

Translated by Greg Gorsuch
Part 8

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 1810

I

The treaty concluded in Vienna on 14 October 1809, between France and Austria, took away from the Spaniards and the English all hope of a powerful diversion in favor of the peninsula; on the contrary, war was going to turn on it with more vigor. Nearly one hundred and twenty thousand French troops were led on Spain: the Eighth Corps of the German army, with twenty-two thousand men and under the orders of General Junot; four reserve divisions formed in the cadre depots supplemented by an additional conscript levy; twelve provisional dragoon regiments, twenty gendarmes squadrons, and eight regiments of march of various cavalry bodies; a Neapolitan division; detachments of Polish, Italian, Berg and others troops. A large crew of siege artillery of nine hundred and fifty carts, including fifty forges, was directed on Burgos. Eighty-five engineer carts, responsible for twenty thousand tools, were gathered in Bayonne with seven companies of sappers or miners, as well as a brigade of forty engineering officers under the orders of General Rogniat. Twenty thousand men of the Imperial Guard marched from Orleans and Chartres to Bidasoa; and the Emperor, in his speech of opening to the legislative body, on 3 December, announced his presence beyond the Pyrenees. At the same time, to reduce the expenses caused by such great preparations, and according to this axiom that war must feed the war, he formed four major governments of the provinces of Biscay, Navarre, Aragon and Catalonia, to which he added more later of the governments of the provinces of Burgos, Valladolid and Salamanca. He ordered all the generals to use the country's resources for the maintenance of their troops. He then reduced the to two million per month the aide in money that France would have to provide to Spain for war costs. From January, when the campaign opened, almost all the corps had received the reinforcements intended for them. Their total effectives, which, at the end of 1809, was reduced to two hundred and twenty-six thousand men, including one hundred and sixty-one thousand present under arms, was brought to three hundred and sixty-six thousand men, of which about two hundred and eighty thousand could hold the countryside. On all points, the French troops resumed the offensive.

The defeat of the Spaniards in Ocaña, and the retreat of the English in Portugal, opened the South provinces to the French armies. King Joseph wanted to conquer it, hoping to find great

resources¹. Marshal Soult brings together for this object the First Corps, the Fourth, the Fifth, and the reserve division of General Dessolles, total about fifty thousand men. The Second Corps was to stay in the Tagus valley to cover Madrid and protect the flank of Marshal Soult.

General Aréizaga defended with thirty thousand Spaniards the mountains of the Sierra-Morena which cover Andalusia on the north side. The main passages had been fortified; and, in the country, we looked at these mountains as impassable. The Despeñasperros defile, which crosses the main road from Madrid to Seville, had been entrenched with the greatest care. Trenches and breastworks had been associated across the winding contours of this road, over a length of three leagues, and land mines (*fourneaux de mine*) had been prepared under the main passages to be crossed. Marshal Soult, who wanted to enter this same road, thought he had to threaten the Spanish line over an expanse of twenty leagues, in order to divide the enemy's attention. The First Corps, under the orders of Marshal Victor, brought itself to the right, towards Santa-Eufemia and Belalcázar. The Fourth Corps, commanded by General Sébastiani, extended to the left to Villanueva de Los Infantes. The Fifth Corps, under the orders of Marshal Mortier, and the reserve division of General Dessolles, were placed in the center, on the main road, in Santa-Cruz de Mudela, where King Joseph brought his headquarters. Marshal Soult began his attack on 20 January 20. Two divisions turned the entrenchments of Despeñasperros by the tops of the heights and opened the passage to the other troops. On the 21st, the vanguard of Marshal Mortier arrived in Andújar, and seized the Guadalquivir bridge. Marshal Victor, after pushing the Spanish to Belalcázar, headed on Cordoba. General Sébastiani, who experienced a little more difficulty on the left, nevertheless arrived almost at the same time as the other columns on the Guadalquivir, and occupied Úbeda.

The Spanish army, already reduced by half, fell back on Jaen and Granada. General Sébastiani was detached in pursuit. He reached her on 28 January around Alcalá la Real, dispersed it again, seized a convoy of thirty-two pieces of artillery, made a large number of prisoners, and entered the same day in Grenada. He then went to Malaga to finish subjugating the country. He seized this city on 5 February and took considerable equipment. His march towards the borders of Murcia was intended to unite, if it had been possible, with the Army of Aragon which was to advance on Valence at the same time.

