albuera, i. 234; Badajos  
 reinvaded, i. 236; siege raised,  
 i. 237; French retire from  
 Estremadura, i. 238; blockade  
 of Ciudad Rodrigo, i. 240; lines  
 of Torres Vedras repaired, i.  
 240; action of El Bodon, i.  
 241; retreat of Allies, i. 242;  
 retreat of the French, i. 243;  
 blockade of Ciudad Rodrigo  
 resumed, i. 244
- Sieges of Ciudad Rodrigo and  
 Badajos, 1812 (*see also preced-  
 ing section*); new Regency  
 appointed in Spain, i. 247;  
 defences of Almeida repaired  
 by the Allies, i. 248; siege and  
 capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, i.  
 249-253; siege, storming, and  
 sack of Badajos, i. 256-262;  
 Wellington's omission to sum-  
 mon the garrison, i. 258
- Salamanca, 1812. Bridge at Al-  
 maraz destroyed, i. 273; position  
 and strength of the armies, i.  
 273-275; the Allies enter Sala-  
 manca, i. 275; reduction of the  
 forts and continued retreat of  
 Marmont, i. 276; Wellington  
 decides on retreat, i. 278;  
 French cross the Tormes, i.  
 280; battle of Salamanca, i.  
 281-287; fine charge of Hano-  
 verian cavalry, i. 289; the
- Allies enter Valladolid and ad-  
 vance upon Madrid, i. 290;  
 King Joseph leaves Madrid, i.  
 290; Allies enter Madrid, i.  
 291; appointment of a Judge-  
 Advocate-General, i. 292; siege  
 of Burgos, i. 294-296; Wel-  
 lington raises the siege, i. 296;  
 Allies recross the Douro, i.  
 299; Soult crosses the Tormes,  
 i. 300; Soult recrosses, and the  
 Allies go into winter quarters,  
 i. 301; festivities at Ciudad  
 Rodrigo, i. 303
- Vitoria, 1813. Forces under Wel-  
 lington, i. 306; position and  
 number of Spanish forces, i.  
 307; Wellington's plan of  
 campaign, i. 308-310; the Allies  
 advance, i. 310-314; French  
 abandon Burgos, i. 312; Allies  
 cross the Ebro, i. 314; King  
 Joseph offers battle, i. 315;  
 battle of Vitoria, i. 316-320;  
 spoil and losses, i. 321 *and note*;  
 site called "The English Hills,"  
 i. 321-322 *note*; incident of  
 Madame Gayan, i. 322; Wel-  
 lington made Field-Marshal,  
 i. 322 *and note*; Wellington's  
 harshness to Captain Ramsay,  
 i. 325; King Joseph's retreat  
 i. 326; investment and siege  
 of San Sebastian, i. 326, 328;  
 Soult appointed Napoleon's  
 lieutenant, i. 329; Soult forces  
 the passes of Maya and Ronces-  
 valles, i. 330, 331; siege of San  
 Sebastian suspended, i. 331
- Pyrenees, 1813. Wellington's  
 first sight of Soult, i. 333;  
 battles of Sorrauren, i. 334-337;  
 Soult is driven across the  
 frontier, i. 337; siege of San  
 Sebastian renewed, i. 339;  
 storm and capture, i. 341; en-  
 gagements of 31st August and  
 1st September, i. 344, 345;

