



W. M. Craig del.

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GENERAL
THE EARL OF HOPETOUN, K.B.

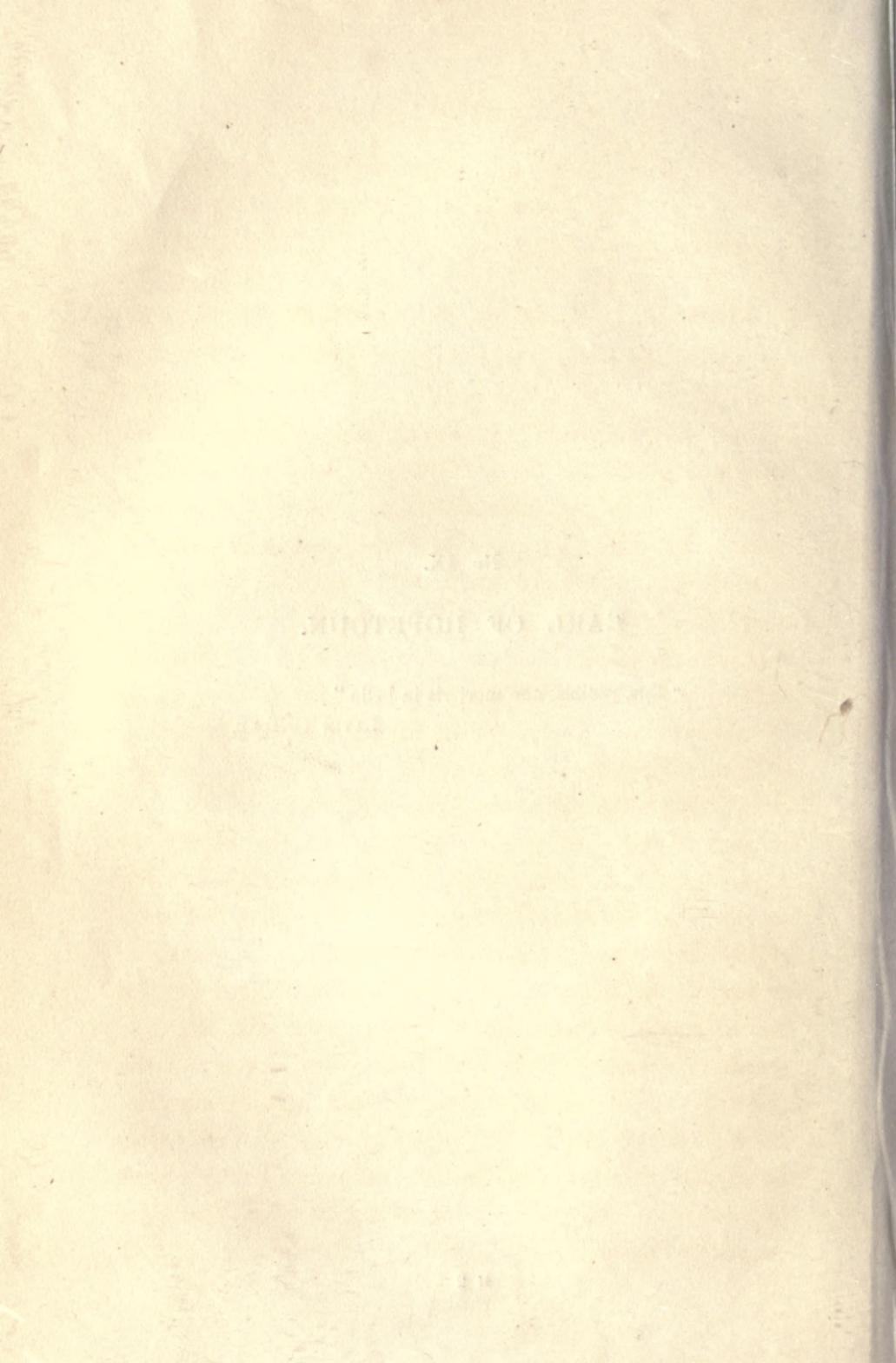
Sc. &c.

No. IX.

EARL OF HOPETOUN.

“Ibis, redibis, non morieris in bello.”

LATIN ORACLE.



GENERAL THE EARL OF HOPETOUN, G. C. B.

Born 1763. — Died 1823.

JOHN fourth Earl of Hopetoun, better known in his military capacity as Sir John Hope, was the younger son by a second marriage of the second earl, and succeeded his elder and half-brother in the hereditary honours and estates of the family in 1816. The surname of Hope is one of great antiquity in Scotland; but the immediate ancestor of the subject of the present memoir was John de Hope, who is said to have come from France in the retinue of Magdalene, or Margaret of Valois, daughter of Francis the First, in 1537, when that princess married James the Fifth.

