

Translated by Greg Gorsuch
Part 10

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

OF THE

PENINSULA WAR,

FROM 1807 TO 1814,

SERVING AS AN INTRODUCTION TO THE JOURNALS OF THE SIEGES MADE
OR SUSTAINED BY THE FRENCH IN THIS WAR.

CAMPAIGN OF 1811

I

Massena's situation at Santarem became more critical every day. The French army lived only by marauding. The Lisbon junta had decreed the death penalty against any Portuguese who would not abandon his home when the French approached; and these unfortunates, fleeing to the most deserted places, took with them their effects, their provisions, took their livestock, and destroyed everything they could not remove. The marauders spread out fifteen, twenty and even forty leagues, searching the valleys, the mountains, the caves, the islands in the middle of the rivers, to discover what the inhabitants had hidden there.

These resources, so painfully acquired, were soon exhausted. The privations engendered diseases which caused great ravages. The army numbered only forty-six thousand men present under arms, not including the troops of the Ninth Corps; and, to escape total ruin, it was essential that it should leave its positions. Marshal Masséna, wishing to throw himself into the Alentejo, had prepared means of crossing the Tagus; and, by the 10th of January, after less than six weeks of work, he had at the mouth of the Zêzere a deck crew of ninety boats, two flying bridges, a ferry and eight nacelles. But Lord Wellington, foreseeing his design, had detached General Hill with fifteen thousand men and several corps of militia on the left bank of the Tagus. Marshal Beresford, who soon afterwards took command of these troops, had entrenchments and batteries erected opposite Punhete, and tried, on several occasions, to set fire to the boats which were assembled there with Congreve rockets. At the same time, he put himself in communication with the garrison of Abrantès by the bridge of that place, directly threatening the establishments of Punhete from the right bank of the Tagus. On the other hand, strong reserves were located at Villanova, ready to move wherever the French should attempt the passage. Lord Wellington had moved his headquarters to Cartago, and his vanguard had advanced on the Rio Mayor; the rest of his troops guarded the lines of Torres Vedras.

Napoleon, informed by General Foy of the situation of affairs in Portugal, had reiterated the order to Marshal Soult to go to Estremadura with the Fifth Corps and what troops he could join to it from Andalusia, and to advance into the Alentejo to the banks of the Tagus, to facilitate the

establishment of a bridge over this river by the army of Portugal¹. Masséna was to, while awaiting the arrival of Marshal Soult, make new efforts to remain in his positions², in order to contain Lord Wellington with all his forces in the Lisbon angle, and to force him to continue the enormous expenses he was obliged to make to feed his army and the population taking refuge behind his lines. Marshal Bessières received the order to assemble all the reserves at Valladolid and to form the Army of the North, in order to watch the frontier of Portugal, and, in case of need, to come to the aid of Masséna³. He had to prepare the demolition of Almeida, supply Ciudad-Rodrigo, make large piles of provisions at Salamanca, and carry a body of six thousand men to the frontier, to support the Ninth Corps which remained at Masséna's disposal. King Joseph was informed of all these arrangements and had to send a column of the Central Army to Coria, to have news of the army of Portugal.

Marshal Soult considered it necessary for the success of his operations to first seize Badajoz, an important place situated on the main road to Lisbon, which would secure his rear, give him a solid bridge over the Guadiana and a depot on the Alentejo frontier. It was all the more useful for him to take possession of this strong point, as the enemy still held on the same frontier the towns of Olivenza, Elvas, Campo-Mayor, and the forts of Juromenha, Alburquerque and Valencia. The siege of Badajoz was indeed indispensable; but it should have been done ten months earlier. Before setting out, Marshal Soult had siege equipment of thirty-four guns and a supply of sixty thousand pounds of powder prepared. The immense arsenal of Seville, which had provided two hundred and sixty pieces to arm the lines of the blockade of Cadiz, was still able to provide the means to organize this material. The engineers formed a park of tools; the administration gathered supplies; and, as there was a lack of means of transport, the marshal requisitioned in the country two thousand five hundred carriages drawn by oxen.

These preparations required more than a month. Finally, on 2 January, Marshal Soult left Seville to put his army in motion. The Fifth Corps, designated for the expedition, was formed of two infantry divisions and a brigade of light cavalry. Marshal Soult reinforced it with the division of dragoons of General Latour-Maubourg, the Twenty-seventh Chasseurs, the Fourth Spanish Chasseurs, and a fairly considerable personnel of artillery and engineers. The strength of this army was about eighteen thousand men, including four thousand cavalry. A brigade of the First Corps and several detachments of the Fourth had, in addition, to cover the communications.

The French troops crossed the Sierra Morena passes in three columns. On the right, General Girard, with the First Division of the Fifth Corps and the cavalry of General Latour-Maubourg, advanced by the difficult road that leads from Cordoba to Llerena; in the center, Marshal Soult and Marshal Mortier followed the main road to Badajoz, with the light cavalry brigade of General Briche, the division of General Gazan, and the equipment of the artillery and engineers; on the left, a battalion and a detachment of cavalry advanced by the road to Aracena and Fuentes de León.

The forces which La Romana had left on the Guadiana, when leaving Extremadura, consisted of two divisions commanded by Mendizabál and Ballesteros, a brigade of Spanish cavalry under the

¹ See supporting documents, no. 51.

² See supporting documents, no. 52.

³ See supporting documents, no. 53.

command of General Butrón, and a brigade of Portuguese cavalry under the command of the English General Madden; in all, about twelve thousand men. On 3 January, the vanguard of General Latour-Maubourg met at Usagre, in front of Llerena, the division of Mendizabál and the Spanish Portuguese cavalry. The enemy withdrew without fighting to Almendralejo and to Mérida, where he recrossed the Guadiana. The same day, Marshal Soult and Marshal Mortier arrived at Monasterio with the central column, a moment after Ballesteros, who, with five thousand men, had just taken up position at Calera. Marshal Mortier had it attacked by Pépin's brigade and the Second Hussars. The fight lasted three hours. The enemy, overthrown, fled in the direction of Fregenal. The night which came, prevented pursuit.

Although advanced, the season promised to be favorable; but suddenly a most violent storm arose which opposed great obstacles to the march of the army. Abundant rain mixed with hail formed torrents which destroyed all the roads. The weather became so dreadful that the courage of the soldier was broken. More than three hundred carts drawn by oxen were abandoned by their drivers, and a large part of the food and ammunition was lost. The road, at first quite good at the beginning of the operations, and repaired again by a company of sappers, was horribly degraded by the multiplicity of carts. The country they were crossing offered only wild lands, barren and resource less moors, where there were barely any traces of habitation. Sunk in the mud, without shelter, and often without a fire to dry their clothes soaked by the rain, the men also lacked bread. The convoys, drawn by unruly oxen that the soldiers drove with bayonets, barely made a league and a half a day.

Despite all these obstacles, the columns of infantry and cavalry were united on the 4th at Fuentes de Cantos, from where they went on the 5th to Los Santos and Zafra. On the 6th, the light cavalry of General Briche seized the bridge of Mérida on the Guadiana. Mendizabál, after hastily throwing four thousand men into Olivenza, had fallen back on Badajoz with the rest of his column.

This beginning of the campaign gave the greatest hope for the continuation of the operations, since the enemy, instead of concentrating his forces on Badajoz to defend the Guadiana, was already dispersed, and had abandoned the bridge of Mérida which he could have blown up. Marshal Soult judged that before the arrival of the material, which he had been obliged to leave behind, he would have time to seize Olivenza, a small place which, situated two leagues from the Guadiana, could serve as a depot for the army while awaiting the capture of Badajoz, and did not appear to be likely to put up much resistance. The previous year, Marshal Mortier had entered it without obstacles during the first movement of the Fifth Corps on Badajoz; and, since then, the Spaniards had seemed to neglect it. After having made an initial reconnaissance of the fortifications of Badajoz, Marshal Soult therefore moved on January 1st to Olivenza. (*See the account of this siege, Volume III.*)

General Gazan had remained behind with his division, between Fregenal and Monasterio, to protect the march of the convoys on the road to Seville, and to gather the material under the support of the castle of Zafra, which for this purpose was put in a state of defense. After his failure of 3 January, Ballesteros had thrown back towards the lower Guadiana, where he was reinforced by part of the troops that General Copons commanded in the county of Niebla. General Gazan set out in pursuit on 18 January, calling to him General Rémond who, with a

mobile column of twelve hundred men, was charged with monitoring the line from Rio-Tinto to Niebla. On 25 January, he attacked the Spaniards on the heights of Villanueva de los Castillejos, put them to flight, and forced them to cross the Guadiana to take refuge in Portugal. He then took the road to Olivenza, and General Rémond returned to Niebla.

On the right of the army, General Briche, after having seized Mérida, had been charged with his brigade of light cavalry, with clearing the right bank of the Guadiana, and intercepting the relief that the enemy would attempt to throw into Badajoz. On the left bank, General Latour-Maubourg was to, with his division of dragoons, contain the garrison of this place and cover the siege of Olivenza. General Briche advanced as far as the walls of Campo-Mayor, and captured several convoys from the Spaniards; but he could not prevent Mendizabál, who had retired with three thousand men of cavalry to Albuquerque, where he had been reinforced by the brigade of D. Carlos España, coming from the environs of Abrantès, from bringing into Badajoz a strong column of infantry and cavalry. This movement of the enemy, appearing to have as its object the relief of Olivenza, General Briche received from Marshal Soult the order to return to the left bank of the Guadiana. He took up position, on 17 January, at Talavera la Real, where he was supported by a brigade of dragoons, of the Latour-Maubourg division, posted not far from there at Valverde de Leganés. The Spaniards, numbering fifteen hundred men, came to attack him on 20 January, but they were repulsed. Olivenza surrendered on 23 January: a small garrison was left there. In the meantime, Marshal Soult, having again received from the Emperor the order to advance to the relief of Masséna⁴, left this place on the 26th, to go and besiege Badajoz. (*See the account of this siege, Volume III.*)

General La Houssaye had been detached from the army of the center and sent from Talavera de la Reyna, by King Joseph, with a column of three thousand infantry and five hundred cavalry, to have news of the march of Marshal Soult. He crossed the Tagus at the bridge of Arzobispo, and arrived on 22 January at Trujillo, from where he communicated at Miajadas on the 24th, with a reconnaissance of the Fifth Corps, which had left Mérida. Marshal Soult wanted him to go towards Cáceres to cover the right of the army before Badajoz. Perhaps he also hoped by supporting him to be able to open a communication more promptly with Masséna; but General La Houssaye had the formal order of King Joseph to return to the right bank of the Tagus, and to push reconnaissances towards Abrantès, to have news of Masséna. Having reached Talavera de la Reyna on February 1st, General La Houssaye went on the 21st, to Plasencia, from where he pushed parties on the 23rd and 24th towards Coria and Alcántara. The lack of provisions having forced him to fall back, he received again from King Joseph the order to go to Trujillo. The time lost by all these marches rendered null the services that could be expected from this column.

On hearing of Marshal Soult's offensive movement, Lord Wellington had hastily sent back to Estremadura the two Spanish divisions which had joined him on the Tagus. Mendizabál took command of them in replacement of the Marquis de la Romana, who had just died suddenly at Cartago; and, with the troops he already had, he found himself at the head of twelve thousand men. He came to take up position on 6 February, under the walls of Badajoz, occupying the heights of the right bank of the Guadiana in front of Fort San-Christobal. Marshal Soult destroyed this army on 19 February, at the battle of Gebora; only a few thousand men escaped. Badajoz surrendered on 11 March, after thirty-eight days of siege; its garrison still numbered

⁴ See supporting documents, nos. 54 and 55.

nearly eight thousand men. Since his departure from Seville, Marshal Soult had seized two strongholds, he had killed or dispersed twenty-four thousand men, taken twenty-five flags, and taken seventeen thousand prisoners, with forces that barely exceeded that number. Nevertheless, the principal object of his expedition was found to be missed.

Masséna had not been able to wait for the fall of Badajoz to begin his retreat. His new efforts to procure provisions and fodder had produced only very feeble results. At the end of February, the marauders brought back nothing more, although two-thirds of the army were busy searching the countryside. The soldiers lived only on chestnuts and acorns; and, accustomed for five months to an organized marauding, they no longer knew the restraint of discipline. This army, formerly so fine, was in the greatest distress, and found itself considerably reduced by the attacks of the militia, the lack of provisions and the diseases. The enemy, on the contrary, had received numerous reinforcements, and was becoming more enterprising every day, principally towards Leiria. Everything indicated that he was seriously preparing to resume the offensive. If this had been the case, the loss of the French army seemed inevitable. Obligated, in order to survive, to spread out over a large area of ground, it could no longer subsist from the moment it was forced to concentrate to fight.

Masséna had been informed, by the English newspapers and by some peasants, of the arrival of the Fifth Corps on the frontier of Alentejo. He had even heard for some time the cannon of Badajoz, but for twenty days the noise had ceased. Seeing nothing appear, he believed that Marshal Soult had been obliged to withdraw; then he himself thought of retreating to Coimbra to take the line of the Mondego⁵, a project that the Emperor himself had adopted, in order to be able, in the month of September and after the harvests, to combine an attack against the English with the Armies of Portugal, the South, and the Center⁶. But to execute his flank movement in front of a very superior army, Masséna had to hide his design. He therefore maneuvered in such a way as to make the enemy believe that he wanted to cross the Tagus at Punhete, or to withdraw behind the Zêzere to reach Castelo Branco. Consequently, all the boats were gathered at a point on the river where preparations for the crossing were simulated. On 5 March, at eight o'clock in the evening, the Eighth Corps, which occupied Tremês and Alcanede, began to fall back on Pernes, and from there on Torres-Novas. At the same time, the Second Corps was heading with the baggage and the sick, from Santarem to Thomar and Espinhel. Marshal Ney gathered the Sixth Corps and the cavalry of General Montbrun at Leiria, to contain the enemy on the Lys, threatening to move on Torres-Vedras.

Lord Wellington thus remained uncertain for several days as to the course that Masséna wanted to take. It was not until 7 March that he learned, by the burning of the pontoon bridges prepared on the Tagus, the direction of the retreat of the French army towards Coimbra. Then he limited himself to having the Second Corps followed in the direction of Thomar, by a few detachments of cavalry and infantry; he had the Eighth Corps followed a stronger column, which was marching on Pombal to take the main road to Coimbra there; and with the mass of his forces, he advanced on Leiria to outflank the French army and arrive before it on the Mondego. A body of ten thousand men, recently arrived from England, had been left on the transports on purpose, to be landed at Figueroa, at the mouth of the Mondego, to go up this river by the right bank, and to

⁵ See supporting documents, no. 56.

⁶ See supporting documents, nos. 57 and 63.

be in a position to attack in front the head of the French army, when it should present itself before Coimbra.

On the 9th of March, the Sixth Corps, the Eighth, the Second Division of the Ninth and the cavalry of General Montbrun found themselves united in a vast plain in front of Pombal. A general action was expected. The enemy deployed boldly and entered Pombal; but he was vigorously driven out, and Masséna was able to fall back behind the Soure. Continuing his retreat towards Coimbra, he arrived on the 12th of March at Condeixa. Marshal Ney, who commanded the rearguard, had stopped the day before with a division on the heights of Redinha, to cover the retreat of the army through a very long defile, and to give time for the baggage to pass. He was attacked the next day in this position by thirty thousand men; he nevertheless maintained himself there all day by valiant efforts, and, at nightfall, he withdrew in good order to rejoin the main body of the army at Condeixa. During this combat, the French vanguard, under the orders of General Montbrun, had advanced as far as the suburb of Coimbra, on the left bank of the Mondego. Colonel Trant, commanding the eastern militia, had destroyed two arches of the bridge and posted a battalion and some cannon behind. He himself defended the fords of the river. The cannon of Redinha had warned him of the arrival of the English army, and he knew that the column of ten thousand men landed at Figueroa was going up the Mondego to throw itself into Coimbra.

Masséna, believing Coimbra to be more heavily occupied than it really was, despaired of forcing the passage of the Mondego there, and did not even attempt it. His position was becoming extremely critical; stopped at the head and pressed at the rear, he was threatened with being turned to the left by Lord Wellington, who was maneuvering to outstrip him on the Deuca. He immediately left Condeixa to take the bad road of Miranda de Corvo, the only one left to him; he himself advanced with the divisions of Loison and Clauzel to oppose the movement of Lord Wellington, which threatened his left, and to try to put himself in communication with the Second Corps, which was at Espinhel.

On 14 March, the French army took up position at Miranda, after having escaped the most imminent danger of being surrounded. The slowness of Lord Wellington's movements saved it. General Montbrun, who had advanced as far as Coimbra, managed only with the greatest difficulty to rejoin the army at Miranda; it had been thought that he was lost. The Second Corps, which covered the left towards Espinhel, heading towards Lourosa, communicated from that moment with the army.

Masséna continued his retrograde movement during the night. The columns were encumbered with baggage; most of the companies had up to twenty mules or donkeys following them, to carry the baggage and provisions. An order of the day prescribed that all these animals be hamstrung and that the carts and luxury carriages be burned. Thus, lightened in their march, the French troops arrived on the Ceira on the morning of 15 March, and halted at Foz de Arouce, behind this river. Marshal Ney stood all day with two divisions on the heights of the left bank which command the approaches to the bridge. The enemy appeared in the afternoon and immediately attacked this rearguard. The melee was lively and bloody and continued until nightfall. However, the French held their positions and did not fall back until eleven o'clock in the evening on the right bank of the Ceira, whose bridge they blew up. The army continued its

retreat on the Alva, which it crossed on 17 March, after having reestablished the bridge of Murcela, destroyed by the peasants who were defending the approaches. Masséna would have liked to stop for a few days on this river; but the enemy having taken control of the bridge of Pombeiro, situated two leagues upstream and defended only by one battalion, threatened the rear of the army and its communications with the Second Corps which was in the vicinity of Lourosa. These movements determined the French army to continue, from the same evening, its retreat towards Celorico, where it arrived on 21 March, almost without having seen the enemy⁷.

There, Masséna had the choice of withdrawing under the support of the cannon of Almeida and Ciudad-Rodrigo, or of taking at Guarda, on the Serra de Estrela, a flank position which would bring him closer to the Tagus, allow him to link up with the Army of the Center towards Madrid and with the Army of the South on the Guadiana, and give him the means to maneuver further against the English. He preferred the latter course, although contrary to the general desire of the officers and soldiers of the army, who wanted to return as quickly as possible to Spain to rest from their fatigues and obtain provisions. Marshal Ney, who since the beginning of the campaign had been in open division with the commander-in-chief, positively refused to obey, preferring to bring the army directly back to Almeida, and from there to Salamanca, to take up cantonments there. The general-in-chief, irritated by a refusal which compromised his authority, believed it necessary to dismiss this Marshal from the army, to reestablish subordination by an example of severity on one of his first leaders, and he gave command of the Sixth Corps to General Loison⁸. He sent his sick to Ciudad-Rodrigo and had Alcántara, Coria, as well as the whole country between the Tagus and the Guadiana reconnoitered, thinking that the position of the Tagus was the best to take, if he could find food there. But, on 29 March, Lord Wellington having presented himself before Guarda, Masséna fell back behind the Côa. In this retreat, the French army lost one thousand two hundred marauders who did not have time to rejoin their regiments.