- passage of the Bidassoa, i. 348, 349; attack on La Rhune, i. 349, 350; Pamplona surrenders, i. 351; battle of the Nivelle, i. 354-356; incident of "L'affaire est finie!" i. 357
- South of France, 1813-14.  
 Passage of the Nive, i. 359; battle of Saint Pierre, i. 361; losses of the Allies, 9th to 13th December, i. 361; Napoleon's treaty with Ferdinand, i. 361, 362; the Allies in cantonments, i. 362; passage of the Adour, i. 363; battle of Orthes, i. 364-367; Wellington wounded, i. 366; Allies enter Bordeaux, i. 367; affair of Tarbes, i. 369; battle of Toulouse, i. 371, 372; claimed by Soult as a victory, i. 373; abdication of Napoleon, i. 373
- Ferocious character of the struggle, i. 101, 187, 231
- French army. *See under France*
- Great Britain (*see also Army*), official attitude, i. 103, 130, 133, 150, 151, 153, 181, 306, 374, 390; Wellington's lack of money, i. 218, 278, 294; public opinion, i. 305, 306
- Portuguese and Spanish troops, government, etc. *See under Portugal and Spain*
- Pereval, Mr., Wellington's opinion regarding Napier's censure of, i. 154 *note*; succeeds Duke of Portland as Prime Minister, i. 178; assassinated, i. 248
- Percy, the Hon. Henry, brings news of Waterloo to England, ii. 97, 98
- Perponcher, General de, prompt action in absence of Wellington, ii. 7
- "Peterloo" affair, the, ii. 146, 147
- Pieton, General, refuses to support Craufurd, i. 190; in danger at Busaco, i. 195, 196; orderly retreat at El Bodon, i. 242; charge to the
- Counaught Rangers, i. 251; leads assault at Badajos, i. 258, 259; story of Wellington's farewell to Portugal, i. 310 *note*; goes on leave, i. 347; in Brussels with the reserve, ii. 12; ordered to halt the reserve at Waterloo, ii. 14, 16; arrives at Quatre-Bras, ii. 17; charges the French cuirassiers, ii. 24; killed, ii. 70; Wellington's opinion of, ii. 70 *note*; incidentally mentioned, i. 221, 317, 318, 331-333, 836, 364, 365, ii. 42, 54, 69
- Pitt, William, Bill on Roman Catholic disabilities supported by Wesley, i. 7; expects continuation of peace in 1792, i. 9; appreciation of Wesley, i. 21; seeks his advice on his return from India, i. 75; regards Spain as the place of ultimate stand against Napoleon, i. 93, 97; death of, i. 77
- Ponsonby, Lord, bet on Wellington's occupation of the lines of Torres Vedras, i. 185 *note*; with the Union Brigade at Waterloo, ii. 55; killed at Waterloo, ii. 71 *and note*
- Poor Law Bill, Wellington's attitude towards, ii. 299, 300
- Portland, Duke of, constancy of purpose maintained by Cabinet of, i. 150, 151, 153, 154
- Portugal (*see also Peninsular War*)—  
 Army: commissariat deficiency, i. 106-108, 219, 354; lack of discipline, i. 108; improvement effected by Beresford, i. 133 *and note*, 136, 175, 245; all military resources called out, i. 186; troops praised by Wellington, i. 198, 336 *note*, 359; treachery to Spanish prisoners, i. 291; fine behaviour at the Nive, i. 360; inefficiency of cavalry, i. 212; desertion, i. 224; troops asked by Wellington for Netherland campaign against Napoleon, i. 394
- Base of operations against Napoleon, i. 99 *and note*, 100



- Coast route chosen by Wellesley, i. 107
- Debarkation of Wellington's troops at Montego, i. 105
- Devastation of, by the inhabitants ordered by Wellington, i. 186, 187, 191; order disregarded, i. 199, 203
- Government, interference with Wellington by, i. 191, 192; indolence and remissness of, i. 217-219, 224, 248
- Great Britain, relations with, 1808, i. 96; political settlement effected by, i. 120; subsidies granted by, i. 389, 394
- Loyalty and endurance of the people, i. 202, 216, 218
- Masséna's advance into, i. 193; evacuation of, i. 222
- Miserable state of the country, i. 200
- Monk's warning to Wellesley, i. 110
- Napoleon's treatment of, i. 93, 94
- Prince Regent's escape to Brazil, i. 93
- Spies, usefulness of, i. 216
- Wellington's farewell to, i. 310  
*note*
- Press, English, useful to Napoleon, i. 183, 184 *note*; cultivated by Canning, ii. 201
- Prince Consort. *See* Albert
- Prince of Orange. *See* Frederick
- Prussia (*see also* Blücher and Bülow), alliance with Austria against France, 1793, i. 10; designs on Saxony, i. 387, 388, 403; joins the Quadruple Alliance, i. 391
- Pyrenees. *See under* Peninsular War
- Wellington joins Prince of Orange at, and orders 'a general concentration, ii. 16; battle of, ii. 20-28
- RAMSAY, Captain Norman, exploit at Fuentes de Oñoro, i. 220; Wellington's harshness to, i. 325, 326 *and note*, ii. 195; superiority of, ii. 122
- Redinha, combat of, i. 214
- Reform, Parliamentary, Wellington's opposition to proposals of, ii. 253, 254, 262-265; his change of policy regarding, ii. 267-269; his defence of the change, ii. 269, 270
- Reinard, M., escapes with a secret treaty, i. 403
- Richmond, Duke of, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, with Wellesley as Chief Secretary, i. 81; offers to serve under Wellington in the Peninsula, i. 323 *note*, ii. 11 *note*; introduces Wellington on taking his seat in the House of Lords, i. 381; studies map of Waterloo district with Wellington, ii. 14; resigns from Grey's Ministry, ii. 300
- Richmond, Duchess of, hall in Brussels given by, ii. 11-14
- Roliça, combat of, i. 110-112
- Roman Catholic disabilities and claims, Wellesley's opinion and attitude regarding, i. 7, ii. 173, 175-180, 190, 216; cases of evasion of the Test Act cited by Wellesley, i. 80; the Catholic Association, ii. 176, 177; suppressed, ii. 178; the question left open, ii. 176, 177, 187; O'Connell's election, ii. 221; concession advocated, ii. 221-226; Emancipation Bill before Parliament, ii. 230, 237; carried, ii. 233
- Romana, Marquis, escape from Denmark effected by, i. 147, 148; Wellington's estimate of, i. 149; entreats Wellington to succour Ciudad Rodrigo, i. 189