On 28 January, King Joseph had his headquarters in Cordoba. That very day, Marshal Victor arrived in Carmona on the road to Seville, and Marshal Mortier was in Écija. On the 30th, the French troops appeared before Seville that the insurgents had covered with some earthworks. The greatest agitation reigned in this capital; an uprising took place against the Supreme Junta, which was dissolved; and, on 1 February, after two days of negotiations, the inhabitants submitted. In the city, stores were found in incalculable value, a huge amount of ammunition, two hundred and sixty cannon pieces, a magnificent foundry, and a powder factory in the best condition. The Spaniards had done almost nothing to warn of such a setback. They had such a great confidence in the obstacles presented by the mountains of Sierra-Morena, that they attributed to the extreme cowardice of their troops and the betrayal, the speed with which the French managed to cross them. Cadiz was also devoid of means of defense and would have fallen to the power of the French, if The Duke of Alburquerque who, from 22 January, had left Estremadura with nine thousand men, had not been brought to forced marches from Utrera in this

¹ See supporting documents, n ° 39

place, by Lebrija and Jerez. He arrived there on 3 February, enough in time to break the bridge of Zuazo on the Sancti-Petri canal, and stop there the vanguard of Marshal Victor who, the next morning, appeared for Chiclana. The Marshal Mortier could have immediately arrived in Écija, marching on Cadiz by Moron and Utrera, and ahead of the Duke of Alburquerque four days; but King Joseph, who awaited General Sébastiani's successes to go ahead, wanted to grab Seville first. It was a serious fault, because, marching on Cadiz, one could have seized at least from the Isla de León, which would have made much easier to take the city.

Thus, Andalusia was invaded in less than fifteen days². This conquest was, strictly speaking, only a military march, and did not cost more than two hundred men to the French army. It delivered him the richest country in Spain; but it paralyzed fifty thousand men with other things, when Lord Wellington peacefully founded the defensive system in Portugal that we should never have given him time to organize. King Joseph returned with his Guard to Madrid, where Marshal Jourdan resumed his functions as Major General. Marshal Soult remained responsible for the chief command of the Midi army. General Dessolles' reserve division occupied Cordoba and Jaen, from where it maintained communications with the troops confined in the La Mancha and in New Castile. General Sébastiani, with the Fourth Corps, covered Granada and Malaga against the debris of the Spanish army which had taken refuge in Murcia. Marshal Victor was responsible for blockading the ground, with the First Corps, the important city of Cadiz that had been left. The Provisional Regency, which had succeeded the Supreme Junta pending the general convocation of the Cortes, had been established in this city. It brought General Blake from Catalonia to command the Spanish troops; he received an English division, and thirty million francs which arrived from Mexico. These powers helped him to make new efforts to maintain war.

The Marshal Mortier went into Estremadura with the Fifth Corps, minus a detached brigade to form the garrison of Seville. Duke del Parque was chased to this province at the time of the Sierra-Morena attack, hoping that, meeting at the Duke of Alburquerque, he could, by the defile of Almaden, fall to the right of the First Corps, but it arrived too late. The Marquis de la Romana, who had replaced him in his command, was at the head of twenty-five thousand men. The Marshal Mortier chased the Spanish from the Guadiana valley, seized Mérida, threw a battalion in Olivenza that the enemy had abandoned, and came to camp on 12 February under the walls of Badajoz. It was very important to the army of the Midi to seize this city which allowed the Spanish, supported by the intact army of Lord Wellington, to constantly harass its communications and to stir up the fire of the insurrection up to the heart of the Kingdom; but Marshal Soult, first wishing the country he occupied to submit, did not rush to organize siege equipment. The Marshal Mortier, having stayed twenty-two days under the walls of Badajoz lacking food and having to wait a long time his big artillery, raised his camp on 3 March, evacuated Olivenza and withdrew to Zafra. Soon afterwards, a Spanish division, under the orders of General Contreras, came to post in Jerez de Los Caballeros to menace the main road of Seville, and all attempts made to flush it out of this position were useless. The massing which were formed at the same time on the border of Portugal threatened directly Seville, as well as the blockade of Cadiz; insurrections had broken out towards Granada and in the Mountains of Ronda; finally, the Spanish Army of Murcia, commanded by General Freire, made movements to take the offensive. All these circumstances persuaded the Marshal Mortier to withdraw on 9

² See supporting documents, n ° 40.

