SOME NEW BOOKS.

Oman's Peninsular War.

In a volume of 650 pages, Prof. CHARLES OMAN presents the second installment of his *History of the Peninsular War* (Oxford; the Clarendon Press). In a notice of the first volume of this work, we pointed out that it not only invites, but successfully withstands, comparison with Napier's celebrated narrative. The story of the long and memorable conflict between the English, Spanish and Portuguese levies on the one hand and the armies of Napoleon on the other needed to be rewritten, because a vast amount of material not accessible when Col. Napier wrote is now obtainable, not only from British, Spanish and Portuguese, but also from French sources. Moreover, although there was something chivalrous in the attitude maintained by Napier toward Napoleon and his Marshals, there is reason to believe that, in some instances, his judgment of their conduct was too favorable. On the other hand, his criticism of England's Spanish and Portuguese allies erred on the side of severity. Prof. Oman, for his part, has tried to be scrupulously just to all parties engaged in the protracted contest, and, to that end, he has imposed upon himself an immense, not to say exhaustive, amount of patient research. The very size of the volume before us, not a page of which could well be spared, attests an unflinching purpose to tell the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The first volume, it may be remembered, ended with the retreat of Sir John Moore, and with his death at Corunna. The second volume carries us from the beginning of 1809 to the close of the Talavera campaign, in August of the same year. It may seem at the first glance surprising that 650 pages should be needed for a review of the events of about six months. The surprise vanishes when we note the causes to which the bulk of the present volume is attributable. The first of these causes is that a far larger number of original sources of information, both printed and unprinted, are available for the campaigns of 1809 than for those of 1808. The second cause is that the Peninsular War, in its second year, had lost the character of comparative unity which it had possessed in its first. Napoleon, on quitting Spain in January, 1809, left behind him, as a legacy to his brother Joseph, a comprehensive plan for the conquest of the whole Iberian Peninsula. That plan, however, had proved from the first impracticable, and, when it had miscarried, the fighting in every region of the theatre of war became local and isolated. Neither the harassed and distracted French King at Madrid, nor the impotent Spanish Junta at Seville, knew how to combine and to coördinate the operations of their various armies into a single logical scheme. Ere long, six or seven campaigns were taking place simultaneously in different corners of the Peninsula, each of which was practically independent of the others. Every French and Spanish General fought for his own hand, paying little heed to what his colleagues were doing. Their only unanimity was that all alike kept urging on their central governments the plea that their own particular section of the war was more critical and important than any other.

If, for example, we look at the month of May, 1809, we find that the following six disconnected series of operations were all in progress at once, and that each has to be treated as a separate unit, rather than as a part of one great general scheme of strategy; first, Soult's campaign against Wellesley in Northern Portugal; second, Ney's invasion of the Asturias; third, Victor's and Cuesta's movements in Estremadura; fourth, Sebastiani's demonstrations against Venegas in La Mancha; fifth, Suchet's contest with Blake in Aragon; and, sixth, St. Cyr's attempt to subdue Catalonia. Obviously, when a war has broken up into so many fractions, it becomes, not only hard to follow, but imposes length upon the narrative. Fortunately for the historian and the student, a certain amount of unity is restored in July, 1809, owing mainly to the fact that the master mind of Wellesley has been brought to bear upon the situation. When the British General attempted to combine with the Spanish armies of Estremadura and La Mancha for a common march upon Madrid, the whole of the hostile forces in the Peninsula (with the exception of those in Aragon and Catalonia) were once more drawn into a single scheme of operation. Hence the Talavera campaign is the central fact in the annals of the Peninsular War for the year 1809, for which reason it will not be thought that Prof. Oman has allotted a disproportionate amount of space to the setting forth and discussion of the various problems which it involved.

The thoroughness of the author's investigations is exemplified in the account of the Battle of Talavera, with which the present volume ends. The details of that action have engaged his special attention. He thought it worth while to go very carefully over the battlefield, which at this day remains much as it was in 1809. The author's walk around it explained many difficulties encountered in the documentary authorities, but suggested certain others which Prof. Oman has done his best to solve. In several other chapters of this volume an inspection of certain localities produced valuable results. At Oporto, for instance, our author found that Wellesley's passage of the Douro assumed a new aspect when it was studied on the spot. Not one of the previous historians who have dealt with this achievement has taken the trouble to mention that the crossing was effected at a point where the Douro runs between lofty and precipitous cliffs towering nearly 200 feet above the water's edge! Yet this simple fact explains how it came to pass that the passage was effected at all. The French on the plateau above the river could not see what was going on at the bottom of the deeply sunk gorge, which lies in a "dead angle" to any observer who has not come forward to the very edge of the cliff. Prof. Oman has inserted in the present book a photograph of the spot which elucidates the situation at a glance. From Napier's narrative and plan, one is forced to conclude that he had either never seen the ground or had forgotten its aspect after the lapse of years.

In this notice of Prof. Oman's second volume, we shall mark the outcome of each of the six campaigns that took place during the first half of 1809, and then point out the conclusion reached by Wellesley in August of that year with regard to the possibility of defending Spain after Napoleon, having brought the war against Austria to a triumphant close, was at liberty to employ his whole strength in the Peninsula.

