

In now taking leave of Dr. Middleton, we have merely to repeat the high approbation, which we have already strongly expressed, of his very elaborate production, and also to signify our hope that we have decisively shewn in the course of the preceding pages, that the application of his Doctrine of the Article to the illustration of the New Testament, is far from being confined to minutiae of inferior importance, but that, on the contrary, it serves strongly to confirm the truth of a remark of Lord Bacon, who, in speaking of the Holy Scriptures, affirms “*complecti eas non solum totaliter aut collective, sed distributive etiam in clausulis et vocabulis singulis, innumeros doctrinae rivulos et venas, ad Ecclesiae singulas partes, et animas fidelium irrigandas.*”

ART. XI.—*A Narrative of the Campaign of the British Army in Spain, commanded by His Excellency Lt. General Sir John Moore, K. B. &c. &c. authenticated by Official Papers and Original Letters, by James Moore, Esq. 4to. pp. 324. Johnson, 1809.*

A few Remarks explanatory of the Motives which guided the Operations of the British Army, during the late short Campaign in Spain, by Brig. General Henry Clinton, 8vo. pp. 30. Egerton, 1809.

Observations on the Movements of the British Army in Spain, in Reply to the Statement lately published by Brig. General Clinton, by a British Officer, 8vo. pp. 40. Murray, 1809.

Letters from Portugal and Spain, &c. by an Officer, 8vo. pp. 320. Longman.

An Account of the Operations of the British Army, &c. by the Rev. James Wilmot Ormsby, Chaplain on the Staff, 2 vols. 12mo. Carpenter.

Letters from Portugal and Spain, &c. by Adam Neale, M.D. 4to. Philips.

IT is not our intention to enter upon a regular examination of all the publications contained in the preceding list: although it would not be difficult to compile an amusing and interesting article from the pages of Dr. Neale and of Mr. Ormsby; both of whom appear to have related, with great truth and candour, all the events of our short, but most distressing campaign, in the north of Spain, and to have examined, with as much attention as circumstances would permit, the country through which they passed, and the conduct and character of the Spaniards.

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The accounts of eye-witnesses are always valuable: but a mere recital of facts, however enlivened by local descriptions and by occasional anecdote, must always be considered as subordinate to the labours of the professed historian. We shall therefore, for the present at least, confine our attention to Mr. Moore, who has assumed this character, and has undertaken the task of tracing every event to its cause, and of forming the whole into a connected narrative.

The materials which Mr. Moore possessed for the framing of such a narrative were indeed of no ordinary kind; according to the description which he gives of them in his preface.

‘ There is here (says Mr. Moore) presented to the public, perhaps the most authentic fragment of history on record: for *Sir John Moore kept a journal of his proceedings*; and with an exactness unusual in a military man, preserved every official paper or letter of importance which he received, together with copies of those which he wrote.

‘ *All these documents the author has in his possession*; and he has, besides, had the opportunity of acquiring full information respecting the events. He could not misrepresent them, had he been so inclined, without being exposed to immediate detection; but he is under no temptation either to disguise or to conceal any part of the conduct of the person in whom he is most deeply interested. His only wish has been to make a full disclosure; and with this view he has, as much as possible, made every individual concerned explain himself by his own letters; which, together with other documents, are selected and arranged in the order adapted to elucidate the facts.

‘ There is also given a connecting narrative; *and such reflections are added as naturally arose out of the transactions.*

‘ The intermingling of a multitude of letters with the narration, though not the most concise, is certainly the most candid mode of describing the campaign; for if a false inference be drawn, the reader can immediately discover it.’

The first sentiment which the perusal of this passage is calculated to excite, is that of regret that a document so important as the *journal* of Sir John Moore should not have been laid before the public in its most authentic form. A journal of the campaign written by Sir John Moore, had it been presented to the world, (with such omissions as might have been deemed necessary,) would, we conceive, have answered most perfectly, all the purposes intended by the present publication. Why then has it been suppressed? It was, perhaps, hastily and inaccurately written; but, surely, the most cold-blooded critic would not require precision and polish in a *journal*. The language of the moment,

moment, however hasty and inaccurate, is often the best that can be employed ; it is the language of truth, nature, and of present feeling : and certainly, in the case before us, even if the execution of the literary part of Mr. Moore's work had possessed a merit to which it does not pretend, we should have been of opinion that no degree of merit of that kind could compensate for the genuine diction of Sir John Moore.

It is not enough to know that this most curious document is in the possession of Mr. Moore; or to be assured that its substance has been incorporated into the work before us. Thus absorbed, and new modified, it loses all its animation, and is even useless as an authority. We do not question Mr. Moore's veracity; but if we were disposed to do so, it would be no satisfactory answer to our doubts, that he has, at home, an authentic paper, which however he does not produce.

If, indeed, any thing could induce us to entertain any suspicion of the scrupulous fidelity of Mr. Moore's narrative, it would be his avowal that he enters upon his task not merely as an historian but as a champion; that we are to expect, in his work, not the impartiality of a mere record of facts, but the zeal of political controversy. His purpose, in writing this book, is, as he informs us, to repel the various indirect insinuations by which, he affirms, that malice has endeavoured to detract from the glory of his illustrious brother, the much-lamented commander of the expedition.

'One disagreeable consequence, however,' says Mr. Moore, 'is likely to be produced by *so open an explanation* ; it may *irritate those whose conduct cannot bear investigation*. The love of tranquillity, his professional avocations, and his private interest, would have hindered the author from undertaking so laborious a work, and *engaging in such vexatious hostility*, had he not been urged forward by an impulse superior to these combined motives. He could not remain passive when his brother's memory was assailed by ungenerous attacks and dark insinuations. *The sufferers from this publication* ought to bear in recollection, that the author only acts defensively; and they should point their indignation against the first assailants, who are the original cause of any mortification they may endure.'

To reprint a series of public letters already printed by order of parliament; to unite them by a connecting narrative; and to add such reflections as naturally arise out of the transactions, is apparently, a candid though not a concise mode of describing a campaign: but when the author qualifies this, as a 'laborious work;' as 'engaging him in vexatious hostility;' as tending to 'irritate those whose conduct will not bear investigation,' we are

are at a loss to understand his meaning; and feel it impossible to repose our whole confidence in a man, who represents thus strangely, the motives of his own conduct. But to proceed.

We are told (page 3) that ‘after having acted both in the Mediterranean and in Sweden, as commander in chief, Sir John Moore was superseded by Sir Harry Burrard; and he received the Secretary of State’s orders to serve in Portugal as third in command; that *there are few generals in the British service who would not have resigned upon such treatment; but that he, superior to modern military etiquette, possessed a large portion of the ancient Roman spirit,*’ &c. &c.

Professing, once for all, a most unfeigned respect for the military talents and character of Sir John Moore, we must nevertheless protest, once for all, against the disposition which manifests itself in almost every page of this work to elevate that character at the expense of the whole British army. Far from believing that there are “*few generals in the British service who would not have resigned*” upon such an occasion, we believe that there are *none* by whom the command of a body of troops, entrusted to them for a specific object, is considered as an inalienable property; or who, after once enjoying such a proof of His Majesty’s confidence, would think themselves justified in quitting His service, rather than accept a subordinate command in a larger army under senior officers. We must observe too, in fairness to Sir John Moore himself, that he is very far from advancing any such arrogant claims. ‘I beg’ (says he, in his letter to Lord Castlereagh) ‘that your lordship will convey to his Majesty the high sense I have of the *honour* conferred upon me; and that you will assure his Majesty, that I have nothing more at heart than the good of his service; that my best exertions shall not be wanting to promote its success; and that I can only be happy in proportion as I shall be able to fulfil his Majesty’s wishes, and to justify, in any degree, the trust he has been graciously pleased to repose in me.’

Such, we are persuaded, were Sir John Moore’s real sentiments. Nor is this the only instance in which we find the sentiments of Mr. James Moore directly at variance with those of his brother. The following statement occurs in the same letter from which the last passage is quoted:

‘*It is my intention, as it was that of Sir H. Burrard, to move with the troops from this on Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo; this, your Lordship will observe, by Lord William Bentinck’s letter of the 2d October, is recommended by the Spanish generals; and I think it preferable, for many reasons, to a movement by sea to Corunna,*

runna, which at this season would be tedious and uncertain; and where the country, already exhausted by General Blake's army, *will, perhaps*, scarcely be able to supply the equipment required, to enable the corps, under Sir David Baird, when landed, to move forward.'

