CHAPTER VII.

The first military event that marked the assumption of the command of the army by Don Pedro, was the attack on Villa Nova on the 14th of November. Schwalbach passed the Douro above the Seminario, at the head of one thousand five hundred men; his orders were to destroy the batteries of St. Christovao, Bandeira, and that of the Pinery if possible, while two hundred seamen pushed over to the Cabedello to destroy it, and the Sampayo battery. Captain Hill commanded the gun-boats, and landed Schwalbach with great promptitude. The Miguelites were prepared for the attack, swept the landing-place, and pounded the town from their various batteries. Schwalbach advanced at a charge, carried their bivouac, and
the two batteries, which were destroyed; the guns were disabled as well as they could be done without either spikes or sledge-hammers, which had been forgotten. The enemy now advanced two heavy columns, and Schwalbach, who knew his art well, retired in good order and embarked under cover of the fire from the Seminario and Serra Convent. The gallant Captain Morgal with his sailors carried the Cabedello, but he too was unprovided with implements to destroy the guns, and could only upset them and break the carriages. His men had only ten rounds of ammunition, and when that was expended, they were obliged to retreat.

Captain Morgal and Lieutenant Haward, a volunteer from the British regiment, and six men, were killed and fourteen wounded. The success these sorties met with, proves how much it is to be regretted a larger force was not employed. The Serra Convent ought to have been well re-inforced the night before, and as Schwalbach landed, they ought to have made a sally. The seamen should also have been supported by troops; they are always active, but never ought to be employed in shore expedi-
tions, unless properly assisted; they are liable to fall into disorder, and not being accustomed to act together, when attacked by regular troops are easily cut up.

The troops behaved with great courage, and lost two hundred men in killed and wounded, which could ill be spared from the Queen’s little army. The enemy, it is supposed, suffered considerably more.

On the 17th of November another sortie was decided on, under the command of Schwalbach. The British, now divided into three battalions, were commanded by Brigadier Bento de Franca; they marched out on the Valongo road, supported by a battalion of the sixth regiment, and forty mounted guides. The French and the third caçadores, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Sequeira, advanced from the Captivo battery, and the second caçadores on the St. Cosme road. The fifth caçadores were in reserve on the Antas. The enemy’s piquets at St. Roque fell back on Rio Tinto, where the main body was stationed. Before they had time to form, Lieutenant-Colonel Soares, with two hundred of the second caçadores, seized the
bridge of Campanhan, and destroyed the barricade: those of St. Roque were also destroyed by Captain Barreiros. The enemy were in great force, and by no means backward to engage; their main attack was on Schwalbach's left and centre, as well as on the Antas. Shaw reinforced this point with the second battalion of the British, was shot through the thigh and obliged to quit the field early in the battle. Lieutenant-Colonel Williams, with the first battalion of the British, being menaced by half a squadron of cavalry, was ordered to retire, which he did in close column in good order, but was not followed.

Schwalbach, being hard pressed, was obliged to retire within his lines, with a loss of three hundred killed and wounded. The French suffered considerably, the Miguelites giving no quarter either to French or English. There appears to have been no object whatever in this sortie: a few barricades were destroyed, which could be more easily replaced than the men who were killed. The Miguelites were supposed to have lost five hundred men, but their army in Portugal consisted of nearly one hundred thousand men of all arms,
and they had the whole country to recruit from, while Don Pedro could with great difficulty procure either men or money; and all the exertions and resources of Mendizabal were inadequate to keep pace with the losses attending these ill-digested attacks.

Desertion now became a heavy drain on Don Pedro's force; the rations of his troops had been much reduced; and not only Portuguese, but both French and English went over to the enemy. A private of the third caçadores was shot, and it was with great difficulty Don Pedro could reconcile himself to permit his execution: this was the second that had taken place at Oporto. The Emperor had a great antipathy to the punishment of death, and yet I have heard this man accused of every species of cruelty.

The Duke of Palmella and Mouzinho de Albuquerque left Oporto in the London Merchant on the 22nd of November, and were nearly lost in passing the bar. On board this vessel General Mina was also embarked: he had been examining various parts on the coast of Spain and Portugal in disguise, had visited Lisbon, and landed in
Spain, and been some time in Oporto undiscovered, and only made himself known to Colonel Hodges, who was his old friend. His disguise was so complete that discovery was impossible, and in this manner he remained unknown even in the steam-boat, though he was well acquainted with the Marquis of Palmella. The British government had insisted on Don Pedro not permitting any Spaniard connected with the Spanish liberal party to come to Oporto as the price of their preventing Spain from meddling with Portuguese affairs; and had it been known that Mina was in Oporto, it would have placed the Emperor and his ministers in a very awkward predicament.

The object of Palmella’s mission to England was to employ his influence to raise money, and to obtain, if possible, the direct interference of France and England in Donna Maria’s favour. Unlimited powers were granted to Palmella, but he insisted on Mouzinho de Albuquerque being associated with him in his mission. The marquis had no confidence in the Emperor’s advisers, and suspected they would sacrifice him at the earliest opportunity. The ministers, on the other hand,
were pleased to get rid of him, and would have objected to nothing he proposed provided it removed him from Oporto.