I.

It will be convenient to begin with the campaign in Catalonia, and to look next at the operations in Aragon, La Mancha and Estremadura, and then to recall the movements of Ney in Galicia and the Asturias, before dwelling on Soult's expulsion from Portugal by Wellesley, and the latter's encounter with Victor at Talavera. By way of preface, however, we should say that light will be thrown on every feature of the contest if we keep continually in mind the exceptional character of the Peninsular War. The war in which Napoleon found himself involved in Spain differed fundamentally from any in which he had previously engaged. This difference he long failed to understand, and, consequently, it upset his calculations. He imagined that, in dealing with Spain, he might act as if he were dealing with Austria or Prussia—indeed, that he had an enormous extra advantage in the fact that the armies of Ferdinand VII. were inferior in fighting power to those of Francis II. or Frederick III. By all the ordinary rules of modern warfare a nation whose capital had been occupied, and whose regular armies had been routed and half destroyed ought to have submitted without further trouble. The Emperor was a little surprised that the effect of the successes gained at Espinosa and Gamonal, at Tudela and Ucles, had not been greater. He had almost expected to receive overtures from the Junta asking for terms of submission. But, somewhat disappointed though he might be at the close of 1808, he had not yet realized that Spain was not as are other countries. The occupation of Madrid counted for little or nothing. The insurrectionary armies, when driven into a corner, did not capitulate, but dispersed, and fled in small parties over the hills, to reunite on the first opportunity. Large captures of Spaniards only took place on the actual battlefield (as at Ucles or at Ocaña), or when an army had shut itself up in a fortress and could not get away, as happened at Saragossa and Badajoz.

Nor was this all. In Italy, Germany and Austria, Bonaparte had dealt with regions where the population remained quiescent when once the regular army had been beaten. Risings like that of Verona in 1797, or of the Tyrol in 1805, were exceptional. The French army had been wont to go forward without being forced to leave large garrisons behind it to hold down the conquered countryside. A battalion or two placed in the chief towns sufficed to secure the communication of the army with France. Small parties, or even single officers bearing despatches could ride safely for many miles through an Italian or Austrian district without being molested. It was not thus in Spain. The Emperor was to find that every village where there was not a French garrison would be a focus of active resistance, and that no amount of shooting or hanging would cow the spirits of the peasantry. It was only after scores of aides-de-camp had been murdered or captured, and after countless small detachments had been destroyed, that he came to realize that every foot of Spanish soil must not only be conquered, but also held down. If there was a square of ten miles unoccupied, a guerrilla band arose in it. If a district thirty miles long lacked a brigade to garrison it, a local junta with a ragged apology for an army promptly appeared. Three hundred thousand men—during the first half of 1809 the French had in Spain 288,000 effectives, notwithstanding the departure of the Imperial Guard—look a large force on paper, but, when they have to hold down a country five hundred miles broad, they are frittered away to nothing. This Great Britain now knows well enough from her recent South African experience, but it was not a common matter of knowledge in 1809. If the Emperor had been told on the day of his entry into Madrid that even three years later his communication with Bayonne would only be preserved by the maintenance of a fortified post at every tenth milestone, he would have laughed the idea to scorn. Still more ridiculous would it have appeared to him if he had been told that it would take a body of three hundred horse to carry a despatch from Salamanca to Saragossa, or that the normal garrison of Old Castile would have to be kept at 15,000 men, even when there was no regular Spanish army nearer to it than Oviedo or Astorga. In short, he, and all Europe, had much to learn as to the conditions of warfare in the Peninsula. If he had realized them in March, 1808, there would have been no treachery at Bayonne, and the "running sore," as he afterward called the Spanish War, would never have broken forth.

II.

In the early days of September, 1808, the situation of the invaders in Catalonia had been most perilous. After the disastrous failure of the second siege of Gerona by the French, Gen. Reillé had withdrawn to Figueras, close to the French frontier, while Gen. Duhesne had cut his way back to Barcelona, after sacrificing all his artillery and his baggage on the way. Both commanders reported to the Emperor that there was need for ample reënforcements of veteran troops, or a catastrophe must ensue. The Spaniards, on their part, however, failed to use their opportunity. They let the autumn months slip by without striking at the two isolated French forces in Catalonia. Two courses were open to them, for they had upward of 30,000 men at their disposal, and large reënforcements were at hand. They might have turned their main army against Barcelona, and undertaken to besiege, instead of merely to blockade Duhesne; or they might have left a mere cordon around him, and have sent all their best troops to join the levies of the North, and sweep Reillé across the Pyrénées. As a matter of fact, they attempted neither operation until the opportunities were lost. They confined themselves to an investment of Barcelona and left Reillé undisturbed. Meanwhile the French, entirely unopposed on the line of the Pyrénées, were getting together a formidable host for the relief of Barcelona. When he had recognized that Reillé's extemporized army was insufficient alike in quantity and quality for the task before it, the Emperor directed on Perpignon two strong divisions of the army of Italy, one composed of ten French battalions, and the other of thirteen Italian battalions, the whole constituting a force of 25,000 veterans.