The Second Corps took up position at Sabugal, where there is a fine stone bridge on the Côa, at the junction of the main roads of Guarda and Castelo Branco. The Eighth Corps was placed behind at Alfayates. The Sixth Corps extended to the right along the Côa. Masséna still retained in this position the possibility of operating, either on Coria, or on Ciudad-Rodrigo, and he gave time to Marshal Bessières to arrive to his aid with the Army of the North⁹, and to complete the supplies of Almeida and Ciudad-Rodrigo. But soon Lord Wellington appeared with his army, and, on 3 April, he attacked the Second Corps at Sabugal with superior forces. The combat was maintained for a long time with the liveliest ferocity; in the end, General Reynier was obliged to withdraw to Alfaiates, by making his way, arms in hand, through the enemy who already surrounded him. This affair cost us seven hundred men. Masséna, obliged to return to the opinion of Marshal Ney, withdrew under the walls of Ciudad-Rodrigo, as much to avoid disadvantageous engagements, as to put an end to the terrible shortage to which his army was prey¹⁰. The detour he had made by Guarda allowed the enemy to blockade Almeida, before this place was completely supplied. A few days later, Masséna came to take up quarters at Salamanca, to recover the army from its fatigues.

⁷ See supporting documents, no. 58.

⁸ See supporting documents, nos. 59 and 60.

⁹ See supporting documents, no. 61.

¹⁰ See supporting documents, no. 62.

For their part, the Anglo-Portuguese, lacking provisions, crossed the mountains again, and established themselves in the vicinity of Celorico, in order to be within reach of their stores established at Viseu and Coimbra. A body of twenty thousand men, under the orders of General Spencer, remained under the walls of Almeida, to blockade this place, where General Brenier was with a weak garrison.

Marshal Soult was still under the walls of Badajoz, when he learned, on 8 March, that Masséna had left Santarem to head for the Mondego. This retreat did not allow him to follow up on his successes; he left Badajoz on the 14th, with part of his troops, to return to Andalusia, where the state of affairs required his prompt return. An English corps of seven thousand men, commanded by General Graham, had left Cadiz and landed on 27 February at Algeciras, to join fifteen thousand Spaniards who had also come from Cadiz under the command of General Lapeña and had already landed at Tarifa. These troops advanced along the coast by Vejer and Conil, to attack Chiclana. In order to facilitate this operation and ensure the retreat, General Zayas, who had remained in the island of Leon with six thousand Spaniards, threw, on 2 March, a bridge of rafts on the Santi Petri channel, near its mouth, and immediately started a bridgehead which he placed under the guard of a thousand men. Marshal Victor, weakened by the departure of two infantry regiments and five cavalry regiments, sent to Estremadura, had only twelve thousand men, of whom two thousand, under the command of General Cassagne, covered the rear at Medina-Sidonia. Informed of the enemy's plans, he asked for help from General Sebastiani, and gave the order to General Villatte, who was at Chiclana, to attack immediately the Spanish bridgehead, in front of the Santi-Petri. This attack took place on 3 March, by four companies; the enemy, although already protected by a line of palisades and chevaux-de-frise, was overthrown by our troops and lost eight hundred men killed, drowned or taken: the bridge itself would have remained in our power, if the attack had been made with more considerable forces. Marshal Victor arrived on 5 March at Chiclana with his reserves, at the moment when the Anglo-Spanish army was advancing by Conil and the tower of Barossa, to join the troops of Zayas, who were emerging at the same time from the island of Leon. He immediately sent General Villatte with three thousand men to contain Zayas, and went, with what troops he had, about six thousand men of the divisions Laval and Ruffin, against the Anglo-Spanish army, which was engaged between the sea and the wood of Chiclana. Taking advantage of the critical situation of the enemy in this defile, he emerged from the woods and attacked the English, who were at the tail of the column. After two and a half hours of the most lively combat, in which the enemy lost three thousand five hundred men, Marshal Victor, unable to rout the English, and, himself, having already suffered a loss of two thousand three hundred men, had to retire to Chiclana, as well as General Villatte. He expected a general attack the next day; but the English, irritated against the Spaniards, who had only very weakly supported them in the combat of the day before, did not wish to engage in a new action, and were content to observe our lines. On the other hand, Ballesteros, after rallying his division, had forced the line of the Rio Tinto, defended by General Rémond, and had advanced as far as Sanlúcar, from where he threatened both Seville and the blockade of Cadiz. Things had reached this point, when the arrival of Marshal Soult determined the enemy to retire.

A more threatening storm soon raged in the vicinity of Badajoz. After the Pombal affair, Lord Wellington, judging that Masséna was thinking only of retreat, had directed Marshal Beresford to the Alentejo with thirteen thousand infantry and some cavalry corps, to stop the progress of

the Army of the South. This corps crossed the Tagus on 17 March and advanced by Portalegre on Elvas. Marshal Mortier had remained on the Guadiana with the Fifth Corps, to continue the attack on the fortified points that the enemy still held on the frontier of the Alentejo. His vanguard, under the orders of General Latour-Maubourg, seized the forts of Albuquerque and Valencia, while he himself laid siege to Campo-Mayor. (*See the account of this siege, Volume III.*) This place surrendered on 21 March. Marshal Mortier returned to Badajoz and expected to enjoy the fruits of his conquests in peace, when Marshal Beresford appeared on 25 March before Campo-Mayor. General Latour-Maubourg had remained under the walls of this place with two battalions and five hundred horses to remove the equipment. This rearguard was charged by the English cavalry, which dispersed part of it and pursued the fugitives to the gates of Badajoz, where it almost entered pell-mell with them.

Marshal Mortier, not finding himself strong enough to remain on the Guadiana, had Badajoz supplied and fell back on Llerena, in order to cover the passes of the Sierra-Morena which lead to Andalusia.

Marshal Beresford concentrated his troops in the vicinity of Elvas, crossed the Guadiana at Juromenha on 4 April, and came to besiege Olivenza. This place, which had a garrison of only four hundred men, surrendered on 15 April. Lord Wellington arrived five days later at Marshal Beresford's army, which invested Badajoz. He made the necessary reconnaissance to begin the siege of this place. Marshal Soult, worried about the plans of the English on Andalusia, had already requested reinforcements from the Emperor, who ordered several arrangements for the defense of this province¹¹.

However, Masséna, fearing for the town of Almeida, which, invested unexpectedly, had only enough food for a month, gathered a convoy towards the end of April to resupply it¹². This operation was to lead to a great battle. The Army of Portugal, greatly weakened by the successive losses of a long and painful retreat, had barely thirty-five thousand men present under arms. The cavalry had only two thousand horses in a state to march, and the artillery could only maneuver a dozen pieces. The army was reinforced by the entire Ninth Corps, about thirteen thousand strong, and composed of the divisions Conroux and Claparède and the cavalry brigade of General Fournier. Masséna, hoping in addition to be supported by the Army of the North, long requested assistance from Marshal Bessières¹³; but he obtained only the light cavalry brigade of General Wattier, eight hundred strong, a detachment of eight hundred mounted grenadiers, chasseurs or lancers of the Imperial Guard, brought by Marshal Bessières himself, a battery of six pieces of light artillery, and thirty teams. All these troops were gathered on 30 April at Ciudad-Rodrigo. Later, the Emperor blamed Marshal Bessières for not having gone with all his forces to the aid of Masséna¹⁴.

On hearing of this gathering, the Anglo-Portuguese army concentrated in the vicinity of Almeida. It numbered forty-five thousand men, not including the militia and the Spanish bands. Lord Wellington arrived in all haste on May 1st to resume command.

¹¹ See supporting documents, no. 63.

¹² See supporting documents, no. 64.

¹³ See supporting documents, no. 65 and 66.

¹⁴ See supporting documents, no. 67.

The French army crossed the Águeda on May 2nd at the bridge of Ciudad-Rodrigo. Lord Wellington took up position at the village of Fuentes de Oñoro, behind the steep ravine of Dos Casas which covered his front. His left rested on the fort of La Concepcion on the road to Almeida; his right, on the marshy wood of Pozo Bello, beyond which some Spanish troops guarded the mountain of Nave de Aver. His line had an extent of nearly two leagues. On the right and in the center, he had for his retreat only the single carriage road of Castelo Bom; and, in its rear, was the Côa, whose steep banks offer only precipices everywhere. Masséna sought to seize the enemy's only communication with Castelo Bom, and to overthrow him on the Côa; it was with this aim that he attacked the village of Fuentes de Oñoro on 3 May. They fought all day, but without any other result for the French than the occupation of the lower part of the village. Having been unable to take the position frontally, Masséna sought to turn it. During the night, he made a large movement on his left, to reach the head of the ravine of Dos Casas beyond the wood of Pozo-Bello, in order to outflank the enemy by the plain which extends between the wood and the mountain of Nave de Aver. At daybreak, General Montbrun attacked across this plain, overthrew the Anglo-Portuguese cavalry, broke through several squares of infantry, and forced the Spanish troops to retreat by a long detour. Continuing to advance, he moved to the rear of the English line, in the defile formed by the ravine of Dos Casas and that of the Turon which was behind. This open passage prepared the way for the most resounding victory; the road to Castelo Bom was uncovered and the English believed themselves lost. But, by inconceivable fatality, the Sixth Corps, instead of falling upon the half-beaten enemy and rushing between the two ravines, remained without orders. Marshal Ney no longer commanded it, and General Loison, who had replaced him, did not dare take it upon himself to execute this bold movement. Lord Wellington thus had time to withdraw his right wing into the fatal defile and direct his reserve there. The decisive moment of the battle was thus lost for the French. Masséna, who, instead of supporting his left, had made vain efforts to take Fuentes de Oñoro, in the center, rushed to the scene too late and was forced to abandon his project. The enemy devoted the days of 6 and 7 May to entrenching themselves at all points¹⁵.

Masséna having lost all hope of communicating with Almeida, wanted at least to save the garrison: he chose four soldiers of good will, to each of whom he promised a reward of six thousand francs if they managed to cross the English line and take to General Brenier, governor of the place, the order to blow up the fortifications and join the army at San Felices. Three of these brave men were massacred; but the fourth, named Tillet, after having escaped the most eminent dangers, was able to reach Almeida. On 7 May, at ten o'clock in the evening, four salvos of twenty-five cannon shots were heard, a signal by which General Brenier announced the receipt of the orders and their imminent execution. The garrison had been working for a month to prepare furnaces to blow up the two southern fronts of the place, as well as the bastion of the arsenal, under the rubble of which all the artillery equipment was to be buried.

During the days of the 8th, 9th and 10th of May, the army made demonstrations to occupy the attention of the enemy. Finally, on the night of the 10th at midnight, the explosion of Almeida was heard: one hundred and forty mines, divided into six groups, and each loaded with nine hundred pounds of powder, both to avoid jamming and to consume all the supplies, were fired at once. Since ten thirty in the evening, General Brenier had been on the march with the garrison,

¹⁵ See supporting documents, no. 68.

composed of eleven hundred men. The battalion commander of engineers Morlet remained behind with two companies of sappers and one of miners, to fire the mines. Hotly pursued and without guides, General Brenier reached the Águeda bridge in the morning, opposite San Felices, where he joined up with General Reynier, at the very moment when the enemy, who had attacked him with six battalions, had already made him lose three hundred and sixty men, and was going to crush him¹⁶. On 11 May, the French army returned to its cantonments in the vicinity of Salamanca, to recover from its fatigue. Marshal Marmont, first announced to command the Sixth Corps, replaced Marshal Masséna in the command-in-chief of the army. He organized his infantry into six divisions, suppressing the designation of army corps, and sent back to France a large number of infantry and cavalry cadres to complete themselves. He prepared to move to the Tagus, to be able to watch both the north and the south of Spain¹⁷.

Marshal Beresford had remained under the walls of Badajoz, and had opened the trench, on 8 May, in front of this place. Having learned, on 13 May, that Marshal Soult had left Seville on the 10th, with all the troops he had available, and was advancing to the aid of Badajoz, he went to meet him at Albuera, the junction point of the roads from Badajoz and Olivenza to Seville. The Duke of Dalmatia had with him only the troops of the Fifth Corps, some detachments of the First and Fourth, the cavalry of General Latour-Maubourg, and a brigade of the reserve division, of which General Godinot had taken command in replacement of General Dessolles; in total, nearly twenty thousand men. The enemy army consisted of the two English divisions Cole and Stewart, the Portuguese division of General Hamilton, a regiment of light dragoons with some heavy cavalry, four thousand Spaniards, under the command of Castaños, and an expeditionary force of about ten thousand men, coming from Cadiz, under the command of Blake; in total, thirty-one thousand men, including three thousand six hundred cavalry. This army occupied a fairly steep plateau behind the Albuera stream.

On 15 May, Marshal Soult arrived in the presence of the enemy. The very next day, he attacked the right wing of Marshal Beresford's line, where the English troops were located, while General Godinot created a diversion on the left wing by seizing the bridge and the village of Albuera. The aim of Marshal Soult was to gain control of the Olivenza road, to throw back the Anglo-Portuguese army on Badajoz and prevent the junction of Blake, which he did not believe had yet been effected. General Girard, who had replaced Marshal Mortier in command of the Fifth Corps, advanced with the First Division in close column, against the right wing of the Anglo-Portuguese army, while four regiments of cavalry, hussars and lancers, by a brilliant charge, took it in flank. The first line of the enemy yielded to these vigorous efforts; but soon, supported by three reserve brigades, it turned in strength on the center, and opposed with the best sustained fire of two ranks to the column of General Girard, which, continuing to march without deploying, soon suffered enormous losses, and was forced to withdraw. The Second Division, commanded by General Darricau, immediately advanced in close column, like the first; but it experienced the same difficulty in deploying under the fire of the enemy line. It fought for some time, whirling around on itself, and finally, broke up in the most terrible disorder. The brigade of General Werlé, which formed the reserve, rushed and protected the retreat, but could not bring back the victory; it was carried away in its turn by the fugitives. The artillery, which had gathered thirty to forty pieces to protect the attack, supported the efforts against the enemy for

¹⁶ See supporting documents, no. 69.

¹⁷ See supporting documents, no. 70.

two hours. It made a terrible fire, and, supported by cavalry, it saved the army. This battle is one of the bloodiest of the war in Spain: the French, very inferior in number, had seven thousand men out of action, including five generals; the Anglo-Portuguese lost more than eight thousand men, most of them harvested by the artillery or sabered by the cavalry. Two thirds of the English troops were destroyed; two of their generals were killed and two others were wounded.

The next day, 17 May, the two armies remained in each others presence, ready to recommence the fight. Marshal Soult, who had learned of Blake's arrival, and no longer hoped to force the Anglo-Portuguese army, retreated during the night, marching so slowly that he did not arrive at Llerena until the 23rd. The enemy cavalry followed him, and there was a lively engagement at Usagre, but without result. Marshal Soult remained under observation at Llerena to reorganize his army, whose morale was greatly affected by the losses of the Fifth Corps. Marshal Beresford returned before Badajoz, where all his works had been destroyed in his absence by the garrison of this place. Marshal Victor had remained before Cadiz and continued the blockade. The Emperor had ordered the capture of the island of Leon, to then crush the city with batteries. He thought that a path of a few hundred fathoms through the marshes and canals which obstruct the approaches to Santi-Petri was not an impracticable thing. But Marshal Victor having hardly more than ten thousand men, and lacking artillery ammunition, found himself too weak to attempt anything.

General Sebastiani had made all the necessary preparations to enter Murcia, and lay siege to Cartagena¹⁸; but Marshal Soult having withdrawn troops from him, and the garrisons of the places he occupied weakening him further, he had only three thousand five hundred men left to oppose the Spanish Army of Murcia, which numbered more than ten thousand. He could therefore undertake nothing.

In the north of Spain, Marshal Bessi res had his headquarters at Valladolid. He was to support with his troops the right of the Army of Portugal and maintain communications on the main road to Bayonne. The disasters of the French troops in Portugal, the return of these troops to Spain, and the departure for Paris of King Joseph who was to attend the baptism of the King of Rome, had revived the energy of the Spaniards. The bands of guerrillas had become more numerous and more enterprising than ever. They attacked the convoys, prevented the collection of contributions, forced all the young men to enlist, took away the grain and threw terror into the rear of the army¹⁹. Marshal Bessi res made several reports to the Major General on this state of affairs²⁰, and took various measures to maintain the inhabitants and pacify the country²¹.

In Lower Catalonia, General Suchet, after having seized Tortosa, was charged with collecting provisions, and preparing artillery material for the siege of Tarragona, which Marshal Macdonald, retired to Lerida, was to undertake. On 8 January, General Habert seized with his division, by a most audacious attack of main force, Fort Saint-Philippe, which, situated at the Balaguer pass, closed the Royal Road from Tortosa to Tarragona. The Marquis of Campoverde had succeeded O'Donnell in the command of the Spanish army of Catalonia, and had retired to

¹⁸ See supporting documents, no. 71

¹⁹ See supporting documents, no. 72.

²⁰ See supporting documents, no. 73.

²¹ See supporting documents, nos. 74 and 75.

Tarragona, after some unsuccessful attempts against the French camps in the environs of Lerida and Tortosa.

On 10 March, by virtue of a new demarcation of the theater of operations of the two armies of Aragon and Catalonia, made by the Emperor, General Suchet was charged with the siege of Tarragona. Marshal Macdonald had to hand over to him the divisions of Frère and Peyri of the Seventh Corps, which were at Lerida, and return to Upper Catalonia, where the divisions of Lamarque and Baraguey d'Hilliers had remained. On 26 March, Macdonald left Lerida for Barcelona under the escort of ten thousand men, commanded by General Harispe. The bands of Sarsfield and Baron de Eroles went to meet this column, which they harassed in its march. At Manresa, an Italian brigade which formed the vanguard was assailed by a hail of bullets; it lost a certain number of men, and all the wounded who were taken by the peasants were slaughtered in the most barbarous manner. The Italians, irritated, meditated a terrible vengeance: during the night, they set fire to Manresa in all its districts at once; and this city, which numbered twenty-five thousand souls, but whose inhabitants had fled at our approach, became entirely prey to the flames. Even the house where the Marshal was staying was not spared; and it was only with the greatest difficulty that the sick who were in the hospitals were saved. Animated by the same fury, the peasants and the Spanish troops who occupied the Montserrat, attacked the column in the defiles of the Davi Pass, and made it lose nearly eight hundred men; it was only with the greatest difficulty that they reached Barcelona, from where General Harispe then joined General Suchet by Villafranca and Montblanc, followed by Manso's bands. The Catalans, animated more than ever by the desire for revenge, indulged in the most cruel reprisals.

On the night of 19-20 March, Campoverde had attempted to seize by surprise Fort Montjoui in Barcelona, by means of intelligence that he had secured in the place for money. This plan was known to the governor, who, without discovering the plot, remained on his guard; and, when the enemy presented itself at the foot of the walls of the fort, he had him attacked with the liveliest fire. Eight hundred elite men strewn the ditch; the rest fled, and a column that went out in pursuit of them brought back a few hundred prisoners.

Campoverde was more fortunate against the fort of Figueres. On the night of 9-10 April, Rovira, leader of bands, entered, with five hundred miquelets, this fort by a secret door of the food store which opened into the ditch; a subordinate employee had given him the key for 20,000 francs. The garrison, surprised in its barracks, was obliged to lay down its arms. At this news, French troops were sent from Girona and Mont-Louis to blockade the fort; but they did not arrive in time to prevent Brigadier Martinez from throwing himself into the place with three thousand men.

