

on their flank by a cannonade from the artillery placed on the heights, they were obliged, after a severe contest, to retire in confusion. A vigorous attack was also made by a considerable body of the enemy's infantry and cavalry on major-general Ferguson's brigade, who bravely repulsed the assailants, and afterward attacked them, being supported by the brigades of brigadier-generals Nightingale, Bowes, and Ackland, while general Crauford's brigade and the Portuguese troops, in two lines, advanced along the heights on the left. General Ferguson led on his troops with a degree of courage and judgment superior to all praise, and was supported in the ablest manner by general Nightingale. At length, the enemy, being every where repulsed, was obliged to retire with the loss of about three thousand five hundred men killed, wounded, and prisoners, thirteen pieces of cannon, and twenty-three tumbrils of ammunition. One French general, Beniere, was taken prisoner, and another, supposed to be general Thebauld, was found dead on the field of battle. The loss of the English, as stated in the returns, was seven hundred and forty men killed, wounded, and missing, in which were included many valuable officers.

On the day after the battle of Vimeira, general Dalrymple landed, and took the chief command of the army. On the 30th of August, a cessation of hostilities was agreed on, and eight days afterward a definitive convention was signed by the French and British commanders. By this treaty the French were to carry off all their arms, ammunition, artillery, carriages, and horses, with their military chest, and all the plunder acquired by contributions, and to be conveyed to France in British vessels, without any restrictions in regard to future service. The Portuguese artillery, &c., with the military and naval arsenals, were to be surrendered to the British army and navy. No Portuguese was to be molested on account of the part which he had taken with the French invaders; and the British commanders engaged to prevail on the Spaniards to release all the French who were arrested in Spain, and were not *bona fide* military men. The Russian fleet in the Tagus, consisting of nine ships of the line and a frigate, surrendered to the British government as a deposit, to be given up six months after the conclusion of a peace; but the officers and seamen, above five thousand six hundred in number, were to be immediately carried to Russia.

The reasons assigned for consenting to this extraordinary convention were, the apprehended difficulty of obtaining provisions, and the importance of time, on account of the season of the year, the approach of the equinox, and the means which the enemy had of protracting his defence. These reasons, however, were far from being satisfactory either to the British or Portuguese nation. The people of England considered the convention as a disgraceful contrast to the glorious victory of Vimeira, and the Portuguese general entered a solemn protest against several of its articles. A court of inquiry was instituted; but on a minute investigation of the case, nothing appeared that could have the least tendency to criminate any of the generals. Whether better terms could have been obtained is not very clear; and the critical state of Spain rendered it absolutely necessary to terminate as soon as possible the business of Portugal. It is also proper to observe, that the convention of Cintra probably saved the city of Lisbon from destruction.

The British army, having consumed more than two months in Lisbon, on the 26th of October commenced its march for Spain, under the command of sir John Moore, and immediately proceeded to Salamanca. Sir David Baird had, on the 13th of October, landed a strong body of troops at Corunna, and, after many delays and innumerable difficulties, on the 19th of November arrived at Astorga. In the mean while, the emperor of France had personally entered Spain, with a view of conducting the operations of the war. The patriotic armies under generals Belvidere, Blake, and Castanos, being successively defeated at Burgos, Espinosa, and Tudela, the French army forced the pass of Somma Sierra, and on the 2d of December advanced to Madrid. That city now displayed a horrible scene of confusion. The constituted authorities had no influence. The city was in the power of an ungovernable rabble, consisting in part of strangers from the country; and

the opulent inhabitants dreading the alternative of seeing all their property pillaged, either by a victorious enemy or by a licentious mob.

The populace being averse to any measures of conciliation, Napoleon gave orders for an assault on the suburbs, and during the night his troops made themselves masters of the Retiero and other commanding positions. An unruly populace was ill adapted to a vigorous defence. The most turbulent made their escape in the night; and on the 4th of December, Madrid surrendered without farther opposition. Don T. Morla and the prince of Castel Franco, who had the chief management of affairs, however, did not escape the suspicion of having treasonably delivered up the city. The French emperor, having settled the affairs of the capital, hastened to endeavour to cut off the retreat of the English army. For this purpose he put his different divisions in motion, under the dukes of Dalmatia, Abrantes, Dantzic, and Treviso, and on the 18th of December, he himself departed from Madrid, with an army of thirty-two thousand infantry and eight thousand cavalry. But the passage of the mountains of Guadarama proved extremely difficult, being covered with a deep snow; and the incessant rains and overflowing torrents occasioned a delay of two days in his march.

