

Sir John Stewart, who commanded the British forces in the Mediterranean, made the best preparations in his power for resisting the threatened attack. He disposed all his troops in a line along the shore, with a chain of communications, guarding the whole coast by means of batteries and gun-boats. In the narrowest parts of the straits a constant firing was kept up on both sides, which was rather a spectacle than a serious conflict; but in repeated attacks upon the Neapolitan flotilla, a number of vessels were taken, destroyed, or dispersed. On the 18th of September, a debarkation of three thousand five hundred Neapolitans and Corsicans was effected near the Taro; but two British regiments took nine hundred of them prisoners, compelling the rest to retreat to their gun-boats. On the 2d of October, Murat proclaimed the expedition to Sicily adjourned, the experiment having sufficiently proved that the enemy's flotillas could not obstruct the passage when seriously attempted. (1)

LETTER XIII.

Progress of Hostilities in the Peninsula, A. D. 1811, 1812—Fourth Campaign—Siege of Cadiz—Battle of Barossa—Retreat of the French from Santarem—Siege of Badajoz—Capture of Tarragona by the French—Investment of Valencia—Proceedings of the Cortes—State of Affairs in France—Napoleon visits Holland—Glance at Austria—Germany—Sweden—Denmark and Russia.

THE peninsula of Spain and Portugal still continued the theatre, my dear son, on which the contest for the liberties of Europe was maintained; and it was carried on with vigour, but with various success. The campaign commenced at a very early season of the year. On the 2d of January, the French marshal Suchet made himself master of Tortosa, a place which might have held out much longer, since its situation at the mouth of the Ebro afforded it great facilities for receiving supplies. On the 23d of January, marshal Soult took possession of Olivenza; and on the same day the Spanish cause sustained a great loss in the death of the marquis de Romana, who expired suddenly at his head-quarters at Cartaxo. The command of the army now devolved on general Mendizabel, who had scarcely put his troops in motion when he was defeated by Soult with great loss.

This was a very inauspicious opening of the campaign, but the success of the French arms soon afterward received a check, on the heights of Barossa, near the isle of Leon. During the whole of the preceding year, marshal Victor had been occupied with the siege of Cadiz, but without effect, and even without any rational prospect of its reduction, as its peninsular situation, united to the continent by a long and narrow isthmus, rendered it inaccessible to an enemy which had not a fleet to attack it from the sea; and the width of the harbour secured it in a great measure from sustaining any material injury by a cannonade or bombardment from the opposite shores. On the 25th of February, an armament was sent out from Cadiz, under the command of sir Thomas Graham, who disembarked a body of English, Spaniards, and Portuguese at Algesiras. The main object of the expedition was to attack the French army employed in the siege; and the landing being effected on the 28th, the allied army arrived on the morning of March the 5th, on the ridge of Barossa, about four miles to the southward of the river of Santo Pedro. The allied force scarcely amounted to six thousand men, of which about one-half were British; while Victor had eight thousand troops in a high state of discipline and equipment opposed to them. In this situation, however, lieutenant-general Graham, and the Spanish general Las Panas, determined on an attack. In the commencement of the action, a well-conducted and vigorous attack on the rear of the enemy's lines, near Santo Pedro, by the vanguard of the Spaniards under

(1) Scott's Life of Napoleon, vol. vii.—Southey's History of the War in the Peninsula, vol. i.—Recollections in the Peninsula, by an Officer.—Edinburgh Annual Register, 1810.

brigadier-general Ladrizabel, opened the communication with the isle of Leon. This being effected, general Graham moved down from the position of Barossa, to the Torre de Bermesa, about half-way to Santo Pedro, in order to secure a communication across the river, over which a bridge had been recently thrown. While making this movement he received intelligence that the enemy had appeared in force on the plains of Chichlana and were advancing towards the heights of Barossa. In consequence of this information, and considering these heights as the key to Santo Pedro, he immediately ordered a countermarch, with the view of supporting the troops left for their defence. But before his corps could completely extricate itself from the wood, the troops on the ridge of Barossa were observed to be retiring, while the left wing of the French army was rapidly advancing up the heights, their right being posted on the plain at the edge of the wood.