- Ronccavalles, Sault's success at, i. 331
- Russell, Lord John, comments on Torres Vedras arrangements, i. 185 *note*; his remark on the Indemnity Act, ii. 215; carries a bill removing disabilities of Dissenters, ii. 216; first Reform Bill, ii. 258; third Reform Bill, ii. 265; proposes a fixed corn duty, ii. 354; his manifesto on the Corn Laws, ii. 340; attempts unsuccessfully to form a Cabinet, ii. 342; Wellington's indignation at his desertion of Peel, ii. 353; commissioned to form a Government, ii. 353; Wellington's disapproval of his Army discharge scheme, ii. 133; defeated on the County Franchise Bill, ii. 382; resumes office, ii. 383; his Militia Bill, ii. 383, 384
- Russia (*for Emperors and Policy, see Alexander and Nicolas*), Napoleon starts for, i. 275; his disaster in, i. 306
- SABUGAL, combat of, i. 221
- Saint Helena, Wellesley's experience of, i. 71
- Saint Pierre, battle of, i. 361
- Salamanca campaign. *See under Peninsular War*
- Salisbury, Lord, asks Wellington's advice regarding negotiations with Whigs, ii. 265; Wellington's letter to, explaining his support of Peel, ii. 344-348
- Salisbury, Lady, extracts from diary of, 1838, ii. 320-323; illness and death of, ii. 325, 326; Wellington's attachment to, ii. 375
- San Sebastian, investment and siege of, i. 326, 328; siege suspended, i. 331; renewed, i. 339; storm and capture, i. 341
- Sanchez, Julian (guerilla chief), reliability of, i. 239, 241
- Scott, Sir Walter, estimate of Wellington, i. 127, ii. 103; letters from Wellington deprecating a history of Waterloo, ii. 50, 51; Wellington's account of the cavalry attack on British infantry at Waterloo, ii. 75; remark on Wellington's debating method, ii. 336
- Seringajatom, siege of, i. 34
- Shaw, Colonel, Wellesley's reason for corresponding with, i. 44 *note*
- Shore, Sir John, memorandum on the Philippines prepared for, i. 20, 21
- Slave trade, British attitude regarding, i. 380, 383
- Somerset, Lord Edward, at Orthes, i. 365, 366; at Waterloo, ii. 54
- Somerset, Lord Fitzroy, at Salamanca, i. 283; story of Wellington's search for the army, i. 297; at Sorauren, i. 333; left at Paris as chargé d'affaires, i. 386; right arm shot off, ii. 89; his superiority, ii. 122; with Wellington in the Green Park, ii. 151
- Sorauren, battles of, i. 334-337
- Sault, Marshal, checked by small British force in Lisbon, i. 133; disaffection among officers of, i. 137-140; Wellington's opinion of, i. 182 *note*; inhumane edict of, i. 187; advances to support Masséna, i. 211; returns to Seville, i. 217; claims Albuera as a victory, i. 234 *note*, awaits d'Erlon at Llarena, i. 235; withdraws to Andalusia, i. 238; in Andalusia, i. 255; at Llarena during siege of Badajoz, i. 258; retires into Andalusia, i. 273; his numbers, 15th May, 1812, i. 274; advises evacuation of Madrid, i. 290; raises siege of Cadiz, i. 291, 292; accuses King Joseph to Napoleon, i. 292; joins Albuera and crosses the Tormes, i. 300; recrosses, i. 301; recalled to Paris, i. 308; appointed to chief command in Spain, i. 329; defeats Cole and Picton, i. 331; Wellington's first sight of, i. 333, 334;