Mr. Moore, on the contrary, takes upon himself to assert, that

' Upon an examination of the subject, *there was found to be no choice*; for, independently of the uncertainty and danger of a coasting voyage in winter, which, even when prosperous, unhinges the whole machinery of an army, *it was ascertained* that, at Corunna, there were hardly the means of equipping and forwarding the corps commanded by Sir David Baird.'

Sir John Moore affirms (and we have no doubt affirms most truly) that he exercised a *discretionary* judgment; and justifies his choice by conjecture and *probability*.

His brother affirms (from what authority does not appear) that there was *no room left for discretion*; and that what Sir John Moore states only as *probable* and conjectural, was in fact distinctly "*ascertained*."

Is it possible to read such manifest contradiction in a point perhaps the most controverted of any in the history of the campaign, without wishing that we had rather the journal of Sir John, than the commentary of Mr. James Moore before us?

This alteration, however, if not very correct, is very convenient for one of the points of history which Mr. Moore is evidently desirous of establishing: because, the project of transporting the army to Corunna being once shewn to be impracticable, it follows that the whole plan of the campaign, as conceived by the Cabinet, was originally absurd: and, accordingly, we are invited to look back with contempt on that foolish credulity which placed such reliance on Spanish enthusiasm; which, after the surrender of Dupont's division to one Spanish army, anticipated the expulsion of 45,000 Frenchmen from the Peninsula by the combined efforts of the Spanish nation; and which caused the dispatch of an English army into Leon, to participate in the glory of our allies.

' The conviction of the universal enthusiasm of the Spaniards,' says Mr. Moore, ' was, at this time, so prevalent in the British Cabinet, that in a memorial transmitted for the information of Sir John Moore by the Secretary of State, it is stated, that the French armies could not enter the defiles of the Asturias without exposing themselves to be destroyed, even by the armed peasants.'—p. 11.

This memorial, though probably (like the journal of Sir John Moore) in Mr. Moore's possession, was, apparently, thought by him

him too ridiculous for insertion in the appendix. But, as it was written by the Marquis de la Romana, and is fortunately printed elsewhere, we here subjoin an extract from it.

‘ Galicia and the Asturias,’ says the Marquis, ‘ are separated from the neighbouring provinces by chains of mountains of such a nature as to render them nearly inaccessible. The entrance of the former is defended by two rows of Cordilleras, inclosing between them a small country, about seven leagues in breadth, called El Bierzo, and situated on the confines of Old Castile. The first of these cordilleras, called Fontcavaddon, terminates near Astorga, the frontier town of Castile: the second at Villa Franca del Bierzo. The intervening country is rather flat; but the plain is so narrow that an army occupying it would be completely inclosed, as it has no issue but by the great road which passes from Castile into Galicia; and this is so hemmed in by mountains to the right and left, that a body of one thousand men might dispute its passage against an army of twenty thousand. Hence it appears that the English auxiliary army, intending to carry on its operations on the plains of Castile, would have full liberty for all its movements, without any hazard of being cut off, as it would have a secure retreat on the great road which leads to Corunna. This circumstance, the facility of entering the harbour with every wind and in all seasons, and its vicinity to the coasts of England, point out Corunna as the best port of rendezvous for the English auxiliary army. As to the Asturias, the enemy cannot entangle themselves in the defiles of that province, without exposing themselves to be destroyed, though they should have nothing to encounter but the armed peasants,’ &c.

Now we really cannot discover any thing very absurd in this memorial, the principal part of which is supported, as we conceive, by Sir David Baird’s subsequent proclamation of the 1st of December.

‘ Galicia,’ says Sir David Baird, ‘ strong by nature, does not require for its protection a more numerous army, nor can it possess a more gallant one than the army of the left, composed principally of the courageous youth of the kingdom, which is now united, in Leon, under the orders of the highly distinguished commander His Excellency the Marquis de la Romana. The resort of *more* troops, in the present circumstances, in the defiles of the mountains, *would be prejudicial,*’ &c.

This expression, we think, is nearly as strong as that of the memorial which Mr. Moore treats with so much contempt: and agreeing with the British general in the high opinion which he expresses of the Marquis de la Romana, we agree with the Spanish general in thinking, that, in such a country as is here described,

scribed, supposing it occupied by a British force (which is the supposition of the memorial) “the armed peasantry of the Asturias” might have “destroyed” any French corps which should have been sent into their “defiles” for the purpose of turning our position.

Our author next proceeds (perhaps with less injustice) to arraign the conduct of the Central Junta, as equally marked by imbecility and rashness; as tending to check and render inefficient those succours which they were daily soliciting from us; as prodigally lavishing the blood of their own soldiers, whom they successively forced, in small bodies, half armed, half clothed, and unprovided with artillery or cavalry, on the swords of the enemy; and as preparing, by their perverse councils, the certain triumph of Buonaparte. The aspect of affairs in Spain was certainly most unpromising when Sir John Moore, having sent the greater part of his infantry in three divisions through Portugal, and his cavalry and artillery supported by two regiments of foot on the Madrid road, arrived, on the 13th of November, at Salamanca, having previously learned the defeat of the army of Estremadura and the capture of Burgos by the French. The head of Sir David Baird’s column was, on that day, only at Astorga; the cavalry, horse-artillery, and waggon-train, had not yet left Corunna; the troops from Lisbon, coming up in succession, were not expected to assemble at Salamanca till the 23d, and General Hope’s division was far distant:—so that nothing could be more embarrassing than the General’s situation. But Fortune had not yet exhausted her malice. On the 15th he learnt from General Pignatelli, the governor of the province, that the French had taken possession of Valladolid, a city only twenty leagues distant from Salamanca: and though he soon discovered that this had been effected by a small body of cavalry who retreated on the following day; this little alleviation of his uneasiness was almost immediately succeeded by the intelligence of the complete dispersion of the Spaniards under Blake, at Reynosa, by which his position was completely uncovered, and his hopes of assembling the different divisions of his army became totally dependant on the ulterior operations of the enemy.

‘The following extract (says Mr. Moore, p. 44) from a letter to one of his brothers, marks his view of the state of affairs. It is dated Salamanca, November 26, 1808.

“Upon entering Spain I have found affairs in a very different state from what I expected, or from what they are thought to be in England.

“I am in a scrape from which God knows how I am to extricate myself.

myself. But, instead of Salamanca, this army should have been assembled at Seville. The poor Spaniards deserve a better fate, for they seem a fine people; but have fallen into hands who have lost them by their apathy and ****.

“ The Junta, jealous of their generals, gave them no power, but kept them at the head of separate armies, each independent of the other. Thus they have prevented any union of action.

“ They took no pains to recruit the armies, or to furnish them with arms and clothing. In short, during the interval that the French were weak, they did nothing either to overpower them before their reinforcements arrived, or to meet them with superior numbers when reinforced.

“ When I marched into this country, in three divisions, from Corunna, Lisbon, and round by Madrid, instead of finding any army, to cover the junction of the three corps, until our supplies and stores came up, which were necessary to enable us to act; I found that the Spanish armies were placed on each flank of the French; one in Biscay, and the other on the river Alagond: at such a distance as to be able to give no sort of support to each other, or to combine their movements; and leaving it in the power of the French to attack either army with their whole force as soon as they were ready. They accordingly attacked Blake and have completely dispersed his army. Officers and men are flying in every direction. Many of them have passed this.

“ They also got a corps, called the Estremadura army, beat at Burgos, where they sent it, without any motive, close to the strength of the French.

“ I was desired to correspond with Castanos, and combine my movements with him; but as I began my correspondence, he was suspended, and the Marquis of Romana named to the chief command; but who, when I last heard, was at Santandero.

“ I am in no correspondence with any of their generals or armies. I know not their plans, or those of the Spanish government. No channels of information have been opened to me; and as yet a stranger, I have been able to establish no certain ones for myself.

“ The enemy are at Valladolid, in what force I cannot make out; and I have my junction to make with Baird, whose whole force will not be at Astorga until the 5th of December, and with Hope, who will be at Arevola about the same time.

“ Castanos and Palafox have about 40,000 men, mostly undisciplined peasants, upon the Ebro and Alagon. And this is all the Spaniards have to oppose 100,000 French troops. The provinces are not armed, and as to enthusiasm I have seen no marks of it.