John Hope evinced a strong bias for the profession of arms from early boyhood, and served as a volunteer in his fifteenth year. There was little prospect then of his succeeding to the title; for his brother had five daughters, and it could scarcely be calculated that he would leave no heirs male. The future earl was appointed to a cornetcy in the 16th Light Dragoons on the 28th of May, 1784; being then of age, and rather beyond the period of life when young men of good family with money and interest commence the career of a soldier. Two years later he was nominated a lieutenant in the 27th foot, and in 1789 obtained a troop

in the 17th Light Dragoons. In 1792 he reached the rank of major in the 1st foot, and in 1793 was gazetted lieutenant-colonel of the 25th, or King's own Borderers. With this last-named corps he repaired to the West Indies, where he was fortunate enough to be placed on the staff as adjutant-general. Throughout the campaigns of 1794, 1795, 1796, and 1797 he served with marked distinction, and was more than once particularly noticed in the orders and public despatches by Sir Ralph Abercrombie and other commanders.

In 1796 he was elected a member of parliament for the county of Linlithgow; but had no opportunity, and perhaps not much desire of attaining senatorial celebrity. When the expedition to North Holland was determined on in 1799, he accompanied the forces as deputy adjutant-general, and received his first wound (a severe one) at the landing at the Helder on the 27th of August. This accident prevented him from taking any further part in the events of that short, ill-conducted, and most unfortunate campaign.

In 1800 Colonel Hope was appointed to the important post of adjutant-general to the army in the Mediterranean under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, with the rank of brigadier-general. In the autumn of that year he was dispatched on a special mission to communicate with General Melas at the Austrian head quarters, and to furnish a true report of the actual state of affairs in that quarter. He executed this difficult task with tact and ability, which raised him high in the confidence of his immediate commander, and his name began to

be whispered as that of an officer of bright promise. He was present at the actions of the 8th and 13th of March, and in the battle of Alexandria on the 21st, when he was wounded again so severely as to be compelled to leave the field. He rejoined the army, which had advanced to Cairo on the 20th of June, and at his own urgent request was appointed to command a brigade, resigning the adjutant-generalship to Colonel Abercromby, the son of the brave general who fell in his hour of victory. When the French commander Belliard proposed to surrender on capitulation, Hope was selected by General Hutchinson to conduct the negotiations, which he managed with much skill, and to the perfect satisfaction of his employer. The terms appeared to be unusually favourable to the enemy, but they were dictated by sound policy, for he could have brought eight thousand effective soldiers into the field, while the English generals could with difficulty have presented four thousand in line of battle. The French were thoroughly disgusted with Egypt, and anxious to leave that barren land at any price. It was equally desirable for us to get rid of them before a general peace was concluded.

After the capitulation of Cairo, General Hope resumed the command of his brigade, and continued in Egypt until the deliverance of the country was finally accomplished by the surrender of Menou, at Alexandria, on conditions similar to those previously granted to the garrison of the capital. This occurred on the 3rd of September, 1801. For his services he received

the second class of the Order of the Crescent, established expressly by the Grand Signior to reward the English generals who had distinguished themselves in the Egyptian campaign.

In 1802, Brigadier Hope was promoted to the colonelcy of the North Lothian Fencible Infantry, with the rank of major-general. In June, 1805, he became deputy-governor of Portsmouth, but resigned that lucrative appointment to serve under Lord Cathcart with the troops destined to operate against the French in Hanover. Nothing of importance occurred in this abortive attempt. In October of the same year he was appointed colonel-commandant of a battalion of the 60th Regiment, and in 1806 succeeded the Marquess of Huntley in the colonelcy of the 92nd Regiment. On the 29th of April, 1808, he reached the rank of lieutenant-general.

When Sir John Moore sailed with ten thousand men for the Baltic, to act in conjunction with Gustavus Adolphus the Fourth, the insane King of Sweden, General Hope accompanied him as second in command, and on their return repaired with his chief to the Peninsula, where the most brilliant portion of his services was destined to be performed. When Moore advanced from the frontiers of Portugal into the north of Spain, he divided his army, owing to the reported impracticability of the roads and the difficulty of transport. While he himself, with the main body, moved on the direct line of Almeida, Ciudad Rodrigo, and Salamanca, he detached Hope by the circuitous and exposed route of Talavera,

with nearly the whole of his artillery, consisting of twenty-four pieces, the cavalry, amounting to one thousand troopers, the great part of the army, and an additional escort of three thousand infantry. The arrangement is open to military criticism, but the English commander-in-chief was impelled by necessity, and somewhat misled as to the actual state of the roads and the resources of the enemy. But he selected an officer whom he thought capable of conducting a dangerous and delicate enterprise, and the result justified the soundness of his judgment. Moore, finding the roads through Portugal better than he had reason to expect, and anticipating from the movements of the enemy that he might be hurried into a battle without his artillery, wrote anxiously to General Hope to abandon the longer line of march, and seek a shorter passage by Placentia, across the mountains, to Salamanca. On the 8th of November, 1808, the British army was scattered and divided into three portions. Sir John Moore was at Almeida, on the frontier of Portugal; General Hill with the artillery, cavalry, and baggage at Truxillo, in Spanish Estremadura; and Sir David Baird with his division at Corunna. On the 23rd of the same month the centre, consisting of twelve thousand infantry and six guns, reached Salamanca. On the 26th, Sir David Baird's leading brigades entered Astorga, while the head of Hope's column was at the Escorial and the rear at Talavera. Twenty days were necessary before the English army could unite in one compact body. In the meantime Napoleon advanced into the pass of the