This event excited the enthusiasm of the Catalans to the highest degree. Campoverde wanted to take advantage of it to bring a convoy of provisions into the fort. He headed from Tarragona by Olot with ten thousand men of his best troops, and presented himself, on 3 May, before Figueres; but General Baraguey d'Hilliers, who commanded the blockade, attacked him and put him to a complete rout. Nine hundred men killed, fifteen hundred prisoners, all the baggage, and the convoy itself, were the result of this battle.

No. 51.

*Letter from Prince Berthier, Major General, to Marshal
Soul, Duke of Dalmatia.*

Paris, 4 December 1810.

I have placed before the Emperor, Duke, your various dispatches. His Majesty was displeased that, when it came to measures as important as those affecting the safety of his army in Portugal, you allowed General La Romana to advance to the Tagus without having him followed with a sword at his back. If the Prince of Essling's army were defeated, Duke, you must understand the importance of this for the Emperor's armies in Andalusia, and how much they would be compromised. The very movement of La Romana proves that what is happening in Portugal is the most important thing for the affairs of Spain.

The English position is still at Torres Vedras, and behind Villafranca. The Prince of Essling is positioned opposite the English line. The latter have about thirty thousand men of their own troops, ten thousand Spaniards, and thirty thousand Portuguese. The Prince of Essling has about fifty thousand men; but, having judged the enemy's position too strong, he did not see fit to attack them and has entrenched himself. The Prince of Essling has isolated Abrantès from the Tagus and has begun the siege of this city, defended by two thousand Portuguese militia.

Count d'Erlon, the Duke, was at Guarda on November 18th with a corps of twenty thousand men, and he will likely have defeated all the Portuguese militia corps that intercepted the communications of Prince Essling's army.

The Prince of Essling, with his forces and in his position, fears no attack from the English. He intends to maintain his position and is busy organizing his means of subsistence in the Tagus Valley. He has built a bridge over the Zêzere, covered by good bridgeheads and considerable outworks. This river, by its very nature, is the real obstacle that makes an undertaking by Castelo Branco difficult; so, if unforeseen circumstances forced the Prince of Essling to evacuate his position, he would still maintain his bridge over the Zêzere, as well as the works defending it. The Emperor, Duke, has instructed me to inform you that it is essential that a corps of ten thousand men, drawn from the Army of Andalusia, and composed of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, move either to Montalvão or to the heights of Villa-Velha, to establish communication with the Prince of Essling and with General Drouet, and to be able to contribute and serve to force the English to re-embark. All considerations, Duke, must disappear before the movement that I prescribe to you. It matters little that the Fourth Corps occupies a lot of ground. His Majesty thinks that the siege of Cadiz cannot be contested by the miserable troops who find themselves shut up in this place.

In my letters of 30 September, 26 October, 14, 21, and 28 November, I reiterated the Emperor's wishes to you, and His Majesty has no doubt that a force, drawn from the Army of Andalusia, equal in strength to that of La Romana, is already on the Tagus, communicating with Prince Essling; for, I repeat, no operation in Andalusia can be successful if Prince Essling's army were at a disadvantage, a fact so well understood by La Romana. His Majesty therefore orders you,

Duke, to march a force to the Tagus to assist in the main operation, which is the destruction of the English.

You will find enclosed several *Moniteurs*, which will inform you of the news from Portugal of 12 November, which arrived via England.

Signed: ALEXANDRE.

No. 52.

*Letter from Prince Berthier, Major General, to Marshal
Masséna, Prince of Essling.*

Paris, 4 December 1810.

Monsieur Prince of Essling, General Foy, whom you dispatched, arrived in Paris on 22 November; he informed His Majesty, in great detail, what had happened and your position.

As early as 4 November, General Gardanne was ahead of Almeida with a corps of six thousand men. Count d'Erlon, with the divisions of Claparède and Conroux, and General Fournier's cavalry, must have been at Guarda around 20 November.

The Emperor, Prince, has seen from the English newspapers that you have built bridges across the Tagus, and that you have one across the Zêzere, defended on both banks by strong bridgeheads. His Majesty believes that you must entrench yourself in the position you occupy before the enemy; that since Abrantès is eight hundred toises from the Tagus, you will have isolated it from its bridge and blockaded it to lay siege to it. The Emperor recommends that you build two bridges across the Zêzere, and defend these bridges with considerable works, like those at Spitz before Vienna. Since your line of operations and communications must be established by the Guarda road, starting from the Zêzere, passing through Cardigos, and following the crest of the mountains via Campinha and Belmonte, you will always have the road to Castelo Branco and Salvatierra to bring in supplies.

I have just given the Duke of Dalmatia the order, already reiterated several times, to send the Fifth Corps to the Tagus, between Montalvão and Vilaflor, to junction with you. The Emperor believes it would be necessary to capture Alcántara, to fortify and consolidate all the bridges over the Zêzere and the Tagus, to ensure all your communications by seizing the favorable points that the localities may offer, to fortify small positions, castles, or houses, which, occupied by a small number of troops, would be safe from militia incursions.

You will feel, Prince Essling, the advantage of thus regularizing the war, which will enable you to take advantage of the reunion of all the corps that will reinforce you, to march on Lord Wellington, and attack the left of his position, either to force him to re-embark, by marching on the left bank of the Tagus; or finally, if all these means do not succeed, you will be able to

remain in position during the months of December and January, taking care to organize your supplies, and to establish your communications with Madrid and Almeida.

The Central Army, which is in Madrid, has detachments in Plasencia, so your communications with that capital are not difficult.

Two million 500 thousand francs, intended for the pay of your army, are already in Valladolid; another two million are currently leaving Bayonne; thus, your army will be in a good position.

Your position will become very embarrassing for the English, who, despite the enormous expenditure of men and money, will find themselves engaged in a systematic war, and will always have an immense number of ships at sea for re-embarkation. You must therefore, Prince, work constantly to fortify yourself against the enemy's position and be able to maintain your own with fewer troops, which will make part of your army mobile and enable you to make incursions into the country.

You will find enclosed *Moniteurs* giving news from Portugal, received via England, dated 12 November.

Signed: ALEXANDRE.

No. 53.

Report of Prince Berthier, Major General, to the Emperor.

Paris, 16 January 1811.

Sire,

I have the honor to report to Your Majesty that, in execution of your Imperial Decree dated the 15th of this month, a copy of which has just been sent to me by the Minister Secretary of State, I am giving the necessary orders for the formation of the Army of Northern Spain.

I am sending to Marshal Duke of Istria, along with the copy of the decree, the military instructions, the draft of which I had the honor of submitting to Your Majesty on the 14th, as well as the status of the troops comprising the Army of Northern Spain, whose total is fifty-seven thousand seven hundred and two men present under arms, and eight thousand seven hundred and eighty-three horses, not including four thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven men and twelve hundred and eighty horses who are in the province of Salamanca, but who belong to the Army of Portugal or the Ninth Army Corps.

I have informed him that he is free to make any movement he deems appropriate; to concentrate his hospitals, his stores, and finally to make all the arrangements he deems necessary for the good of Your Majesty's service; that he is authorized to correspond with His Majesty the King of Spain, with the Duke of Dalmatia and General Suchet, with General Drouet and the Prince of

Essling, to learn what they are doing. I have informed him that he will command General Drouet's corps, should this corps return to Spain, and finally that, in unforeseen circumstances, he must support the Army of Portugal and provide it with assistance.

I have informed all the governors-general whose commands are part of it of the formation of the Army of Northern Spain, and I have instructed them to correspond, from that moment on, with Marshal Duke of Istria, to report to him and take his orders.

I have also informed His Majesty the King of Spain and General Belliard, Chief of Staff of the Army of the Center; Marshal Prince d'Essling, and General Drouet, commanding the Ninth Army Corps; Duke of Dalmatia, and General Suchet, commanding the Third Corps and Governor of Aragon, I have recommended them to correspond with Marshal Duke of Istria whenever circumstances require concerted arrangements between their command and his, or whenever they have to send him information that might be of interest to the service.

I had the honor of sending Your Majesty this morning the draft instructions to be given regarding the administration; I will await your orders before sending them.

Signed: ALEXANDRE.

No. 54.

*Letter from Marshal Soult, Duke of Dalmatia, to Prince
Berthier, Major General.*

At the camp before Olivenza, 22 January 1811.

Monseigneur,

The dispatch riders having been detained for more than fifteen days at Manzanares, I only received two days ago, and at the same time, the letters that Your Serene Highness did me the honor of writing on 28 November and 4 and 10 December; the first two containing the repeated order to create a diversion in favor of the Army of Portugal, and expressing His Majesty the Emperor's displeasure at my apparent inactivity; the latter appears to destroy the previous arrangements, since it states that, since the retrograde movement of a few marches that Marshal Prince d'Essling has made, *the essential thing is to redouble our efforts to defeat the brigands and destroy them wherever they can be seen.*

At the time Your Highness wrote to me, you could not yet have received my letter of December 1st, in which I reported on the preparations I was making to effect a major diversion in favor of the Army of Portugal. Since then, it will surely have reached you, as will the one of the 31st of the same month, which I instructed Battalion Commander Girard, a staff officer, to have the honor of delivering to you. In it, I announced my departure from Seville and my march on Badajoz.

.....(*The report here gives the details of the operations that preceded the siege of Olivenza.*)....

This is the report of the operations that have taken place since my departure from Seville. Your Highness will note that I had warned His Majesty the Emperor of his intentions before I could have learned them; you will even observe that I had taken a great deal upon myself, if you will take the trouble to read the letter from Marshal Duke of Belluno, dated the 5th of this month, a copy of which you will find enclosed. It is to the point that, in similar circumstances, many others could have limited themselves to making representations and requesting new orders. The observations contained in my letter of 31 December are still full of force, and I must refer to them. I will add, however, that, for the moment, it is quite impossible for me to push troops to the Tagus without compromising them, and without also compromising the safety of the Army of the South, which, from then on, would no longer be able to hold out in Andalusia. There are six military strongholds on this frontier: Badajoz, Olivenza, Juromenha, Elvas, Campo-Mayor and Alburquerque, which together contain more than twenty thousand infantry and two thousand five hundred cavalry. It has been demonstrated to me that if I were to carry a body of ten thousand men to the Tagus, as was the intention of His Majesty the Emperor before Your Highness wrote me his letter of 10 December, this body would not be able to reach its destination, and would be immediately surrounded without my being able to go to its aid. It therefore seems to me that, in the current state of things, I would better fulfill the intentions of His Majesty the Emperor, and I would be useful to the Army of Portugal, by taking Olivenza, Badajoz and Campo-Mayor, from where I would probably be able to communicate with Marshal Prince of Essling; or, if the enemy wants to prevent me, they will be forced to form a large detachment that will give the Prince superiority and give him the advantage of the operations. Until then, nothing harmful can happen to the Army of Portugal, especially since it is in a good position where it has provisioned itself and entrenched itself. It will certainly hold the enemy in check long enough to allow operations in this area to progress and put me in a position to facilitate new successes.

I have the honor to request Your Highness to be so kind as to place my report and the attached copy of Marshal Duke of Belluno's letter before His Majesty the Emperor, and at the same time to inform him that all the indirect reports I have received from Portugal confirm that matters there remain in the same state, that the reinforcements received by Marshal Prince of Essling are estimated at twenty thousand men, and that for several months there has been no incident.

I have the honor to renew to Your Highness the homage of my respect and my perfect devotion.

Signed: MARSHAL DUKE OF DALMATIA.

No. 55.

*Letter from Marshal Soult, Duke of Dalmatia, to Prince
Berthier, Major General.*

Olivenza, 25 January 1811.

Monseigneur,

I have just received, through an aide-de-camp of His Catholic Majesty, the letter that Your Serene Highness did me the honor of writing on December 22nd, which contains the order from His Majesty the Emperor to send the Fifth Corps to the Tagus to pursue La Romana and establish communication with Marshal Prince d'Essling. Your Highness also tells me that His Majesty finds that I have not adopted a system; she asks me if Cadiz can be taken; finally, she is kind enough to send me *Moniteurs*.

I have the honor to send to Your Highness a duplicate of my letters of the 22nd and 23rd of this month, as well as copies of the various documents attached thereto, and the letter I wrote to you this morning. Your Highness will find therein the details of my operations since January 1st, the time of my departure from Seville. I hope that you will have received my dispatches of December 1st and 31st. The latter was brought to you by Battalion Chief Girard, a staff officer. Both informed him of the decision I had taken, based on mere indirect advice, to create a diversion in favor of the Imperial Army of Portugal, and the last ones (those of 31 December, 22 and 23 January) explained to him the reasons that irresistibly opposed the Fifth Corps moving to the Tagus to communicate with Marshal Prince of Essling before the town of Badajoz was taken.

Indeed, how could this army corps reach this destination without being immediately surrounded, since it would leave on its left and in its rear five strongholds containing at least twenty thousand garrison men, who would certainly not fail to assemble and act advantageously against it, while it would be stopped by the Tagus, where it would be unable to build any bridges, and would also have to fight the English corps of General Hill, which was under Abrantès?

This measure is therefore unenforceable. It would lose the Fifth Corps and would be of no use to the Imperial Army of Portugal, while also ruining His Majesty the Emperor's affairs in Andalusia. I beg Your Highness to read carefully the letter that Marshal Duke of Bellune wrote to me on 5 January, a copy of which I am sending him.

I have just captured Olivenza and 4,050 Spanish troops, who are being taken to France as prisoners of war. Tomorrow I will have the city of Badajoz surrounded, and the siege will begin immediately. I hope to win, despite the 10,000 garrison troops there (thirty deserters who left yesterday assure me that this is the strength of the garrison). If I succeed, I will then take Campo Mayor, and after or even during the siege of these two places, I will make incursions into Portugal that may be useful to the army commanded by Marshal Prince d'Essling. I declare on my honor and by the duties I have to fulfill to the Emperor, that I do not believe it is possible to do better, without compromising the fate of the Imperial troops I left in Andalusia.

The Sixty-third Line Infantry Regiment, the only infantry of the First Corps I have brought, left the day before yesterday to escort the prisoners to Cordoba; it will then proceed to Seville to reinforce this important point which, according to the letter from Marshal Duke of Bellune, and based on the enemy's movements toward the mouth of the Guadiana, is causing me serious concern. I have already told Your Highness that General Gazan's division is still detached against the corps of Ballesteros and Copán, which have assembled in the county of Niebla and are threatening Seville.

The Emperor does me the favor of asking if Cadiz will be taken. I answer affirmatively; but for that, sufficient resources are required. There are in Cadiz or on the island of Leon twenty thousand troops, including five thousand English or Portuguese, and in the port a squadron of eight to ten ships of the line, frigates and one hundred gunboats. To reach the island of Leon, one must cross an arm of the sea three hundred toises in its narrowest width; and this space cannot be crossed without means of embarkation. Artillery is also needed to respond to two thousand guns that are in battery against us. We had nothing when the army appeared before Cadiz; now there are two hundred and eighty large-caliber cannons, or mortars in battery, for the armament of which everything had to be created. We have also built a flotilla. I have requested an increase of one thousand gunners and six hundred sailors. I also earnestly requested that eight to nine thousand troops belonging to the Army of the South, who are in the district of the Army of the Center, be sent to me; I have been unable to obtain anything. What can I do with the troops presently under arms? Because His Majesty is too just to include under my command the nine thousand men being held around Madrid. The area I currently occupy is more than one hundred and fifty leagues from France, and it is impossible to reduce it without compromising everything on the left. I have to defend myself against the gatherings of Murcia, who, every month, present themselves in force to make an incursion. In the center, I have to contain the English garrison of Gibraltar, and to push forward operations against Cadiz, where twenty thousand troops are stationed. I am keeping a third of Spain in line of duty, and I have, however, undertaken a major diversion in favor of the Army of Portugal, fifty leagues from my line of operations.

I again beg His Majesty the Emperor to send a military man worthy of his trust to examine what I have done, and even to take my place; I submit in advance to his judgment, and I will applaud his successes. As for me, it is impossible for me to do more, and I have nothing left to aspire to but a glorious death.

I will add, with regard to Cadiz, the observation I made a long time ago to Your Serene Highness: that if His Majesty the Emperor saw fit to send one of his squadrons to act against this place, the city would not hold out for five days, and the enemy squadron in the port would inevitably be captured or compromised.

From all that I have said, and from my previous reports, Your Highness will surely draw the conclusion that since I have had the honor of commanding the Army of the South in Spain, my objective has been to advance operations against Cadiz, to pacify the country, to provide for the needs of the troops, and to extend the influence of the Imperial armies as far as possible. It is true, I did not expect to be in the position of creating the diversion I am engaging in, especially since the country I am traveling through was not within the scope of my command; however, I

came there in person, before receiving any orders, as soon as I could presume that another of His Majesty's army might need my help. But it was not in my power to prevent La Romana from marching with six thousand men on Lisbon: I believe I have sufficiently demonstrated this. Making his movement under cover of six strongholds, he was free to carry it out at will. Moreover, the operations I am carrying out seem to me the only ones that could favor those of Marshal Prince of Essling. If I had greater means, I would use them; and, while my operations are further advanced, I do not believe the situation of the Imperial Army can worsen, given that the entrenched position of Santarem makes it impregnable and that it has the ease of supply.

I have the honor to ask Your Serene Highness to accept the homage of my profound respect.

Signed: MARSHAL DUKE OF DALMATIA.

No. 56.

*Report from Marshal Masséna, Prince of Essling, to
Prince Berthier, Major General.*

Torres-Novas, 6 March 1811.

As I had the honor of informing Your Highness in a dispatch of 20 January, I spent the last days of that month and the first days of February completing the necessary preparations for my crossing of the Tagus. I had works erected on both banks of the confluence of the Zêzere, to prepare a triple bridgehead at Punhete; and I increased the number of boats and pontoons to 120, in order to be able to build three bridges, one over the Zêzere, and the other two over the Tagus above and below the confluence. As the enemy had, as it were, blocked the outlet of the Zêzere with the formidable batteries and entrenchments he had built opposite, I had fifty drays made to transport part of my bridge crew above Punhete, to the only favorable location for building a bridge. At the same time, work was being carried out on a gently sloping road through the mountain to facilitate the passage of sloops. But these arrangements could not have been so hidden from the enemy that they soon became aware of them; and, consequently, they built other works opposite the point chosen for the new establishment, which they linked to those already located opposite the Zêzere. While they were lining the bank of the Tagus with breastworks, they were crowning with entrenchments and batteries the nearby heights that we were to seize to protect the crossing.