March on Seville, leaving only a strong advanced guard in Santa-Olalla to hold the main road. The Spanish divisions of Contreras and Ballesteros followed him and tried in the early days of April to force the defiles that led to Andalusia; but they were beaten in Elezena and Aracena. Ballesteros withdrew by the mountains in the county of Niebla. Marshal Mortier followed him there, beat him again and then returned to Seville. For his part, General Sébastiani advanced by Baza and Lorca against General Freire, commander of the Murcia army, and forced him to withdraw on Alicante. Our troops entered Murcia on 23 April, and pushed reconnaissance even under the walls of Cartagena, after which they returned to their cantonments under Granada.

As of 12 January, the Second Corps, having debouched by the Arzobispo bridge, had moved, with mountain artillery, from Talavera de La Reyna on Mérida, to cover the march of Marshal Soult on Andalusia, and contribute with the Fifth Corps to the Badajoz siege. After the retirement of the Marshal Mortier on Seville, the Second Corps, which General Reynier then commanded, concentrated in Trujillo. He was to cover Madrid by the Tagus valley, and oppose the English corps of General Hill, with thirteen thousand men, who had advanced from Abrantès towards Portalegre and Elvas, with the double purpose of protecting Badajoz and pressing the Spanish troops of the Marquis de la Romana. General Reynier occupied Mérida, whose castle he strengthened for the defense of the Guadiana bridge, and as a liaison point with the Fifth Corps. He covered his communications on the Tagus by posts established at the bridges of Almaraz and Arzobispo and had occupied by a brigade Plasencia on the right bank of the river, to observe the Spanish division of General La Carrera, which had remained in Coria on this same bank. He had several affairs against the troops of the Marquis de la Romana and often carried his incursions up to the walls of Badajoz.

In the province of Salamanca, Marshal Ney had taken up the command of the Sixth Corps, which had received numerous reinforcements, and observed the Anglo-Portuguese army posted behind the Côa. Hoping that the successes of the French armies in the plains of La Mancha and in Andalusia would persuade the garrison of Ciudad-Rodrigo to surrender, he presented himself under the walls of this place on 12 February, at the same time as the Marshal Mortier was acting before Badajoz. But the Governor of Ciudad-Rodrigo was resolved to defend himself, and the place was well supplied. Marshal Ney had to return to Salamanca to prepare his means of siege. He strengthened the line of the Tormes, to stop the English there, if they came to advance. The Saint-Vincent convent in Salamanca and the castle of Alba de Tormes were transformed into a campaign post, armed and supplied for a month. Already the old castles of Zamora, Toro and Tordesillas had been fortified for the defense of the Douro bridges.

In northern Spain, General Bonet left Santander at the end of January, with six thousand men, and advanced in the Asturias. On 2 February he occupied Oviedo, where he established his headquarters. At the same time, General Loison moved, with the First Reserve Division, from Valladolid to Léon, to threaten Galicia and support the movement of General Bonet in Asturias. He presented himself, on 11 February, before the important post of Astorga, that Marshal Ney, in his movement on Talavera, had abandoned to the Spanish. The governor having refused to open his gates, and a Spanish division under the orders of General Garcia having taken a position at Villafranca behind this place, General Loison had to withdraw on the Órbigo. As a result of this retreat, General Mahy, Governor of Galicia, no longer fearing for this province, brought new forces in Asturias, and forced French troops to evacuate Oviedo. A new victory allowed General

Bonet to reoccupy this city; but, after having had at Grado, on 19 March, a general affair against very superior forces, and being without ammunition, surrounded by all sides, he retired on the Sella. Soon afterwards, having received reinforcements, he resumed the offensive, put the enemy rout on 26 March, returned to Oviedo and followed the Spaniards to Tineo.