On the Marquis’s arrival in England, he found that the interest in favour of Donna Maria was fast subsiding: her friends had lost all hopes of her cause; many of the officers coming home in disgust at the manner they had been treated, and the little thanks they got from the minister-at-war for their services, together with sick and wounded men appearing in London totally unprovided for, had very much cooled those interested in Don Pedro’s success. Added to this, rumours were afloat of discontent and mutiny in the squadron, and disagreements between the admiral and several of his officers. These occurrences were necessarily reported to the French and English governments, and it is not surprising that they should be extremely cool in their reception of Palmella; being a minister, he necessarily became mixed up with all the faults, follies, and intrigues that had been so long going on at Oporto. They were not to know that the Emperor was completely in the hands of Freire and Candido Xavier.
On an exposé of the state of affairs at Oporto being laid before the cabinets of France and England, it is believed, (though I have had no means of getting at the fact,) that they both refused to interfere even in negociations with Spain, unless the two princes and their ministers should retire from Portugal and Oporto. This stipulation, as regarded Don Pedro, was absurd to ask, and equally as absurd to consent to. The Emperor, with all his faults, was the heart and soul of the cause; he was active, determined, and obstinate to a degree; and though that obstinacy often did harm, it was the cause of the splendid defence of Oporto. As for his advisers they were totally incapable; they had neither military talent nor military firmness; they had persuaded Don Pedro that he was a great general, and had driven from his military councils the best and wisest men in Oporto; and had they been moved from his person affairs would have gone on well. The Marquis and Albuquerque were, however, supposed to consent to this, and Sir Stratford Canning proceeded to Madrid. Zea Bermudez was now minister, and it was hoped he was less hostile to the Queen's
cause than his predecessor. Palmella without loss of time communicated the arrangements he had made to the Emperor, and as might have been expected from a man of his temperament, was dismissed from office, his conditions rejected; had he been himself the bearer of them, he would have most certainly been imprisoned by his former colleagues, and executed if they dared go that length.

A new ministry was formed: the Marquis of Loulé succeeded Palmella, Silva Carvalho took the Finance and Justice, two most irreconcilable portfolios at the present moment, for money was wanted, the portfolio of finance was widely opened to receive it, while that of justice was securely locked up in the minister's bureau. Carvalho was, however, not to blame. The troops and fleet were in arrears, provisions scarce, the town besieged by a powerful and revengeful enemy; and as long as there was a shilling in the town, he was right to take it either by fair or foul means. Had Oporto fallen, the Miguelites would have respected neither property nor persons; the plunder of it had been promised to the troops, and the peasantry even came from afar to share the
spoil. The sacking of Badajoz would have been a trifle to what would have happened at Oporto.

Candido Xavier became minister of the interior; Bernado de Sa remained; and the only excuse for him doing so, and for the Marquis of Loulé, who was an honourable man, accepting a portfolio with such colleagues, was their desire to serve the cause, and prevent Pedro's other ministers from doing as much harm as they would had they been left to themselves.

I still continued to be much interested in the affairs of Oporto; I had a sincere regard for many of the Portuguese officers, with whom I became acquainted in the Azores; and on the arrival of Palmella in London, I proposed to him, in the event of its being possible to embark the army at the Foz, to hire a dozen steam-boats, run up the Tagus in the night, land at Black-Horse Square, and settle the question at once. The best part of Miguel's army, consisting of at least thirty thousand men, was round Oporto; and the continual sorties made by the Queen's troops was a useless waste of life, and could not in the least advance her cause. This was evident to every one
except those who had the management of military matters; and it was also evident that unless some daring measure was adopted, the army in Oporto must inevitably lay down their arms. There was a British steam-vessel of war at Oporto, to carry off the Emperor in that event; and I suppose his advisers looked for a passage in her. Had their retreat been out off, as was the case with the army, I suspect that the capacity of the minister-at-war would have been a little quickened; and as long as the danger lasted, he would have forgotten the word "Amanha," and even treated the foreign troops with justice.

The rage for making sorties had in no way subsided; and on the 28th of November two columns of a thousand men each, under General Brito, assembled at Carvalhido. The intention of this sortie was to surprise Telles Jordao, who commanded the right of the Miguelite army, extending from the neighbourhood of the Foz to Matazinhos. Here, then, was a decided object in view, sufficient to countenance an attack: we shall see how it was executed. The left column under
Brito took the Ramalde road; Queirioz headed the other on the road of Padrão de Legoa. Fonseca, with a hundred and fifty men from the Foz, menaced the enemy’s right; while Bacon, with a squadron of lancers, was in reserve in advance of the Lordello.