They were pushing ahead with equal activity with their work on the Rio Mayor; he reinforced his troops on the left bank of the river and concentrated them opposite Punhete. He established very close posts and various connecting signals. Finally, he worked tirelessly to improve communications on his line. The entire population he brought from the provinces we occupied gave him the ability to carry out all these works at once, with great speed. The crossing of the Tagus was becoming more difficult day by day; it was even considered very hazardous by some of the general officers of the army. I was, however, at the moment of undertaking it, either above Punhete, by means of the drays, or at Santarem, by lowering my pontoons onto the Tagus, to operate against Hill's corps, which was assembled opposite Punhete, or finally by using one of

these points for a diversion, and the other for the real establishment. But several reconnaissances made on the banks of the Tagus, and on this river itself, made me aware of the extreme difficulty of a large operation on Santarem; and the frequent floods in front of this city made it very dangerous.⁵¹⁹

My Lord, things were in this state when General Foy arrived on February 5th and brought me Your Highness's dispatch, dated December 22nd. Based on its contents and based on what General Foy told me on behalf of His Majesty, I counted on the prompt cooperation of the Fifth Corps, which you informed me was to move to the left bank of the Tagus at Vilaflor. Receiving no direct order for the crossing of this river, and seeing nothing that could make me judge that it was commanded by His Majesty's intentions, I judged it appropriate to suspend this operation, so as not to expose the army unnecessarily to a main force attack, and to all the risks of chance, when I could hope to obtain the same advantages by the arrival of the Fifth Corps. General Foy having dispatched a courier from Ciudad Rodrigo on January 27th to Marshal Duke of Dalmatia, informing him that the Army of Portugal was able to cross the Tagus, but that the cooperation of his army, ordered by His Majesty, was becoming absolutely necessary, it seemed that a strong detachment would have to be deployed upon arrival at the river. Thus, I had to wait for the Fifth Corps to arrive at Vilaflor, to give me accurate information on the resources of the Alentejo, and to bring us some large-caliber guns, which are very necessary to us, and which I was unable to bring across the Beira Mountains.

These hopes were in vain. While the reports assured me that there was a French corps in the upper Alentejo, neither my frequent reconnaissance, nor the spies, nor the movements of the enemy, nothing has made me aware that this corps has approached the Tagus. Artillery salvos were heard for some time in the direction of Badajoz; but the total cessation of this noise, for more than 20 days, proves to me that the siege has ended or that the place has been taken since then; that consequently I have no more cooperation to expect, and that as a result, instead of the Army of Portugal having been rescued by that of the South, it has on the contrary served to protect and cover the operations on the Guadiana.

I spent the month of February perfecting and completing our means of passage and our works. Since that time, as before, I have not ceased to torment the enemy with demonstrations, frequent reconnaissances, expeditions on the Tagus and its islands, and operations against the gatherings of peasants that were forming around Pombal, Espinhel, Castelo Branco, Pedrógão, etc., in which the advantage always remained with us, and which provided some resources in food and livestock to the corps that were responsible for them. Our expeditions were mainly directed towards Vilaflor or Montalvão, and higher up the Tagus, to have news of the Fifth Corps, and our demonstrations were multiplied on the river, to prevent the enemy from making detachments on Badajoz. Finally, while we held the English army in constant movements or bivouacs on the front lines and on the Tagus, our troops continually scoured the entire countryside between Castelo Branco, Ponte Murcela, the suburbs of Coimbra on the left bank of the Mondego, and the sea, through detachments or organized raids. It was during one of these major reconnaissances on the Rio Mayor that the Duke of Abrantès received a bullet in the cheek, which caused a shallow wound from which he has fully recovered. In this short winter campaign, our soldiers, fully seasoned, suffered no losses other than increased consumption of weapons, while the

enemy, unaccustomed to campaigning, especially at this time of year, had their hospitals filled with the sick.

While we were constantly working at Punhete and on the other parts of the line, the enemy wasted no time: he was constantly busy increasing his defenses. He had brought together between Punhete and Chiamussu the entire corps of Hill and Beresford; and, taking advantage of the works he had erected opposite Santarem, he was able to move part of Picton's division to the left bank of the Tagus towards Alpiarça and Almeirim. All these troops could assemble at the threatened point in a few hours, by means of signals. Thus the operation of the crossing, which was already very difficult in relation to the steep banks of the Tagus, the width of its bed, the rapidity of its course, its terrible flooding and the slowness of the debarkings, has become very hazardous, since it would be necessary to take with inferior forces entrenchments well-stocked with troops, or to establish the bridge under the fire of the enemy, to then attack his lines. Please also note, Monseigneur, that in order not to compromise the army during the operation, it must be placed on the left bank of the Zêzere. If the crossing of the Tagus is not successful, in addition to the loss of troops and the moral effect on the soldiers of both powers, the army loses its line of operations on Coimbra, it is immediately thrown back into Spain, and having no retreat but a barren and dreadful countryside, paths through rocks, precipices, and torrents, it must lose part of its artillery; it finds itself furthermore unable to carry away the wounded, and forced to abandon them, as well as stragglers, its sick, etc. If the operation succeeds, the army will have lost in this affair a good part of its ammunition, which is already infinitely reduced; it will also cost it a great deal to defend its bridgeheads; and to what are the advantages of such a success reduced, if one cannot stand astride the Tagus? To gain a few leagues of infertile and entirely devastated country, in which a small body of troops would not find food for fifteen days.

Your Highness will not have forgotten that, when dealing with the crossing of the Tagus, I had always thought that the difficulties of subsistence would make the occupation of both banks very difficult, even with bridgeheads. For a permanent establishment cannot take place at Santarem, because of the extent of the position and the depression of the left bank, which is so often covered with water over a league in width; and opposite Punhete, the country where the bridges were to be built, offers no resources, even at a great distance. Besides these disadvantages, there were very great ones in the dangers of the bridges being broken by the furious floods that took place in the Spring, or by the machines that the enemy would throw into the Tagus at Abrantès, and in the consequences of the isolation of the bridgeheads, where the troops could be taken or starved. Indeed, too much weakness would expose them to the enemy's attempts; and if the garrisons were too considerable, the army, whose numerical strength is already less than half that which opposes it, would find itself cut in two and very compromised on both banks. Such inconveniences would increase greatly as the main body of the army, placed on the left bank of the Tagus, would see itself forced to spread out to get provisions and to move further away from its bridges. Soon the moment would come when it would be forced to throw itself on one or the other bank; and, then, it would be possible to find the bridgeheads surrounded by a countervallation of the enemy, or the army would see itself forced to receive battle with a river at its back, while trying to move to the right bank of the Tagus. The necessity of standing at the same time astride the Zêzere increases these difficulties still further; for, if we don't have an outlet on the right bank of this river, we'll have to cross it in front of the enemy to march on

Coimbra or Santarem; and if we don't occupy positions on the left bank, we can neither undertake operations against Abrantès nor have communications with Almeida.

I had to decide, Monseigneur, a new question based on what General Foy reported to me about His Majesty's intentions to prolong the war, regularize his system, and yet keep the enemy in check. Is it preferable for the entire army to move to the Alentejo or between Pombal and Coimbra?

I thought that by throwing ourselves into the Alentejo, and by putting between us and the enemy a river like the Tagus, without being able to keep our pontoon bridge, which it is impossible to transport for lack of horses, the combined army would no longer be in check; that under the shelter of this barrier and the entrenchments of Setubal and Almada, Lord Wellington would put the English in cantonments to rebuild them, and would send at the same time some Portuguese detachments and militia, in order to contain the Ninth Corps, to prevent its progress beyond the frontier, to reassure and to reorganize the provinces of the north of Portugal. Besides, the destruction of food recently carried out by the English, and the unhealthy state of the lower part of the Alentejo would soon force our army to go back towards Portalegre or to throw itself on the Guadiana, countries probably destined to be occupied one day or another by the Fifth Corps. The army, which is experiencing a multitude of needs, would move further away from the resources that General Foy tells me have been accumulated at Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, and from its true lines of operations or communication; once again, it would find itself for a long time without any connection with France. Finally, Monseigneur, the reasons why I had planned to move into the Alentejo no longer exist, since the army of the South appears to be besieging the strongholds.

On the contrary, I believed I recognized all the advantages and complete conformity with His Majesty's intentions in the change of position that the army will make by pivoting on Pombal to position itself between the sea and the Zêzere. It will be facing the enemy and will no longer have either fortifications or the Tagus River to overcome. It will be able to constantly act against its posts, its detachments, and the weak points, should the enemy ever come closer to us; which is not conceivable, because of the devastation of the country, the difficulty of food supplies and the system of inertia that he has adopted. If the English remained near Lisbon, I would continue to act by detachments on the Tagus and on the Zêzere; and, by means of the bridge of Pedrógão or any other that I would establish, we would exhaust the left bank of this last river. When the army is a little organized, that it has received some replacements and some munitions, it will be able, if His Majesty orders it, to make some further advances. And if during the season of fordings on the Tagus, it entered into His Majesty's intentions to push these advances beyond the river, the army would find resources for some time in the Alentejo after the harvests.

I hope to be able to sustain the army for fifty or sixty days on the Mondego, while waiting for the organization of the food aid that Spain can send us. By placing a division of the Ninth Corps at Trancoso and Guarda, another near Pinhancos on the Mondego, and at Viseu, double communications with France and Spain will be firmly and regularly established; this army corps will guard the outlets at the head of the Zêzere valley, will monitor enemy parties that could threaten the Eja, and will find enough to live on for some time in the fertile valleys of the Cova de Beira. Finally, if the Fifth Corps occupies the borders of the Alentejo or lays siege to the

fortresses, the enemy will find himself worried on both banks of the Tagus, forced to divide or completely abandon one of the banks; then, by means of a separate corps, which it would be necessary, in any case, to establish at Alcántara, the Army of the South and that of Portugal could coordinate their movements, and the latter would still be able to cover and protect the operations of the former.

My Lord, I summarize the observations I have just had the honor of presenting to Your Highness. The crossing of the Tagus is a very hazardous operation at this time; the cooperation of the Fifth Corps has not taken place for three months since it was announced to me; the occupation of both banks is impossible, and the position of the army less offensive beyond the Tagus than on its right bank; the situation of the Alentejo is changed by the devastation of the English, and by the operations of the Army of the South; I now believe that it is more consistent with what General Foy has reported to me of His Majesty's intentions and policy, and with the interests of the army, to march on Pombal, to take up position there, and to maintain the troops as long as possible on the banks of the Mondego. This is the course I will take, for it is impossible to wait any longer in our positions. The army has held out as much as was physically possible; it has lived for nearly six months, by dint of industry, care, and deprivation, in a country where it was not believed it could last fifteen days, and on which the enemy had organized the devastation that the rapidity of our marches did not allow to reach its peak. Now the place where we are, and that which surrounds it five or six marches away, are totally exhausted. The few inhabitants who remain are reduced to living on roots, acorns, and grass. The forced laborers can no longer find corn at great distances, which has long been the food of both officers and soldiers. The meat is exhausted, the straw is entirely consumed, and the horses have been out for more than a month, in this season when the grass is extremely short; so a certain number of them are lost every day in the artillery and cavalry. Clothing is in poor condition, and it has become so difficult to repair or replace shoes that many soldiers have shoes made with fresh hides. Cartridges and the reserve of biscuits deteriorate daily due to the bad weather. Ammunition is in short supply. The artillery carriages have suffered considerable reductions due to daily consumption. They had to be increased further because of the loss of horses. Transport, which was already in short supply, had to be further excessively reduced by the various consumptions, and by the assistance they provided to the artillery. Finally, everything wears out due to service, chores and continual fatigue, and everything is very difficult to repair or replace. I must not let His Majesty be unaware that in this state of reduction and impoverishment of the army's weapons and accessory means, I believed it necessary to avoid anything that could tend to compromise the preservation of such good troops.

I owe great praise to the whole army for its perseverance and the extreme devotion it has shown. The rains that have fallen during the last months have increased its suffering, and I would not have demanded so many sacrifices from it, if I had not sensed, in some way, the intentions of His Majesty, and judged that this campaign, not having been able to end with a brilliant stroke, must be a struggle of tenacity against the English army and against the whole of Portugal, especially in the political crisis in which England found itself. My pontoon bridge and the works of Punhete have not a little favored my dispositions. They have gained me a new army corps, by holding before them a considerable detachment of the enemy and have enabled me to cover with my troops a part of Beira and Estremadura, and to withdraw from them the subsistence that we consumed on the Tagus. I thus kept General Hill and Field Marshal Beresford's corps on a

perpetual defensive, forcing them to continually move with the slightest demonstrations; and these demonstrations powerfully supported the operations of Marshal the Duke of Dalmatia's army, since they constantly held the enemy back on the Tagus.

On 6 March, the army will execute its movement to change positions. The artillery crews, baggage, and reserves will be directed in advance to the points where the army corps are to move. The Second and Eighth Corps will take up positions the next day on the heights of Golegã and Torres Novas. With the artillery making demonstrative arrangements for the crossing at Punhete and preparations to throw and destroy the bridge, the enemy will remain uncertain for two days about the true purpose of the movement until the bridge crew is destroyed. Leiria is the pivot of the conversion and the center of resistance. I will assemble there, under the command of Marshal Duke of Elchingen, the first division of the Ninth Corps, two divisions of the Sixth, and the army's cavalry. On the third day, before the enemy can unravel my intentions, the army will be in line from Leiria to Thomar, and will march: the Second Corps, from Thomar towards Espinhel; the Third Division of the Sixth Corps, from Chão de Maçãs to Ansião; the Eighth Corps, from the same village to Pombal and Redinha; the Sixth and Ninth Corps will form the rearguard, from Leiria to Pombal. The army will stop in its new positions, will take care of the crossing of the Mondego, and the ninth corps will march on Celorico. According to these dispositions, the enemy cannot undertake anything against the various columns of the army, and he remains indecisive until the moment when the change of position is completed. Attached is a sketch and copy of the instructions for this movement.

In these new positions, I will await His Majesty's orders to determine whether I should confine myself to worrying the enemy by keeping the army alive as long as possible between the Mondego and the Douro, or whether I should carry the war beyond the latter river, a rather difficult operation due to the nature of these mountainous regions. It might be preferable, when the country between the Douro and the Mondego is exhausted, to return to the Tagus, towards lower Beira and upper Alentejo, occupying Alcántara, taking advantage of its stone bridge and a few others that could be built further down with boats, to straddle the river, control its course, threaten the enemy on both banks, and traverse and invade whichever of these two provinces is less guarded. Then, with some supplies from Spain, this war could be regularized and the army reorganized, whose spirit has suffered somewhat in the raids and forced labor to which it has been reduced in order to survive.

My Lord, I must also point out to Your Highness that during my stay on the banks of the Tagus, I was unable to undertake anything serious against Abrantès, and that I had to limit myself to blockading this place, or rather, tightening its posts, and preventing its communications with the countries on the right bank of the Tagus. Its garrison has always consisted of five regiments, two of which were line regiments and three militia. Its armament was considerable and was estimated at one hundred guns. But whatever its number, I had neither cannons nor ammunition to direct the slightest attack against this place, for I only brought eight with me through the Beira Mountains. I was waiting, before attacking Abrantès, to be master of both banks of the Tagus, to be able to blockade this place regularly, and to have received by the Alentejo some pieces capable of opening its walls. It is good to observe moreover that Abrantès is far from being as important a post as is said, because of the distance where it is from the Tagus, its distance from

the Zêzere, and the two roads of Castelo Branco and Guarda. The pontoon bridge has been withdrawn to the left bank since our arrival.

I see approaching with great satisfaction, Monseigneur, the time when I will be permitted to resume regular correspondence with Your Highness. The distance in which I found myself, the difficulties of the country behind me, the insurrection of the peasants organized far away, the inconvenience of weakening by too frequent detachments an army already weak due to the one opposing it, the operations it had to undertake, and the forced laborers it sent daily for supplies: these were the reasons that led me to prefer the route of secret emissaries to give news of the army's position; but it appears that of the large number I sent, very few reached Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo.

My Lord, I will not conclude without asking Your Highness to note that the Army of Portugal lacks artillery horses, transport, clothing, and footwear, and that it needs to be recruited; finally, that it would be useful to place it for a time in a country where the divisions could be reunited to restore order and discipline, which circumstances have necessarily weakened. General Foy will go into many details with Your Highness that I cannot write. My task has been and is difficult. My absolute devotion to the service of His Majesty has enabled me to overcome many obstacles.

I have the honor to transmit to you herewith various reports that will inform Your Highness of the situation of the Army of Portugal.

I will eagerly await the instructions that I request Your Highness to send me soon, since, as I have said, we will only be able to live in our new positions for fifty days, from the day the movement begins, and since it is important that before the expiration of this period, I know His Majesty's orders, so that I can take care in good time of the means of execution that require preparatory arrangements.

I am with respectful devotion, etc.

Signed: MASSÉNA.

P.S. General Foy was due to leave me on the 7th. I kept him until the 8th. He witnessed the most difficult part of the movement. Everything went well, as he will report to Your Highness.

Chão-Maçãs, 8 March 1811.

Signed: MASSÉNA.

No. 57.

*Letter from Prince Berthier, Major General, to Marshal
Masséna, Prince of Essling.*

Paris, 29 March 1811.

My dear Prince of Essling, I am writing to you in particular: the Emperor would have wished the Portuguese campaign had turned out better. You were too bold in attacking the position of Bussaco, which was defended by good troops. If you had succeeded, it is likely that the English would have been driven back into their lines, without having time to defend themselves; but since the strength of the enemy's position caused you to lose the battle, the Emperor, in such a position, would have stopped at Coimbra, fortified himself there, stockpiled supplies, and boosted the troops' morale, which always diminishes after a failure.

Your task was difficult. It will be difficult again; but also, there is more glory for you. It is in your current situation that it is very important to deploy great energy. Continual affairs with the English weaken them, keep them in alarm, and above all prevent them from making detachments in Andalusia. We think that Badajoz is taken. The Emperor's very formal intention is, in the month of September, after the harvest, to combine a movement with the Army of the Couth, a corps of the army of the center and your army, to overthrow the English; and it is until this time that you must act in such a way that no enemy corps can hold the countryside, either to advance to Andalusia, or to move more than a march or two from Lisbon. We are perfectly informed by the English, and much better than you are. The Emperor reads the London newspapers, and every day a large number of letters from the opposition, some of which accuse Lord Wellington and speak in detail of your operations. England trembles for its army in Spain, and Lord Wellington has always been in great fear of your operations. The glory of France, yours, my dear Prince, are in your hands. If the outcome of a great battle given wisely were to go against us, which does not seem likely, by making good reconnaissance and attacking according to the rules, the result of a large number of men killed by the enemy would be enormous for England and would be equivalent to a defeat for her. For, certainly, after a great battle whose success was not entirely to our advantage, the English would have a third of their men killed or wounded. I tell you this, my dear Prince, to make you understand how much the English care about the preservation of their army. I will write to you every day. When I send you some of my aides-de-camp, keep them near you for a month; make them fight the war. It is doing me a service to keep them in suspense and to keep them at your school.

In a few days, you will be sent a million francs in small drafts, to make it easier for officers to smuggle money into France.

Signed: ALEXANDRE.

No. 58.

*Report from Marshal Masséna, Prince of Essling, to
Prince Berthier, Major General.*

Maceira, 19 March 1811.