On 14 February, General Junot, Duke of Abrantès, arrived in Valladolid with the Eighth Corps, with around thirty thousand men, including six thousand cavalry. He had to occupy the Kingdom of Leon, support General Bonet in the Asturias, and meet with the Sixth Corps in the event that the English had advanced to Salamanca. General Loison headed with his division towards Toro and Zamora, to strengthen the Sixth Corps, which was thus brought to twenty-eight thousand men. General Clauzel replaced General Loison on Órbigo, with the First Division of the Eighth Corps, and was responsible for besieging Astorga, to remove to the enemy this point of support and make in favor of General Bonet a diversion on the side of Galicia. (*See the relating of this siege, Volume III.*)

In Biscay and Navarre, the General Seras, commanding a rear-guard division newly entering Spain, and General Dufour, Governor of Pamplona, maintained communications, despite the efforts made by the Supreme Junta to take the country and shake up the loyalty of the French soldier³.

In the Aragon, the Third Corps had been brought in January to twenty-two thousand men. General Suchet, who commanded it, had received the Emperor's order to prepare for the attack on the towns of the lower Ebro, which alone could decide the submission of Lower Catalonia, when King Joseph, marching on the Andalusia, ordered him, on 15 February, to advance to Valence to support his movement, hoping that this city would open its gates with the approaching French army. General Suchet set off from Teruel with twelve thousand men; and, after having repressed the vanguard of the Army of Valencia which had entrenched itself on the Mijares, he arrived on 4 March before Valencia. After five days of unnecessary efforts, he had lost all hope of making himself master of this city other than by a siege; having also received the repeated order of the Emperor from 1 March to besiege Lerida and Mequinenza, he returned to Zaragoza on 17 March to make his preparations. (*See the relating of these two sites, Volume III.*)

In Catalonia, Marshal Augereau had succeeded General Gouvion Saint-Cyr in the command of the Seventh Corps. His army, which had suffered a lot during the seat of Girona, had to be reinforced by a Neapolitan Division under the orders of Prince Pignatelli, and by numerous detachments of French, Italian and Berg troops. He received food from France and was supported along the coast by around twenty gunboats who were armed in Port-Vendres to protect the shipments of trade in Barcelona. Marshal Augereau, hoping to subdue the country by terror, hanged all the peasants who were taken with arms in hand⁴. More animated by their successes than tamed by this severity, the Catalans became cruel in their revenge; all humanity disappeared from this unfortunate region. Girona succumbed on 10 December. This conquest put the Seventh Corps in a favorable situation by giving it a good point of support, and by opening up the main road from France, if necessary to continue its operations. Profiting from this advantage, the Marshal Augereau dispersed a mass levy that Blake had made to come to the aid of Girona.

³ See supporting documents, n° 41.

⁴ See supporting documents, n° 42.

On 12 January, he beat at the pass of the Espinas the Spanish army, made him lose three thousand men, including eight hundred prisoners, and forced him to retire to Tarragona. He immediately set out able to communicate with Barcelona; but not being able to go there by the sea road, where the enemy had made deep entrenchments, he headed by the old road defended by the Château d'Hostalrich. This castle was in an indisputable position; Marshal Augereau was content to have it blockaded by the Italian Division, which was protected by the Souham Division posted under observation at Vic. After having opened a path of a league and a half to avoid the cannon of the castle, he himself led a convoy to Barcelona where he entered on 24 January. Already General Duhesme, Governor of this city, having wanted to support the entry of the convoy he was waiting for, had detached Colonel Guerry with three battalions and five squadrons of cuirassiers on the road from Granollers to Vic; but these troops having been surprised, on the 21st, in Santa Perpètua and in Mollet, by a Spanish division, had been partly destroyed. Marshal Augereau, fearing to compromise the blockade of Hostalrich while standing too far from this place, left Barcelona on 1 February, and returned to Girona, where he made new efforts to obtain subsistence that his army lacked.

Henry O'Donnell had replaced Blake in the command of the Spanish Army of Catalonia. This General, already renamed by his activity and by his audacity, thought he could take advantage of the isolation in which the Souham Division was, camped in the plain of Vic, to surround and crush it, then hoping to easily clear the garrison of Hostalrich. He therefore advanced from Moya on 20 February, with fifteen thousand men, to attack the General Souham, while several columns of miquelets made a diversion on the camps around Hostalrich and on the last of the French army towards Bàscara. But, although three times more numerous, the Spanish, after a bloody fight, were pushed back with a loss of seven thousand men killed, injured or prisoners, and part of their luggage. This action demonstrated the greatest honor to the Souham Division.