General Graham, aware that a retreat in the face of an enemy so superior in numbers must expose the allies to great danger, and relying on the courage of his troops, notwithstanding the inferiority of their number and the advantage which the enemy possessed in point of position, resolved on a general and immediate attack. A battery of ten pieces of cannon, under the direction of major Duncan, opened on the enemy's centre. Brigadier-general Dilkes, with a brigade of guards, supported by colonel Wheatly's brigade and three companies of the cold-stream guards under lieutenant-colonel Jackson, formed on the left and right. The infantry being thus hastily arranged, the artillery advanced to a more formidable position, and kept up a heavy and well-directed fire. The right of the allies attacked general Rufin's division on the heights, while lieutenant Barnard's battalion and a detachment of Portuguese were engaged with the enemy's tirailleurs. But general Laval's division, notwithstanding the havoc made by major Duncan's battery, advanced in imposing masses, and opened a destructive fire of musketry. The left wing of the allies now advanced, keeping up a constant fire; and a most determined charge of the 67th regiment, and the three companies of guards, supported by all the rest of the left wing, decided the fate of general Laval's division. The eagle of one of the regiments of light infantry was taken by major Gough. The right wing of the allies was equally successful. The French met brigadier-general Dilkes on the ascent of the ridge, and an obstinate conflict ensued; but the undaunted bravery and steady perseverance of the British troops surmounted every obstacle, and general Rufin's division, being driven from the heights, left behind them two pieces of artillery. In less than an hour and a half from the commencement of the action the French began to retreat; but the exhausted state of the allies prevented any pursuit. The loss of the enemy on this occasion was about three thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners, with one eagle, and six pieces of cannon, their ammunition wagons, and a number of horses. General Bellegarde, chief of the staff, and aid-de-camp of marshal Victor, and several other officers, were killed, besides a number that were wounded and taken prisoners, among whom were the general of division, Rufin, who soon after died of his wounds. The loss of the allies amounted to about twelve hundred in killed and wounded; but among these were unfortunately a number of excellent officers. Of all the actions that had hitherto taken place in the peninsula, this was one of the most glorious to the British arms; but it was productive of but little advantage. General Graham had gained a brilliant victory, but finding it impossible to procure supplies, he withdrew the next day across the Santo Pedro, and afterward returned to Cadiz.

About the same time that the British arms were so successful on the heights of Barossa, Massena commenced his retreat from Santarem, where he had never been able to attack lord Wellington with any prospect of success. Scarcity of provisions at length obliged him to retire. Behind him he had only a barren and exhausted country, with a hostile population, circumstances which greatly distressed his army; while the British general, having the Tagus on his right, and Lisbon in his rear, was in a commanding position which ensured ample supplies. Massena, in retreating through Portuga.

killed or drowned after the entrance of his troops into the city. But the account given of this dreadful disaster by the Spaniards themselves makes the number that was butchered by the French to be six thousand, and the prisoners about five thousand. Suchet coolly remarks, that this terrible example, as he terms it, will be long remembered in Spain. And, doubtless, it will be remembered as an indelible disgrace to his character. By this conquest, the French became possessed of the whole coast of Catalonia; and Suchet, marching into the interior of that province, dispersed the parties which the marquis of Campoverde had raised by his exertions.

In the month of September, Suchet entered the province of Valencia, and on the 27th took possession of Murviedro. He then opened trenches against its fortress, and made several attempts to carry it, which were repulsed with considerable loss. In the mean time, general Blake collected all the disposable force in that quarter for its relief. He occupied the heights above the besieging army, where, on the 25th of October, he was attacked, and after a well-sustained engagement, was defeated with a loss, according to the French account, of six thousand five hundred men in killed, wounded, and prisoners. On the following day the fortress of Murviedro capitulated, and its garrison remained prisoners of war. Suchet then advanced with part of his army to the suburbs of the city of Valencia, and made preparations for the siege of that capital. On the 26th of November, he attacked general Blake's protecting army, the cavalry of which being routed, the infantry took shelter in their intrenched camp. This was afterward forced; and the defenders, after losing their artillery and baggage, found no other retreat but into the city itself. On the 25th of December, Valencia was invested on every side; but its fall was protracted till the following year.

In the beginning of the year 1811, the cortes issued a proclamation, declaring that they would not recognise any act of Ferdinand VII. while deprived of his liberty. In April they passed a decree, abolishing the use of torture, and referred to a committee a motion for the abolition of the slave trade. Other proceedings of that assembly, tending to the removal of old grievances, were, the admission of plebeians, as well as nobles, into the military colleges: the application to the use of the military hospitals of sums destined for the use of religious fraternities: and the abolition of jurisdictional seigniories and vassalage. A principal object of their attention was the formation of a constitution; and a committee having been appointed for drawing up a plan, two sections were read at a public sitting on the 19th of August, and ordered to be printed. The preliminary article ran thus: "The sovereignty resides essentially in the nation; and therefore the right belongs to it, exclusively, of establishing its fundamental laws, and of adopting the form of government which it judges most suitable." This produced a long debate, the result of which was, that the first clause of the article was voted by a large majority; the second was rejected. The doctrine of the sovereignty of the nation, however, met with opposition from the royal council, which circulated a paper expressly disavowing it: in consequence of which the cortes instituted a criminal proceeding against such persons as concurred in that measure, and in the mean time suspended them from their functions.