“ That the Spaniards must be driven from Madrid is inevitable; they have no force to resist. When they will bring up, or if they will bring up at all, I cannot guess. In this province, and throughout Old Castile, there is no mark of any intention to make any effort.

fort. The French cavalry are overrunning the plains, raising contributions, to which the people submit without resistance.

“ There may be more character in other parts. Enthusiasm, and an obstinate determination not to submit to the French yoke, may do much. But even in this case the government has been improvident: arms, ammunition, and other means, are wanting.

“ The probability, therefore, is that the French will succeed; and if they do, it will be from no talent having sprung up, after the first effort, to take advantage of the impulse, and of the enthusiasm which then existed.

“ I understand all is fear and confusion at Madrid. Tell James it is difficult to judge at a distance. The Spaniards have not shown themselves a wise or a provident people. Their wisdom is not a wisdom of action; but still they are a fine people; a character of their own, quite distinct from other nations; and much might have been done with them. Perhaps they may rouse again. Pray for me that I may make right decisions: if I make bad ones, it will not be for want of consideration.

“ I sleep little; it is now five in the morning; and I have concluded, since I got up, this long letter.

“ Your affectionate brother,

“ JOHN MOORE.”

Sir David Baird was, at the same time, still more desponding. He had, as early as the 18th, anticipated the probability of being compelled to retreat, and even felt so little confidence in his means of defending the almost impregnable passes of Galicia, that he proposed to retire by Vigo, for the purpose of avoiding the danger of being molested by batteries on the shore during any attempt to effect his embarkation at Corunna. It was indeed sufficiently evident, that the French might, if they thought fit, effectually prevent the junction of our armies; but Sir John Moore wisely judged that they would not attempt this until they should have disposed of the army of Castanos, and thus opened a secure passage to Madrid, and with this impression sent orders to Sir David to press the advance of his troops as much as possible. We here gladly transcribe a portion of seven lines, which Mr. Moore has vouchsafed to give us from Sir John's Journal.

“ I see my situation as clearly as any one, that nothing can be worse; for I have no Spanish army to give me the least assistance, only the Marquis of Romana is endeavouring to assemble the fugitives from Blake's army at Leon. Yet I am determined to form the junction of this army, and to try our fortune. We have no business here as things are; but, being here, it would never do to abandon the Spaniards without a struggle.” (p. 50.)

His object was to march from Salamanca on the 1st of December to Toro: Sir David Baird was directed to proceed, on the same day, from Astorga to Benevente; General Hope was to lead his corps to Torderillas, and the army would then have taken up a line upon the Duero, to cover the arrival of their stores, and then to act according to circumstances. Had the General persevered, at all risks, in the execution of this project, it is highly probable that his boldness would have been rewarded by success. But the defeat of Castanos, the news of which arrived at Salamanca on the 28th of November, convinced him that the ruin of the Spanish cause was at length complete; and that there was no alternative but to await with the British army the approach of Buonaparte's whole force, or to avail himself of the very short respite which the present distance of his indefatigable adversary might allow him, to measure back his steps and retire into Portugal. He accordingly, as his historian informs us,

'Assembled the general officers, and shewed them the intelligence he had received, and the plan he had adopted. He told the generals, that he had not called them together to request their counsel, or to induce them to commit themselves by giving any opinion upon the subject. He took the responsibility entirely upon himself; and he only required that they would immediately prepare for carrying it into effect. It ought to be mentioned, that the idea of retreating was very generally disapproved of at Salamanca by the army. The murmurs against it, from officers of rank, were heard in every quarter. Even the staff-officers of Sir John Moore's family lamented it; and, for the first time, doubted the wisdom of his decision. He, however, afterwards learned, that General Hope agreed with him completely on this, as on all other points.' (p. 72.)

Instructions were immediately sent to Generals Baird and Hope, and on the following day, the 29th, Sir John Moore's determination was conveyed to Mr. Frere and the other agents of the British government at Madrid.

It is here, most particularly, that we lament the want of that valuable Journal from which Mr. Moore has furnished us with such scanty extracts; as it would have been highly interesting to possess an authentic and correct statement of Sir John Moore's feelings and opinions, during the short and inactive, but most anxious, interval between the 28th of November and the 5th of December. We are, indeed, provided with letters in abundance, most of which are already known to the public; and Mr. Moore has displayed much argumentation, and no small degree of acrimony, in a series of remarks on the controversy with Mr. Frere: but we do not think that he has succeeded in shewing the
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wisdom of a resolution rather abruptly adopted, and again, after a week's delay, suddenly abandoned, nor the fallacy of the criticisms made upon it at the time ; though he contends (p. 139.), that ' Buonaparte having presumed that his movement would, of course, determine the English to retire on Lisbon,' such a retreat must have been a wise military measure.

We did not expect, after reading the French bulletins, that Buonaparte would have been cited as the eulogist of any of our operations in the Peninsula : but, without entering on so wide a field of discussion as our author has done, we will now endeavour to collect from the materials before us, a short view of the arguments on both sides of the question.

On one side it is stated,—that the instructions sent out to Sir J. Moore in September, were drawn up with a view to guide his conduct under circumstances widely different from those which actually presented themselves. They allowed to the commander a specific degree of latitude as to the mode of assembling his army ; but to assemble it somewhere, and to preserve it from being destroyed in detail, was obviously necessary. To direct its combined efforts, when assembled, to some useful purpose, was a subsequent duty. But there did not exist, at this moment, one substantial army in Spain ; one corps which, though joined by the whole British force, could oppose any serious resistance to the invader. Even if the central government, whose rashness and inexperience were so conspicuous, could be expected to exert in future more caution and wisdom ; if the provinces which, after having appointed that government, seemed to consider the revolution as complete, should resume their former enthusiasm ; there was not time to re-assemble an army and prepare it for service, any where within reach of our troops, in the face of an alert and victorious enemy. A division of the French was at Burgos, was receiving daily reinforcements, was covered by a numerous cavalry with which it levied contributions at pleasure, and concealed all its operations ; and might hourly be expected to push forward, and to occupy in force the whole country between Salamanca and Astorga. Since therefore we were neither strong enough to advance, nor to resist, in our actual positions, the growing force of the enemy, there remained no means of safety but a retreat on Portugal, where it would at least be possible to unite our own forces, and from whence we might, on the first symptoms of reviving enthusiasm, return into Spain. To adopt such a measure was, indeed, most distressing ; particularly, as Portugal itself, being in-

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defensible against an enemy once possessed of Spain, could afford us only a temporary refuge : but the preservation of the army must supersede every other consideration. Such are the opinions and arguments contained in the letters of Sir John Moore and Sir D. Baird, and, as we are told, acquiesced in by General Hope.

On the other hand it is contended,—that this description of the state of things was in every part much exaggerated. The rational hope of establishing the independence of Spain might yet be entertained. The undisciplined Spanish troops had indeed been found unable to contend at once with cold and famine, and with the superior skill and numbers of the French, and had been foiled and defeated, and dispersed ;—but not annihilated. The government whilst yet in its infancy, and ignorant of the extent and unexperienced in the exercise of its own powers, had committed numerous errors ; the results of which at such a moment must be highly mischievous ;—but not fatal. The enthusiasm of the nation had apparently abated, from the cessation of the causes which had first excited it ;—but was in none of the provinces totally extinguished. The fugitives from those battles to which they had been so unwisely and cruelly hurried, were daily re-assembling round their standards. The central junta still continued to issue its decrees, and was still obeyed. The people, though they had not hailed our arrival with songs and gratulations, had evinced towards us a friendly disposition, at least proportionate to the exertions which we had hitherto made in their defence. With regard to our own situation, though certainly critical and perilous, it was by no means desperate. The French, however alert and enterprising, did not possess the attribute of ubiquity. Having after the battles of Reynosa and Burgos, directed the mass of their forces towards Arragon and Madrid, they could not immediately turn their efforts against us. Of their strength at Burgos, and of the rapidity with which their reinforcements might arrive, nothing was yet known ; but their present inaction proved their actual insufficiency to attack us, and if instead of contemplating with prophetic despondency their future numbers, our commander would hasten the advance of Sir D. Baird, a very few days must ensure the junction of our forces. To encounter the risk attendant on this short interval was surely better than to retire without making a single effort in favour of our allies. By a retreat on Portugal, we should contribute to the subjugation of the country which we were sent to assist, without securing that to which we should retire ;

retire ; we must alienate for ever the affections of the Spaniards, impair the spirit and the discipline of our own army, and degrade our national character in the eyes of all Europe.