In March, the Marshal Augereau, having been joined by the reinforcements which had been announced to him, recovered the order of the Emperor to get closer to the Ebro, to cover the sieges of Lerida and Mequinenza that the General Suchet had to undertake. He advanced on 28 March up to Reus and established two divisions under the orders of General Severoli, leaving only a brigade in Manresa and an infantry battalion in Villafranca, to ensure communications with Barcelona, where he took his headquarters. O'Donnell, who, at the first movement of the French army, fell back on Tarragona, took advantage of the isolation in which the post of Villafranca was to take it on 3 April. He then headed for General Schwartz's brigade, left recklessly in Manresa, and put it to rout. The Marshal Augereau, then fearing to see the Spanish army getting closer to Hostalrich, whose garrison, still blockaded, was ready to go, immediately fell back on Girona. O'Donnell followed him; but he lost his advanced guard by wanting to push French troops too strongly. So, he returned to his march to rescue Lerida, whose investment had barely started. General Suchet marched to him, completely beat him at Margalef, and forced him to take refuge in Tarragona.

After four months of blockade, the garrison of Hostalrich had consumed its food, and no longer hoped to be rescued. On the night of 12 May, it made a sortie to escape. Already it had gone past the French outposts, when the blockade troops ran to arms, and pursued it with such promptness that they took the Governor and his staff, ten officers, three hundred soldiers and a flag; nevertheless, eight hundred men managed to gain Tarragona. At the same time, the Fort de

Las Medes, located at sea towards the mouth of the Fluvià, and whose occupation was important for coastal trade, fell to Prince Pignatelli, who had besieged it with the Neapolitan troops.

However, the hasty retirement of Marshal Augereau on Girona, and the advantages he had let the enemy take by too much dispersion of his troops, persuaded the Emperor to replace him with Marshal Macdonald, who, at the end of May, came to command the Seventh Corps and receive specific instructions for its operations⁵.

⁵ See supporting documents, n° 43.

No. 39.

Letter from Prince Berthier, Major General, to King Joseph.

Paris, 31 January 1810.

Sire,

The Emperor orders me to send back to Spain the aide-de-camp of Your Majesty, Mr. de Clermont-Tonnerre, to inform Your Majesty of his intentions regarding the expedition to Andalusia.

1° In marching on Seville and Cadiz, the Emperor thinks that care must be taken to lead the necessary siege crews; because if the enemy knows that we do not have the means to bombard or mine him, this could increase his resistance.

2 ° It must be foreseen that the English may march on Talavera to create a diversion; the Emperor therefore judges that it is appropriate to leave the Fifth Army Corps, which is composed of our best troops, to be opposed to the English, and to place all the small corps charged with guarding communications with Madrid under the orders of the commander of the Fifth Corps, so that he is able to reunite them and oppose the enterprises of the English. This corps will be able to move to Alcántara and as far as the borders of Portugal, to scout the movements of the English and correspond with Marshal Duke of Elchingen, commanding the Sixth Army Corps.

3° If the English do not make the move to march on Madrid to create a diversion, they can move to Salamanca; and, in this case, the Sixth Corps will be reinforced by the Loison Division, the Eighth Corps, and by twelve thousand men of cavalry who would make any operation in the plain impossible.

4° If the corps that will be opposed to the English is not strongly constituted, if the corps between the Sierra-Morena and Madrid are not under the same command, if the English conceive the hope of making an offensive movement, this will encourage the resistance of Cadiz. The least retrograde movement of one of the corps of the expedition of Andalusia would be contrary to all military idea, would embolden the insurrection and discourage the French army: it is therefore necessary to send to Andalusia only the necessary troops; because, in this operation, it is necessary to foresee the diversion of the English.

5° His Majesty has not been entirely satisfied with the projects that have been submitted to him; he does not find that they present strong enough plans. The Emperor considers that there are only the English are dangerous in Spain; that the rest are only rabble who can never hold out in the field; that the communication of Lisbon with Seville and Cadiz is very prompt, and that, if we leave too weak a corps on the Tagus, we risk compromising the operation.

I beg Your Majesty to accept the homage of my respect.

Signed: ALEXANDRE.

No. 40.

General Order of the army, given by His Catholic Majesty.

At the Royal camp of Seville, 1 February 1810.