The emperor Napoleon, during the summer of this year, was chiefly intent upon his grand project of totally excluding the British commerce from the continent of Europe, and of raising a navy which might in time contend with that of England for the dominion of the sea. On the 1st of January, the annexation of the great commercial city of Hamburgh to the French empire was announced by the display of the French flag, and a public proclamation. The plan of a marine conscription was, by Napoleon's order, presented to the senate, and, of course, received its ratification. It consisted in converting the military into a naval conscription, throughout the thirty maritime departments of the empire. For the purpose of recruiting the navy, youths from the age of thirteen to sixteen were to be selected and trained in the necessary manœuvres; and a decree was passed for placing ten thousand conscripts of each of the classes of 1813, 1814, 1815, and 1816, at the disposal of the minister

of the marine. At the same time, seamen were collected from every part of the empire, to man the fleet at Antwerp. In the spirit of forcing even nature to conform to his will, this extraordinary man issued a decree enjoining the culture of beet-root and woad, to a large extent, to supply the place of the sugar-cane and indigo plant: thus hoping to supersede the necessity of colonial importation.

On the 17th of June, the French national ecclesiastical council was opened at Paris in great form and state. Its object was to supply the numerous vacancies in the episcopal order, which had been occasioned by the peremptory refusal of the pope to induct the bishops of the emperor's nomination. It was consequently declared in the *exposé* of the state of the empire, that the concordat between France and the see of Rome no longer existed; and that the fate of episcopacy would henceforth be attached to the deliberations of the council of Paris. But uncontrolled as the will of Napoleon was in all other matters, it appears that he found it necessary to exercise a little management with regard to ecclesiastical affairs. With a view, probably, to conciliate the affections of his new subjects in Holland, and to accelerate his maritime preparations, he set out, in the month of September, accompanied by his amiable consort, Maria Louisa, on a tour to the coast of France, and from thence to the Netherlands and Holland. At Boulogne he ordered his flotilla to make an attack on an English frigate lying off that port, which terminated only in his mortification. He proceeded to view all the works and shipping at Ostend, Flushing, and Antwerp, in which visit he is said to have found much to flatter his pride and elevate his hopes—not wholly unalloyed, however, with some mortifying circumstances. At Amsterdam, decorated with the title of the third city of the empire, he was received with all the demonstrations of joy and attachment which are so easily procured to gratify the feelings of a present master; and from the imperial palace of that city he issued a string of decrees to regulate the internal government of Holland, the intent of which was to assimilate its institutions in the most perfect manner to those of the "great nation," in which that republican country was now merged. During this time, and after his return to Paris, Napoleon was actively employed in negotiating with the northern powers, the consequences of which soon began to develop themselves. The year closed with an immediate call for a hundred and twenty thousand conscripts for the year 1812.

The humiliated court of Vienna was principally occupied at this time with efforts for the restoration of its dilapidated resources; one of the means of doing which was the sale of ecclesiastical estates to a considerable extent. The diet of Hungary was opened in August; and in the beginning of September the emperor repaired thither, and read a paper containing the proposals of government relating to matters of revenue and finance. Some opposition beginning to manifest itself, a declaration was made on the part of the emperor, that he would not suffer any resistance to be made to his measures from his Hungarian states. His subserviency to the projects of his son-in-law Napoleon was evinced by a note to the stadtholder of Austria, directing that a free passage, and all necessary supplies, should be granted to the French troops through his territories. In other parts of Germany, every thing was submissive to the will of the tyrant. The dutchy of Oldenburgh was annexed to his northern empire without opposition, on no other plea than that of convenience. Prussia was rendered almost entirely dependent; and its unfortunate sovereign was compelled to place a considerable body of troops under French command on the coast of the Baltic, and to join the confederation of the Rhine. This league, the masterpiece of Napoleon's policy, was now become of vast consequence from its extent of territory and population. Its contingent of troops was fixed at one hundred and eighteen thousand six hundred and eighty-two men; and this body in the autumn was taken into the pay of France, and an army composed from it was assembled in the vicinity of Mentz.