Monseigneur,

In the dispatches carried by General Foy, I recently had the honor of reporting to Your Highness the change of position to which I found myself forced by the exhaustion of the country I occupied, by the total lack of food and fodder, and by the considerable reductions that the army had suffered in its means and accessory weapons. I had made arrangements for this movement such that it was carried out very calmly during the first days in the presence of the enemy, whom I kept in complete uncertainty about the aim of my operations. The army found itself reunited at Pombal, Ansião and Espinhel; but the enemy, who had a much shorter distance to cover to reach our line of operations, because of the detour to which the Ourem mountain range forced us, was able to present us with superior forces on 10 March, in front of Pombal, where the Sixth Corps forming our rearguard was located. He attacked the light troops positioned in front, drove them back, and penetrated into the heart of the city. The first brigade of the First Division soon drove the English out with bayonets and killed many in the streets or in houses; they were driven back in great disorder, leaving the city full of dead and wounded, who were burned by the fire that broke out shortly afterward. The rearguard remained in front of Pombal, and the army was found at Redinha. Already, during that day, the majority of the combined army was in front of us, and Lord Wellington was there himself. The Second Corps and Loison's division had only a few enemy regiments behind them.

On 11 March, the rearguard took up position on the heights in front of Redinha. The enemy deployed in the afternoon twenty-five thousand English under the fire of our artillery, which did not cease firing on their masses with the greatest advantage, without being countered, Lord Wellington having only shown artillery after having completed his deployment. Then, he marched a strong column towards the left by the valley of Redinha. As soon as the head of this infantry began to skirmish, it was charged and overturned with the bayonet; the English officer who commanded it was killed. Colonel Laferrière was wounded while charging at the head of the Third Regiment of Hussars. Lord Wellington continued to file troops up the mountain to the left of the town; the rearguard, which had contained the enemy beyond all hope and had caused them to suffer a considerable loss, withdrew, in the greatest order and without being pursued, to the reverse of the valley where it took up position. The army was partly in echelon between Redinha and Condeixa; the rest was in position in front of the latter village: the Second Corps occupied Espinhel and Corvo. The column of General Cole, which had followed General Régnier until this moment, went come to join Lord Wellington: the latter had five English divisions with him that day and the Portuguese troops amounting together to fifty or sixty thousand men, without counting the militia who were on the right bank of the Mondego and the armed peasants. According to reports, General Hill was advancing with his division and a large detachment of Portuguese through the mountains of the upper Zêzere, heading for the left bank of the Mondego. From that moment, I abandoned the hope of holding this bank without risking a

battle, and I turned all my attention to the right bank of this river and to the Alva. Moreover, the enemy carried out his system of devastation in this unfortunate country with such rigor that not a single grain of corn was to be found there.

I had sent General Montbrun with part of his cavalry and Colonel Valazé of the engineers to reconnoiter the state of the Mondego and the enemy's dispositions before Coimbra. They reported to me that the river was prodigiously swollen by the rain that had been falling continuously since our departure; that the bridge at Coimbra had two ruined arches and some undermined; finally, that the right bank was garrisoned by the troops of Trant and Silveira and defended by cannon. It would take several days to repair the Mondego bridge, and a strong attack to take Coimbra; I lacked the boats to affect a crossing, because I could not bring any pontoon equipment, and the enemy had destroyed all the boats on the Mondego. Added to these difficulties were the proximity of the combined army and the certainty of being attacked while part of our troops were employed in this crossing. I had to then abandon an operation that had become so difficult, and for a few moments I wanted to stop the enemy by a battle in the beautiful positions of Condeixa. But my complete devotion to His Majesty and the consideration of the interests of the army diverted me from this project and determined me to weigh carefully the major reasons that would make me renounce it. Here, Monseigneur, are the reasons that seem to me likely to entirely convince Your Highness: the strength of the army which is reduced to almost half of that which is opposed to me; the departure of the Conroux Division of the Ninth Corps; the exhaustion of the army by long deprivations and the reduction of its supplies; the considerable quantity of sick, equipages, baggage, part of which is dragged by oxen; the little ammunition that remains to us; the state of the artillery whose teams are excessively reduced and in the worst condition; finally, the desire that the leaders have long expressed to leave Portugal and return to France, and which contributes not a little to the lack of harmony that should reign in the army. Added to these considerations was the remoteness of our resources, which we could only find in our fortresses, while the enemy had his rear assured by Peniche and the lines, and the dangers of losing artillery, crews, stragglers, wounded, etc., if the army were pushed back; for we are in the midst of an entire population armed against us and exasperated by the losses caused by the famine in which we find ourselves, and the nature of this war. These powerful reasons, some of which I had the honor of presenting to Your Highness in my previous dispatch, have persuaded me then and since to carefully avoid any general affair, which, moreover, could have no advantageous outcome for us, since we find ourselves forced to abandon a completely devastated country, where it is impossible to live. I decided to fight only as much as necessary for the honor and safety of the army, contesting the ground with the enemy step by step. Thus, I had to abandon the crossing of the Mondego, and I had to resolve to gradually bring the army closer to the border, where it must resupply itself with all its lack.

Lord Wellington maneuvered on the 12th on the left of Condeixa towards Fonte Coberta, where Loison's division was located. I reinforced this position, which covered all our movements, with the division of Clauzel, and I advanced there. Meanwhile, the enemy having shown some troops on the flanks of the rearguard, Marshal Duke of Elchingen, who commanded it, abandoned the position of Condeixa sooner than I expected, and advanced beyond Loison's division. The Fonte Coberta position was exposed, and the artillery located there compromised; I reached the main road with it by a flank march within cannon range of the enemy line and in beautiful moonlight. The two armies executed only major maneuvers that day; not a single shot was fired.

The army was assembled in front of Miranda de Corvo, and the rearguard was at Lamas: it was attacked in the afternoon by the English army, which continued its same maneuvers on the flanks. After vigorously defending its position with heavy artillery and musketry fire, the rearguard came to position itself in front of Miranda de Corvo, and the army, by a night march, moved towards Foz de Arouce where it took up position on the heights of the right bank of the Ceira. The Second Corps, which had been at Corvo the day before, held the head of the column, and established itself on the left of the new position; the Eighth on the right; the Sixth and the rearguard were to occupy the center. During this time, our equipages and our sick did not stop filing, and absolutely nothing remained behind. However, some of these crews and even some artillery carriages were pulled by oxen, and the sick or wounded were carried on donkeys. In the attack on Lamas, my aide-de-camp, Squadron Leader Marcelin Marbot, was wounded by several saber blows.

The position on the right bank of the Ceira was strong and respectable; but part of the Sixth Corps remained on the left bank. On the evening of the 15th of this month, it was vigorously attacked by several columns of English infantry, while other columns maneuvered according to their custom on our flanks. The village of Foz de Arouce was taken and retaken. The infantry of the combined army still suffered greatly from the fire of all the artillery on the right bank, which dominated and devastated it, while five pieces that the enemy displayed were kept out of range by the dominance of our batteries. Colonel Lamour was killed at the head of the Thirty-ninth Regiment, which caused some confusion among our troops; but they were united by a vigorous charge of the Sixty-ninth Regiment, and by some companies of tirailleurs who had launched themselves on the extreme right. The English attacking the village were thrown into the greatest disorder, and this disorder spread throughout the enemy line. In this very stubborn battle, where our troops fought against a superior enemy and the flaws in their position on the left bank, our losses amounted to less than two hundred men; that of the enemy, who had a general officer killed, was infinitely greater. The same advantage was noted in all the battles where the English almost always received superior fire and were fiercely attacked with bayonets.

However, the Murcela bridge, where the army's only communication lay, was destroyed, and it took several days of work to repair it; the Ninth Corps, which had left the army at Pombal on the 16th, was having this bridge rebuilt. I had it finished, and it was fully completed during the day of the 19th. To contain the enemy, the Second and Eighth Corps had been put in position on the heights of the left bank of the Alva, while the Sixth Corps was echeloned between this position and the Ceira, the bridge of which had been completely ruined; Marchand's division formed the front towards the enemy, on the fine position of the Ceira, and maintained the army's line of fire in the middle of the woods. The enemy remained in position all day, and did not make its usual attack towards evening. The baggage and artillery, part of which had slipped across the fords of the Alva, passed in their entirety beyond this river, and, on the 17th, the army found itself reunited in the positions on the right bank of the Alva, with an advance guard on the heights of the left bank. The enemy stripped its line in the middle of the night, and made a movement on one of our flanks; my reconnaissance has not yet been able to indicate to me the point to which he has gone: they cannot extend a little far except in very large force, because all the inhabitants without exception are under arms, as I have already had the honor of telling Your Highness. I think that the enemy has made a detachment on the right bank of the Mondego, in order to

dispute the passage with us, since the waters of this river have partly flowed away with the return of good weather, and that moreover, in these high countries, it has much less water than near Coimbra.

I believe that, in the current state of affairs, and according to the movements that the enemy may make on my flanks, by the Mondego or by the mountains of Guarda, where General Hill's corps has directed itself, it is necessary for the interests of His Majesty to bring the army closer to our base of operations on our cities, in order to recover a little from its fatigues and its long privations, to reorganize it and to provide for the replacement of so many objects which it is completely lacking. It seems to me, moreover, impossible to support our troops in confined and mountainous countries which have been exhausted by the two armies and recently ravaged with the greatest barbarity by the English, who punished all those who kept some grain, and did not abandon their homes at our approach. We find everything destroyed: factories, mills, houses, and many villages burned. Enclosed is one of the latest proclamations of the enemy on this subject. I will march as slowly as possible; I will still dispute the ground with the enemy step by step, avoiding, however, as much as possible, those battles which cost us brave men, but in which the loss is always on the enemy's side due to the actual numbers, and especially due to the balance of forces between the two powers. As soon as I find a suitable position within reach of these fortresses, I will occupy it and await, if necessary, the combined army; I will also await the orders I had the honor to request from you in my dispatch of the 6th of this month.

Our retreat was carried out with the greatest order; we did not leave behind a single sick or wounded soldier, nor a single artillery or baggage vehicle; the enemy was repulsed every time it attacked, and always with losses. Finally, since the army was reunited at Pombal, it has only advanced two leagues a day and has never been pushed back by the English.

I shall consider myself most fortunate, Monseigneur, if, after having exercised all the devotion of which I am capable, I can learn that His Majesty is fully convinced that no effort is being spared on my part to fulfill the trust with which He has deigned to honor me. I have already reported to Your Highness that the general officers displayed the greatest zeal for the good of the service. As I have reason to note in particular that of Major General Fririon, whose duties as Chief of Staff keep him in constant contact with me, I owe him the justice of also informing you, Monseigneur, that, through his skill, talents, and activity, he has acquired new rights to His Majesty's kindness during the course of this campaign.

I will have the honor of presenting to you soon a more detailed report of the operations and state of the army. I have not yet been able to find a moment to present this summary report to Your Highness.

I am, with respectful devotion, etc.

Signed: MASSÉNA.

No. 59.

*Letter from Marshal Ney, Duke of Elchingen, to Marshal
Masséna, Prince of Essling.*

Cortizo, 22 March 1811, at four o'clock in the afternoon.

Prince,

I have just received the letter that Your Excellency did me the honor of writing today, in which you inform me of the plan you have decided to direct the Army of Portugal against Coria and Plasencia. Although this morning I only indirectly knew of his intentions in this regard, I spoke out against this maneuver in the letter I addressed to him a few hours ago: now that they are known to me in a positive manner, I formally protest against it, and I declare to Your Excellency that unless the Emperor has sent you new instructions relating to a movement to be made towards the Tagus, which I cannot believe in the current circumstances, the Sixth Corps will not execute the one you mention in your letter today. The army needs to rest behind the fortresses of Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo, to bring in its clothing and footwear, which it absolutely lacks, and which are piled up in the stores of Valladolid. Your Excellency must disabuse yourself if you think you will find abundant provisions at Coria and Plasencia. I have traveled to this country, and nothing can compare to its sterility or the poor state of its communications. Your Excellency will never drive a cannon there with the teams we have just brought back from Portugal. Besides, this maneuver, so unusual at this time, would completely expose Old Castile and could, as I told Your Excellency this morning, compromise all our operations in Spain. I know that by so formally opposing your intentions, I am taking on a great responsibility; but even if I were to be dismissed or lose my head, I will not follow the movement Your Excellency is telling me about on Coria and Plasencia, unless I repeat, it is ordered by the Emperor.

Please accept, Prince, the assurance of my highest consideration, etc.

Signed: MARSHAL DUKE OF ELCHINGEN.

No. 60.

*Letter from Marshal Masséna, Prince of Essling, to
Prince Berthier, Major General.*

Celorico, 22 March 1811, at eleven o'clock in the evening.

Monseigneur,

I have found myself reduced to an extremity I have constantly sought to avoid. Marshal Duke of Elchingen has taken his disobedience to the limit, as Your Highness will see from the copy of the enclosed letters. As they could have dire consequences for the safety of His Majesty the Emperor's armies, I have ordered the divisional generals of his army corps to obey only my direct orders, and I have given command of the Sixth Corps to Count Loison, as the most senior divisional general.

My Lord, it is very painful for an old soldier who has commanded armies for a long time, and who has been honored by His Majesty's trust, to resort to such an extremity with one of his comrades. Marshal Duke of Elchingen, since my arrival in the army, has not ceased to thwart me in my military operations. Perhaps I have been too patient; but I was far from expecting that he would abuse it to the point of carrying the scandal so far. The character of the Duke of Elchingen is well known; I will say no more. I have ordered him to go to Spain and await His Majesty's orders there. My first aide-de-camp, who will have the honor of delivering this to you, will go into greater detail with you and will report to Your Highness on the retrograde movements and the position of the army. I intend to take up position between Guarda, Belmonte, and Alfaiates. The army has not lost a single cannon or a single piece of baggage. Certainly, it was not because of the English, but because of famine, that the army was forced to withdraw to its current positions, which it will only be forced to leave for the same reasons.

I have the honor to be, with respectful devotion, etc.

Signed: MASSÉNA.

No. 61.

*Letter from Marshal Masséna, Prince of Essling, to
Prince Berthier, Major General.*

Alfaiates, 31 March 1811.

Monseigneur,

In my last letter, I told Your Highness that I would reconnoiter Coria, Plasencia, and Alcántara, to ascertain whether the region offered any resources and could support the army. I have not had time to gather this information. The enemy having moved on Guarda, the army has taken up positions at Sabugal, Alfaiates, Ponte de Siqueiros, and Rapoula do Côa. The cavalry reserve is positioned near Alfaiates.

Monseigneur, I owe you the truth: the army needs a few months of rest; General officers and others have spoken about it too often to the soldiers, and this opinion prevails in the army. I will hold my new positions as long as I can. It is true to say that they offer very few resources; but we could hold out there for a few days, if I am not thwarted as I have been until now. It is enough for the enemy to show a few column heads to intimidate the officers and make them say loudly that it is Wellington's entire army that is approaching. The Army of Portugal needs some time to restock and to take advantage of the clothing belonging to the corps, which is in Valladolid and Salamanca. I believe that when the army has rested and dressed a little, His Majesty will be able to put it into action.

We have been on the march for twenty-seven days today: everything is worn out, and we need a lot of things. As I already told Your Highness, we have lost neither artillery nor caissons; and our horses are completely exhausted. The military pontoons no longer exist; therefore, we have no transport.

All the equipment of the military pontoons and artillery must be rebuilt.

I have ordered General Count d'Erlon to position himself, with his two divisions, at Vale de Mula, Aldea del Obispo, and the surrounding area, to protect the evacuation of Almeida, and to come to the aid of the two fortresses, if necessary, if the enemy threatens them. If I am forced to cross the Águeda, I will deploy the army between San Felices de Chico, Ledesma, Zamora, Toro, and the surrounding area, so as to be able to assemble it quickly and march, if necessary, on Almeida or Ciudad Rodrigo.

I do not believe the enemy can attempt anything serious against these two fortresses, as the bridges over the Côa are destroyed and the approaches to the former are difficult. If I cross the Águeda, let Your Highness be assured that I have not failed to mount the strongest resistance, and that this movement will only have been executed as a last resort. The desire the army has long expressed to rest leaves me no doubt that it would be dangerous to wait for the enemy to receive or give battle. The troops are good, but they need rest. The raids, although organized

and permitted, have contributed significantly to weakening discipline, which is in dire need of restoration.

I will take care to report to Your Highness every two days on what has transpired.

I have the honor to be, with respectful devotion, etc.

Signed: MASSÉNA.

No. 62.

*Letter from Marshal Masséna, Prince of Essling, to
Prince Berthier, Major General.*

Salamanca, 17 April 1811.

Monseigneur,

In my last dispatch, I had the honor of presenting to Your Highness the reasons that had led the army whose command His Majesty had entrusted to me to return to Spain. I informed you of the positions it had occupied since then; that, to cover the two fortresses, a division of the Sixth Corps was stationed at Ciudad Rodrigo, communicating with Salamanca via another division deployed along the road, and that the Ninth Corps was stationed at San Felices el Grande and Vitigudino, where it was supported by the Second, occupying Ledesma. The same dispatch also informed you that the Eighth Corps was at Toro and the cavalry reserve at Benavente.

Today, Monseigneur, I must explain to you with the same precision the situation in which the army finds itself, and the difficulties it has encountered since returning to the border.

When, upon arriving at Guarda and Belmonte, I recognized the limited resources the country offered us for subsistence, I saw that we could not avoid recrossing the Côa and the Águeda. I wrote on 25 March to Marshal Duke of Istria, to warn him that these attacks are costing us brave men, but in which the loss is always on the enemy's side due to the actual numbers, and especially due to the balance of power between the two powers. As soon as I find a suitable position within reach of these fortresses, I will occupy it and await, if necessary, the combined army; I will also await the orders I had the honor to request from you in my dispatch of the 6th of this month.

Our retreat was carried out with the greatest order; we did not leave behind a single sick or wounded person, nor a single artillery or baggage vehicle; the enemy was repulsed every time it attacked, and always with loss. Finally, since the army was assembled at Pombal, it has only traveled two leagues a day and has never been pushed back by the English.

I shall consider myself most fortunate, Monseigneur, if, after having exercised all the devotion of which I am capable, I can learn that His Majesty is fully convinced that no effort is being spared

on my part to fulfill the trust with which He has deigned to honor me. I have already reported to Your Highness that the general officers displayed the greatest zeal for the good of the service. As I have reason to note in particular that of Major General Fririon, whose duties as Chief of Staff keep him in constant contact with me, I owe him the justice of also informing you, Monseigneur, that, through his skill, talents, and activity, he has acquired new rights to His Majesty's kindness during the course of this campaign.

I will have the honor of presenting to you soon a more detailed report of the operations and state of the army. I have not yet been able to find a moment to present this summary report to Your Highness.

I am, with respectful devotion, etc.

Signed: MASSÉNA.

No. 59.²²

*Letter from Marshal Ney, Duke of Elchingen, to Marshal
Masséna, Prince of Essling.*

Cortizo, 22 March 1811, at four o'clock in the afternoon.

Prince,

I have just received the letter that Your Excellency did me the honor of writing today, in which you inform me of the plan you have decided to direct the Army of Portugal against Coria and Plasencia. Although this morning I only indirectly knew his intentions in this regard, I entered into the matter against this maneuver in the letter that I addressed to him a few hours ago: now that they are known to me in a positive manner, I formally protest against it, and I declare to Your Excellency that unless the Emperor has sent him new instructions relating to a movement to be made towards the Tagus, which I cannot believe in the current circumstances, the Sixth Corps will not execute until in eight days we would be in Spain, and to ask him to have a supply of five to six hundred thousand rations of biscuit prepared for us in Salamanca. On the 31st, I made him see how advantageous it would be if three to four hundred thousand could already be found in Ciudad-Rodrigo, to give initial relief to troops who had not had bread for fifteen days, and to enable them to remain there to face the English who would appear between the two places.