Soldiers,

The war that the Emperor has just ended so gloriously with Austria, had revived the hopes of the English cabinet. His armies disembarked in Spain were to conquer Madrid, and operate a powerful diversion; but, stopped at Talavera, they no longer dared to show themselves.

Abandoned by their supposed allies, the troops of the insurrection attempted a last effort at the time of the pacification of Vienna: Ocaña confounded their insane projects; you saw in them only misguided brothers thrown into the precipice by a common enemy; you wanted to save them; I received them like children. Frenchmen, this memory will never abandon me; I will reign over Spain, but France will always live in my heart.

The barriers that nature has placed between the north and the south of Spain have fallen; you have found only friends on this side of the Sierra Morena; Jaen, Cordoba, Granada, Seville, have opened their gates; you have traveled through these provinces with the spirit of peace and order that you would have brought to the heart of Languedoc and Burgundy. The good reception of the inhabitants, the abundance, the peace, have been the results of your conduct.

Soldiers of Talavera, Almonacid, Arzobispo, Ocaña, Sierra Morena, how can I show you what I owe you?

I remind you of your own conduct.

The Emperor will know it.

The King of Spain wishes that between the Pillars of Hercules a third column should rise, which will bring to the most distant posterity and to the navigators of both worlds the knowledge of the leaders and corps who have repelled the English, saved thirty thousand Spaniards, pacified ancient Baetica, and reconquered for France its natural allies.

Signed: JOSEPH.

For amplification, the Division General, aide-Major General.

Signed: DAULTANNE.

No. 41.

Advice from the peoples of Europe to the French army.

French soldiers,

The mask has fallen, the prestige is dissipating; the very terror that your astonishing successes inspired has vanished; the peoples of Europe feel their strength, they no longer fear you.

We know our rights, these imprescriptible rights of nations, founded on immutable justice, confirmed by all divine and human laws; we claim them, we take up arms to defend them, and we will not lay them down until we are in peaceful possession of all that is dearer to us than life.

Your tyrant has attacked them all, violated them all, these precious rights, religion, property, sovereignty, liberty. These sacred words are in his mouth like the word justice in that of demons: he has profaned everything, soiled everything, upset everything. The measure is full, the time for vengeance has arrived. His trickery, his artifices will no longer deceive anyone; his unheard-of crimes only excite one interest: that of purging the earth of the enemy of the human race.

All rivalry ceases at the sight of the common danger; the different peoples of Europe, English, Germans, Prussians, Spanish, Portuguese, etc., etc., form only one family. Too long victims of the monster who made you his slaves, we have no other thought than that of putting an end to his devastations, and of stopping the course of his bloody expeditions.

French soldiers, will you still lend your arms to defend the most odious and the most hated of tyrants? Are you not yourselves victims of his ambition, of his ferocity? Is there any kind of happiness that he has not robbed you of? Is not the soil of Germany, Spain and Portugal covered with the corpses of your brothers? Does not this execrable despot still burden with irons the remaining young people in your families to lead them to the slaughter? Do you want the last drop of French blood to be shed to maintain or to raise on thrones vile characters who should be led to the scaffold?

French soldiers, open your eyes to your dearest interests, take back the rights that were taken from you to make such cruel use of them! A single cry from you will suffice to calm the storm. Proclaim your legitimate king! He is near you; he is only waiting for a signal to fly to your aid; he is worthy of commanding you. Religion, talents, courage, kindness, are the virtues that adorn his heart and his mind; he only lacks the opportunity to deserve your admiration and your love. We all have our eyes on him as on the benevolent star that must ward off the storm. We repeat to you, dare to proclaim it, and peace reigns in the universe.

The olive branch in one hand and the sword in the other, we await your final resolutions; reflect on the party that remains for you to take.

By continuing to fight for the tyrant oppressor of your country, destroyer of all civil and religious order, persecutor of the religion of your fathers, the scourge of the human race, you associate

yourself with all his crimes, you rivet the chains with which he charges you, you renounce the glorious reputation that your ancestors have made for themselves, you become the enemies of all the peoples of the earth.

By abandoning this monster to the fate it deserves, you erase, as much as possible, the stain that the most detestable of revolutions imprints on the French name; you conquer your liberty, you resume your rank among civilized nations, you participate in the great regeneration that is being prepared, you become worthy again of the sincere alliance of your neighbors.

Choose then between crime and virtue, between slavery and liberty, between infamy and glory, between hatred and the friendship of all peoples.