It is not easy to weigh with impartiality these opposite arguments, unless we abstract from our minds the knowledge of all that has since occurred, and consider the situation and views of the persons by whom at the moment the opinions were entertained.

It was natural that the officers of the British army, of whose dissatisfaction and murmurs at the projected retreat Mr. Moore makes mention, having so lately had an opportunity of comparing the prowess of our troops with those of the French in the field of battle, having beheld our regiments on their arrival at Salamanca, improved in discipline, in activity, and even in health ; having hoped to see them achieve in Spain victories still more brilliant than that of Vimeira,—it was natural that, with these impressions, the officers of Sir John Moore's army, feeling no personal responsibility, no dread of present or contingent embarrassments, and no desire but that of signaling themselves, should be disposed to undervalue the suggestions of even the most necessary and provident caution.

It was natural that our minister at Aranjuez, exposed as he was to the daily solicitations of the Spanish government, witnessing the difficulties by which they were assailed on all sides,—conscious of the anxiety of his own court that an auxiliary army which had been fitted out and carried into Spain after much effort, and at an enormous expence, should become available in the hour of Spanish distress ; and aware of the impression which its success or failure might produce on the cabinets of all Europe, should consider its proposed retreat from the only scene of action on which British valour had an opportunity of exerting itself, as too hurtful and ignominious to be palliated by any apprehensions of anticipated danger.

It was also natural that the British nation, so lately soured by the disappointment of its hopes in the Convention of Cintra, and now encouraged to fresh expectation by the well-known gallantry of Sir John Moore, should view with impatience the long scene of apparent inactivity exhibited at Salamanca, and comparing the velocity of Buonaparte's eagles with the sluggish movements of our commissaries and their baggage-waggons, should shut their ears against any reasons by which a retreat without a battle could be justified.

On the other hand, it was perhaps equally natural that our generals should be actuated by very different feelings. Sir David

Baird had arrived on the 18th of October at Corunna; but, in the first instance, by some strange perversity or negligence of the Central Junta, he was not permitted to land his troops. The cavalry and artillery having joined him later, could not be disembarked and put in motion till the 15th of November, when having received an account of Blake's defeat at Soronosa, he began to feel the difficulty of effecting his proposed junction with Sir J. Moore. We are told by Mr. Moore, p. 47, (whether seriously or humorously, we are, after much grave deliberation, unable to decide,) that Sir David had also a peculiar source of annoyance in the want of "slaves" and "elephants" to which he had been accustomed in India; but, however this might be, he was certainly assailed by numerous difficulties during his march, harassed by alarming and contradictory reports, disconcerted by the slowness and apathy of those whom he had expected to find enthusiasts, and confounded by the rapidity of the French successes. He seems to have despaired almost from the beginning, and to have communicated his despondency to Sir John Moore; who, in a situation of much greater hazard, with more extensive responsibility, having full leisure to meditate on the accumulation of power which was destined to overwhelm him, ultimately reconciled his mind to every sacrifice by which the impending destruction might be averted. Gallant and brave as he was, and adventurous in meeting and even in courting personal danger, and confident as he must have been in the spirit of his excellent troops, he seems to have forgotten that their courage might perhaps afford him some resource, and that audacity in forming and rapidity in executing projects is often, in the vicissitudes of a military life, the best quality of a general. The melancholy forebodings by which he was now visited are strongly expressed in the concluding lines of his letter to Sir David Baird. 'On your arrival at Corunna, you will of course embark and sail for the Tagus, where orders shall be waiting for you. Write immediately to England, and give notice of what we are doing; and beg that transports may be sent to Lisbon. *They will be wanted: for when the French have Spain, Portugal cannot be defended.*' (p. 70.)

The intelligence of Sir John Moore's intention having been conveyed to Aranjuez and Madrid, by his letters of the 29th, excited there the utmost consternation. Mr. Stuart writes to him on the following day, "You must certainly know best the chances of effecting a junction between your different divisions; and it does not become me to hazard an opinion on the subject.

With

“ With respect, however, to the consequence of their distinct retrograde movements, I can tell you, that they are likely to produce an effect here, not less serious than the most decisive victory on the part of the enemy ; and I shall, I own, be surprised if a change of government is not the immediate consequence, when the reasons for your retreat are known.” Mr. Frere dispatched on the same day two letters of expostulation on the same subject. The Central Government sent to Salamanca two Spanish Generals, whom Sir John professed to consider as ‘ *two old women*,’ and whose remonstrances, of course, had not any effect in shaking his resolution. Lastly, Castel Franco and Morla, the joint governors of Madrid, addressed to him, on the 2d of December, a memorial, imploring him to succour that city, which it had been resolved to defend to the last extremity ; and Colonel Charmilly, who had witnessed the apparently enthusiastic determination of the inhabitants, was deputed by Mr. Frere to report what he had seen, and to second the urgent representations contained in a letter of which he was the bearer. These dispatches reached Salamanca on the 5th, the very day on which it appears that the artillery under General Hope joined the army ; and, in consequence of measures concerted between the two generals at Alba de Tormes, where they met on the 4th, actually began their retreat towards Portugal.*

Hitherto, Sir John Moore had persevered in his resolution. He listened to Colonel Charmilly “ without uttering a word which could indicate his thoughts. But, when alone, he reflected seriously upon the extraordinary demands which had been transmitted to him, not only by the Spanish Government, but also by the British Minister : and he called to mind, that he had been commanded to receive the requisitions and representations of both with the utmost deference and attention. But, independent of these positive requisitions, the intelligence brought was of a most favourable kind, and from so authentic a source that it could not be doubted. The letters were official, and from the highest authorities ; and M. Charmilly, who was deputed by the British Minister, had been an eye-witness of the effervescence at Madrid. The General was thus persuaded that a great and unexpected improvement in the public affairs had taken place ; and he judged, that he ought not to pursue the plan which he had devised previous to these events.” (p. 89.)

We must here stop to observe, that, if General Clinton is to

* See ‘ Observations, &c. in reply to General Clinton,’ p. 12 & 13.

be credited, (Remarks, &c. p. 8.) it was *not* from 'deference or attention to Mr. Frere or to the Spanish Government' that Sir John Moore relinquished his plan. Indeed, Mr. Moore himself tell us (p. 108.), that "neither the arts of Morla, the news of Charmilly, nor the arguments and requisitions of the Junta and Mr. Frere, could induce the General to march to Madrid;" neither did he adopt any other of their suggestions. We are told by General Clinton, that "accounts were received from *various other* channels, as well as from Mr. Frere, that the Spaniards were resolutely defending themselves in Madrid; and although none of that enthusiasm, of which so much had been said, was apparent in any part of Spain through which Sir J. Moore had passed, it was represented to him *by British officers, upon whose judgment he knew he could rely*, that the spirit which had manifested itself at Saragossa, and in other parts of Spain, was by no means extinct." (p. 10.)

This indeed seems perfectly conformable to the language of the Journal, from which we transcribe with pleasure the following extract.

"After Castanos' defeat, the French marched to Madrid. The inhabitants flew to arms, barricaded their streets, and swore to die rather than submit. This has arrested the progress of the French, and Madrid still holds out. This is the first instance of enthusiasm shewn. There is a chance that the example may be followed, and the people be saved. I have stopped Baird's retreat, and am taking measures to form our junction, whilst the French are wholly occupied in Madrid. We are bound not to abandon the cause as long as there is hope. But the courage of the populace of Madrid may fail; or at any rate they may not be able to resist. In short, in a moment things may be as bad as ever, unless the whole country is animated, and flocks to the aid of the capital. In this part the people are passive. I have sent Colonel Graham to Madrid, to let me know exactly what is passing; for we find the greatest difficulty to get people to bring us information."

Still, however, the principal difficulty remains to be explained; since it was not the French army then occupied at Madrid, but the corps in the vicinity of Burgos, whose cavalry had so long levied contributions in the plains of Leon, and which, after receiving its reinforcements, was expected to advance and interpose itself between Salamanca and Astorga, that formed the supposed impediment to the junction of our divisions; and concerning this corps, it does not appear that either the Junta or Mr. Frere had been able to furnish any satisfactory intelligence.