The political state of Sweden, at this critical juncture, was of a very un-

decided form. The leading part in the administration, taken by a Frenchman as declared successor to the crown, naturally induced the expectation that French interests would predominate, and the declaration of war against England was apparently the result of this influence; yet the war between the two countries was rather nominal than real. The war was unpopular with the Swedish nation; and the crown-prince himself began to show marked indications of being more swayed by the consideration of his future sovereignty, than by attachment to a former master. In March, the king issued a proclamation signifying, that, on account of ill-health, he had found it necessary for the present to withdraw from public affairs, and that he had transferred the royal authority to the crown-prince. A conscription of twenty thousand men was now levied, but it was attended with insurrections among the peasantry in various parts, which were not quelled without bloodshed. Sir James Saumarez, who had the command of the English fleet in the Baltic, entered into a negotiation with the Swedish government relative to some detained ships with colonial produce, from which a mutual desire of being upon more amicable terms became apparent. And the conduct of the British admiral, in not only allowing coasting vessels to pass unmolested, but affording them protection, was highly satisfactory to the Swedish nation.

The hostility of Denmark towards England continued without abatement; and the proximity of the power of France, in consequence of the German annexations, necessarily rendered her subservient to French politics. A great proportion of the Danish seamen were allowed to enter into the French service, their chief employment at home being confined to the manning of privateers and gun-boats against the British trade. The most considerable enterprise undertaken by the Danes during this year, 1811, was an attempt to recover the island of Anholt from the English. On the 27th of March, a Danish flotilla with troops on board, constituting a force of about four thousand men, landed on the island, and made an attack on the English fortifications, garrisoned by only three hundred and fifty men. Their operations, however, were so ill-directed, that after repeated efforts, in which no want of courage appeared, they were repulsed with the loss of their commander, and many killed and wounded. Five hundred of them, in one body, unable to get back to their boats, were obliged to surrender themselves prisoners of war.

Russia continued throughout this year to waste its population and revenues in a contest with the Ottoman Porte, which was carried on with vigorous efforts on both sides. At the close of the year the Russian arms had decidedly obtained that superiority which skill and discipline must always eventually obtain over blind valour. The emperor of Russia might at his pleasure disengage himself from the burden of a war of ambition; but difficulties were now impending over him of a more serious kind. He was now the only continental sovereign capable of asserting his independence against that colossal power which aimed at nothing less than rendering all Europe subservient to his views; and his determination to maintain that dignified situation was now to be put to the proof. The scheme which Napoleon had formed for ruining the finances of England, by cutting off her communication with the continent of Europe, required a universal concurrence in the means proposed; and he had so far effected his purpose that he could not brook any obstacle to its completion. But the English trade with Russia was too important to that empire to be readily renounced. Many of the nobility derived a great share of their revenues from the sale of products of which Great Britain was the principal market, and its connexions with the mercantile interests of Russia were extremely intimate. On this account English manufactures had never been committed to the flames in that country, as in many others, and British colonial produce was admitted into the Russian ports in neutral bottoms. The presence of an English fleet in the Baltic during the summer could not fail to occasion some relaxation of the system of commercial exclusion, which gave umbrage to the ruler of France. Other causes of difference subsisted between the courts of Petersburg and Paris, and the whole year passed in discussions between them, some of which bore the aspect of

immediate hostility. On the whole, it no longer remained doubtful, that the temper of the Russian monarch at the close of the year 1811 was more friendly towards England than towards France; and a cloud was obviously gathering, which in the ensuing year burst forth with great fury.⁽¹⁾

LETTER XIV.

Affairs of Great Britain, A. D. 1811, 1812—Parliamentary Discussions on the King's Indisposition—Turbulent Conduct of the Irish Catholics—Reinstatement of the Duke of York as Commander-in-chief—Lord Sidmouth defeated in his Attempt to restrict the Limits of the Toleration Act—Affairs of Great Britain and the United States—Naval Operations—Disturbances in the manufacturing Districts of England—Attempt on the Part of the Prince Regent to conciliate the Whigs—Assassination of Mr. Spencer Perceval—Negotiations for a new Administration.