In the mean time, the British general, being apprized of the surrender of Madrid, meditated a junction with the marquis Romana, with the view of making an attack on the duke of Dalmatia. He therefore marched to Majorca, where he was joined by general Baird, with the troops from Corunna. The whole British army, which was now found to consist of twenty-three thousand infantry and upwards of two thousand cavalry, besides some small detachments, advanced to Sahagan. But general Moore was no sooner arrived at his station than he received intelligence of the movements of the enemy; and judging it impossible to make an effectual resistance against the formidable force that was coming against him, on the 24th of December, he commenced his precipitate retreat through Galicia. The emperor Napoleon made forced marches as far as Astorga; but finding that his expected prey had eluded his grasp, he resigned into the hands of the dukes of Dalmatia and Abrantes the farther operations against the English army.

The retreat of the British army was attended by the disasters inseparable from the rapidity with which it was necessarily conducted in the middle of winter, and by roads almost impassable. Great numbers of men, who were unable to keep up with the rest of the army, were left on the line of march, and many dropped down exhausted with fatigue. Many of their horses were also left behind; and no less than one thousand four hundred were killed to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy. General Anstruther died through excessive fatigue; and some accounts state the loss of the British army during the retreat at seven thousand men! The English were constantly harassed by the enemy's cavalry, which made frequent attacks on their rear, though they were always repulsed with considerable loss. The valour and perseverance of the troops were never more conspicuous than on this memorable occasion, amid so many disadvantages, and retreating before a force greatly superior. At length, after fourteen days of precipitate and harassing marches, the army reached Corunna on the 11th of January, 1809; and had the transports been ready, might have embarked without farther difficulty or loss. But these had been sent to Vigo, to which place the British general had first intended to retreat; and it was not till the 13th that the first division of transports arrived at Corunna.

On the 12th of January, the advanced guard of the enemy arrived at Betanzos, within twelve miles of that place, and their main body came up on the following day. On the 14th and 15th the rest of the transports arrived, and part of the troops were embarked. The French, in the mean while, had brought up their infantry in great force; and general Moore, perceiving that he should be forced to risk an action, was obliged to suspend the embarkation. On the 15th, the enemy began to harass the English with continual skirmishes, while he made his dispositions for a more serious attack. The French had occupied an advantageous position; and their object was, by an

impetuous attack on the right wing, to cut off the British army from the point of embarkation. Aware of their design, general Moore took the necessary precaution to draw up his army under the walls of Corunna. In the forenoon of the next day, the duke of Dalmatia reconnoitred the English army, and on the 16th of January, about 2, P. M., he gave orders for the attack, which was made with the most tremendous impetuosity. The British troops stood like a wall, and with calm intrepidity received and repulsed the repeated attacks of the enemy. A vigorous charge with the bayonet decided the affair, and compelled the enemy to retreat to the heights. In the beginning of the action, sir David Baird, an officer justly distinguished by his bravery and eminent services in the cause of his country, received a wound in the arm, which rendered instant amputation necessary. Some time after, general sir John Moore was wounded by a shot in the shoulder, of which he died before midnight. He fell in the flower of his age, but he fell crowned with laurels. Like Wolfe, Abercrombie, and Nelson, he expired in the arms of victory; and like theirs, his name and memory will ever be dear to his country. Several other officers of distinguished rank and merit fell on that memorable day. In this unfortunate expedition, the British army lost all its ammunition and magazines, and five or six thousand men. Even a large portion of the military chest, to the amount of a hundred and twenty thousand dollars, was thrown from a precipice that it might not fall into the hands of the enemy. The action ended about five in the evening. After general Moore had received the wound of which he died, the command of the British troops devolved on general Hope, who completed the victory, and with great ability directed the embarkation, which recommenced about ten o'clock in the evening of the battle, and before the morning of the 18th, was completely effected, with a celerity of which there are few examples. Corunna capitulated soon after the departure of the army, and the French also obtained possession of Ferrol, Bilboa, St. Andero, and all the most important places on the northern coast of Spain. (1)

## LETTER VII.

*State of Affairs in the North of Europe, A. D. 1808—Russia and Denmark attack Sweden—Extravagant Conduct of King Gustavus IV.—his Dethronement—is succeeded by the Duke of Sudermania, Charles XIII.—The Pope refuses the Dictation of Napoleon, who arrests him and has him conveyed captive to Avignon—Austria takes Advantage of the Peninsular War, and resumes Hostilities against France—Battles of Eckmuhl and Estling—Vienna a second Time occupied by the French—Battle of Wagram—Peace again concluded at Vienna, 14th October, 1809.*