Be

Be this, however, as it may, Sir John Moore sent off to Sir David Baird, who by this time had retreated as far as Villa Franca, two dispatches dated on the 5th and 6th of December, in the latter of which, after ordering him to return to Astorga, and explaining the principal motives for this change of conduct, he uses this melancholy and prophetic phrase. "I mean to proceed bridle in hand; for if the bubble bursts, *we shall have a run for it.*" He also began a direct correspondence with the Marquis Romana; and, our historian informs us (p. 108) "formed and executed a plan for stopping the progress of the French, and relieving Spain, which has been highly admired by masters in the art of war." Sir John Moore, himself, indeed, in his letter of the 8th, 10th, and 12th to Lord Castlereagh, professes that his object was simply to advance by Valladolid towards Burgos, in conjunction with Sir D. Baird, and with or without the army of Romana, for the purpose of threatening the communications of the French: a plan which certainly was not quite new; which as certainly he did not execute; and from which, whatever might be the opinion of other 'masters in the art of war,' he declares himself to have entertained very slight hopes of success.

Notwithstanding these feelings of despondency, however, on the 12th of December he marched from Salamanca to Alaejos, on his road to Valladolid; and the commencement of his enterprise was signalized by the capture of a small corps of the enemy at the village of Rueda; an event of little importance, except as it was highly honourable to the skill and enterprising spirit of the cavalry under the orders of Brigadier General Stuart.

On the 14th, he received, at Alaejos, an intercepted letter from Berthier to Soult, by which he learnt the strength and situation of the different divisions of the French army; and in consequence of this information, wishing to attempt an attack on Soult, who was then posted at Saldanha, changed his route and marched to Toro, for the purpose of forming an earlier junction with Sir D. Baird, who was on his way to Benevente.

We are here compelled to stop, that we may insert an extract, the last which is afforded to us from Sir John's journal.

"I halted at Toro on the 16th, when Mr. Stuart came to me from Mr. Frere, accompanied by a member of the Junta, to request I would connect myself with the Marquis of Romana. 'This I told them I was about to do, and that I had written to the Marquis from Salamanca. I explained to Mr. Stuart Mr. Frere's extraordinary conduct to me, and I shewed him his letters, which surprised him. He was not much pleased at having been sent upon a mission with only a half confidence.'"

It

It appears that Sir John had dismissed Colonel Charmilly on the 6th, without any answer to the two letters from Talavera; that, on the 8th Mr. Frere had thought it his duty to repeat his expostulations from Truxillo; that the central Junta, alarmed at the retreat of Sir D. Baird, of which they had received intelligence from the Marquis de la Romana, deputed to Sir John Moore one of their members with a written remonstrance; and that Mr. Stuart, who was the bearer of Mr. Frere's letter, had undertaken to support their solicitations by his personal influence with the General.

Being unwilling to engage in this controversy, we leave the simple statement to the consideration of our reader. We dismiss the subject with this single observation, that as for reasons known only to himself, Mr. James Moore did not think it right to publish *the whole* of Sir John Moore's journal; it is to be lamented that he should have felt himself at liberty to select for partial publication, a passage, containing reflections upon any individual. In the publication of the *whole* there could have been no reason to expect that such a passage should have been omitted. But in a *selection* from the papers of a person deceased, it is at least in the power of the selector to publish only what is either absolutely necessary, or entirely unobjectionable; and though Mr. James Moore has announced his performance in the outset as controversial as well as historical; we should have thought better of his taste and his feelings, if he had cited his brother's name only in the confirmation of his history, and had been contented to carry on the controversy in his own.

At this time, our cavalry under Lord Paget were so far advanced that they had frequent skirmishes with the enemy near Valladolid, in all of which they evinced a manifest superiority. Sir John Moore had his head-quarters on the 18th, at Castromuevo, and Sir D. Baird at Benevente. "Sir John, says our author, "was very desirous of obtaining the co-operation of the "Marquis of Romana, who, unluckily, was beginning to retire on "Gallicia. This proceeded from the Spanish and English commanders being independent, instead of the one being subordinate to the other;" and this is followed by a letter from the British general to the Marquis, (p. 141,) in which the asperity of the style is rather more evident than the general meaning. Sir J. Moore taunts the Marquis de la Romana with having announced to Sir D. Baird an intention of retreating on Gallicia, and for having begun to do so, instead of occupying the Asturias, "and
" thus

“ thus protecting the left of the British communication with Co-
“ runna,” as might have been expected from the reasoning contained
in “ the paper, which he had given in to the British government.”
Now in the first place, we conceive that had the Spanish com-
mander pushed into the Asturias, he would have been more distant
from Sir John Moore than he was at Leon; in the second place,
there is nothing in the paper alluded to from which the reason-
ableness of his marching into the Asturias could possibly be in-
ferred; and thirdly, the retreat which he had begun was perfectly
involuntary; and of this he very naturally, and very civilly re-
minds Sir John in his answer. Sir D. Baird (parliamentary
papers, p. 201) says, in his letter of the 4th of December, from
Villa Franca, “ *a strong and urgent application I received from*
“ the Marquis of Romana, who is using every effort to collect
“ and organize the scattered remnants of the dispersed Gallician,
“ Estremaduran, and Asturian armies at Leon, requesting me to
“ remain at Astorga, for the purpose, in the first place, of afford-
“ ing countenance and support to his measures, and *in the second,*
“ *of endeavouring, by a combined movement, to effect a junc-*
“ *tion with Sir John Moore,* induced me in some degree to delay
“ the execution of my orders, and to leave Lord Paget with the
“ cavalry and light brigade at Astorga, and in its vicinity, whilst
“ the remainder of the infantry and the stores were falling back.
“ *To the second part of the Marquis's proposition I could pay*
“ *no attention.*” Such a reception of such a proposal, however
justified by the circumstances of the time, might very naturally
render the Marquis somewhat reserved in his communications to
one of the British generals; but, in his reply to Sir John Moore,
he says, “ I hasten to answer your Excellency's letter of yesterday,
“ by observing, that if I entertained any thoughts of retreating, it
“ was only in consequence of the news I received from Sir David
“ Baird; otherwise it was by no means my intention;” after which
he expresses very fully his willingness to co-operate in any mea-
sure which Sir John Moore should point out; and no sooner
was that measure suggested than he cheerfully risked the whole
of his disposable force to insure its success.

The British army was at length assembled, on the 20th De-
cember, at Majorga, and mustered about 23,000 infantry, and
2,800 cavalry; the latter being in advance within a few miles
of Sahagun, where about 700 of the enemy's cavalry were posted.
Lord Paget attempted to surprise and carry off this corps, and
though his complete success was prevented by an accident, dis-
persed them and brought off 157 prisoners. On the 21st, the
army arrived at Sahagun; and on the two following days every
preparation

preparation was completed for the attempt of the enemy at Carrion and Saldanha. The Marquis of Romana was on the 23d at Mansilla with about 7,000 infantry, 120 horse, and 8 pieces of artillery, expecting directions for the combined attack; the British army was actually in motion at eight o'clock in the evening; but about ten, they were ordered to return into their former cantonments. This was in consequence of information received from the Marquis of Romana, and through other channels, that Soult had just been joined by a large reinforcement; that the French armies had been suddenly halted on their march towards the south; and that Buonaparte was advancing from Madrid. Sir John, therefore, lost no time in beginning his retreat, and in explaining the necessity of it, and communicating his ulterior intentions to the Marquis of Romana. "The troops, says he, were to have marched from this
 " to Carrion at eight this evening. I countermanded them, and
 " shall take immediate measures for retiring on Astorga. *There*
 " *I shall stand; as my retreat thence, if necessary, will be secure.*
 " You may rest assured, that I shall not retreat a foot beyond
 " what is necessary to secure my supplies from being intercepted.
 " I am sensible of the zeal and activity your Excellency has displayed, in thus hastening to co-operate with me; but for the
 " reasons contained in the former part of this letter, I believe the
 " attempt no longer advisable. It will, however be of use, and
 " will blind the enemy, should you continue with your corps a
 " few days at Mansilla."

It is asserted that "when Buonaparte received intelligence that the British were moving to the Duero, he said "Moore is the only general now fit to contend with me; I shall advance against him in person;" that, having properly disposed the march of between 60 and 70,000 men, he had no doubt of being able to intercept our march on Galicia; and that

"Sir John Moore, as appears both by his letters and his conduct, saw clearly the whole of this plan: he had prepared for the danger; calculated his time; and has acquired the glory of being the first general who has frustrated Buonaparte." (p. 166.)