- battles of Sorauren, i. 334-337; driven across the frontier, i. 337; attempts to relieve San Sebastian, i. 343; loses an opportunity at the Bidassoa, i. 349; maintains the defensive, i. 353; battle of the Nivelle, i. 354-356; at Bayonne, i. 360; attacks Hill at Saint Pierre, i. 361; embarrassed by legitimism of French inhabitants, i. 362, 372; concentrates at Orthes, i. 363; losses at Orthes, i. 366; retreats to Tarbes, i. 367; resumes the offensive, i. 368; retreats to Toulouse, i. 369; loses an opportunity at Toulouse, i. 370, 371; sends Wellington plans of battle of Toulouse, i. 372; claims victory at Toulouse, i. 373; sends Wellington formal acknowledgment of the Provisional Government of France, i. 376; welcomes Wellington's presence as ambassador, i. 383; Berthier as chief of the staff, i. 389; unfitness for the post, i. 400 *and note*; warns Ney of a general advance, ii. 17; deplorable absence of Grouchy at Waterloo, ii. 59; urgently recalls Grouchy, ii. 66; complains of Ney's action at Waterloo, ii. 76; represents Louis Philippe at the Queen's coronation, ii. 320; Hardinge presented to, ii. 321; name coupled with Wellington's at the City dinner, ii. 322
- Souza, Principal, interferes with Wellington's movements in Portugal, i. 191, 192; opposes sending Portuguese contingent to Wellington in the Netherlands, i. 395
- Spain (*see also* Peninsular War)—  
 Army, inefficiency of troops, i. 132, 136 *note*, 152, 153, 156, 161, 166, 170, 172-175, 180 *and note*, 234 *note*, 246, 285-287, 293, 299; position of French and Spanish armies at beginning of Talavera Campaign, i. 135, 136 *and note*; valour displayed by troops, i. 344, 350; praised by Wellington, i. 345; commissariat deficiency, i. 346, 354, 358; Wellington made generalissimo of, i. 298; Wellington's income as generalissimo handed over as a fund for, ii. 112
- Charles IV., abdication of, i. 94; Bourbon dynasty dismissed, and Napoleon's brother made king, i. 95
- Colonies in South America seek British aid, i. 90; struggle with the mother country, ii. 170, 173; obtain foreign recognition, ii. 193; Ministry of the Colonies abolished, 1809, i. 247 *note*
- Euthusiasm of the people and resistance against the French, i. 95, 96, 98, 99, 104
- Ferdinand, Napoleon's treaty with, rejected by the Regency, i. 362; tyranny of, i. 379, 383, ii. 160
- Ferocity of the war in, i. 101, 187
- Fleet destroyed off Cape St. Vincent, i. 19
- Government, new Regency appointed, i. 247; rejects Napoleon's treaty with Ferdinand, i. 362
- Great Britain, relations with, 1808, i. 93, 96, 97; dislike of the British, i. 99; treaty with, 1809, i. 133; subsidised by, i. 99, 132, 152, 247, 380, 389
- Language acquired by Wellington, i. 98
- Napoleon's designs upon, i. 93; visit to Madrid, i. 130
- Stanley, Lord. *See* Derby
- Stevenson, Colonel, with Wellesley's infantry in rear of Conahgull, i. 41; commands Hyderabad contingent against Holkar, i. 52; storms Jalnapur, i. 54; detached from Wellesley's force at Budnapur, i. 55; unable to assist at battle of Assaye, i. 59; Wellesley's communications with, i. 61; laborious march and siege of Gawilghur, i. 63