It was a fortunate circumstance for the emperor of France, that Russia had remained faithful to the alliance and the engagements of Tilsit. The emperor Alexander was then in a fit of enthusiasm and affection for this powerful and extraordinary mortal, Napoleon, who, before he ventured to lead his forces into Spain, wishing to assure himself that all was secure in the north, had an interview with Alexander, at Erfurth, on the 27th of September, 1808, when the two masters of the west and the north guaranteed the repose and the submission of Europe. Napoleon then marched into Spain, as mentioned in my former letter, and Alexander took upon himself the care of Sweden. Among other arbitrary stipulations of the treaty of Tilsit, it was resolved that the king of Sweden should be compelled to exclude all British vessels from his harbours;—a demand which the Russian minister insisted upon was supported by former compacts among the northern powers, by which they had agreed to a union of strength in defence of the Baltic. The king, however, replied, that these compacts had ceased to be in force, and

(1) Southey's History of the War in the Peninsula. History of the War in the Peninsula, under Napoleon, by General Foy. Recollections in the Peninsula, &c. &c. London Gazette, and Annual Register

he would only promise to prevent the British court from sending ships of war into that sea.

It was not, however, merely the subserviency of Alexander to the views of his new ally by which his Swedish majesty was aggrieved, but also his desire of adding the whole province of Finland to his immense empire; and this prompted him to order an invasion of his Swedish territories. For the defence of Finland against this powerful enemy, Gustavus sent an army of ten thousand men into the field, with six thousand more to garrison Sweaborg, the Gibraltar of the north. Two of the frontier posts were not tamely yielded even to the great superiority of the assailing force. The Russians endeavoured to prevent the northern troops from joining those of the south; but the valour of the Swedes so far prevailed as to effect the desired union, and to check the advance of the enemy. Resenting keenly the hostile conduct of the Russian emperor, which had not even been preceded by a declaration of war, Gustavus gave orders for the confinement of the Russian minister at his court, as well as the consul, and threatened to banish from Sweden every subject of the Russian emperor. And as he suspected the intentions of the court of Denmark, he demanded from count Moltke, the ambassador, an explanation of the views of his sovereign. The answer was a declaration of war, in which the king's connivance at the attack upon Copenhagen was pointedly censured, and his renewal of alliance with a power which could coolly perpetrate such an act of outrageous injustice was severely condemned. He denied the former charge, though he evidently approved the aggression; and he retorted the accusation of interested subserviency to Great Britain by a reference to the implicit dependence of Denmark upon Russia.

As the danger to which Sweden was exposed would be very inadequately repelled by the unassisted force of that nation, the king addressed a letter to his Britannic majesty, stating that he was attacked on every side because he was the friend of England, and requesting, in addition to the stipulated subsidy of one million two hundred thousand pounds, which by a new treaty he was to receive from this country, for employing his whole army and a part of his fleet, during one year against France or her allies, he might receive speedy and more powerful assistance. A promise of succour was readily given; and it was resolved that ten thousand men should be sent under the command of sir John Moore. The conditions, however, which were annexed to this grant of aid, were not altogether agreeable to the views and wishes of Gustavus. They were to be recalled at pleasure; to have as little connexion as possible with the Swedish army; to be entirely under the command of their own general; and not to advance farther from the coast than would give them the opportunity of communicating with the fleet of Great Britain which conveyed them to the Baltic. But instead of confiding their operations to the defence of Sweden, the king wished to employ them in the conquest of Norway, or in an attack on Copenhagen. Sir John Moore arrived at Gottenburg on the 17th of May, 1808, and immediately proceeded to Stockholm to concert measures of co-operation with the Swedish troops. He there found that the king, though with means very insufficient even for defence, was nevertheless bent on conquest; and refusing to concur in some of his extravagant plans, as being contrary to his instructions, the monarch's resentment was roused against him to such a pitch, that he was obliged to escape in disguise, and brought back his troops without landing them.

The Russians had, in the month of March, taken possession of Abo, the capital of Finland, and declared its annexation to the Russian empire; they now directed all their force by sea and land against the fortress of Sweaborg, and so feeble was the defence which was made of it, that it induced a suspicion of treachery. The naval force in the harbour was included in the capitulation, under the singular condition that it should be restored to Sweden whenever England restored the fleet of Denmark! The Russians also made descents on the islands of Gothland and Aland, and an engagement between the flotillas of the two powers ended in the disadvantage of the Swedes.