Xavier, with the fifth caçadores, commenced the attack with his usual impetuosity, surprized and bayonetted the enemy’s picquets; he then carried their entrenchments, where the surprise was complete, and the greater part of the enemy destroyed. Santa Martha now advanced with a large force to support Telles Jordao. Xavier was reinforced by Colonel Mariana Barossa, by which he was enabled to destroy the enemy’s encampment, and carry off a considerable quantity of cattle and grain. Brito was now ordered to retire, and in his retreat was attacked by Santa Martha, and suffered considerably. Colonel Williams’s battalion, under the orders of Barossa, formed the rear-guard, and behaved well. The loss of the Queen’s troops was about three hundred killed and wounded; the enemy were supposed to have
lost nearly eight hundred men, fifty prisoners, and about fifty deserters came in, and three hundred were said to have deserted to their homes.

The French on this occasion met their old antagonists the royalist volunteers, who had refused them quarter on the 17th, and bayonetted two companies of that blood-thirsty corps.

This sortie, like the other two, led to no results: it did not succeed in cutting off Telles Jordao's division, and the Miguelites could better afford to lose men than Don Pedro; but it made a strong impression on the Miguelite troops. They found they had to contend with a desperate enemy, and it inspired the inhabitants of Oporto with much confidence. They had now taken up the constitutional cause with great vigour, and on every attack or sortie old and young were seen armed with every species of weapon they could lay their hands upon: even the women on many occasions showed their enthusiasm for the cause of the Queen.

The squadron continued in Vigo in consequence of the danger of the anchorage off Oporto; they were far from being provided with stores, either to
keep the sea, or ground-tackle to keep the anchorage. The crews were without pay, clothing, and provisions. At first they were well received at Vigo. The Donna Maria was stripped and allowed to refit; but on the Don Pedro, an Indiaman mounting fifty guns, arriving from France to reinforce the squadron, the governor requested Captain Mins to send her to sea. This ship had been purchased in England in September, and the Marquis Palmella, then in London, requested me to assist in getting her fitted out as expeditiously as possible.

Sartorius, conceiving that his force was not sufficient to cope successfully with the Miguelite squadron, had written to Mendizabal to procure a ship of this description. The funds at that time at his disposal were very scanty, and the friends of the cause had purchased this ship. She was not of a sufficient size to insure a decided superiority over the enemy; and assisted by M. Da Sylva, now the Baron of Lagos, who took a great interest in the affairs of the Queen, I endeavoured to induce them to fix on an Indiaman of twelve hundred tons, a much more effective ship; but hun-
dreds of reasons were against this selection. The friends of the cause had already purchased the Don Pedro, and it was indispensabla that they should force her on the Queen's agent: he had no means of resistance; and the Don Pedro, a small ship of eight hundred tons, was taken up. She was well and expeditiously fitted out in Mr. Young's yard: none of her old rigging, anchors, or stores were thought sufficiently good; every thing was landed; and, what is rather singular, the Queen's friends actually sent out her anchors to the Bayonne Islands, though they were not supposed good enough for her in the Thames; and one, marked with her former name, the Lord Wellington, found its way afterwards as new stores on board the Don Pedro.

The Foreign Enlistment Bill prohibited the arming of this ship in England, and she was in consequence sent to Cherbourg, where, after the usual blunders and the usual want of faith to the crews, she was equipped.

The Rainha sailed shortly after the Don Pedro, which had proceeded off Oporto; and in the beginning of December the Donna Maria was
again ready for sea. Shortly after this Admiral Sartorius arrived from Oporto, where he had been since the action, attending to the duties of major-general, and the Rainha coming in he hoisted his flag on board his old ship. The rest of the squadron, with the exception of the Don Pedro, had also arrived. On the 9th the governor of Vigo, who had as yet been very kind, invited the officers of the squadron to a ball.

The dissensions in the squadron had not subsided; on the contrary, they had increased. It is not my intention to enter into their causes. Captain Mins has published one account; Captain Boyd has replied to it, and I have every reason to believe that Admiral Sartorius himself intends favouring the public with an account of his proceedings when in command of the squadron. I shall merely observe that Captain Rose was brought to a court-martial on various charges, and acquitted. The discretion of the admiral may be here questioned; troublesome times are not favourable to court-martials. If the admiral was dissatisfied with his officers, and was of opinion they were plotting mischief and intriguing against him, they
ought to have been superseded, and sent to Oporto; or one might have been selected and punished without the ceremony of a court-martial.

This trial did not at all tend to improve the discipline amongst the seamen. No great pains were taken to prevent the disagreements between the admiral and the officers from being known to the ships' companies, and on the 20th of December, when the Donna Maria was ordered to carry stock to Oporto, the men refused to weigh till they were paid, and no persuasion or threats of the admiral could induce them to change their resolution. Upwards of two hundred left the squadron, forfeiting their pay and prize-money. Had the admiral been supported by his officers as he ought to have been, whatever was their cause of complaint, this mutiny would not have taken place; and if it had taken place, strong measures would have put it down.

Shortly after this the cholera broke out in the squadron, and the Spanish authorities took this opportunity of ordering the ships out of Vigo, and, ill provided as they were, they had no other place of refuge except under the Bayonne islands.