The officer placed in command of this army, which crossed the Pyrénées on Nov. 5, 1808, was Gen. Gouvion St. Cyr, who afterward won his Marshal's bâton in the Russian War of 1812. The qualities of this commander are defined with characteristic incisiveness and candor. He was, says Prof. Oman, "a General of first-rate ability, who had served all through the wars of the Revolution with marked distinction; but he disliked Bonaparte and had not the art to hide the fact. This had kept him back from earlier promotion. St. Cyr was by no means an amiable character; he was detested by his officers and his troops as a confirmed grumbler, and selfish to an incredible degree. He was one of those men who can always show admirable and convincing reasons for not helping their neighbors. From his morose bearing and his dislike for company he got the nickname of '*le hibou*.' He was cautious, cool-headed and ready of resource, so that his troops had full confidence in him, though he never commanded their liking. Even from his history of the Catalonian war one can gather the character of the man. It is admirably lucid and illustrated with original documents, Spanish no less than French, in a fashion only too rare among the military books of the soldiers of the Empire. But it is not only entirely self-centred, but full of malevolent insinuations concerning Napoleon and the author's colleagues. In his first chapter he broaches the extraordinary theory that Napoleon handed over sources, money or transport, in order that he might make a fiasco of the campaign and ruin his reputation. There was, of course, no ground for the General's suspicions of his master. No doubt Napoleon disliked St. Cyr, but he did not want to see the campaign of Catalonia end in disaster. He gave the new General, as we have seen, a fine French division of veteran troops and picked regiments of the Italian army. As the event proved, they were entirely adequate for the work they had to do. Within a few months St. Cyr had captured the strong and strategically important fortress of Rosas, had defeated the Spaniards in two battles at Molins de Rey and at Valls, and relieved and blockaded Tarragona. Our author thinks that he might have profited by his victory at Valls to begin a movement against Gerona, which, commanding, as it did, the high road to Perpignan, interrupted communication with his base.

III.

When Napoleon was urging on the fruitless pursuit of Sir John Moore, and while St. Cyr was discomfiting the Catalans, there was one point on which the war was standing still and where the French arms had made no great progress since the battle of Tudela, which had been fought on Nov. 23, 1808. Saragossa was holding out with the same tenacity that she had displayed during the first siege in July and August of the preceding summer. In front of her walls and barricades two whole corps of the Emperor's army were detained from December, 1808, till February, 1809. As long as the defence endured she preserved the rest of Aragon and the whole of Valencia from invasion.

After having routed the Spanish armies of Aragon and the Centre, Marshal Lannes had thrown up the command which had been intrusted to him and had gone back to France. The injuries which he had suffered from his fall over the precipice near Pampeluna were still far from healed and served as the excuse for his retirement. Marshal Moncey, therefore, resumed on Nov. 25, 1808, the charge of the victorious army; on the next day he was joined by Marshal Ney, who, after failing to intercept the Spanish General Castaños in the mountains, had descended into the valley of the Ebro with two divisions of infantry and a light cavalry brigade. On Nov. 30 the two Marshals appeared in front of Saragossa with all their troops, and were about to commence the investment of the city when Ney received orders from the Emperor to leave the siege to Moncey and to cross the mountains into New Castile with all the soldiers of the Sixth Corps. He was to find Castaños and hang on his heels so that he should not be able to march to the help of Madrid. Moncey, meanwhile, was left in front of Saragossa with a force consisting of no more than 15,000 men, a force far too weak to undertake the siege. Should the Spaniards come to know of his condition they might sally out from Saragossa and attack him with more than 30,000 men. Moncey therefore had to wait for the arrival of the Fifth Corps under Mortier, and it was not until Dec. 20, 1808, that he was able to invest the city. Thus Saragossa gained four weeks of respite between the battle of Tudela and the commencement of the actual siege. The reprieve was invaluable to Palafox and the Aragonese. Palafox made admirable use of the delay that was granted him. Not only did he manage to increase the garrison so that long ere the actual siege began he could count on 32,000 bayonets and 2,000 sabres more or less organized, but the fortifications of the city were materially strengthened.

The second siege of Saragossa continued from Dec. 20, 1808, to Feb. 20, 1809, and may be divided into three well-marked sections. The first comprises the operations against the Spanish outworks, and terminated with their capture on Jan. 15. The second period includes the time during which the besiegers attacked and finally broke through the main *enceinte* of the city; it lasted from Jan. 16 to Jan. 27. The third section consists of the street fighting after the walls had been cleared; it ended with the fall of Saragossa on Feb. 20. The French losses in front of Saragossa are not easy to calculate. Our author concludes with Schepeler and Artèche that the total French loss must have been 10,000 men, rather than the 4,000 given by Napier, who, apparently, relied on Rogniat. The last-named officer gives only the casualties in battle and not the losses in hospitals. The state in which Saragossa was found by the French hardly bears description. Nearly 54,000 persons had died in the place since the siege began. It was weeks before the dead were all buried; months before the contagion of the siege fever died out from the miserable city.