Upon my arrival at Ciudad Rodrigo, I found only the siege supplies, consisting of 250,000 rations of biscuit and flour sufficient for 160,000 rations: I learned that the one at Almeida could only feed the garrison of this place for 35 days, starting on 4 April. The circumstances in which we found ourselves made me greatly regret that the considerable supplies poured into the two places, following the arrangements we had made before our entry into Portugal, had been consumed with little economy by the Ninth Corps, and without it having taken measures to

²² No. 59 is used in Belmas' book here for unknown reasons. Translator.

provide for their replacement. But it is not the case to examine here either what the Ninth Corps did, or the arrangements of the administration that succeeded us. I felt that it was necessary, however, to hold out, at least for a few days, between the two places, to see what the enemy's plans would be, in order to prevent him from bringing terror to the north of Spain by a prompt appearance at this point, and to give time to arrive at the supplies I had requested. I therefore took from those of Ciudad-Rodrigo a double ration of biscuits per man, for three days; but, instead of the real help I had hoped for, receiving only a notice from Marshal Duke of Istria, that more than ten thousand fanègues of wheat existed in Salamanca, that six thousand more were going to be sent there, that two thousand fanègues were leaving for Ciudad Rodrigo, where he was also to direct two hundred thousand rations of biscuit, to replace what I had borrowed from the stores, I had to leave this place, limiting myself to representing to the Marshal that it would be convenient for His Majesty's interests if he sent there an observation corps provided with provisions, while the troops of the Army of Portugal went to seek them in the cantons which presented resources. Your Highness can judge from what I have already told you, how much it was to be desired that the assurances of Marshal and my representations had been followed by some effect. I arrived, however, with the Sixth Corps at Salamanca, and, far from finding there what had been announced to me, I could only count on six thousand fanègues and thirty-nine thousand rations of biscuit, which we had to take later to replace what we had consumed from the supplies of Ciudad-Rodrigo, where only twenty thousand rations had been sent by the Marshal, without a convoy of one hundred thousand, which he had said he was sending for the same destination, having arrived more than the two other convoys announced, one of six thousand fanègues, and the other of two thousand. Seeing neither the observation corps of the Army of the North come to our aid, nor the means of subsistence that we had been promised, and the importance of covering the places being still as great, I ordered two divisions of the Sixth Corps and the Ninth to take part of the six thousand fanègues found here, and to go and establish themselves in the positions that I had the honor of indicating to you at the beginning of my letter.

If I did not see what I had been told come to pass, at least I hoped that the contracts for which a million francs from the funds intended for pay were withheld in Valladolid, as one of my dispatches of the 12th informed Your Highness, would produce considerable payments for the period of the 15th, which had been indicated to me. But we are at the 17th, and nothing has appeared. Yesterday, I explained again to the Marshal the painful state in which we found ourselves, and that, if effective assistance did not reach us immediately, we would be forced to give up covering the places. What I told him yesterday, Monseigneur, I can only say to Your Highness, to let you know the true state of affairs. The Sixth and Ninth Corps will find themselves without provisions: the Second is already complaining of its position, and only the Eighth can hold where it is. The cavalry, although billeted, is losing a large number of horses daily, exhausted by lack of food and their fatigue in Portugal. The carriage and artillery trains are, for the same reason, in a state of absolute incapacity. The country no longer has any means of transportation. The greatest apathy reigns among all the authorities, whose zeal should be growing in the situation we find ourselves in.

The summary of my letter is that, of all the promises the Duke of Istria made to me, none have been fulfilled; that I see only an extremely dismal future; that I have done and am doing everything in my power; that I can only make representations, write, and explain the true state of affairs, without being any further ahead so far. Being without authority in the country, I despair

of being able to support the troops I have at San Felices el Grande and Vitigudino any longer, as well as the two divisions, one of which is at Ciudad Rodrigo, and the other stationed in echelons. This is the truth that I submit to you, Monsignor; it is truly urgent that other measures be taken, that my letters be answered and acted upon.

I am, with respectful devotion, etc.

Signed: MASSÉNA.

No. 63.

*Orders issued by the Emperor Napoleon, on the
night of 29 to 30 March 1811, for the Prince of Neufchâtel, Major General.*

The Major General will have two hundred copies of the *Moniteur* collected tomorrow and sent before ten o'clock in the evening by special courier, ordering that they be forwarded from Bayonne to Spain. Also, by special courier, the Prince of Neufchâtel will send fifty copies of the *Moniteur* to the commandant of Bayonne, who will deliver twenty-five to Aide-de-Camp Casabianca as he passes through and send some to General Reille in Navarre. The Prince of Neufchâtel will send the remaining one hundred and fifty copies to the Duke of Istria, who will forward them to Madrid, to the Army of Portugal, and distribute them throughout Spain.

The Prince of Neufchâtel will write by this courier and in duplicate by the officer he is to send tomorrow, to the Duke of Dalmatia, to inform him of my satisfaction at the capture of Badajoz. But he will also write to him: that I saw with sorrow the events which befell the First Corps before Cadiz; that I cannot approve of the dispositions he had made in this direction; that this event would not have taken place, and that the siege of Cadiz would not have incurred the risks it has just incurred, if, in leaving for Estremadura, the Duke of Dalmatia had placed the division of Godinot and the corps of General Sebastiani under the orders of Marshal Duke of Bellune; that by this means, six French regiments and three Polish regiments, that is to say, nearly twenty thousand men would have found themselves under his orders; and, when he saw himself threatened by the landing at Algeciras, by recalling eight thousand men from Sebastiani's corps and a brigade under General Godinot, he would have had three times more forces than he would have needed; that the only two points truly to guard during the Extremadura expedition were Seville and Cadiz; that all hospitals had to be centralized in Seville; that, moreover, a third of the Fourth Corps was more than sufficient to hold off the poor troops of Murcia and, more or less, contain the entire region.

The Duke of Dalmatia has sixty thousand men under his command. He could have left thirty thousand under the command of the Duke of Bellune and had double the forces he had before Badajoz. This mania for wanting to hold all the points, in a difficult moment, exposes one to great misfortune.

The Emperor is displeased that, while the siege of Cadiz was in danger of being raised, the Twelfth, Thirty-second, and Forty-third Regiments, forming a division of more than eight

thousand men, were scattered among insignificant posts. The six Polish battalions and the light cavalry of Perreimond were more than sufficient to remain in observation on that side, and, consequently, the four French regiments, and Count Milhaud's cavalry division, could be available to support the siege of Cadiz.

On the other hand, General Godinot's two regiments, forming six battalions, were doing nothing and were useless in their quarters.

The disposition of troops is a general's primary merit, and His Majesty sees with sorrow that proper arrangements had not been made here.

His Majesty intends that all the hospitals be gathered in Seville, so that while occupying the country to gather supplies and resources, it will still be possible, in the event of an emergency, to centralize the forces and only have to guard a few citadels.

His Majesty does not approve of the decision taken to keep Olivenza either. This place must be blown up and its fortifications destroyed.

As for Badajoz, everything depends on the possibility of supplying it. If it can be supplied promptly for six months, this place must be kept; if not, only the citadel must be kept and the city's fortifications blown up.

The Emperor has ordered that all troops currently in the Army of the Center, the Fifty-first Regiment and the Fifty-fifth, march immediately for Andalusia. The Emperor has ordered the same for the five thousand men, both infantry and cavalry, belonging to the Army of the South, who are currently in the Army of the Center. I am transmitting His Majesty's orders in such a positive manner that they will be immediately executed.

At the same time, I am ordering the Duke of Istria to send eight thousand infantry and two thousand cavalry, who also belong to the Army of the South and are currently under his command.

These reinforcements will repair all losses and restore the Army of the South to a suitable position.

Regardless, within two weeks, another corps of six thousand men, belonging to the Army of the South, will also be deployed there.

With these arrangements made, the Duke of Dalmatia must prepare to defend himself against an attack by the English army and, when the time is right, march on Lisbon with thirty thousand men, while the Army of Portugal, for its part, marches on Lisbon with sixty thousand men. But this offensive operation is postponed until northern Portugal is organized.

The headquarters of the Army of Portugal remains in Coimbra. Porto is occupied by a detachment. This army is seventy thousand strong. It has orders to give battle to Lord Wellington if he wishes to cross the river, and to constantly harass him at Lisbon to prevent him

from making large detachments against Andalusia. Lord Wellington has only thirty-two thousand Englishmen under his command; he can therefore only send a detachment of eight to nine thousand men with five or six thousand Portuguese.

It would always be necessary to maintain at Badajoz the strength of fifteen thousand men, cavalry, infantry, artillery, in good condition and from the best regiments, so that at the slightest movement of the English in that direction, the Duke of Dalmatia, advancing there with eight or ten thousand men, could muster twenty-five to thirty thousand men in Extremadura. In this extraordinary case, only a single observation corps would remain near Granada, under the command of the Duke of Bellune.

The Duke of Dalmatia must communicate, via Madrid, with the Prince of Essling and with the Army of the Center.

The King must always maintain a corps of six thousand men between the Tagus and Badajoz, ready to join the Duke of Dalmatia's corps if necessary to oppose an English operation in Andalusia.

But to achieve this result, the country must be completely cleared, the hospitals must be reunited in Seville, and Cadiz, Seville, and Badajoz must be the only points to be guarded, with an observation corps in Granada. In this case, Marshal Duke of Bellune would have command of the troops remaining in Seville, those continuing the siege of Cadiz, and the observation corps of Granada, while the Duke of Dalmatia would command the corps opposing the English. The Duke of Dalmatia would also have under his command the central division of the army and could thus easily muster thirty to thirty-five thousand men.

The siege of Cadiz can proceed with the greatest activity. The necessary number of men can be deployed there by better distributing them. The Fifty-first and Fifty-fifth must be replaced by the regiments that suffered the most at Cadiz. It is even necessary to replace some French regiments in Sebastiani's corps.

Finally, the Duke of Dalmatia is in a position to resist thirty thousand English troops, assuming Lord Wellington marches against him with his entire army. The Duke of Dalmatia would have with him the central division of the army and could oppose more than thirty-five thousand men. But this assumption cannot be realized, since then the Prince of Essling would march on Lisbon, and the English would find themselves caught between two fires and cut off.

The Prince of Essling will hold Coimbra, threatening Lisbon, which will be attacked after the harvest by seventy thousand men from the Army of Portugal, and by the troops that it will be possible to draw from Andalusia depending on the circumstances, to operate on Badajoz and the Tagus. These one hundred thousand men, supported by Coimbra and Badajoz, would succeed in conquering Portugal, and this conquest would draw the English into events that would be of the greatest interest.

To this dispatch, the Prince of Neufchâtel will attach the status of the detachments ordered to join the Army of the South.

In two days, a duplicate of this order will be delivered by an officer of the Prince of Neufchâtel.

The Prince of Neufchâtel will send General Monthion to establish a headquarters in Bayonne. General Monthion will command the department and the various depots. General Boivin will return to Bordeaux.

General Monthion will set up a police force to keep abreast of the officers who pass through; and, when they bring him interesting news, he will send this news by special dispatch, so that it arrives twenty-four hours ahead, if possible, of the officer who brings it.

General Monthion will have the details of everything relating to the departure of the treasuries and the convoys.

He will send out all the extraordinary dispatch riders he wishes. The Prince of Neufchâtel will inform the Count of La Valette. I only wanted to reduce the dispatch riders traveling to Spain, because their frequency is too tiring for the escorts; but from Bayonne to Paris, the reasons are not the same.

General Monthion will establish regular correspondence with Generals Caffarelli, Thouvenot, Reille, and with Marshal Duke of Istria.

The Major General will send a dispatch to the King of Spain to inform him of the situation of the Armies of the South and Portugal, and the situation I am ordering them to adopt. He will inform him that the Army of the Center, depending on the circumstances, must send a division to Badajoz, and even to Cordoba, to support the Army of the South if it were attacked by Wellington's army. The Prince of Neufchâtel will inform the King of the funds that have been sent for the central army, and what funds are still being sent to him.

The Prince of Neufchâtel will write to General Sebastiani that I am displeased that he is keeping sixteen thousand of my best troops doing nothing; that the incident at Cadiz is his fault; that he was an army of observation, and that it was up to him to guarantee the besieging army.

The Prince of Neufchâtel will send me as soon as possible the bill for all the rewards requested by the Duke of Dalmatia, which are just, so that they can be dispatched within a few days. In the meantime, write to him that he will receive them.

The Prince of Neufchâtel will inform the Duke of Dalmatia that several colonels will arrive with the marching regiments; that he will be able to give them the vacant regiments.

The Prince of Neufchâtel will make it clear to the Duke of Dalmatia that the First Regiment of Foot Artillery has a company of eighty men in Cordoba, and that many other artillery companies are scattered; that he can gather them together to send them to Cadiz.

The Prince of Neufchâtel will order the Twenty-sixth Chasseur Regiment to surrender in its entirety to the Army of the South. This order will be in precise terms, and the Duke of Dalmatia will be advised to send this regiment towards Badajoz.

The Prince of Neufchâtel will order the eighth company of the Seventh Artillery Regiment, which is in Guadalajara; the seventh company of the Third Artillery Regiment, which is in Segovia; the company of the Sixth Regiment, which is in Madrid; the second company of the Second Battalion of Miners, which is in Madrid; and the third company of the Engineer Corps, which has seventy soldiers and sixty-three horses in Madrid, to go to Andalusia to reinforce the Army of the South.

The Prince of Neufchâtel will inform me if there are any artillery companies in Bayonne that can still be sent to Andalusia.

Signed: NAPOLEON.

No. 64.

*Letter from Marshal Masséna, Prince of Essling, to
Prince Berthier, Major General.*

Ciudad Rodrigo, 30 April 1811.

Monseigneur,

As I had the honor of informing you in my dispatch of the 24th, I went to Ciudad Rodrigo with the intention of resupplying Almeida. The army could not be assembled until yesterday, instead of on the 26th, as I had thought possible. I reviewed most of it; and this morning, I would have begun my move on Almeida if, having been informed that Marshal Duke of Istria had arrived in Salamanca with cavalry and artillery teams, I had not written to him to send for this assistance, which is so useful to us. I expect it this evening, and tomorrow I intend to march against the enemy. According to reports from deserters and peasants, there are seven divisions around Almeida commanded by Lord Wellington, who is said to have returned from Extremadura. I will hasten to inform Your Highness of the result of our expedition; from the various reports I have given you, you will easily understand the difficulties we will have encountered in undertaking it. To tell you that each army corps does not have horses capable of operating three artillery pieces; that the army's cavalry has barely two thousand horses fit to march, including Fournier's brigade; and that the payments of subsistence that were to be made to Ciudad Rodrigo

have not arrived, or have arrived there only too late, reduced by more than half, is to repeat to you, Monseigneur, the complaints that fill my previous letters. However, these are the inconveniences we encounter on the eve of a battle and at the moment when we must drop supplies into a stronghold. I must assure Your Highness that nothing will be spared to ensure that these difficulties do not prevent us from achieving a success that meets His Majesty's wishes, and I will not rest until the 120,000 rations of biscuits, the 100 quintals of flour, the 80 quintals of vegetables, the 80 quintals of salted meat, and the 100,000 rations of brandy, forming the convoy intended for Almeida, have arrived there in full.

The enemy has always been obliged to maintain seven divisions at this point, said to be together 50,000 men strong, and a large amount of cavalry, which has prevented them from deploying their forces elsewhere, a circumstance that fits perfectly with His Majesty the Emperor's plan. I can only march against him with thirty-five thousand men of all arms, but who are well disposed.

I am with respectful devotion, etc.

Signed: MASSÉNA.

No. 65.

*Letter from Marshal Masséna, Prince of Essling,
to Marshal Bessières, Duke of Istria.*

Salamanca, 22 April 1811.

My dear Marshal, I have received your dispatch. All your promises to join me vanish, then, at a time when I need them. Resupplying Almeida and Rodrigo is the first and only operation that can give us the ability to make the Army of Portugal available, when we no longer have anything to fear regarding the fate of the fortresses. By throwing three or four months' worth of supplies there, we can then establish several mobile columns; we can send troops to Avila and Segovia; we can, if necessary, support the movement of the Army of Andalusia; but would it not be shameful to allow a fortress to surrender due to lack of supplies, in the presence of two Marshals of the Empire? I have already warned you of the ineffectiveness of my cavalry, of the impossibility of the artillery horses being of any service. You also know that I must send the Ninth Corps to Andalusia; I also wanted it to contribute to resupplying the towns before its departure. Can you, my dear Marshal, hesitate for a single moment to send me cavalry and artillery teams? If you wish, keep your equipment. Didn't I warn you that I was beginning my movement on the 26th? And you seem to be expecting a second request from me on the 22nd! You know as well as I do that losing one or two days in war is a lot, and this delay can have unfortunate consequences that can no longer be repaired.

When I told you that I would only assemble six divisions, it was so as not to deplete important points occupied by the army corps; but cavalry and artillery are a resource I cannot do without. I therefore ask you, my dear Marshal, to send me, by forced marches, cavalry and artillery teams.

Remember that once the fortresses are supplied, I will be able to command two-thirds of the army, and that this operation takes precedence over everything else.

By offering to send us the teams for sixteen guns, you no doubt understood, my dear Marshal, that you included those needed for the gun caissons?

Signed: MASSÉNA.

No. 66.

*Letter from Marshal Masséna, Prince of Essling,
to Marshal Bessières, Duke of Istria.*

Ciudad Rodrigo, 29 April 1811.

My dear Marshal, your letters are inconceivable. In the one dated the 20th, you tell me that you cannot give me any assistance. In the one dated the 22nd, you tell me that, on the 25th or 26th, you will join me wherever I am, and that the head of your column will arrive in Salamanca on the 26th. In the one I just received, you tell me that your cavalry and artillery are still, on the 27th, a day's journey behind Salamanca, and you conclude that my movement must be over, and you express your regret for not having been able to cooperate. You must agree, my dear Marshal, that if the Army of Portugal were to suffer a defeat, you would have much to reproach yourself for. I asked you for artillery and teams, and even more positively for cavalry; you have, under various pretexts, evaded my request. All the troops in Spain are of the same family. You are, until new orders are issued, charged with the defense and supply of the fortresses of Almeida and Rodrigo. I would have asked nothing better than to employ the Army of Portugal under my command to defend these fortresses, to march to the aid of the Army of the South, but how can I do this without provisions?

I intend to make my move tomorrow morning. I do not know what the outcome of this movement will be. If my letter reaches you tomorrow, your cavalry and artillery could still move during the night to arrive the day after tomorrow, May 1st, at Cabrillas. I beg you to send, without stopping, the biscuits, flour, and grain that you will have gathered following your troops. It is urgent that these resources, like many others, arrive at Ciudad Rodrigo. This place will not have a fortnight's supply of provisions. When I leave here, considerable convoys will have to be sent there.

Signed: MASSÉNA.

No. 67.

*Letter from Prince Berthier, Major General, to Marshal
Bessières, Duke of Istria.*

Rambouillet, 19 May 1811.