On the 24th, Sir John began his retreat, and wrote to the Marquis of Romana, urging him to "keep a strong corps at Mansilla to defend the bridge there," and, when compelled to retire, by no means to retreat on Astorga or its neighbourhood, which, "together with the passage into the Gallicias," must be "left for the British troops." In consequence of this request the Marquis left at Mansilla 3000 men and four pieces of cannon,

non, nearly half of his disposable force, at the same time explaining to Colonel Symes, (p. 171 and 172,) that the town was not defensible; and that the destruction of the bridge would oppose no obstacle to the enemy: he also stated, that “wherever else he might go, it was impossible for him to send any part of his troops into the Asturias, as the roads were then impassable, the snow having fallen in unusual quantity.” Consequently, as the Marquis was equally unable to retire, at that season of the year, into the mountains to the northward, or to face, with 120 horse, the numerous cavalry of the enemy in the plains to the southward, he seems to have thought that, by the sacrifice of half his force at Mansilla, he had purchased at a sufficient price the privilege of retreating by the only road on which he could find a place of refuge.

The order to halt and return to their quarters became, to the British troops, the signal of despair and insubordination. Unable to comprehend the object of so many contradictory movements, and disappointed in their hopes of meeting the enemy, they turned their fury against the unhappy Spaniards, to whose treachery they attributed their toilsome and useless marches. The letters of Dr. Neale, Mr. Ormsby, &c. are filled with disgraceful anecdotes of their conduct; and Mr. Moore finds it ‘requisite to make the painful confession’ of their want of discipline, and to fill many of his pages with the general orders repeatedly issued by the commander in chief.

The march was, indeed, rendered perfectly secure by the indefatigable exertions of our excellent cavalry, which effectually checked that of the enemy, and routed, at Majorga and at Valencia, the detachments which pursued us too closely. The Esla was crossed by Sir David Baird at the ford of Valencia, and by the rest of the army over the bridge at Benevente. As soon as the passage was effected that magnificent bridge was completely destroyed: the only result of which however was, that the French imperial guards, under the command of Le Febvre, forded the river, and thus presented to Lord Paget the means of evincing, once more, the great superiority of our cavalry over the choicest troops of Buonaparte’s army. A day was lost by the delay of a convoy of artillery, which, unable to cross the river at Valencia, was obliged to move by the road of Benevente. The roads, almost impassable by heavy rains, rendered the fatigue of the soldiers excessive; and though the reserve, in spite of these obstacles, performed the march from Benevente to Astorga in two days, it was not till the 30th that Sir John Moore arrived there, and

and was, as we are told, extremely disconcerted to find that the town was pre-occupied, and filled with the troops of the Marquis Romana.

‘ This general *did not destroy the bridge at Mansilla, as had been requested*. The guard he left there was charged by a party of Soult’s cavalry; and the Spaniards fled, or surrendered themselves prisoners. The Duke of Dalmatia then advanced on this road to Leon; which city, instead of making the obstinate defence that was expected, ‘ opened its gates at once to the enemy, and furnished them with as many rations as they required.’ (p. 181.)

Now we know that part of our own army forded the Esla at Valentia; and that the French cavalry forded it even at Benevente; wherefore, as rivers are usually shallowest near their source, and as Mansilla is considerably higher up the stream than Valentia, we think that the evidence of the Spanish general, who had seen this bridge, and affirmed that nothing could be gained by its destruction, is better than that of Mr. Moore, who probably has not seen it.

Further, the Spanish general had been told by Sir John Moore, in his very last letter from Benevente,

‘ My opinion is, that a battle is Buonaparte’s game, not ours. We should, if followed, take defensive positions in the mountains, where his cavalry can be of no use to him, &c.—In short, the game of Spain and of England, which must always be the same, is to procrastinate and gain time,—and not, if it can be helped, to place the whole stake upon the hazard of a battle.’ (p. 177.)

Now it is not proved that it was easier for the Marquis de la Romana, with 5000 half-armed Spaniards, two howitzers, and eight field-pieces, to protect Leon against Soult’s army, six or seven times more numerous than his own, than for Sir John Moore, with 26,000 British, to protect Benevente or Astorga against two or three times *his* numbers. Romana, deprived of every resource but his own courage, “ has procrastinated and gained time,” and defended himself in mountain-passes, and played the “ game of Spain.” How the game of England was played remains to be seen.

‘ The appearance,’ says Mr. Moore, ‘ of this (the Spanish) army was extremely melancholy: it was ill-armed, wretchedly clothed, and very sickly. But no reproach ought to be thrown upon these troops for the little resistance they made: their native courage is undoubted; and they endured the most cruel privations with the ut-
most

most patience. But their deplorable, almost famished condition, and the total want of officers, would have disheartened the bravest people. Astorga was one of the depôts which had been formed for warlike stores, with the view of offensive operations in conjunction with the Spanish armies; which gave an opportunity of supplying the Marquis's troops with muskets, and as much ammunition as they could carry off. The rest was *necessarily* destroyed. The corps under Sir David Baird had brought their camp-equipage from Corunna to Astorga, and had deposited it there. But this was no country for such conveniences: there were no means of removing it, and the whole was ordered to be consumed. Many officers had brought along with them a considerable quantity of baggage, and the overloaded mules fell behind. But the general would not suffer a soldier to be detained by the baggage; and gave strict orders, that every horse or mule that could not keep up with the columns, should be abandoned.' (pp. 181, 182.)

After these salutary preparations the retreat was continued, and with little loss of time, since the two divisions left the town on the 30th, the day on which the reserve entered it; Sir David Baird's on the 31st, Sir John Moore, with the reserve on the same evening. The French were unable to arrive there till the next day.

It will be remembered, that Sir David Baird's division had arrived at Corunna on the 18th of October, and had occupied the country between that place and Astorga during about six weeks. During this interval they had time to learn that Vigo was a better harbour than Corunna; and accordingly it was resolved to march to Vigo. They had also time to learn that there were two roads to Vigo; and accordingly 3000 light troops were detached by the worst of these, by Orense, whilst the main body proceeded by that of Astorga. But it seems that they had not time to make such observations on the country through which they had for so long a time marched and counter-marched, as enabled them to ascertain to what degree that country was defensible. The consequence of this oversight appears to have been that all the intrenching tools were thrown away or destroyed at Astorga.

Again, General Clinton tells us that Sir John Moore *had not time* "to concert measures with the Marquis of Romana, and to choose and prepare a position, &c. or, if the retreat into Galicia had been determined upon, to have put in execution that plan, before the enemy could have been at hand to impede it." Neither has Mr. Moore found time to give us any information concerning the nature of the many, successive, and difficult passes of Galicia through which our army effected their retreat with a

rapidity which continues to be matter of admiration to all those who have had opportunity of viewing the face of that country. This information we must now therefore borrow from Dr. Neale, Mr. Ormsby, and others.

Astorga is $41\frac{1}{2}$ Spanish leagues, or about 175 English miles distant from Corunna. The reserve under Sir John Moore, arrived on the morning of the 1st of January at Bembibre, having marched about 25 miles.

‘The road,’ says Dr. Neale, ‘which was extremely steep, was for many leagues knee-deep in snow:—after ascending for several miles we reached the summit, covered with thick clouds and drifting snow, through which we waded for an hour. The road now winds down by the edges of precipices, and the most stupendous Alpine crags, amid fastnesses much more wild and strong than any I have hitherto seen, even in the mountains of Silesia, or the Alps of Moldavia and Hungary. I cannot conceive it would be possible for any invading army to penetrate into Galicia if these passes were defended by a body of brave and determined men.’*

No attempt, however, appears to have been made to stop or check the pursuit even of the enemy’s cavalry.

The scene of drunkenness which presented itself at Bembibre was, as Mr. Moore informs us, most disgusting. Every house was filled with stragglers; and though the general, when he proceeded on the 2d towards Villa Franca, left the 20th regiment and some cavalry for their protection, their intoxication rendered them equally insensible to the warning voice of their friends and to the swords of the French cavalry, who charged through them. On this day the army, though checked by some severe skirmishing, marched about 34 miles, their road lying through the country called El Bierzo, described by the Marquis of Romana. It had been intended to halt the army at Villa Franca, but it was found that the magazines had been plundered, the ovens destroyed, the wine-stores broken open, and such depredations committed by our unruly soldiery, that it became necessary to proceed.

‘The country now being inclosed and mountainous,’ says Mr. Moore, ‘the cavalry were sent on before to Lugo.’