Prof. Oman regards the siege of Saragossa, whereof Spaniards are so proud, as a magnificent display of civic courage little helped by strategy or tactics. In his judgment, Palafox, though a splendid leader of insurgents, was a very poor General. "He made a gross initial mistake in shutting up 40,000 fighting men in a place which could have been easily defended by 25,000. If he had sent one or two divisions to form the nucleus of an army of relief in lower Aragon, with orders to harass but not to fight fixed battles, it is hard to see how the siege could have been kept up. His second fault was the refusal to make sorties on a large scale during the first half of the siege, while he was still in possession of great masses of superfluous fighting men." What he did was to send out scores of petty sallies, of a few hundred men each; he never moved so many as 5,000 on a single day. Our author holds that such a policy, while it worried, could not seriously harm the French, and destroyed the willing men of the garrison. In short, the conduct of Palafox was not that of a capable officer. At the same time it is pronounced absurd to represent him as a coward, or as a puppet whose strings were pulled by fanatical friars.

Prof. Oman can find nowhere the source from which Napier drew his assertion that Palafox hid himself in a bomb-proof and lived "in a disgusting state of sensuality," shirking all the dangers of the siege. Our author's conviction is that he knew perfectly well what he was doing and how to manage the disorderly but enthusiastic masses of the city's population. "There can be no doubt that his personal influence was all important and the effect of his constant harangues and proclamations immense. It would be quite as true to say that the friars and the mob orators were his tools as that he was theirs. He had to humor them, but by humoring them he got out of them the utmost possible service. Against the stories that his proclamations were written for him and that he had to be goaded into issuing every order that came from his headquarters we have the evidence of Vaughan and others who knew him well. It is unanimous in ascribing to him incessant activity and an exuberant fluency in composition. There can be no doubt that the garrison might have been much more wisely handled; but it is doubtful whether under any other direction it would have shown so much energy and staying power. There is certainly no other Spanish siege, save that of Gerona, where half so much resolution was shown. If the defence had been conducted by regular officers and troops alone the place would probably have fallen three weeks earlier. If the monks and local demagogues had been in command, and patriotic anarchy alone had been opposed to the French, Saragossa would possibly have fallen at an even earlier date, from mere want of intelligent direction. Palafox, with all his faults, supplied the connecting link between the two sections of the defenders and kept the soldiery at work by means of the example of the citizens, while he restrained the citizens by dint of his immense personal influence over them, won in the first siege. In short, he may have been vain, bombastic and a bad tactician, but he was a good Spaniard. If there had been a few dozen men more of his stamp in Spain the task of the French in 1808-09 would have been infinitely more difficult. The example of Saragossa was invaluable to the nation and to Europe. The knowledge of it did much to sicken the French soldiery of the whole war and to make every officer and man who entered Spain march not with the light heart that he felt in Germany or Italy, but with gloom and disgust and want of confidence. They never failed to do their duty, but they fought without the enthusiasm which helped them so much in all the earlier wars of the Empire."

IV.

The operations in La Mancha and Estremadura during the first half of 1809 may be viewed in a few paragraphs. By the middle of the month of February, 1809, Andalusia was once more covered by two considerable Spanish armies. Cartaojal, with the wrecks of Infantado's force and the new levies of Del Palacio, was holding the great passes at the eastern end of the Sierra Morena; Cuesta had rallied behind the Guadiana the remains of the army of Estremadura. Meanwhile Marshal Victor, after his victory at Ucles, and a vain attempt to surprise Del Palacio, had passed away to the west, leaving nothing in the plains of La Mancha, except some dragoons who were placed as a cavalry screen across the roads to the south. This movement of Marshal Victor to the Valley of the Tagus was in execution of the plan dictated by Napoleon before he left Spain. The Emperor had directed that, when the February rains were over, Victor should move on Badajoz, to assist by his presence in that direction the projected attack of Soult on Lisbon. Only when Estremadura and Portugal had been subdued was the attack on Andalusia to be carried out. Soult was much slower in his movements than Napoleon had expected and Victor waited in vain at Talavera for any news that the invasion of Portugal was in progress. Hence the Spaniards gained some weeks of respite, the ranks of their armies were filled up and the spirits of their Generals rose. Cartaojal, for his part, conceived a plan for thrusting back the cavalry screens opposite to him, and for recovering the whole of La Mancha. If Victor's corps had been the only force available to oppose him there would have been something to say for the project. As a matter of fact, King Joseph and his adviser, Jourdan, had not left the roads to La Mancha unguarded; they had drafted down from Madrid two infantry divisions whose command Sebastiani had taken over. Ignorant, apparently, of the fact that there was anything but cavalry in his front, Cartaojal resolved to beat up the French outposts. The result of this forward movement was that on March 27, 1809, Cartaojal was severely beaten by Sebastiani at Ciudad Real. The Spanish General lost in this rout, which it would be absurd to call a battle, five guns, three standards and more than 2,000 prisoners, among whom were sixty-one officers. The loss in killed and wounded was probably not very great, for there had been no attempt at a stand, and the troops which were cut off had surrendered without resistance. The loss of the French was insignificant, probably less than one hundred men in all. Sebastiani, however, dared not follow the fugitives into the mountains, as he had received orders to clear La Mancha, but not to invade Andalusia; that was to be the task of Victor. The army which Cartaojal carried back to Andalusia was more frightened than hurt, for, when the stragglers came in, it still numbered 12,000 infantry and 3,000 horse. Nevertheless, he was not allowed to retain the command. By the middle of April the army had been reënforced by new levies from Granada, and could take the field, although its state of discipline was bad and its morale much shaken by the recent events.