- Stewart, Lord Charles. *See* Londonderry
- Stewart, Major-General the Hon. William, Wellington's comment on his surprise by d'Erlon, i. 330 *and note*; success at the Nivelle, i. 355
- Suchet, General, advises concentration in Catalonia, i. 290; occupied by Sir J. Murray, i. 306, 327; withdraws northward to Lerida, i. 338; his presence in Catalonia a check on Wellington, i. 346; disregards Soult's instructions to unite forces, i. 353; sends Wellington formal acknowledgment of the Provisional Government of France, i. 376; commands the Army of the Alps, i. 398
- Sultanpettah, Wellesley's reverse at, i. 32; capture of, i. 33; letter to Gurwood regarding, i. 404, 405
- Sutton, Mr. Manners, asked by Wellington to join his Cabinet, ii. 268
- TALAVERA CAMPAIGN. *See under* Peninsular War
- Talbot, Colonel, Wellington's remonstrance regarding an illegible letter, ii. 288
- Talleyrand, Wellington's presence as ambassador welcomed by, i. 383; remark on the Congress of Vienna, i. 387; directed to appoint Fonché Minister of Police, ii. 100
- Thirty-third Regiment, Wesley a major of, i. 6; ordered to the Netherlands, i. 10; ordered to the West Indies and driven back, i. 18, 19; detailed for India, i. 19; Wellesley's care of, i. 30; Wellesley a colonel of, i. 77; conduct at Quatre-Bras, ii. 26
- Tipú Sultan, conspiracy of. *See under* India
- Torrens, Colonel Sir Henry, Wellington's letter complaining of military appointments, i. 207; proposes to Wellington a G.O. on his assuming the Command-in-Chief, ii. 185
- Torres Vedras. *See under* Peninsular War
- Toulouse, battle of, i. 371, 372; claimed by Soult as a victory, i. 373
- UNITED STATES, effect of the war with, i. 288, 306, 340; Wellington offered command of the war, i. 384; peace commission at Ghent, i. 385; peace concluded, i. 390; friendliness during Canadian rebellion, ii. 318 *note*
- Uxbridge, Lord. *See* Anglesey
- VICTORIA, QUEEN, Wellington disapproves her attending a review on horseback, ii. 312; her regard for Melbourne, ii. 312, 316, 323; the Bedchamber difficulty, ii. 324; Lady Douro admired by, ii. 325; opens Parliament, and announces her betrothal, ii. 328; requests Wellington to remain Commander-in-Chief, ii. 342; Wellington appreciated by, ii. 342, 371, 387
- Vienna—  
Congress of 1815, i. 385–389, 391, 392, 397  
Congress of 1822, Wellington ordered to attend, ii. 166; Lord Stewart's intrigues against Wellington, ii. 166 *note*; Wellington's instructions as plenipotentiary, ii. 169–171; incident of the Quaker, ii. 171, 172
- Vimeiro and Vitoria Campaigns. *See under* Peninsular War
- Vivian, Major-General Sir Hussey, Wellington's pencilled order to, at Waterloo, ii. 67; pursues the Guards, ii. 84, 85; mentioned incidentally, i. 365, ii. 3, 40, 54
- WATERLOO, site of, first indicated by Wellington, i. 382, ii. 44 *note*; Wellington surprised and outmanœuvred by Napoleon, ii. 33, 34,

- 36; strength and composition of the Allied Army, ii. 42; strength of the French, ii. 43; nature of the position, ii. 53, 54; Allied order of battle, ii. 54; advanced posts occupied by Wellington, ii. 55; position of French Army, ii. 57; French order of battle, ii. 62; attack on Hougoumont, ii. 65, 72, 73, 76, 77, 79; arrival of Prussians, ii. 66, 77; attack on La Haye Sainte, ii. 68, 69; second attack on La Haye Sainte, ii. 73, 74; capture of La Haye Sainte, ii. 76, 77; conflict at Plancenoit, ii. 79, 80, 87; Napoleon orders the final attack, ii. 80; defeat of the Imperial Guard, ii. 84, 93-95; general advance of the Allied line, ii. 85; Napoleon leaves the field, ii. 86; Wellington's objection to histories of the battle, ii. 50, 51, 74; Wellington's conversation with Lady Salisbury on the victory, ii. 91-93; site revisited by Wellington with George IV., ii. 160; Wellington's advice regarding the distribution of medals for, ii. 134 *and note*, 135
- Waters, Lieut.-General Sir John, exploit at the passage of the Douro, i. 141; useful to Wellington in hunting, i. 298 *and note*; superiority of, ii. 122
- Webster, Lady Frances, Wellington's letter to, on the eve of Waterloo, ii. 46; letter after Waterloo, ii. 90 *and note*
- Wellesley, Arthur. *See* Wellington
- Wellesley, Henry. *See* Cowley
- Wellesley, Marquess, elder brother of Wellington, and second Earl of Mornington, requests an army commission for his brother Arthur, i. 5; Arthur's request for foreign service, i. 8; high opinion of Arthur and reliance on him, i. 15, 19 *note*, 34, 36, 71; appointment to Governor-Generalship of India, and change of the family name to Wellesley, i. 22, 23 *note*; declares war on Tipu, i. 27; dissuaded by his brother from visiting camp at Vellore, i. 28, 29; letter to General Harris on Arthur's appointment at Seringapatam, i. 36; created Marquess Wellesley, i. 42; displeasure with Arthur and subsequent approval, i. 43, 44; refuses Arthur's repayment of debt, i. 38; defensive alliance with Gaikwar of Baroda, i. 51; treaty of Bassein, i. 52; approves Arthur's Marhatta treaty; i. 64; success of his Indian administration, i. 48, 71, 72; British criticism and censure, i. 49, 50, 75, 79, 80; Minister at Seville, i. 77, 169, 172; at the Foreign Office in Perceval's Ministry, i. 178; resigns, i. 247; suggestion for his brother's armorial bearings, i. 293; reproaches Lord Bathurst for the failure at Burgos, i. 297; Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, ii. 175; reconciliation with his brother, i. 323
- Wellington, Arthur Wellesley, Duke of—
- Historical Sequence of Career—*
- Ancestry, parentage, and birth, i. 1-3; boyhood, i. 3-5; first commission in the army (with list of subsequent commissions), i. 6; appointed aide-de-camp to Lord Westmoreland, i. 7; in Irish Parliament, i. 7; engagement to Miss Pakenham, i. 7; Netherland expedition, i. 10-14; applies for post in Civil Service, i. 15; attempted West Indian expedition, i. 18; goes to India, i. 19; made brigadier, i. 29; incurs heavy expenses with the army, i. 30, 39; battle of Malavelly, i. 31; affair of Sultanpettah, i. 32, 33, 404, 405; appointed commandant of Seringapatam, i. 35, 36; difficulties with the East India Company, i. 37; commander of the forces in Mysore, i. 38; receives