THE melancholy situation of the monarch had once more rendered the appointment of a regency necessary to the regular administration of the affairs of government. The existing ministry, willing to believe that the king's incapacity would not be permanent, continued to govern in his name for eight weeks, before any parliamentary arrangements were made for the critical occasion. The house of commons then voted, that it was their right and duty, in concert with the peers, to provide the means of supplying the deficiency of the executive power. When the lords were requested to concur in this resolution, and also in a vote for adjusting the means of giving the royal assent to a bill of temporary regulation, the duke of Sussex took up the subject with considerable spirit, and censured the ministers for their audacious and protracted usurpation of the functions of sovereignty. The duke of York also condemned the intention of applying the great seal to a bill without the king's sanction and authority; but their lordships finally agreed to the proposition of the commons. Mr. Perceval suggested the propriety of restricting the regent's power, while he expressed his conviction of the expediency of admitting the prince of Wales to the temporary exercise of the royal authority. To this restrictive scheme also a strong opposition was raised, as being both unconstitutional and impolitic, and with all his exertions the minister had great difficulty in carrying the measure. In the progress of the scheme, Mr. Perceval and his colleagues found themselves in a minority, when they wished to grant political power to the queen, by allowing her to appoint or remove all the officers of the household; but she was permitted to retain the care of the royal person, and to receive the assistance of a council. In several divisions which took place in the house of lords, the prince's cause was carried by a small majority; but his adversaries gained the chief points at which they aimed. An opinion generally prevailed among them, that he would not retain the king's advisers in the cabinet, and they therefore resolved to diminish the power and patronage of their expected successors.

During the progress of the debates relating to the regency in the house of lords, earl Grey had taken notice of the circumstance of the king's having been allowed to perform some of the functions of royalty in the year 1804, at a time when his mental malady still rendered him an object of medical control; and a censure on the lord-chancellor Eldon was moved on that account, but it was negatived. The subject was again brought forward by Mr. Whitbread, on the 25th of February, 1811, who prefaced a motion respecting it by stating the facts of the case. The malady of the king, he said, was announced to the public on the 15th of February, 1804, and bulletins con-

(1) Southey's History of the War in the Peninsula.—Narrative of the Campaign of the loyal Lusitanian Legion, and of the military Operations in Spain and Portugal, by an Officer.—Sir Walter Scott's Life of Napoleon, vol. vii.—New Annual Register, 1811.—Dr. Aikin's Annals of George III. vol. ii.

towards the frontier, was closely followed by lord Wellington, whose van attacked the rear of the French on the 11th of March, and gained a considerable advantage. But this success on the part of the allies was ill compensated by the fall of Badajos, which surrendered on the same day to the duke of Dalmatia, after a vigorous resistance.

The check which the French armies received in the peninsula must, nevertheless, have been extremely mortifying to their leaders. Massena, on entering Portugal, had indulged in the most ridiculous vauntings of his determination to "plant his eagles on the forts of Lisbon, and drive the leopard into the sea." But his retreat from Santarem, where he left behind him a part of his heavy artillery, was a retrograde movement little expected by him, and, though conducted with military skill, it is said to have been distinguished "by barbarities rarely equalled, and never surpassed." Lord Wellington accused him of acts of cruelty and wanton mischief which would disgrace a horde of savages. In the haste of retreat the French army abandoned their wounded, destroying most of their baggage and other encumbrances. They retained till the close of March a strong post at Guarda, from which, on the approach of the allied army, they retired to Sabugal on the Coa. Their position on that river was attacked by the allies in force, on the 3d of April, and carried after a sharp action. On the following day, the French army entered Spain, and continued its retreat across the Aqueda.

Lord Wellington now made arrangements for the blockade of Almeida, and employed the interval of active operations in visiting the corps under the command of marshal Beresford, in Spanish Estremadura, consisting of a united force of British and Portuguese troops. After repulsing an attack from the French on the 7th of April, near Olivenza, he took up a position whence he could invest both that place and Badajos. Olivenza surrendered to the marshal on the 15th; and lord Wellington, having had an interview with him, during which they established the siege of Badajos, returned to his army. The siege of this latter place was carried on with vigour until the 12th of May, when the readvance of marshal Soult was announced by general Blake, who joined the army under Wellington with a body of troops from Cadiz. At a council of war then held, the three commanders resolved to give battle to the enemy. With this view the siege of Badajos was raised, and the army took a strong position fronting the banks of the Albuera, and extending to the village of that name, on the summit of a gradual ascent from the river.