While Cartaojal was faring so ill in La Mancha, the Spanish army of Estremadura under the obstinate old General Cuesta, was going through experiences of an even more calamitous kind. Even when he had drawn in his last reserves, Cuesta had but 20,000 foot and 3,000 horse, a number which only exceeded Victor's total by three or four thousand men, because the French Marshal had been dropping detachments on his march westward. If the relative value of the individual soldiery of the two armies be considered, we can understand why Cuesta's behavior in venturing to oppose the French in the field should be denounced as that of a criminal lunatic. As it turned out, his tactics were as bad as his strategy. At the battle of Medellin, which occurred on March 29, 1809, the slaughter of the Spaniards was terrible. Of the 10,000 men whom Cuesta lost that day, three-fourths fell by the edge of the sword: only 1,850 prisoners were sent back to Talavera, and even if some others had succeeded in escaping during their march to the rear, Prof. Oman deems it certain that the Spanish casualty list amounted to at least 7,500 men. Twenty pieces of artillery fell into the hands of the French out of the thirty which Cuesta had possessed. Some few batteries, therefore, must have succeeded in escaping from the rout. Most French authors unite in stating that the total loss on their side was only 300 men. It is pronounced improbable that they suffered less than 1,000 casualties.

After such a disaster, it might have been expected that the Spanish Junta would disgrace Cuesta and remove him from command, as they had Cartaojal. Apparently, however, they were rather cheered by the fact that Cuesta had for five hours disputed the victory with the French than angered with the want of generalship which he had shown from the viewpoint of strategy and tactics. They voted that he and his army had deserved well of the State, and distributed honors and promotion to all the officers whom he recommended for good conduct during the action. Tthey conferred on Cuesta the post of Captain-General of Estremadura, and hurried up to reënforce him with all the troops they could spare. Thus reënforced, Cuesta's army was presently as strong as it had been on the eve of Medellin, and once more mustered 20,000 foot and 3,000 horse. By the middle of April, 1809, the whole had been drawn together and reorganized into five divisions of foot and two of cavalry. This was the army that was to coöperate with Wellesley in the campaign of Talavera. "In any other country of Europe," wrote Marshal Jourdan at the time, "the gaining of two such successes as Medellin and Ciudad Real would have reduced the countryside to submission, and have enabled the victorious armies to press forward to new conquests." In Spain the reverse was the case. Very soon after the victory of Medellin, the communications between Victor and Sebastiani were cut, several bearers of despatches were massacred, and even some detachments cut off.

V.

It remains to glance at Ney's movements in Galicia and the Asturias before we come to Wellesley's campaign, with a detailed account of which the present volume ends. Ney had at his disposal some 17,000 men, exclusive of the two garrisons at Vigo and Tuy, which numbered more than 4,000, but were so placed as to be more of a charge than a help. On March 10, 1809, the Marshal concentrated the greater part of his troops in the northwestern corner of Galicia. His aim was to crush and cow the insurgents in the northern part of the province by means of flying columns. The policy had but little success, for the moment a column had passed on the enemy would return to occupy his old position. In addition to all his troubles with the insurgents, Ney had to keep a watchful eye on two Spanish regular armies, namely, the force in the principality of Asturias and the troops of La Romana, which were once more ready to take the field. On March 17 the last-named body succeeded in capturing Villafranca; the French loss was 700 in killed and wounded besides 574 prisoners. This reverse and the cutting of communication with Galicia, plunged King Joseph and his adviser Jourdan at Madrid into a state of great fear and perplexity as to the condition of affairs in the northwest. Fearing the worst, they resolved to find out at all cost what was going on in Galicia. The expedition organized for the purpose consisted of some 7,000 or 8,000 men, under the command of Kellerman. On May 2 it reached Lugo, where it obtained full information as to Ney's position. For the destruction of the Spanish armies of the north a concentric movement was then planned. On May 18 Ney crossed the Gallegos bridge on the Nora River, routing La Romana with great loss, and on the following day seized Oviedo. Kellerman met Ney's outposts on May 21, having previously beaten an Asturian brigade of 3,000 men. A third French column, under Bonnet, which had also been ordered to move on Oviedo, had found nobody to fight. Thus the three French columns had won their way into the heart of the Asturias, but, though they had seized its capital and its seaports, they had failed to catch its army and only half their task had been performed. Leaving Kellerman with 7,000 men to finish the business, Bonnet returned to Santander and Ney to his Galician garrisons. The latter arrived in time to relieve them, but Santander had been captured by Ballasteros before Bonnet reached it. The French General retook the place, however, after defeating the Asturians and making 3,000 prisoners. The expedition of Ballasteros served its purpose, however, for it forced Bonnet and Kellerman to evacuate the Asturias, and compelled the former General to concentrate his forces on the seaboard for the protection of the French garrisons in Biscay and Guipuzcoa.