‘We entered,’ says Dr. Neale, ‘the side of a deep valley, completely closed in on each side by tremendous precipices. In its windings, the rapid river Valcarso rushes from the mountains. For some miles, lofty chesnuts and oaks shaded us on the left. The road itself is a *caminha real*, cut at great expense, the whole way from Astorga to Corunna, and does the engineer who planned it great credit. It

* Page 295, 296, and the engraving annexed to it.

resembles a good deal Wolfe's grand military road through the highlands of Scotland.'

By this road, in the night of the 3d, Sir John Moore performed his march to Herrerias, a distance of about 22 miles; but we do not hear that by felling a few trees, or breaking up parts of the causeway, any attempt was made to retard the cavalry or even the artillery of the pursuers.

During a short halt at Herrerias, the general learnt that the country near Lugo was of such a nature as to afford him the means of fighting a battle with advantage. He therefore resolved to do so, and sent orders to Sir David Baird to halt at that town, and to forward similar orders to Generals Hope and Fraser. Mr. Moore informs us that

'This dispatch being of the utmost importance, Sir John Moore sent it by his aide-du-camp (Capt. Napier) accompanied by an orderly dragoon. Capt. Napier reached Nogales, and delivered it with the inclosures to Sir David Baird, who forwarded them to their respective officers. The orderly dragoon who was entrusted with these last letters got drunk on the road and lost them. By this unlucky accident general Fraser, with his division proceeded a full day's journey towards Vigo, the original destination, and was countermarched next day. The weather was dreadful, so that this division instead of comfortably resting two days at Lugo, as was intended, were excessively harrassed and lost many men from fatigue.' (p. 188.)

On the 4th, Sir John Moore learnt, and as it should seem for the first time, that Vigo was more distant, by three long marches, than Corunna; he therefore sent off two expresses by different routes to request Sir Samuel Hood that the transports might be sent round.

Mr. Moore says,

'On the morning of the 5th January the reserve left Nogales; the enemy entering the town soon after the rear quitted it. There was a bridge here, which for want of a sufficiency of proper tools was not completely destroyed; but this was of little importance, as the river was fordable. There were some officers who criticised, occasionally, the operations that were adopted, &c.'

To explain this passage we must again have recourse to Dr. Neale.

'The road is here (from Herrerias) cut through the rocks. These, all the way from Astorga, are granite, either primitive or secondary.—Broken waggons and carriages, money carts, dead animals, and the bodies of human beings, who had perished from the inclemency of the weather during the night strewed the way for miles.—After several miles of gradual descent, (from Nogales) we arrived

within sight of a noble bridge, of three arches, resembling an aqueduct, which unites the sides of a deep ravine, and carries the road over the stream before noticed. As I had heard a great deal from several officers of the strength of this ravine, and the impossibility of the enemy's bringing their guns over, *if the bridge should be blown up*, I took a hasty sketch of it, which I now enclose. On this bridge was an engineer officer directing the operations of a party of pioneers and artificers, digging a mine for the destruction of the center arch. &c.—See Letter 50.

The army reached Lugo on the night of the 5th, after an almost uninterrupted march of about 70 English miles from Villa Franca.

But though it had been necessary to abandon, thus precipitately, such an extent of defensible country; to march with breathless haste, through woody glens and over granite mountains, because '*the want of proper tools*' made it impossible to encumber the roads which we passed with fallen trees, or to break up the parts which were artificially constructed with masonry; it was no less necessary to halt at Lugo, until those divisions of the army which had been sent forward through a very bad and circuitous road, and were still persevering in it through the drunkenness of an orderly dragoon, should be enabled to rejoin the army. They arrived on the 7th, on which day our troops, harassed as they were, being engaged in some severe skirmishing with the enemy, resumed for a time their habits of regular discipline.

On the 8th, Sir John Moore offered battle to Marshal Soult who refused to accept it; and on the 9th the retreat recommenced.

'It was deemed impossible, says Mr. Moore, to remain in the present position; for the numbers of the French would soon become too great to be withstood; or they might push on corps on either flank by the lateral roads, cut off the communication with the coast, and surround the British.'

Such, if we must believe Mr. Moore, was the topographical knowledge possessed by our commanders of a country which our forces had traversed during six weeks, that they still dreamed of armies marching, in the midst of winter, by the mule-paths which lead from Lugo by Ribadeo, or by St. Iago; and still supposed that they were pursued by Buonaparte's whole force, through a country in which they had themselves been obliged to leave behind them all their stores, their military chest, and a third of their army; and in which they had themselves experienced the impossibility of procuring subsistence, even for their reduced numbers.

There

There still remained a march of about 46 miles to Corunna. The wind, rain, and sleet, during the 9th of January were particularly severe; the troops, already almost exhausted with fatigue were much distressed on their march to Belanzos, and numerous loiterers were, of necessity, abandoned to the enemy. On the 11th the army reached Corunna; and here, as the incidents of the succeeding battle have been so well described in the Gazette, we shall take leave of our historian.

We do not think that the immediate object of Mr. Moore's work has been successfully attained. What may be its effect with respect to those whom Mr. Moore *intended* to be "*the sufferers from his publication*" we do not presume to determine: but we cannot help fearing that this description will eventually be found to comprehend some, whom he certainly could *not* intend to include in it.

The talents and virtues of Sir John Moore, his accurate knowledge of his profession, his high sense of honour, and his gallant spirit have been universally acknowledged. His death, we are convinced, was universally lamented. But we think his future fame, like that of every other man, is more likely to be impaired than increased by indiscriminate eulogy. The situation in which he was placed was certainly most arduous; it presented only a choice of difficulties: and, in such a case, the most unfortunate result would not afford a justifiable ground for condemning his decision. But, to arrogate the claim of wisdom for protracted hesitation; to dwell with enthusiasm on the energy exerted after the hour of decision was past; to point out the providential anticipation of obvious difficulties, during a hurried and disorderly flight through a series of almost impregnable fastnesses; and to exult over the disappointments, and failures of an enemy who was incessantly pursuing us, is, we think, extremely injudicious.

It has been always represented by political writers as a symptom of decay in the real vigour of a state, when unimportant or doubtful military achievements have been hailed and magnified with disproportionate applause. This Country (God be thanked!) is not so poor in unquestionable exploits and solid glory, as to be under the necessity of resorting to such a practice.

Of the battle of Corunna no Englishman can speak or think but with those sentiments of admiration for the bravery of our countrymen, which are habitually felt, because whenever the occasion occurs they are invariably deserved. And the ever-to-be-lamented fall of the brave Commander of that day, while it excites our most lively and unceasing regret, cannot but effectually redeem, in the estimation even of those who might be most dis-

posed to criticize the transactions of the campaign, the errors, if errors there were, in any part of his preceding conduct. But it is not necessary, and it is not wise, to lavish unqualified panegyric, and to attempt to extort unlimited applause and admiration, where there are so many points which, while Englishmen continue to feel as Englishmen, they must wish to be allowed to pass in silence. The battle of Corunna was in itself splendid and triumphant: but it is vain to labour to persuade the world that, even in the opinion of this country, that victory, splendid as it was, can reflect back an unclouded lustre upon the whole series of distressing events of which it was the close and the contrast.

We cannot help feeling that, in another view, the effect of the victory of Corunna might properly have been made to be retrospective. The Army are unquestionably great "*sufferers from*" Mr. Moore's *publication*." We could have wished that the battle of Corunna had been allowed, in Mr. Moore's estimation, so far to expiate the misconduct of which the army had been guilty in the course of its retreat, as to have purchased the suppression of the greater part of those General Orders, issued with most laudable severity by the commander, but recorded we think with too unvaried punctuality by the historian.

The excesses and insubordination of an armed force cannot be repressed with too strong a hand; nor can too much praise be given to the commander, who diligently enforces discipline and regularity. But we confess we have dwelt with some complacency on the reflection, that the excesses of the army uniformly ceased, and their subordination became perfect and exemplary, whenever a prospect was held out to them of facing the pursuing enemy. It is some consolation, though no excuse for the misconduct of the army, that it appears to have arisen from feelings of which it may be hoped the operation cannot be contagious or permanent, because it may be trusted that the occasion of them will be rare. It is a consolation that the British soldier appears to have become forgetful of his duties only in situations which he may have felt to be repugnant to his character.

————— Descent and fall

To us is adverse; who but felt of late

When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear

Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,

With what *compulsion*, and *laborious flight*

We sunk thus low?—The ascent is easy then—

Per. Lost, B. II. l. 75.