On the 16th of May, at an early hour, the French passed the stream in great force, intending to attack the Spaniards posted under general Blake on the right, and to turn the wing of the allies; and after an obstinate resistance, they succeeded in gaining the heights which commanded the whole position. But while the most strenuous efforts were making to dislodge them, and the English brigades headed by general Stewart were actually charging with fixed bayonets, they were themselves charged by a body of Polish cavalry lancers in the rear, who did terrible execution. At this critical moment, however, sir Lowry Cole, bringing up the reserve, the French were driven from the heights with great slaughter. Their attack on the village and the bridge was also successfully repelled by baron Alton, of the German legion, which, with the division of general Hamilton, defended that post; and the whole French army, after six hours' fighting, repassed the Albuera with some precipitation, though a deficiency of cavalry prevented the allies from pursuing them. "Never," says marshal Beresford, "did troops more gloriously maintain the honour of their respective countries." General Stewart, after being twice wounded, refused to quit the field. General Houghton, leading his brigade to the charge, fell at their head. The Portuguese, under general Hamilton, evinced, according to marshal Beresford's account, the utmost steadiness and courage, and rivalled the British in their manœuvres. The Spanish generals Blake, Castanos, and Ballasteros signalized their valour and intrepidity; and marshal Soult himself is said to have acknowledged, "that in the long course of his military service, he had never before witnessed so desperate and sanguinary a contest."

It is worthy of remark, that, in this engagement, no less than six different nations were at once shedding their blood in mortal combat—namely, British, Spaniards, Portuguese, Germans, French, and Poles! The French army consisted of near thirty thousand men, of which number at least four thousand were cavalry. The allies were superior in infantry; but their cavalry did not exceed two thousand. The total loss in killed and wounded amounted to about six thousand men on the part of the allies; that of the French must have been still greater. Before daybreak of the 18th, marshal Soult commenced his retrograde march to Seville.

The siege of Badajoz now recommenced under the superintendence of lord Wellington; but the fortress was of great strength, and the garrison, though with little prospect of relief, defended the place with extraordinary bravery. In two assaults on fort Christoval, the allies were repulsed with great slaughter. In the mean time, Soult, in conjunction with marshal Marmont, who had now succeeded Massena, was collecting a force for its relief; and on their approach, lord Wellington, finding himself much inferior in strength, retired to the right bank of the Guadiana, from whence, after a short interval, he removed his wearied troops, during the sultry heats of summer, into cantonments in the lower Beira. Towards the end of September, the British troops again took the field, threatening the fortress of Ciudad-Rodrigo; but before lord Wellington could complete his preparations, general Marmont collected a force of sixty thousand men, with the view of turning the left of his position, and either cutting off his retreat, or forcing him to battle. His skilful opponent, however, aware of his design, made a timely movement beyond the Coa, on which Marmont withdrew towards Salamanca. During these operations, general Hill, who had been detached from the main army and joined by a Spanish force, on the 28th of October, surprised and totally defeated a corps of the French under general Girard at Arroyo del Molino, with a loss on the part of the enemy of two thousand men, with their artillery and baggage.

In Spain, the province of Catalonia was the theatre of the most active military operations, at the close of the last and the beginning of this year (1811). The capture of Tortosa, by the French army under marshal Suchet, has been already noticed. After the reduction of that fortress, Suchet sent a division against fort Balaguez, at the mouth of the Ebro, and on the 9th of January it was carried by assault. It was then determined to undertake the siege of Tarragona, and, as a preliminary step, the whole Italian division of the French army made an attack on the Spanish general Sarsfield, January the 15th, but the assailants were defeated with considerable loss, and this check deferred for some months the siege of that city. During this interval, the fortress of Figueras was recovered by a body of Catalonians who were secretly admitted into the place through a stratagem of some of their countrymen whom the French had forced into their service. The whole French garrison were taken in their beds without a shot being fired.

About the end of April, Suchet marched his army against Tarragona, resolved on the reduction of this important seaport: and on the 5th of May he completed its investment except on the sea side. A furious assault made on the 21st, after a great slaughter on both sides, placed the lower part of the town, into which the besiegers had got access through the capture of an outwork, in the power of the enemy. The garrison, however, still held out, until, on the 28th, a practicable breach being made, the assailants rushed in, and almost instantly carried the place. To such a pitch had their fury been roused by the long and determined resistance which had been made, that every outrage and cruelty suffered in a town taken by storm was the melancholy lot of the inhabitants of Tarragona. Multitudes endeavoured to escape into the country; and many, particularly the women and children, fled in boats to the British vessels. Amid this confusion, the ruthless enemy perpetrated every species of outrage, on persons of both sexes, and of all ages! Suchet, in his letter to the minister of war, says, that nine thousand seven hundred and eighty men were made prisoners, and that five thousand were