The Emperor, Monsieur le Duc, was displeased that you did not provide Prince d'Essling with the assistance he needed. You were supposed to be leading a mass of troops capable of effectively supporting Prince d'Essling and decisively securing victory. His Majesty was saddened that you marched to Ciudad Rodrigo with only fifteen to sixteen hundred horses, six cannons, and a few teams. His Majesty had assumed, based on the letters written to you, that you were marching with all your forces in order to defeat and destroy the English army. In such an important circumstance, you were even authorized to summon General Bonet should you have deemed this drastic measure indispensable. The Emperor, Marshal, finds that you have been useless to the Army of Portugal, and that you have not fulfilled his intentions. You have twelve pieces of light artillery of the Guard; can their cannonballs be better employed than against the English? You could have had twelve other pieces of artillery at your disposal. Why did you not march two regiments of voltigeurs, two of tirailleurs and two of fusiliers? Perhaps you could even have marched three from each corps. With the artillery, that would have given you about ten thousand men who would have been of immense effect. What do these precautions mean in assembling and employing one's forces (said the Emperor), when one is in the presence of the English, our implacable enemies? What does it matter to keep Palencia, Lerma and all these other posts, which disperse the army? It was important to occupy Valladolid and Burgos, to leave General Seras under observation where he is, and to march with the rest of your troops. His Majesty would have seen in this disposition further proof of your attachment to him and the hatred you feel for the English.

The Emperor notes that you were aware of Prince Essling's retreat on April 1st, that Almeida would then have found himself exposed, and finally, that it was not until May 1st that you arrived at Ciudad Rodrigo. The Emperor notes that if the English were to defeat you in your current position, what use would be the numerous and fine troops that remain scattered in your rear?

The Emperor, Marshal, hopes that you will repair the enormous error you have just committed. You have under your command approximately fifty thousand men; what a wonderful opportunity to gather them in as large a mass as possible to support Prince Essling and crush the English!

Signed: ALEXANDRE.

No. 68.

*Report from Marshal Masséna, Prince of Essling, to
Prince Berthier, Major General.*

At the camp of Fuentes de Oñoro, 7 May 1811.

Monseigneur,

I awaited with the greatest impatience the arrival of Marshal Duke of Istria with the cavalry, artillery, and teams he was to bring, which had become so necessary to us, given the losses the army had suffered in recent months. On 30 April, as my letter of that date informed Your Highness, I reviewed the troops of the Sixth Corps and those of the Eighth, with the exception of the division of Clauzel, which was left in echelon on the road from Salamanca to Ciudad Rodrigo, for the safety of communications and the progress of the convoys. On May 1st, the Duke of Istria arrived, while I was reviewing the Second and Ninth Corps; but the head of his reinforcements, which consisted of the light cavalry brigade General Wathier, seven to eight hundred men strong, a detachment of grenadiers, chasseurs, and lancers of the Guard cavalry of the same strength, six pieces of Guard artillery, and thirty artillery teams, was still seven leagues from Rodrigo. I hastened their march and ordered the army to cross the Águeda on the Rodrigo bridge, on the 2nd, at daybreak, and to head, the Second Corps towards Marialva, the Eighth and Ninth towards Carpio with the cavalry reserve, the Sixth towards Espeja with the rest of the cavalry. This movement was carried out with great order. The enemy's outposts were withdrawn, and the preparations they had made to defend the Marialva passes were thwarted by the crossing of the Azaba at Carpio. This operation was carried out without much hindrance from the enemy; and their advance guard, consisting of fourteen squadrons of cavalry supported by several thousand infantrymen with artillery, was swiftly advanced beyond Gallegos. The army took up positions as follows: the Second Corps behind and to the right of Gallegos; the Eighth, that is, Solignac's division, to the left of this village, which was occupied by the outposts; the Sixth behind Espeja; and the Ninth in reserve in front of Carpio.

The information I had on the enemy indicated that they had considerably reinforced themselves with all the troops they could muster; that it had recalled the English previously directed against Badajoz; finally, that it occupied with more than fifty thousand men a fine battle line behind the Oñoro stream, on a hill whose left, of rather difficult access, was supported by the fort of the Conception; the right, more accessible, was at Nave de Haver, and the headquarters at Vilar Formoso. However, this position of the enemy was not without dangers for him, since he had behind his line the rocky bed of the Côa, and only one fairly difficult passable communication by Castelo Bom.

On the morning of the 3rd, the army marched forward, the Second Corps still forming the right, and heading towards Alameda, Solignac's division of the Eighth to the left of this village, and the Sixth with the cavalry went from Espeja to Fuentes de Oñoro. The convoy that I intended to throw into Almeida followed the center of the army and arrived at Gallegos where the cavalry of the Imperial Guard that the Duke of Istria had brought was also to go. My plan was to move in force on the enemy's right, to outflank and overthrow him if possible, in order to seize the

communication of Castelo Bom and to drive him towards the lower Côa, in the cul-de-sac formed by this torrent, the Douro and the Águeda, where he would find himself very embarrassed, because of the difficulties with which the banks of these rivers bristle. Consequently, and while the Second and Ninth Corps and Solignac's Division of the Eighth held the enemy's center in check, I moved to its right with the Sixth Corps, pursuing its rearguard, the greater part of which was swiftly pushed back into Fuentes de Oñoro. This village was hidden by the rugged terrain and placed partly at the foot of the hill held by the enemy. I hoped to capture it and hold it. I attacked it and it was soon occupied. Lord Wellington, who saw part of his line cut by the occupation of this important post, continued to throw new forces there, and seized it. The division of Ferey, which was alone employed in this attack, had soon driven the enemy from the village; he lost it in turn. Finally, after seeing it taken and retaken, I had General Ferey supported by four reserve battalions from Marchand's Division, of the Sixth Corps, and the greater part of the village remained with us during the night. At the same time, a few cannon shots were exchanged in the center, and a few small positions were weakly disputed: the village of Alameda remained ours.

On the 4th, at daybreak, the enemy, very worried by the occupation of Fuentes de Oñoro, which was opened an debouchment for us in the middle of his line, tried in vain to retake it; it was swiftly repulsed. Then it filled the avenues of this village with troops, the walls and rocks that flanked it, and, by all sorts of means, made the complete occupation of the upper part of the village very difficult for us. From then on, I saw that this advantage would cost the army too dearly, and I took care of the necessary arrangements for a new attack. I carefully reconnoitered the enemy's flanks, which were guarded by cavalry, Spanish bands, and the local militia. I found an accessible area between Nave de Haver and Poço Velho, and I decided to move the army there. The orders were sent in the evening, and the movements were carried out during the night.

On the 5th, at daybreak, the army found itself thus placed: the first and second divisions of the Sixth Corps opposite Poço Velho, with the second division of the Eighth in reserve. All the cavalry of the army was assembled under the command of General Montbrun on the left of this infantry. These troops, placed opposite the enemy's right, were intended to turn and overthrow it. The Third Division of the Sixth Corps occupied part of the village of Fuentes de Oñoro; it was intended to attack it again and formed the center with the Ninth Corps, which was behind and in reserve. On the right was the Second Corps, whose First Division was based at Alameda; the Second had been placed intermediately between this village and Fuentes de Oñoro. These corps had orders to support the great movement of the army with small attacks, and to maneuver in such a way as to join it as it gained ground on the enemy. The village of Poço Velho and the woods flanking it were full of English infantry; they were vigorously attacked by the First Division of the Sixth Corps and captured with the bayonet. The enemy lost many dead and some prisoners. The three divisions marched in close columns in echelons on the village and its flanks. In the rear, the enemy developed a line of twenty squadrons supported by several infantry battalions and twelve cannons. General Montbrun, with the cavalry, maneuvered on our left in such a way as to gain the crest of the heights and the enemy's right. He had to withstand several charges before he was able to succeed. As soon as he reached the crest and I was able to provide him with four artillery pieces, he charged the enemy cavalry in column by regiment with the greatest success and unparalleled vigor. Despite the protection of the artillery and infantry hidden in the rocks, he successively overthrew the twenty English squadrons and drove them

before him for more than a league. Meanwhile, the First and Second Divisions of the Sixth Corps followed, as far as was possible for infantry, the movement of the cavalry in column; and Solignac's division marched in reserve. The Ninth Corps advanced its left to link up with the main attack. The Third Division of the Sixth Corps vigorously attacked the village of Fuentes de Oñoro, where the enemy again threw considerable forces to occupy this outlet and prevent communication between our center and the left. The enemy had its right wing in disarray; and the corps that composed it fled dispersed towards the center, where they were able to reunite behind the regiments that Lord Wellington was hastily bringing up from his left. The plateau where we had just maneuvered narrowed in this part. From the summit, two very rocky and very difficult ravines descended, where the villages of Fuentes de Oñoro and Vilar Formoso were located. Lord Wellington filled these ravines with skirmishers, garnished the rear with a lot of artillery, and occupied the summit with three large squares. Our cavalry, having reached this point, fell vigorously on the squares and broke through all three; but at the same time it arrived under fire from the enemy artillery and its skirmishers. The artillery that followed it had many horses killed by a very superior fire, and this superb movement was stopped. Before our infantry could arrive, the enemy had time to cover the summit of the plateau with several lines of English infantry and a formidable artillery; it threw new troops into Fuentes de Oñoro and also garrisoned Vilar Formoso on its right. Ferey's and Claparède's divisions vigorously attacked Fuentes de Oñoro and drove the enemy out several times; but as soon as they reached the summit of the village, they were blasted by artillery fire; and Lord Wellington continued to send considerable reinforcements of his best troops there. He lost five hundred prisoners and more than seven to eight hundred dead, including many officers and Scots.

The English general had assembled very large forces and a lot of artillery in his center. The battle was degenerating into skirmishes toward the front and toward Fuentes de Oñoro. I wanted to make an effort to break through the center and overthrow the English army toward the lower Côa: the ardor of the soldiers was unparalleled. I had to take care, before this burst of vigor, of the state of my supplies, because, throughout the course of this campaign, I found myself stopped at every moment by insurmountable difficulties. It resulted from the statement given to me by the artillery commander, that there remained in reserve only four cartridges per man, which made about thirty if we counted what could be found in the cartridge boxes. I did not believe I was in a position to resume an attack with such supplies, and I decided to send all the empty caissons to Rodrigo, in order to bring back ammunition, taking the necessary measures to preserve the advantages gained over the enemy.

The army, on this day, in which all the honor of arms remained with it, captured a thousand men, including a lieutenant colonel and a large number of officers, and killed or wounded more than two thousand. It overthrew the entire right wing of the enemy and gained more than a league of ground from them. They spent the night following the battle strongly entrenching the summit of the plateau they occupied, with five large works, a large amount of artillery, and trenches for the skirmishers. They also set up breastworks in the ravines and behind the rocks. Finally, he barricaded the summits of the villages of Fuentes de Oñoro and Vilar Formoso, thus calling upon all the resources of the fortifications to his aid against a full-force attack.

In order to take advantage of this day's opportunities and feed the army, which, for lack of food, would have been forced to withdraw, I brought the convoy intended to supply Almeida to the

camp. My intention was to approach this place, withdraw the garrison, and blow it up with His Majesty's authorization.

Our loss was small compared to that of the enemy. Generals, officers, and soldiers all fulfilled their duties with devotion and bravery. Major General Count de Montbrun, commanding the army's cavalry, displayed extreme skill during the 5th in the maneuvers carried out to make the most of the intrepidity of the regiments under his command. M. M. Brigadier Generals Fournier and Wathier supported him perfectly; they executed and had executed charges that do them infinite honor. General Lorcet, commanding a brigade of dragoons, was wounded. Colonel Ornano, of the Twenty-fifth Dragoons, led elite squadrons as an extremely devoted and deserving leader. General Maucune received two light wounds and did not leave the battlefield. General Vichery, Colonels Fririon of the Sixty-ninth Regiment and Langeron of the Second Light Demi-brigade, were also slightly wounded.

I will have the honor of informing you in particular of the fine actions that marked the 5th, and of the other distinguished officers who were struck by the enemy's iron. Mr. Septeuil, Your Highness's aide-de-camp, had his leg blown off by a cannonball. This brave and interesting young officer had accompanied the Duke of Istria and was in a dragoon charge. He endured the amputation with rare composure. He is now out of all danger. I beg Your Highness to be assured that I feel as much pain in telling you about this unfortunate accident as you will feel in learning of it.

In my letter of 30 April, I had the honor of informing Your Highness that each army corps could barely mount three artillery pieces. With the teams brought by the Duke of Istria, we have thirty guns for the entire army, not including the six for the Imperial Guard, a quantity far less than what we would need to face the enemy.

I am, with respectful devotion, etc.

Signed: MASSÉNA.

*Report from General Brenier to Marshal Marmont, Duke
of Ragusa, Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Portugal.*

Salamanca, 17 May 1811.

The fortress of Almeida was captured on 7 April. According to the orders I had previously received from His Highness the Prince of Neufchâtel and His Excellency Marshal the Duke of Istria, I had the mines prepared to blow up the fortifications. I continued this work after the capture; and before the end of April, there were 140 land mines ready to be loaded. I thought that the army, after resting for a few days, would move on Almeida; everything was in place to promptly evacuate the artillery and munitions. During this evacuation, the mines would have been loaded, and it would have taken very few days to complete everything. I did not expect the army to move until the 10th to the 15th of this month; and, to give myself time to wait until then, I had established an extremely rigorous system of economy, which I myself monitored with the utmost severity. By this means, I had calculated that I would have enough to live on until the 25th, and I was determined to extend this, in one way or another, at least until June 1st.

From the day after my invasion, I was severely restricted at all points; every day, skirmishers came to shoot my herd, forcing it to return. I then decided to have part of it salted.

Convinced that the enemy could not have brought a siege park, I thought that, knowing the weakness of my garrison, they might attempt some kind of attack; and, in concert with the commanders of the engineers and artillery, I took every imaginable step to repel them. All the flanks of the bastions were manned with guns always loaded with grapeshot; scythes and pitchforks were placed in each bastion; beams were arranged on the parapet of the patrol path; loaded shells and grenades were placed within range, as well as shot, and tarred cakes to illuminate the ditches. I had the troops rehearse to make them aware of their alarm positions by day and night.⁵⁸⁵

On the 15th, I was ordered to surrender by Major General Campbell, who pointed out to me that the circumstances of the campaign removed all hope of rescue; that the weakness of my garrison deprived me of any means of defending myself. I replied verbally that, if they believed my garrison was too weak to defend the place, they only had to try to come and take it, and that I had no other answer to give. On the 17th, Lord Wellington asked me for an interview; I felt I had to refuse it.

I made a sortie on the morning of the 28th; I drove out the English posts. We killed a few men and took four prisoners.

I made another sortie against some Portuguese posts and took three prisoners; but I never had anyone attack the side from which I left.

On May 3rd, I heard a cannonade and a fusillade that announced the army's approach; on the 5th, I judged that there was a serious situation, and I expected to communicate at any moment.

On the 7th, I received orders from His Highness the Prince of Essling, through a soldier of the 6th Light Infantry, to blow up the place and withdraw to Barba del Puerco with my garrison; I immediately set about loading the mines and destroying the artillery. For this last purpose, we used the method we had already experimented with some time before on a disused gun, of firing cannon shots in the volley of the guns; in this way, the guns, the howitzers and the mortars were destroyed. The cartridges were thrown partly into a well, and partly into the ditches, at the foot of the revetments which were to be blown up. The shot was likewise thrown into the ditches to be buried. A large quantity of explosives was already ready and loaded, thanks to the tireless care and foresight of Battalion Chief Morlet, commander of the engineers of the place; the carriages were largely sawn off, and the others placed on the parapets which were mined; the fleet of vehicles was overturned and arranged against the berms below the revetments, where it was buried. Finally, I believe that none of the precautions required to disable anything that could be of any use to the enemy were forgotten; and it is here that I must pay tribute to the intelligence, activity, and dedication of the engineering and artillery officers, who were as aware as I was of all the risks of such a critical operation, and who nevertheless missed nothing that could contribute to the complete fulfillment of His Majesty's orders.

On the 9th, all the landmines were loaded; but the work to destroy the artillery was not finished, and I had to delay for another day so as not to leave any regrets behind. The engineers took advantage of this time to make and load another four hundred toises of explosives, which were still needed for the compassing of the fires.

On the morning of the 10th, I gathered the principal officers of the garrison at my house; I read them the order of Prince Essling; I did not hide from them that our expedition presented many difficulties and dangers; that once outside, with the place under fire, we would find ourselves in the necessity of making our way, to rejoin the army, in the midst of obstacles of all kinds, or of succumbing with honor; that once the place was destroyed, the intentions of His Majesty would be perfectly fulfilled; that this sole goal should animate us; that we were French, and that we had to prove to the entire universe that we were worthy of being so; that if our expedition succeeded, it would cover us with glory, whatever the results for us personally. All have shown the most courageous devotion. I then informed them of the dispositions I had decided upon, as well as the manner in which I intended to arrive at the enemy positions, and I led them to a point in the square, from where I showed them the direction I intended to take; and, wanting to march in two columns, to have less depth and to overthrow a larger front of enemies, which gave me more latitude for my movements beyond their line, I gave them all the necessary instructions for the march of the two columns, and as a basis, I announced that the left column was the direction column. The two elite companies of the Fifth Battalion of the Eighty-second Regiment were to march at the head of the left column, composed of the said battalion, to sweep the passage for the column which followed them; the two companies of gunners marched at the head of the right column with the same object; this column, commanded by the Battalion Commander of the Engineers Thruiller, was composed of various detachments of the Sixth and Eighth Corps; the sappers were to remain in the town, some to set the fire, others in battle formation at various points to prevent the inhabitants from disrupting our operation and to protect everyone's exit. They were then to form the rearguard. They were commanded by Battalion Commander Morlet,

who remained in the town until the fire was set, and who was forced to break through a second time with his sappers through the enemy posts, which had joined up behind us.

I had the crews placed at the rear of the column; I anticipated that in any case, they would not be able to follow us, and I was not unhappy to position them in such a way as to allow them to be used to occupy the enemy.

After agreeing with all the officers of all branches on all the preliminary details of our operation, I went, as usual, for a walk through the town and along the ramparts; I spoke with all the soldiers; I made sure, by an air of security and confidence, to remove from their minds any idea of doubt or anxiety about the result of our operation, and I saw everyone full of confidence, and I dare say enthusiasm; at the onset of night, I had the entire garrison take up arms to prevent anyone from leaving, and to be ready as soon as all the arrangements were completed; because we worked until the moment of departure. At ten o'clock everything was ready, I sent the order to all the advanced posts of the half-moons and the covered ways to move in the greatest silence inside the barrier by which we were to leave. At the moment of beginning the movement, I gave the watchword, *Bonaparte* and *Bayard*; and everyone set off under the auspices of glory and honor.

I was the last to leave; then I sent the order to Battalion Commander Morlet to set fire to the caissons; it was agreed that this order alone would suffice, because he was to make a special signal as soon as he was certain that the lit fuses were in place, so that the powder could be ignited simultaneously. Everything was executed perfectly; my two column heads began to engage the enemy posts at the very moment of the explosion. Everything was broken through, and I quickly continued on my way, always harassed in my rear and on my flanks, as I had anticipated; all the carriages were pillaged. I had not wanted a guide, because he could only have taught me the paths I did not want to follow, and he could have introduced uncertainty into our movements. Unable to recognize at night the various points of direction that I had long studied by day, the moon served as my compass; the various streams and rivers I crossed, the existence of which I knew, also helped to ensure my direction; I was harassed all the way to Thurone. There I was abandoned. Finally, at daybreak, I found myself between Villar de Ciervo and Barba del Puerco; I headed towards Águeda. Between these two villages, before reaching the ridge, the enemy cavalry caught up with me on my right and marched alongside, shooting at me, either to stop me or to indicate the route I had taken to the troops marching after me. I saw some ridges crowned with troops on my left; I maneuvered to avoid them; I finally reached a path that led to the bridge of San Felices.