prize-money, i. 38, 39 *and note*; declines command of Batavia expedition, i. 40; defeats Dhoondia, i. 41; prepares a force for Egypt, and is superseded by Baird, i. 42; suppresses bribery system, i. 49 *note*; promoted to general, 29th April, 1802, i. 52 *note*; Marhattá campaign, i. 52-71; battle of Assaye, i. 56-59; rapid promotion, i. 65; resigns appointment, i. 69; resumes command in Mysore, i. 70; receives Order of the Bath and other honours, i. 70, 71; his one meeting with Nelson, i. 75 *note*, 76; appointment under Lord Cathcart, i. 76; receives colonelcy of 33rd, i. 77; stationed at Hastings, and elected member for Rye, i. 77; marriage, i. 78, 79; becomes Irish Secretary, i. 81; receives a command in Cathcart's army, i. 85; battle of Roskilde, i. 87; bombardment and capitulation of Copenhagen, i. 88; returns to Ireland, i. 89; variety of employment, i. 90; command of Peninsular Expedition, i. 97; Lieutenant-General, i. 97; superseded in command, i. 104, 108, 109; difficulties with Portuguese, i. 106-108; Roliça, i. 110-112; Vimieiro and Convention of Cintra, i. 113-118; declines post of plenipotentiary of Madrid, i. 120; tribute from general officers, i. 121; returns to England, i. 121; popular censure, i. 121-123; incident of the levée, i. 123; Court of Inquiry on proceedings in the Peninsula, i. 123-125, 126 *note*; thanked by Parliament, and presented with the freedom of Londonderry and Limerick, i. 126; commands second expedition to Portugal, i. 134; Talavera Campaign, i. 134-170; narrow escape, i. 160 *and note*; receives a

peerage, i. 171; adopts defensive policy, i. 179; lines of Torres Vedras, i. 179-204; calls out all the military resources of Portugal, i. 186; battle of Busaco, i. 195-198; Redinha and Foz d'Aronce, i. 214, 215; visits Alentejo, i. 223; battle of Fuentes de Oñoro, i. 226-228; Albuera, i. 234; mistake regarding siege of Badajoz, i. 236; El Bodon, i. 241-243; assault and capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, i. 251-253; created a British earl and a Spanish duke, 255; storm of Badajoz, i. 257-261; Salamanca Campaign, i. 273-301; battle of Salamanca, i. 281-287; made a marquis, i. 287; siege of Burgos, i. 294, 295; appointed Spanish generalissimo, i. 298; rebukes his officers, i. 302; Vitoria Campaign, i. 305-331; visit to Cadiz, i. 307; battle of Vitoria, i. 316-320; made field-marshal, i. 322; proposal of the German command, i. 323; Pyrenees Campaign, i. 332-357; narrow escape at Sorauren, i. 333; battles of Sorauren, i. 334-337; capture of San Sebastian, i. 341; battle of the Nivelle, i. 354-356; South of France Campaign, i. 358-373; battle of Orthes, i. 364-366; wounded, i. 366; battle of Toulouse, i. 371; appointed British ambassador in Paris, i. 378; returns to Madrid to remonstrate with Ferdinand, i. 379; created Duke of Wellington, i. 380; takes his seat in the House of Lords, i. 381; reception by the House of Commons, i. 381, 382; goes to Paris as British ambassador, i. 382; Congress of Vienna, i. 386, 388; command of the Allied Army in the Netherlands, i. 392; taken by surprise on the eve of Quatre-Bras, ii. 8, 12, 14, 16;