So it came to pass that the invasion of the Asturias had dwindled down into a raid, and a raid which left untouched the larger part of the enemy's field army under La Romana. In June, Ney moved against this force, but was unable to come up with it, owing to Soult's failure to coöperate. It was soon afterward decided to evacuate Galicia, on the ground that two army corps could not be spared for this secondary theatre of operations. After giving due credit to the Spanish peasantry who checked Ney and harassed Soult, and to the prudence of Gen. La Romana, our author holds that the real cause of the evacuation of the province by the invaders was the presence of the victorious British army in Portugal. The two Marshals might have maintained themselves in Galicia for an indefinite time if they could have shut their eyes to what was going on elsewhere. In Prof. Oman's opinion Soult was right in believing that it would be madness to persist in the attempt to subdue Galicia while Wellesley was in the field and nothing lay between him and Madrid but the 22,000 men of the First Corps under Marshal Victor. If Soult and Ney had lingered on in the north engaged in fruitless hunting after La Romana while July and August wore on, Madrid would have fallen into the hands of Wellesley and Cuesta, and King Joseph would once more have been forced to go upon his travels. The Talavera campaign only failed of success because the Second and the Sixth Corps of the French army were withdrawn from the Galician hills just in time to concentrate at Salamanca, and fall upon the rear of the victors.

We should here note that the attempt to regain possession of Aragon, made by a Spanish force under Gen. Blake, which, for a time, had promised to succeed, was ultimately foiled by Suchet, and ended in disaster. The splendid victory gained by Suchet on June 15 saved Saragossa, and led to the reconquest of the plains of Aragon.

VI.

Before recounting Wellesley's campaign in northern Portugal the sequel of which was the campaign of Talavera, our author pauses to consider at some length the General and the man who was to expel the French from the Peninsula. We are reminded that, just before his death, Sir John Moore, replying to a question put by Lord Castlereagh, had expressed the conviction that the frontier of Portugal was not defensible against a superior force, and that, if the French should succeed in Spain, it would be vain to attempt to resist them in Portugal. Four months later, namely, on March 7, 1809, Sir Arthur Wellesley answered the same question, put to him by the same Minister, in very different terms. "I have always been of opinion that Portugal might be defended, whatever might be the result of the contest in Spain, and that in the meantime measures adopted for the defence of Portugal would be highly useful to the Spaniards in their contest with the French." He added that a force of no more than 20,000 British troops, if it could be placed in a state of activity, would be highly useful to the Spaniards and might eventually decide the contest. It required some moral courage on the part of a Minister to advise the despatch of another British army to the Peninsula, for Moore's gloomy prognostications were echoed by many military experts. Nevertheless, Castlereagh resolved to stake his faith on the correctness of Wellesley's conclusions. On April 2, 1809, he announced officially that the experiment of a second expedition to Portugal would be tried and that Wellesley would have the conduct of it. Reënforcements would at once be sent out to bring the British army at Lisbon up to a total of 30,000 men—the number to which Wellesley, on consideration, had raised the 20,000 of which he had originally spoken. When Wellesley landed at Lisbon in the latter part of April and found that Soult had halted at Oporto, that Victor lay quiescent at Merida and that Lapisse, with the French troops from Salamanca, had gone southward to join the first corps, and so severed the only link which bound together the French army in northern Portugal and the army in Estremadura, he was reassured as to the whole situation. Soult and Victor, isolated as they now were, would each be too weak to beat the Anglo-Portuguese army. The best defensive, however, is a vigorous local offensive, and Wellesley saw the advantage of the central position of the British army on the Tagus. He thought it would be best to make the first onslaught on Soult. Should this succeed, Victor could be attacked later.

Wellesley's correspondence showed that he had gauged perfectly the situation and the difficulties of the French. He saw exactly how much was in his own power. The whole history of the Peninsular War for the next two years was forecast in his prophetic statement that with 30,000 British troops and the Portuguese levies he would guarantee to hold his own against any force of less than 100,000 French, and he did not think that the enemy would find it easy to collect an army of that size to send against him. This is precisely what he accomplished. For the first fifteen months after his arrival, Wellesley held with ease that frontier which Moore had described as "indefensible against a superior force." When, at last, Napoleon, free from all other Continental troubles, launched against him an army, under Masséna, which almost reached the figure (100,000) that Wellesley himself in 1809 had been inclined to regard as irresistible, he showed in 1810-11 that he had built up resources for himself which enabled him to beat off even that number of enemies. Though four-fifths of Spain had then been subdued, he held his own because he had grasped the fundamental truth that (to use his own words) "the more ground the French hold down, the weaker will they be at any given point." In short, he had fathomed the great secret that Napoleon's military power—vast as it was—had its limits; that the Emperor could not send to Spain a force sufficient to hold down every province of a thoroughly disaffected country, and also to provide (over and above the garrisons) a field army large enough to beat the Anglo-Portuguese and capture Lisbon.