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The battle of Corunna was that '*ascent*,' and restored to the British army its '*proper motion*.' Perhaps even had the stand been earlier made, the army might not only have redeemed their own character and secured their own escape, but might have turned back upon the enemy the tide of calamity and disgrace, and become themselves the pursuers.

We cannot help repeating also the wish, which we have already had occasion to express, that it had not appeared necessary, in Mr. Moore's view, to the full and complete illustration of the merits of his deceased brother, to record opinions of things and of persons which were probably never intended by the writer to be made public; and to render immortal controversies with individuals, which, had Sir John Moore survived, we are persuaded would have been buried in oblivion.

The advantage with which the author proceeds in these attacks is such as the brother of Sir John Moore might well have disdained. The immunities of the grave forbid reply: but it is surely an abuse of those immunities to inscribe the monument not with epitaphs on the dead, but with sarcasms on the living.

The Marquis de la Romana is represented throughout Mr. Moore's book in a light most unjustly disparaging. We have pointed out instances in which his imputed errors and omissions are touched with no sparing hand. The Marquis de la Romana has not the means of appealing to the British nation in answer to these insinuations. But what is known of him in this country is not likely to make it to be readily believed here that such insinuations are just. It is known of the Marquis de la Romana, that having by the former government of Spain been delivered over, with the army under his command, into the power of the French, he contrived, at the moment when his country called for his services, to extricate himself with consummate address from a situation of unexampled embarrassments; and that he effected this retreat—a retreat apparently so hopeless, as by '*masters in the art of war*' to be pronounced impossible—carrying with him through all his difficulties the unabated confidence and orderly obedience of his army.

It is further known that after the conclusion of our campaign in Galicia, left alone to his own small and scattered resources, he nevertheless continued to baffle the attempts of the French army against his comparatively insignificant force; and that by a skilful and diligent succession of military movements he has regained and at this moment possesses, in spite of that enemy, with an army augmented and improved, and daily augmenting and improving, a country which we abandoned as impracticable and untenable.

It is also known, and it is that which must make any disrespectful mention of him peculiarly distasteful to the British nation, that the Marquis de la Romana is one of the individuals in Spain the most attached to this country; that he most deeply feels and omits no occasion of proclaiming the obligation which he owes for the share which our gallant navy had in his deliverance; and lastly, that at the moment when the sarcasms of Mr. James Moore were preparing for the press, the Marquis de la Romana, incapable of any miserable jealousy, nobly forgetful of all petty differences, and remembering of Sir John Moore only his gallantry, his talents, and his virtues, was raising with his own hands a memorial of the hero of Corunna on the spot on which he fell.

As to Mr. Frere, the principal of the *intended* 'sufferers' from this controversial history, the general result of Mr. Moore's publication, corrected as it is by comparison with others of equal authority, is, in one respect at least, of some use and importance; since the so much agitated question respecting the immediate cause of Sir John Moore's advance from Salamanca is settled beyond further controversy. The testimony of General Clinton to this point is positive and unimpeached. Whether, if this advance *had been* made (as was originally asserted) solely at Mr. Frere's instigation, the responsibility would have been one from which that gentleman need to shrink, is a question upon which we could say much: but one which may well be left undetermined, when the fact upon which alone that question arose, turns out to have been assumed erroneously.

Into an examination of the correspondence between Sir John Moore and Mr. Frere, we have professed our disinclination to enter. In the present state of things it is impossible to judge of it impartially. We shall not attempt to apportion the precise degree of blame which may belong to one or to the other party, for the asperity which certainly marks some parts of the respective conduct of the minister and the general towards each other. The death of one of the disputants precludes all criticism so far as he is concerned:—and it would be an unfeeling and ungenerous task to aggravate the regret, which, whatever were the merits of the dispute, must equally be cherished by the survivor.

Upon the single subject, however, of the employment of Mr. Charmilly, which made so unfavourable and (as it appears) so unfair an impression to the prejudice of Mr. Frere, we cannot forbear briefly remarking, that we have searched Mr. Moore's narrative in vain for a fact, which was stated, and stated without contradiction, in the House of Commons; viz. that Mr. Charmilly came to Mr. Frere, (whether with any *other* recommendation we know not, but certainly) with the recommendation
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of having been received as a guest at Sir John Moore's table on his way to Madrid.

But while we abstain from discussing the style of Mr. Frere's letters or the merits of his messenger, if it be intended (as apparently it is) to impute blame of another sort to Mr. Frere's conduct on this occasion, and to criminate or to ridicule his ardent attachment to the cause of Spanish independence, and his backwardness to despair of its success, it would be base and unworthy in us to abstain from justifying and applauding sentiments in which we claim with Mr. Frere a full participation.

We admit that in difficult enterprizes the shortest way is always to despond. It is a course which, besides, presents many temptations and allurements. Despondency exonerates from responsibility; it dispenses with exertion; it attracts proselytes by the facility of its creed; and secures the reputation of sagacity beyond the hazard of subsequent contradiction;—for what has once been abandoned as impracticable can never afterwards be *proved* to have been capable of success.

Hope, on the other hand, is always reputed the child of a too sanguine imagination, and as such is justly held in horror by practical sobriety: and if connected, as in this case it was, with strong feelings, with lofty and generous principles, and with enthusiastic wishes, it is exposed to the doubts of those who cannot understand, and to the cavils of those who will not allow for, the operation of moral causes in political or military affairs; to the deductions of the calculating, the apprehensions of the cautious, the hatred of the melancholy, and the sneers of the dull.

Hope labours, moreover, under the peculiar disadvantage, that it does not naturally propagate itself:—that it deters those who would be thought wise, because they dread the confutation of a disappointment; and repels even those who might be made proselytes to mere opinion, because the faith which it inculcates is not perfect without works; because not contented with convincing, it proceeds to stimulate to activity; and whenever it makes a convert, demands a co-operator.

Despondency, however wrong in the outset, is pretty sure of coming right in the end: because, though the premises with which it sets out be ever so untenable, it has a tendency to create it's own conclusions. But, Hope is ever on it's trial. Nothing is taken on it's word. Its conclusions, though demonstrably just, may yet be defeated by the mere incredulity and supineness of those who choose to dispute them;—and even when the result justifies its prophecy, it never fails to hear from those who originally denied the possibility of success, that to chance and not to foresight it is indebted for its justification.

But, in spite of all these discouraging considerations on the one.

one hand, and the easy and seducing facilities on the other, we confess we have all along sided, and we continue to side with Mr. Frere in our view of the affairs of Spain. We confess that we have faith in Mr. Frere's judgment, even though we allow that the spectacle of a great nation struggling for its political independence had power to warm him into enthusiasm. We believe in his faculty of discriminating political truth and forming political calculations, notwithstanding the acknowledged drawback of an original genius, and the admitted disqualification of varied acquirements and cultivated talents.—We know that the sentiments upon which he has acted, have endeared him to Spain, and we do not despair of seeing them justified to this Country—if they may not rather be said to be, so far as any recorded opinions of his are concerned, already fully justified by the event.

That the government of Spain is loose and inefficient, its armies half armed and half disciplined, and their commanders incompetently skilled in the tactics of a regular campaign, we have heard, and we believe. But we know that armies the best disciplined, and generals the most experienced, and governments the most firmly established, have fallen to pieces, before the shock, which the Spanish nation has sustained. If under all the disadvantages which are enumerated, and truly, as belonging to the present state of Spain, more has been done, and more endured without shrinking by the Spanish nation, than by any other people in Europe, we ask what may not be expected of them in proportion as these disadvantages may be gradually removed? That the contest will be protracted and its fortune various; is highly probable: that the manner and the opportunities of applying our assistance will be to be chosen, according to the exigencies and to the exertions of the Spaniards, is sufficiently obvious: but that Spain may ultimately triumph over the attempts of her oppressor; and that we may still gloriously and successfully aid her efforts for her own deliverance, is not more our prayer, than it is our hope. And if we cherished such an expectation even during the period of which Mr. Moore is the historian, even while an army of 26,000 British troops were flying before a force, whose numbers have never yet been ascertained:—we own we cannot consent to abandon it now, when such a day as that of Talavera has re-established, in its old and romantic proportion, the relative scale of British and French prowess; when an achievement, the recital of which is alone sufficient to shame despondency and to give animation to hope, has not only inspired us with fresh confidence in ourselves, but, by infusing into our Allies a portion of that confidence, has furnished them with new means and new motives for exertion.