The two columns, which had always marched within sight and range of each other, arrived together on the left bank of the Águeda, in the same order in which they had left Almeida; they had always marched in order by section, despite the rocks, rivers, and precipices.

The rearguard of the sappers had joined the tail of the left column some moments earlier. I then saw some troops on the other side, whom I recognized with a spyglass as French, and we quickly descended onto the bridge. The enemy was approaching from all sides; they reached the tail of my column, and I had the pain of seeing some of my brave comrades perish. Finally, General Reynier, commander of the Second Corps, ordered troops down to the bridge and protected our

crossing. He collected all the wounded and had them taken to San Felices, where we found ourselves gathered, numbering about a thousand men. In this whole operation I lost three hundred and sixty men, of whom about one hundred and fifty were killed, most of them at the precipice, and two hundred prisoners who got away and were unable to keep up with the rapid march of the column.

I enclose here the report of the commander of the engineers and that of Mr. Lechêne, artillery captain. They each provide detailed details, which I could only indicate in large. I also enclose a dimensioned plan of the fortress; everything drawn in black indicates the walls that have been blown up.

Now, Monseigneur, I have one more duty to fulfill: to do justice to all the officers of the garrison; I will dare to request the decoration of the Legion of Honor for all those who do not yet have it. I enclose with this report the nominal list of all, and I have noted with a star those who have already been decorated.

Mr. Morlet, Battalion Commander of the Engineers, commanded the fortress's engineers from the moment it came into our hands; it is impossible to demonstrate more intelligence, activity, and courage than he demonstrated, either in repairing the fortress or in destroying it, through his talents and leadership, and I will request for him the rank of Officer of the Legion of Honor.

Mr. Thruiller, Battalion Commander of the Engineers of the Ninth Corps, had been sent to the fortress by Count d'Erlon to accelerate the demolition work with the two sapper companies of the Ninth Corps; the fortress was occupied the day after his arrival. He oversaw all the work, in concert with Mr. Morlet; he assisted him with his advice, commanded the right column upon departure, and led it to the Águeda with an intelligence worthy of the highest praise; he himself faced great danger crossing this river, which he was forced to swim across. I also request for him the rank of Officer of the Legion of Honor.

I also owe the highest praise to Mr. Lebel, Lieutenant of the Engineers, who, in all circumstances and especially in this last one, has shown a zeal, activity, and dedication for which he deserves to be rewarded.

I enclose here a statement provided by Mr. Morlet, Battalion Commander of the Engineers, for the officers and non-commissioned officers of the Dutch sappers and miners, which I ask Your Excellency to consider.

Captain Gravelle, commanding the artillery of the place, displayed activity and intelligence beyond all expression before and during the blockade; but it was especially in these last days that he multiplied his efforts, so to speak, to leave the enemy no resources to use.

I also owe praise to Mr. Lechêne, a young man full of merit and knowledge, whose activity contributed greatly to the immense work required to destroy the artillery. I enclose here the report he sent me, recommending several individuals from the two companies of cannoneers of the garrison.

I owe the highest praise to Captains Foucault, commanding the grenadier company of the 82nd Regiment, and Berthier, commanding the voltigeur company of the same regiment. These two companies have been of the greatest use to me at all times; whenever there was an expedition to be undertaken, whether long or dangerous, they were entrusted with it, and always emerged with honor. Captain Foucault commanded the 82nd Battalion from the moment we left Almeida, and proved himself worthy of such a command; I request the Legion of Honor for him, as well as for Captain Berthier. I must also mention Mr. Gilbert, lieutenant of the voltigeurs, who was wounded; Mr. Thomas, second lieutenant of the grenadiers; Captain Combin, Mr. Charbonnier, adjutant-major of the 82nd Regiment, and Mr. Mottier: the latter two have always fulfilled the duties of adjutant of the place, since the beginning, and they have demonstrated intelligence, activity, and courage on every occasion. I will also mention Mr. Bonnet, lieutenant in the 27th Line Regiment. I also owe the most deserved praise to the courage and activity of Captains Barré and Denoé, my two aides-de-camp, who supported me perfectly, both during the siege and during our sortie. I request the rank of battalion commander for Mr. Barré, and the decoration of the Legion of Honor for Mr. Denoé.

I have the honor to be, with deep respect, etc.

Signed: BRENIER.

No. 70.

*Letter from Marshal Marmont, Duke of Ragusa, to Prince
Berthier, Major General.*

Salamanca, 14 May 1811.

Monseigneur,

I only received on the 6th His Majesty's order entrusting me with command of his Army of Portugal. I have already acquired a general understanding of the current situation; and, despite the army's disorder, its extreme fatigue, and the state of disorganization in which it finds itself, I would find it easy to fulfill the task the Emperor has assigned me, if the army were not entirely deprived of means of transport for artillery and supplies, and in a country where the long station of the army and the sieges of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida have destroyed all the livestock. However, His Majesty can be assured that everything humanly possible will be done, and that the interests of his service in this important circumstance, my duties to him, the need to justify the honorable choice of which I am the object, are much dearer to me than life. But Your Highness will allow me to set forth here my needs, based on the situation of things, and to request the assistance that is eminently necessary. Of the 4,200 horses that made up the army's artillery a year ago, 1400 remain today, and of this number only 400 can be harnessed, 4 or 500 will be able to do so in a short time; the rest will no longer exist in a fortnight. Your Highness will judge how difficult it is for me to make the army mobile; for after all, it needs cannons and shells to carry it. The Duke of Istria has given me 100 horses from the Guard artillery, and I appreciate this assistance; but I dare to beg His Majesty to grant me a greater number. The

horses of the Guard artillery are very close to here, and could be given to us, while others coming from France would replace them. The army artillery crew, for a good defense, should be increased to two thousand horses or mules. Without regular means of transport, it is impossible to move in a country that the war has devastated, that numerous bands constantly travel, where requisitions are extremely difficult to carry out. To renounce it would be to increase even more disorders that could have the most serious consequences. The army had three hundred crates of provisions when it entered the campaign, there are only thirty-four left. I earnestly request, for provisions, twelve to fifteen hundred pack mules, which could doubtless be promptly purchased in Bayonne. The English army has twelve thousand beasts of burden, either for the artillery or for provisions; thus, all movements are carried out with ease, and it is from Spain that they draw the greatest number.

The means of transport I request are calculated for defense; an offensive in the interior of Portugal would require almost double that.

The destruction of mules and horses that the Army of Portugal has just suffered is even less the result of the campaign itself than of the total absence of administration, which took place upon its return from Portugal, and which still exists.

Your Highness will learn with astonishment that not a single distribution has been made, either to the artillery horses or to those of the cavalry, since it has been on campaign. Also, the dragoon division, composed of six regiments, is reduced to 800 horses for service; the rest are unmountable. The light troops, with the exception of Fournier's brigade, which is in better condition, are reduced to nothing. The Lamotte Brigade, composed of the 3rd Hussars and the 15th Chasseurs, and which is the strongest in the army corps, currently has only 247 horses suitable for mounting. My first efforts were aimed at preventing the disease from spreading and at least preserving the existing horses; and the measures I am about to take will, I hope, fulfill this objective, the first and most important of all.

It is in the name of the glory of His Majesty's arms, in the name of the safety of his army, and to enable him to destroy his enemies, that I beg His Majesty to grant us the means of transport I request and which are absolutely necessary for us.

I have the honor to be, with respect, etc.

Signed: MARSHAL DUKE OF RAGUSA.

No. 71.

*Letter from General Sebastiani, commander of the Fourth
Corps, to Prince Berthier, Major General.*

Granada, 7 January 1811.

Monseigneur,

All is quiet from Marbella to Cape Gata; the enemy is making no movement.

The insurgent army of Murcia is nine thousand infantry and two thousand horses strong.

I had proposed to His Excellency the Duke of Dalmatia the expedition to Murcia and the siege of Cartagena; the season and circumstances are favorable, and the Fourth Corps is sufficient for this operation. We could also have facilitated, by this means, the operations of the Armies of Aragon and Catalonia. But the desire to create a diversion in favor of the Army of Portugal persuaded His Excellency the commander-in-chief of the Army of the South to besiege Badajoz, and this motive is surely decisive. It would have been desirable even if this diversion had been made two months earlier.

While waiting for the moment when we can march into the province of Murcia, I am assembling in Granada the siege equipment we will need.

I will have all the necessary artillery, minus a few mortars, which we can fire from Seville.

I have found a certain quantity of projectiles in Almeria, and I am currently establishing furnaces in Granada to cast bombs and cannonballs. The gunpowder mills I restored last year will provide us with the necessary quantities. Most of them have already been manufactured and are in our arsenal. Siege carriages are being built and will be completed in six weeks.

We are short of money. This province has provided considerable supplies. The army corps' pay will be completed until September. We haven't received a single penny from the treasury that arrived from France; everything was provided by the country's contributions; we even sent seven million reals to Seville.

The fortifications of Granada and Malaga are completed, and these two points are in a respectable state of defense. They are well armed and well supplied in every way.

The army's spirits are excellent. Its health is perfect; we have lost fewer to disease than we would have lost in cantonments in France.

Almost all the corps have received their clothing; their clothing and footwear are the only items that are suffering and require assistance.

By means of small extraordinary contributions imposed on the villages that receive the brigands, I am rebuilding our cavalry, which will retain as many horses as it has men.

Public spirit has greatly improved in the provinces of Malaga and Granada. With well-disciplined mobile columns, I have succeeded in destroying all the bands of brigands.

I can assure Your Serene Highness that this country is in the state His Imperial Majesty could desire. The vast majority of all classes are devoted to Him. His Majesty's decree on English goods has been executed with severity in the towns and villages of both provinces, and has produced the most positive effect, etc.....

Signed: HORACE SÉBASTIANI.

No. 72.

*Letter from General Count Belliard, Chief of Staff of the Army
of the Center, to Prince Berthier, Major General.*

Madrid, 3 June 1811.

Prince,

There is now a ferment in everyone's minds such as has perhaps never existed in Spain. The English, the leaders of the insurrection, are agitating in all directions and are using every possible means to bring about, either willingly or by force, a general uprising.

Everywhere, young people are being kidnapped, even men who have been married for three years and have no children and taken to the army. The other inhabitants are ordered to arm themselves in any way, either to defend their villages or to rise en masse by district, and to act according to the orders that may be given to them by the insurrection committee.

The organized corps are growing daily and gaining in strength; the same is true of the guerrilla bands that are truly swarming. They are battering and devastating the countryside; they are killing or cruelly mistreating the inhabitants who serve us or who are employed for the mail service. They have adopted the system of starving all our posts, forbidding villages from bringing them supplies, and threatening the mayors with hanging and even burning villages that do not comply with these orders. So that now, Prince, in order to exist, it is necessary almost everywhere to use force, and even wage war to make the villages pay what they owe in daily subsistence.

I have the honor, etc.

Signed: AUGUSTE BELLIARD.

No. 73.

*Letter from Marshal Bessières, Duke of Istria, to Prince
Berthier, Major General.*

Valladolid, 6 June 1811.

Monseigneur,

I have been writing to you for two months to inform you of the situation in this country. Whatever the reports received by the Emperor from different parts of Spain, it is nonetheless clear that I am telling the truth, and that things are the same everywhere. It is time to take a decisive step. The Army of the North is composed of forty-four thousand men, it is true; but if we gather twenty thousand, there will be no more communication, and the insurrection will make the greatest progress. The coast will be lost as far as Bilbao. We will lack everything, because it is with the greatest difficulty that we live from day to day. The spirit of this country is dreadful. The King's departure for Paris, the retreat of the Army of Portugal, and its march to the Tagus, the evacuation of the entire country, even Salamanca, all this is mounting to a point difficult to express. The bands are growing and recruiting at all points with the greatest activity.

I have had the honor of speaking to you in several of my letters about this state of affairs. I have nothing to reproach myself for, Monseigneur; I will never cease to speak to you about it; His Majesty's service requires it, his interests command it. In the meantime, I felt it my duty to prepare. I have ordered General Bonet to move towards Leon, guarding the Pajares Pass to threaten to attack anyone who might seek to debouch through Oviedo, along the coast, or into Castile.

I am sending a battalion and General Wathier's cavalry to Salamanca. I am assembling four regiments here. At the first signal, I will call out all the troops of the Guard, either to act against anyone who emerges against me, or to come to the aid of the Duke of Ragusa or Madrid. If I am forced to take this drastic step, communication will not be possible for some time. Vitoria, Burgos, and Valladolid are the only points I can hold. However, I will only raise the intermediate posts between these three points as a last resort.

I see with regret the time it will take me to assemble the troops, and the limited means I have to firmly hold Santander, which is, in all respects, a poor post that can only be defended by covering it with large numbers of troops.

My Lord, speak of Spain; the Emperor is being deceived. The pacification of the Peninsula no longer depends on a battle against the English. If the English are the stronger, they will either surrender it or receive it. If they are equal in number, they will refuse it, even more so if they are not the strongest. They will not give it up in the plains: if they lose it, they have Portugal as a retreat; and in Portugal, they see only their ships.

Everyone knows the vicious mode of our operations. Everyone agrees that we are too scattered. We occupy too much country; we use our resources profitlessly and needlessly; we cling to

dreams. Cadiz and Badajoz will swallow up all our resources: Cadiz, because it will not be taken; Badajoz, because an army is needed to support it. We must destroy the former and renounce the latter for the time being. We must tighten up, have strongholds for our stores and hospitals, and treat two-thirds of Spain as a vast battlefield, which a victory can give us or make us lose, until we have changed our system and there is a genuine desire to conquer and pacify Spain. We have no one on the coast from Barcelona to Vera; Valencia is the entrepôt of all the insurgents in the north and center, and we are laying siege to Cadiz! If I am mistaken in my calculations, and I still appear timid, you will remember that I am accustomed to calculating the odds; but that, whatever events may occur, I am then the most tenacious. The consequences of all this could be irreparable if nothing is changed in the current system.

We must hurry to send the King back to Madrid. His departure has caused a great deal of harm; it will be difficult to repair.

I send you my dreams; see in them only a passion for good.

I am, with respect, etc.

Signed: MARSHAL DUKE OF ISTRIA.

No. 74.

Order.

At the headquarters of Valladolid, 5 June 1811.

We, Marshal of the Empire, Duke of Istria, Colonel General of the Imperial Guard, Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Northern Spain;

Considering that the clemency measures by which we had hoped to bring the people back to submission and to ward off the evils that a longer resistance would bring, have only served to increase the audacity of the insurgents and partisans.

Considering that the measures of audacity must be all the more severe the longer they have been postponed, and that we only adopt them after being convinced that this is the only way to maintain tranquility in the country.

On the report of the Intendant General, we have decreed and do decree the following:

ARTICLE I. A list of all individuals who have left their homes and who do not live in areas occupied by French troops will be drawn up by the municipalities in the cities and the heads of justice in the villages.

ART. II. All these individuals will be required to return within one month, after which they will be deemed to be part of the insurgent bands, and all their property will be confiscated; all farmers or debtors, for whatever reason, are prohibited from freeing themselves anywhere other than into the hands of the administrators of the national domains.

ART. III. The fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, children, and nephews of these individuals are declared responsible, both with their property and their persons, for any act of brigandage committed by the insurgents against peaceful citizens or against their property.

ART. IV. If any resident is abducted from their home, three of the closest relatives of a brigand will be immediately arrested to serve as hostages; if this individual is put to death by the gangs, the hostages will be shot immediately and without trial.

ART. V. Any individual who is absent from his commune for more than eight days, from the date of publication of this decree, without permission, will be considered to have defected to the gangs; all his property will be sequestered and sold within three months; all relatives within the degree indicated in Article III will be arrested.

ART. VI. No resident may leave his commune without a passport, which will be issued for a limited period. This passport will only be issued upon the attestation of two persons domiciled in the commune, who will guarantee that, at the expiration of the period indicated on the passport, the bearer will have returned to his commune or will have provided proof of residence in the premises occupied by the French army. Otherwise, the two sureties will be arrested and imprisoned.

ART. VII. Every inhabitant of towns where there is a police commissioner shall be required to carry a security card.

ART. VIII. House searches shall be carried out, in accordance with the orders of the local commanders, at times they deem appropriate; any individual not in possession of their security card shall be arrested immediately and imprisoned; only public officials are exempt from this provision.

ART. IX. Those who have given asylum to an individual who does not possess either a passport or a security card shall also be arrested.

ART. X. Anyone convicted of having corresponded with bandits shall be punished by death.

ART. XI. It is forbidden to carry on any correspondence with the inhabitants of the countries occupied by the insurgents; those who receive letters from them must deliver them to the local commanders, or to the police commissioners in places where they are established.

ART. XII. Violation of the provisions of the preceding article shall be punishable by ten years' imprisonment.

ART. XIII. The governor-generals of the various governments, and the intendant-general, are responsible, each within their respective jurisdiction, for the execution of this decree, which shall be published, printed, and posted.

Signed: MARSHAL DUKE OF ISTRIA.

For H.E. the General-in-Chief, Auditor to the Council of State, Secretary General of the Government.

Signed: DE BROGLIE.

No. 75.

Order.

At the headquarters of Valladolid, 6 June 1811.

We, Marshal of the Empire, Duke of Istria, Colonel General of the Imperial Guard, General-in-Chief of the Army of Northern Spain.

Whereas the mayors and chief justices, by not pursuing the collection of taxes from their municipalities, expose the inhabitants to harsh measures that weigh even on those who would have been most diligent in paying their contributions; that therefore they must be primarily responsible for the consequences of their negligence;

Whereas a large number of clergymen, instead of exhorting the people to submission, urge them, on the contrary, to postpone obedience until they are compelled to do so by force; on the report of the Intendant General, we have decided and do decide the following:

ARTICLE I. Contributions shall be paid to the chief town of the partido every month in twelfths, each twelfth in half, namely the first half on the 15th of each month; the other half on the 30th.

ART. II. The decree by which we ordered that alcaldes and heads of justice could not be taken as hostages is revoked.

ART. III. The parish priests, alcaldes, justices, and clergy of each village are responsible for:

1°. The exact payment of contributions.

2°. The execution of orders given to the village by the intendants and by the authorities of the chief town of the partido, for the supply of food or transportation.

ART. IV. Any village that does not immediately execute the order it receives will be executed by military force.

ART. V. Any individual, regardless of profession, convicted of having induced the people to delay obeying laws, decrees, or orders from the competent authorities regarding the payment of contributions and requisitioned supplies, shall be arrested and brought before a military commission.

ART. VI. The governor generals, provincial commanders, and local commanders shall ensure the execution of this decree.

Signed: MARSHAL DUKE OF ISTRIA.

For His Excellency the General-in-Chief, Auditor to the Council of State, Secretary General of the Government.

Signed: DE BROGLIE.