Our author maintains that the talk of the good fortune of Wellesley, of his "lucky star," is absurd. "He had, like other Generals, his occasional uncovenanted mercies and happy chances; but few commanders had more strokes of undeserved disappointment or saw more of their plans frustrated by a stupid subordinate, an unexpected turn of the weather, an incalculable accident or a piece of false news. He had his fair proportion of the chances or war, good and bad, and no more. If fortune was with him at Oporto in 1809, or at El Bodon in 1811, how many were the occasions on which she played him scurvy tricks?" A few samples are cited. In May, 1809, Wellesley might have captured the whole of Soult's army if the Portuguese General Silveira had but obeyed orders and occupied the impregnable defile of Salamonde. On the night of Salamanca Wellesley might have dealt in a similar fashion with Marmont's routed host if the French emigré officer in the Spanish service, known as Carlos d'España, had not withdrawn the garrison of Alba de Tormes in flat disobedience to his instructions, and so left the fords open to the flying French.

In a word, Wellington was not the child of fortune; he was a great strategist and tactician, placed in a situation in which the military dangers furnished but half his difficulties. "He had to cherish his single, precious British army corps, and to keep it from any unnecessary loss, because if destroyed it could not be replaced. With those 30,000 men, he had promised to keep up the war; the home Government was reluctant to risk the whole of its available field army in one quarter, and for years refused to raise his numbers far above that total. It was not till the middle of 1810 that his original five divisions of infantry were increased to six, nor till 1811 that his seventh and eighth divisions were completed. Right down to 1812, it was certain that, if he had lost any considerable fraction of his modest army, the British Ministry might have recalled him and abandoned Portugal. He had to fight with a full consciousness that a single disaster would have been irreparable, because it would have been followed, not by the sending off of reënforcements to replace the divisions that might be lost, but by an order to evacuate the Peninsula. His French opponents fought under no such disabilities. When beaten they had other armies at hand on which to fall back, and, behind all, the inexhaustible reserve of Napoleon's conscription." Our author insists that, when we consider the campaigns of 1809-10-11, it is not Wellington's oft-censured prudence that we should find amazing, but his boldness. Instead of wondering that he did not attempt to relieve Rodrigo or Almeida in July-August, 1810, or to fall upon Masséna at Santarem in January, 1811, we may well be filled with surprise at the daring which inspired the storming of Oporto and the offering of battle at Busaco and Fuentes d'Oñoro. "When a defeat spelt ruin and recall, it required no small courage to take any risks;" but Wellesley had the sanest of minds; he could draw the line with absolute accuracy between enterprise and rashness, between the possible and the impossible. "He had learned to gauge with wonderful insight the difficulties and disabilities of his enemies, and to see exactly how far they might be reckoned upon in discounting the military situation. After some time he arrived at an accurate estimate of the individual Marshals opposed to him, and was ready to take the personal equation into consideration, according as he had to deal with Soult or Masséna, Marmont or Jourdan. In short, he was a safe General, not a cautious one. When once the hopeless disparity between his own resources and those of the enemy had ceased to exist, in the year 1812, he soon showed the worth of the silly taunts which imputed timidity to him, by the smashing blows which reduced Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, and the lightning stroke which dashed to pieces Marmont's army at Salamanca. In the next year, when for the first time he could count upon an actual superiority of force, his irresistible march to Vittoria displayed his mastery of the art of using an advantage to the uttermost. Napoleon himself never punished a strategic fault on the part of the enemy with such majestic ease and confidence."

The merits of Wellington, considered as a tactician, were discussed in the first volume of this work. In the volume before us the author confines himself to repeating that the groundwork of the British commander's tactics was the knowledge of the fact that the line could beat the column whether on the offensive or the defensive. The data for forming the conclusions had been in possession of any one who chose to utilize them, but it was Wellesley who put his knowledge to full account. Even before he left India, it is said, he had grasped the great secret, and had remarked to his confidants that "the French were sweeping everything before them in Europe by the use of the formation in column," but that he was fully convinced that the column could and would be beaten by the line. The column system he believed to be a false one against steady troops. Yet, even though the epoch-making, yet half-forgotten fight of Maida had occurred since then, the first Peninsular battles came as a revelation to the world. After Vimiera and Talavera, it became known that the line was certainly superior for the defensive, but it was only the triumphant line advance of Salamanca that finally divulged the fact that the British method was equally sure and certain for the attack.

VII.

Military historians will probably agree with Prof. Oman in thinking that Wellesley's Oporto campaign against Marshal Soult is one of his strongest titles to fame. He had at his disposal 16,400 British and 11,400 Portuguese troops, of whom the latter were either untried in the field or demoralized by their previous experiences. His superiority in mere numbers to Soult's corps of 23,000 men was therefore small, and he was lamentably destitute of cavalry and artillery. It was no small feat, therefore, to expel the enemy from northern Portugal in nine days, and to cast him into Galicia, stripped of his guns and baggage, and with a gap of more than 4,000 men in his ranks. This had been accomplished at the expense of no more than 500 casualties, even when the soldiers who fell by the way from sickness and fatigue are added to the 300 killed and wounded in the engagements of May 11, 12 and 13. There is hardly a campaign in history in which so much was accomplished at so small a cost. Wellesley had exactly carried out the programme which he had set before himself when he had left Lisbon, the defeat of the enemy and the deliverance of the two Portuguese provinces beyond the Douro. There was one short moment at which Wellesley had it in his power to deal Soult a heavier blow than he had contemplated. On the night of May 12-13, the main body of the French Second Corps was in a deplorable condition, and must have been destroyed had the British been close at hand. If Wellesley had pursued the flying foe on the afternoon of the victory of Oporto with all his cavalry and the less fatigued regiments of his infantry, nothing could have saved the French. The opportunity, however, was one which could not have been foreseen.