French soldiers, who point your bayonets against the brave peoples of Germany, Spain and Portugal, and you who are still left in France to contain the just hatred of your fellow citizens, or to load with irons the unfortunate conscripts that the tyrant wants to sacrifice again to prolong the disorders, tear to pieces these eagles that have been given to you as ensigns, they can only be supported by plunder; raise this white flag under which the good Frenchmen your ancestors gathered! it is without stain, this beautiful flag; the tigers will flee at its sight; and the name of Louis XVIII, repeated by the echoes and more terrible than lightning for the enemies of order and virtue, will make them return to the dust from which they came.

No. 42.

*Proclamation of Marshal Augereau, Duke of Castiglione,
commander of the Seventh Corps.*

Fornells, 28 December 1809.

Catalans,

Girona capitulated on the 10th; the French took possession of it on the 11th. The Spanish garrison, six thousand strong, surrendered to France as prisoners of war.

This city, once so unfortunate, was treated with all the clemency and humanity worthy of the generous heart of the victor.

Catalans, I repeat to you, shrewd men are misleading you and making you the victims of their perfidies.

You have just taken up arms against the French army, you will be punished for it. All misfortunes will now fall upon you.

Any man caught with arms in hand, twenty-four hours after the publication of this proclamation, will be hanged without further trial, as a highwayman. The house where he resists will be burned; everything there will suffer the same fate.

The men who armed you know well that you cannot resist the victorious French army. What then do you have to hope for? death, or a pardon, if you lay down your arms and return to your homes, to peacefully enjoy peace among your families. There, you will be the object of my dearest solitudes, and my greatest happiness will be to make you happy.

Those who remain in obedience will find near me, near my generals and the corregidors of Figueres and Girona, help, protection and safety.

Signed: AUGEREAU.

No. 43.

*Instruction from Prince Berthier, Major General, addressed
to Marshal Macdonald, Duke of Taranto, commander
of the Seventh Corps in Catalonia.*

Paris, 2 May 1810.

In the month of April 1809, General Gouvion Saint-Cyr, commander-in-chief of the Seventh Corps of the Army of Spain, after having been stationed for some time in the vicinity of Tarragona, saw himself obliged, for lack of provisions, to return successively to the Llobregat, then to Barcelona, shortly after to Vic, and finally near Girona, where he established himself in order to cover the siege of this place, which was invested in the month of May by the division of General Verdier.

The Emperor, dissatisfied with the retrograde movements of General Gouvion Saint-Cyr, and with the lack of zeal he showed in seconding General Verdier in the siege of Girona, appointed, in the month of June last, Marshal Duke of Castiglione to the command of the Seventh Corps of the Army of Spain; and the Marshal was to leave for Catalonia, and on June 17th he was sent instructions in accordance with His Majesty's orders. The Emperor's intention was that the Duke of Castiglione should proceed with his corps to the Ebro, to establish himself there in such a way as to link up with General Suchet on his right and to support his left on the sea. This arrangement provided the entire course of the Ebro for a line of defense; it formed a base of operations for the Grand Army, which extended from the Ocean to the Mediterranean, and behind which the insurrection could be destroyed, the country organized, and all its resources taken advantage of. The siege of Girona, undertaken at this time, was moreover the first operation to be completed, and the Duke of Castiglione was to devote all his attention to it.

The Marshal, having arrived at Perpignan, was unfortunately detained there for nearly four months by a serious illness, and General Saint-Cyr retained command of the Seventh Corps. An assault made on 19 September at Girona and repelled as a result of the bad dispositions adopted to attempt it, caused the siege to be converted into a blockade, until the arrival of the Duke of Castiglione, which took place on 12 October. The siege was resumed some time later, and the city capitulated on 10 December.