Duchess of Richmond's ball, ii. 11-14; Ligny and Quatre-Bras, ii. 15-20; narrow escape, ii. 28; cavalry action at Genappe, ii. 40, 41; battle of Waterloo, ii. 52-90; gifts and honours, ii. 91; unpopularity in France, ii. 102-106; chief command of the Army of Occupation, ii. 109; Chief Commissioner of Arbitration and Finance, ii. 110, 111; attempted assassination, ii. 115; disobeys instructions to leave Paris, ii. 119; enters the Cabinet as Master-General of the Ordnance, ii. 142; contemplated assassination, 1820, 150, 151; dissuades King George from dismissing his Ministers, ii. 158; advocates recall of Canning, ii. 161, 166-168; scheme of Catholic relief, ii. 178; becomes partially deaf, ii. 181; mission to St. Petersburg, ii. 181; appointed Commander-in-Chief, ii. 185; quarrel with Canning, ii. 191, 192, 195-205; resignation of Command-in-Chief, ii. 198-203, 205; leaves the Cabinet, ii. 198; defence in House of Lords, ii. 201, 202; resumes Command-in-Chief, ii. 206; becomes Prime Minister, ii. 210; undertakes Roman Catholic Emancipation, ii. 222; defeated at the Oxford Election, ii. 227; attacked by Lord Winchilsea, ii. 231; duel with Lord Winchilsea, ii. 234, 235; defeat on the Estimates, ii. 243; defeat on the Jews' Relief Bill, ii. 244; unpopularity, ii. 250, 256, 257; speech against Reform, ii. 254; death of the Duchess of Wellington, ii. 259; rioters at Apsley House, ii. 259; opposition to second Reform Bill, ii. 262-264; undertakes to form a Government pledged to Reform, ii. 266, 267; resigns the attempt, ii. 269; un-

popularity, ii. 270-273; action in Opposition, ii. 274-276; correspondence with Miss J., ii. 280-283; voluminous general correspondence, ii. 283; installed as Chancellor of the University of Oxford, ii. 289; estrangement from Peel, ii. 289-294; difficulties with his party, ii. 294; accepts the chief offices provisionally, ii. 302; memorandum on the House of Lords, ii. 307; renewed estrangement from Peel, ii. 309; action in Opposition, ii. 315-317; cordiality with Peel restored, ii. 310; letter on coalitions, ii. 313; declines nomination as Lord Rector of Glasgow University, ii. 320; the City dinner, ii. 322; reconciliation with Lord Wellesley, ii. 323; recommends the Queen to send for Peel, ii. 324; coldness with Peel renewed, ii. 329-332; attitude towards the Canada Bill, ii. 331; cordiality with Peel restored, ii. 332; proposes leadership of Conservatives to Lord Stanley, ii. 349; declines a coalition, ii. 353; supports the Militia Bill in his last speech, ii. 384, 385; death, ii. 386

*Personal and professional characteristics—*

Abstemiousness and indifference to luxury, i. 47 *note*, ii. 327, 380  
 Administrative ability, i. 25, 51, 64, 66, 71, 89, ii. 102, 112, 141  
 Appearance at thirty-six, i. 78 *and note*; at sixty-nine, ii. 320; dress at Waterloo, ii. 57; on the hunting-field, ii. 277; in Parliament, ii. 335  
 Calmness, coldness, and reserve, i. 134, 181, 222, 229, 324, 374, ii. 77, 140, 306; exceptional outburst of emotion, i. 261  
 Caution and prudence, i. 21, 32, 161, 179, 228, 277, 313