Having expelled Soult from Portugal, Wellesley decided to enter Spain, after concerting with the Spanish General Cuesta a plan of operation against Marshal Victor, who barred the way to Madrid. It is well known that Victor was reënforced by Sebastiani before battle was joined at Talavera on July 28, 1809. In that battle 16,000 British under Wellesley supported and repulsed the attack of 26,000 French infantry—the French division of Vilatte, which was only slightly engaged, being in this calculation omitted from the total of the assailants. The British occupied strong ground, but not so strong as to counterbalance a superiority of 10,000 men. The real fighting power of Wellesley's foot soldiery was shown in the lower parts of the field, where Sherbrooke's and Mackenzie's 8,000 bayonets achieved a marvellous success over the 15,000 men of Lapisse and Sebastiani. Of this success, our author says: "Doomed to apparent ruin by their own rash valor in pursuing the enemy across the Portiña rivulet, they yet recovered their line, reëstablished the battle and finally won an almost incredible victory. The 'First Division' of the Peninsular Army—the Guards and the German Legion, who fought side by side throughout the whole war—had many proud days between 1809 and 1814, but surely Talavera was the most honorable of them all. Yet probably Mackenzie's brigade and Donnelan's Forty-eighth must claim an even higher merit—it was their prompt and steady help which gave their comrades time to re-form, and ward off the possibility of disaster at the critical moment."

The losses at Talavera were tremendous on both sides. If the casualties of July 27 and July 28 be added, the British lost 5,365 men in killed, wounded and missing. The French losses were decidedly heavier. The total in killed, wounded and missing was 7,268. The Spanish General Cuesta never issued any proper return of his casualties. He stated in one of his despatches that they amounted to 1,201 men, but our author does not believe that they exceeded four hundred or five hundred.

Talavera ranks in history among the great battles that settled nothing. Its indecisiveness was due to circumstances beyond Wellesley's control. The attempt of the allies to capture Madrid failed, but, on the other hand, the attempt of the French to surround Wellesley and Cuesta by a flank march on the part of Soult failed also. If we look to the net results of all the fighting since the beginning of May, 1809, we must recognize that the balance of loss stood against the French. They had abandoned Galicia and the Asturias, as well as their precarious hold on northern Portugal. They had gained nothing save that their forces were concentrated in a good central position instead of being dispersed from Corunna and Oporto as far as Merida and Manzanares. The next move was in the hands of the Emperor.

M. W. H.

TWO ODD FISH IN A TANK.

A Climbing Perch Made Lazy by the Amphiuma It Was Meant to Reform.

The amphiuma is an amphibian that looks very like an eel, except that it has no fins. It has four very small rudimentary legs with three toes on each.

It can dart about with eel-like suddenness when it wants to, but it likes better to lie still and motionless. Often the amphiuma, at the Aquarium, which is about two and a half feet long, when seen lying with two-thirds of its body at the surface of the water and the tail hanging limply down, has been thought by visitors to be dead, and they have more than once so informed the attendants. Their opinion undergoes a very complete revision if anything happens to start the amphiuma up.

It was thought that it might be a good thing to put some more lively creature into the tank with the amphiuma to give a little relief to the tank when the amphiuma was having one of its long dead spells, and so they put in a climbing perch.

Despite its name the climbing perch is, so to speak, a straight fish. It has no legs or attachments of any sort except the fins of a fish. It climbs with its fins.

It is said that the climbing perch can climb trees, but certainly the climbing perch can climb out of water on to the adjacent ground, which it does by raising itself on its fins and so working itself forward.

The climbing perch, while not the liveliest and most incessant swimmer in the world, is a fairly active fish, and it was expected to give some life to this tank. But it seems really to be inclined to follow the amphiuma's example and be lazy, and it and the amphiuma have apparently made friends.

The climbing perch is a small fish, this one being four or five inches long; but it shows no fear of the two-and-a-half foot amphiuma. On the contrary, on one day not long after it had been put in the tank, it was seen lying within a ring which the amphiuma had formed by coiling its body on the bottom of the tank, the climbing perch's head being partly under the amphiuma's side. Or the amphiuma may be seen stretched out somewhere in the tank with the climbing perch lying near it.

The placing of the climbing perch in the amphiuma's tank can hardly be said to have accomplished its purpose. The situation is further somewhat complicated by the fact that now some visitors reading the labels on the tank and seeing its tiny legs mistake the amphiuma for the climbing perch; but the seemingly friendly manner in which climbing perch and amphiuma get on together is not without interest.