As soon as the Emperor learned of the capture of Girona, he ordered the Duke of Castiglione to go to Barcelona to lift the blockade of the city and supply it. At the same time, he was to take measures to ensure communications with France, and with this in mind, to seize the fort of Hostalrich. But before receiving these orders, the Marshal learned that a mass levy of the inhabitants of Catalonia, provoked by General Blake for the liberation of Girona, was spreading throughout the province, and was seeking to intercept his communications. From then on, it was necessary to deal with destroying this new enemy, and the Duke of Castiglione, obliged to maneuver against him, soon obtained notable success. This operation took time and employed a lot of men; so the Marshal was only able to leave on 22 January to go to Barcelona. The town of Hostalrich was taken, and it was necessary to be content with blockading its castle. The Duke of Castiglione, having arrived in Barcelona on the 24th, brought there a convoy of oxen and money, and left on the 1st of February for Girona, where the Marshal received a few days later an order from the Emperor, which I addressed to him on the 23rd of January, urging him to go to Barcelona and take Hostalrich. The Marshal, who arrived from Barcelona, took care, before returning there, to cleanse the country of the bands of insurgents who infested it; and several weeks were spent in detailed affairs, among which that of the 21st of February is cited as the most fortunate. On March 1st, the Marshal wrote that he was waiting for the reinforcements that had been announced to him, to move on Barcelona, and pursue the enemy as far as Tarragona and Lerida. On March 14th, the divisions destined for this expedition marched, and on the 18th, they were reunited on the Llobregat, and then moved on Tarragona, which they surrounded on the 27th. Communication was even made via Mora with the troops of General Suchet, in accordance with what had been prescribed by the Emperor; but on the 31st, it was learned that the enemy had landed, in the rear of the army, a corps of six thousand men; and, as they were already without any means of subsistence, the army corps was ordered to fall back, and it came to reunite on the 14th under Girona, where it is today.

The Emperor, dissatisfied with this retreat, judged that Marshal Duke of Castiglione, instead of remaining in person at Barcelona, should have put himself at the head of his troops, swept everything before him, and gone to get provisions in the plain of Lerida. The Emperor complains that Duke of Castiglione returned when he still had enemies to fight, and His Majesty now wants us to move forward, to supply Barcelona, to defeat the enemy, and to obtain provisions, which are abundant in the plains between Lerida and Tarragona. The Emperor recommends above all energy and movement as the only means of obtaining success.

In all that has happened in Catalonia for a whole year, we constantly see the same causes leading to the same results. Three times the army has advanced as far as the environs of Tarragona, and three times it has been obliged to retreat without fighting, as much by the difficulty of subsisting as by the worries that the enemy gave to the rear of the army.

Indeed, as soon as one advances, the line of communication becomes longer, more difficult to keep, more exposed to the attacks of the insurgents; and the army, weakened by numerous detachments, no longer has sufficient forces against men whom it is not enough to defeat in order to conquer them, since it is also necessary to contain them constantly, and to guard the country at all points.

It results from these observations, that communications with France are one of the first objects which must attract the attention of the general in chief. One cannot, before having assured them, think of the execution of the orders of the Emperor; it is even the only way to fulfill his intentions, because it is useless, or even harmful to our successes, not to be able to move forward, without being obliged to constantly retrograde. If the very country that the Emperor believes to be very abundant, because it is very fertile, finds itself today devoid of resources, it is certain that one could only hope for them from France, and that it is necessary at all costs to maintain communications. Points entrenched from distance to distance and properly guarded, mobile columns well directed and always on the move, detailed measures to consolidate the internal organization of the country, reestablish order there and win the affection of the inhabitants by measures of mildness or severity, according to the conveniences of the moment, are in general the means which can lead to the goal; but their use must be regulated on the spot according to the localities and the circumstances. Assured from then on of its relating with France, and free from worry for its rear as for its subsistence, the army will be able to move forward, take Tarragona, give a hand to General Suchet, and favor the siege of Lerida. It is thus that the commander-in-chief will be able to execute the orders of the Emperor, supply Barcelona, complete the conquest of Catalonia, and finish, after having subdued it, by establishing a regular administration there, and assure tranquility there.

Finally, as the Emperor wanted to spare for the needs of the army of Catalonia all the resources that the country can provide, and that moreover the geographical position of this province isolates it from the theater of war in the south of Spain, one must not have or allow communication with Madrid, and Mr. Marshal must act in Catalonia, in this regard as in all others, with the idea that the Emperor wants to reunite this province with France.

I will end by reminding Mr. the Duke of Tarente that Barcelona has provisions only until the end of May, and that consequently the most pressing operation at this moment is to resupply this place. The first care must therefore be given to this important object, which I recommend in the most urgent manner to his activity, his zeal and his devotion for the service of the Emperor.

Signed: ALEXANDRE.