- Charm of manner and considerateness of action, i. 19 *note*, 30, 135, 325, 373
- Children, fondness for, ii. 373, 378
- Confidence in himself, i. 134, 181, 248 *note*, 374, 378, 403
- Conversation, pleasure in, ii. 46 *note*, 374
- Courage, i. 12, 59, 98, 113, 143, 287, ii. 68, 70, 77, 115, 119, 222, 366
- Daily life, example of, i. 304
- Detail, attention to, i. 6 *note*, 12, 13, 20, 28, 42, 66, 83, 91, 98, 256 *note*, ii. 111, 283
- Discontent, and irritation with the authorities, i. 43, 44 *note*, 46, 65, 67-69, 77, 120, 394, 403, 405
- Disinterestedness, i. 25, 49 *note*, 66, 72, ii. 112, 351
- Display, dislike of, ii. 13, 185, 186, 192, 259, 289
- Health and powers of physical endurance, i. 34, 303, ii. 28 *note*, 39, 373, 380; illness mentioned, i. 13, 19, 45, 46, 70, ii. 166, 180, 181, 327; deafness, ii. 181, 325 *and note*, 332, 336, 371; rheumatism, ii. 325; failing powers, ii. 329, 330, 332
- Honour and duty, devotion to, i. 79, 368, ii. 337, 375
- Influence on military and political affairs, i. 20, 24, 29
- Loyalty to superiors and Allies, i. 67, 109, 126, 157, 368, ii. 159
- Moderation and humanity, i. 101, 137, 190, 351, 352, 359, ii. 101, 108, 130, 133
- Outspokenness, i. 21, 28, 29, 65, 66
- Penetration and rapidity of decision, i. 314, ii. 10, 112 *and note*, 124, 193, 369, 380
- Peremptoriness, ii. 193, 213, 230, 322, 375
- Political views- attitude towards slave trade, i. 380; devotion to the Crown, ii. 157, 276, 333, 344, 355; distrust of Whigs and Radicals, ii. 162, 163, 270, 273-276; foreign policy, ii. 249, 250; loyalty to the Government, and principles in Opposition, i. 153, 154, 368, ii. 304, 331, 340, 341, 354-356; Toryism as a "Possibilist," ii. 314
- Public opinion, indifference to, ii. 105, 106, 108, 157, 240, 257, 321, 330, 364; exception, ii. 201
- Religious views, ii. 90, 278-280, 282
- Sensitiveness to slight and occasional resentment, ii. 189, 193-201, 288, 289
- Severity of discipline and occasional harshness, i. 101, 144, 145, 185, 189, 200, 201, 302, 303, 325, 326 *and note*, 333, 342, 352, 362, ii. 130, 195, 273
- Simplicity and directness of speech, i. 66, 256, ii. 336, 372
- Sleep, facility of, i. 163, 283, ii. 38, 306, 381
- Sport, love of, i. 298, 309, ii. 275, 277
- Strategical ability, i. 20, 21, 64, 100, 182, 244, 396, ii. 102; conduct of sieges a weak point, i. 327
- Study, constant habit of, i. 8, 20
- Tactical ability, i. 6 *note*, 20, 59, 60, 107, 108 *note*, 223, 316, 350, ii. 139
- Tenacity of opinion and firmness of purpose, i. 323, ii. 213, 291, 337, 380
- Women, relations with, ii. 374, 375
- Wellington, Duchess of (*née* Pakenham), engagement to Wesley, i. 7; marriage, i. 78, ii. 78, 79, 375; married life, ii. 259, 260; death, ii. 259
- Wesley, name changed to Wellesley, i. 24 *note*
- Westmorland, Lord, Wesley aide-de-camp to, i. 7; desires secrecy regarding the Spanish Colonies Bill,



- ii. 174; Græco-Turkish views, ii. 192; refuses to hold office under Canning, ii. 198; suggested by Wellington for office of Privy Seal, ii. 211
- Wetherell, Sir Charles, violent opposition to Catholic Emancipation, ii. 230
- "Who-who?" Ministry, the, ii. 384
- William IV., accession of, ii. 248; dissolves Parliament, ii. 258; consents to creation of peers for the Reform Bill, ii. 265; accepts Melbourne's resignation, ii. 301; dislike of the Whigs, ii. 303, 311; death, ii. 311
- Winchilsea, Lord, attack on Wellington, ii. 231; duel with Wellington, ii. 234, 235
- Wolseley, Lord, Wellington contrasted with Marlborough by, i. 396 *note*
- YORK, Duke of, Netherland expedition, i. 9-12; recalled, i. 14; opinion regarding rank of field-marshal, i. 323 *note*; receives news of Waterloo, ii. 97; hostility to Roman Catholic claims, ii. 180; death of, ii. 184; Torrens' proposed panegyric on, ii. 185; debts of, ii. 186
- ZIETEN, General von, despatch to Wellington from Charleroi, ii. 8; approaches the French right at Waterloo, ii. 78; enters the field, ii. 80, 81, 84

THE END.

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