Somosierra, and threatened Madrid. General Hope was strongly advised by Don Thomas Morla, the Spanish Secretary at War, who was either treacherous or incompetent, or both, to march through Madrid, which would have thrown him directly into the centre of the French columns; but he was too cool, clear-sighted, and sagacious to be misled by vague reports, or inflated representations. He lost not a moment in deciding on his plan, carried his column with all its encumbrances over the Guadarama mountain, escaped many impending dangers by a rare union of prudence and enterprise, and effected his junction with Sir John Moore at Salamanca, on the 3rd of December, without loss of men, or without sacrificing any portion of his convoy. The march was equally successful, bold, and creditable to the general and his hardy troops.

The subsequent advance and retreat of the British army have been amply detailed in the preceding memoirs. At the battle of Corunna, General Hope's division was posted on the left of the English line, crossing the main road and resting on strong ground, reaching down to the muddy bank of the river Mero. A brigade was kept in reserve in the rear of the left wing. During the action, some companies of the Fourteenth, under Colonel Nichols, carried the village of Palavia Abaxo, considerably in advance of Hope's position, but that general had been called to the chief command, as Sir David Baird and Sir John Moore were successively carried from the field*; and as dark-

* There was a striking similarity between some of the incidents at Quebec in 1759, and Corunna, fifty years later. At Quebec, the com-

ness came on, he found the British army advanced considerably beyond their original ground, and the French falling back at all points in utter confusion. With the reserve under General Paget, and General Frazer's division, which had not been engaged, he might have converted the repulse of the enemy into a ruinous overthrow ; but to do this it would have been necessary to encounter all the hazards of fighting in the dark, with the certainty that no ultimate good could arise from following up the advantage already gained. Thousands upon thousands of the French were rapidly coming up in support, and the difficulty of an ultimate embarkation would be increased by the delay of days or even hours. General Hope, therefore, determined to abide by the original plan of his predecessor, and to carry off the army during the night. They remained in position until a late hour, undisturbed by the enemy, who had been too roughly handled to meditate another attack, and withdrew at the appointed hour without confusion or difficulty. The picquets followed at daybreak, and embarked under the protection of Hill's brigade, posted near the ramparts of Corunna. Not a wounded man or straggler was left behind, and General Hope himself was the last individual who quitted the shore, on the 18th of January. There can be no question that he decided with sound judgment, and evinced great self-

mander-in-chief, Wolfe, was killed, Monckton his second severely wounded, and the battle was concluded by Townshend, the third in seniority of rank. So it happened at Corunna, in the corresponding cases of Moore, Baird, and Hope.

forbearance in not yielding to the temptation of following up the success on the 16th, which in all probability would have proved an *ignis fatuus*.

General Hope's official report to Sir David Baird, when published, was greatly admired for the clearness of the details, and the soldier-like eloquence of the style. We copy it in full, as characteristic of the writer, and comprising in itself an interesting historical document.

“ ‘Audacious,’ off Corunna, Jan. 18th, 1809.

“ SIR,

“ In compliance with the desire contained in your communication of yesterday, I avail myself of the first moment I have been able to command, to relate to you the occurrences of the action which took place in front of Corunna on the 16th inst.

“ It will be in your recollection that about one in the afternoon of that day, the enemy, who had received reinforcements, and who had placed some guns in advance of the right and left of his line, was observed to be moving troops towards his left flank, and forming various columns of attack on that extremity of the strong and commanding position which on the morning of the 15th he had taken in our immediate front. This indication of his intention was immediately succeeded by the rapid and determined onset which he made against your division, occupying the right of our position. The events which occurred during that period of the action you are fully acquainted with.

“The first effort of the enemy was met by the commander of the forces, and by yourself at the head of the 42nd Regiment, and the brigade under Major-general Lord William Bentinck. The village on your right became the object of obstinate contest. I lament to say, that soon after the severe wound which deprived the army of your services, Lieutenant-general Sir John Moore, who had just directed the most able dispositions, fell by a cannon shot. The troops, though not unacquainted with the irreparable loss they had sustained, were not dismayed; but by the most determined bravery, not only repelled every attempt of the enemy to gain ground, but actually forced him to retire, although he had brought up fresh columns in support of those originally engaged. Finding himself foiled in every attempt to force the right of our position, he endeavoured by numbers to turn it. A judicious and well-timed movement, made by Major-general Paget with the reserve, which corps had moved out of its cantonments to support the right of the army, by a vigorous attack, defeated this intention. The Major-general having pushed forward the 95th (rifle corps) and the first battalion of the 51st Regiment, drove the enemy before him, and in his rapid advance threatened the left of the enemy’s position. This circumstance, with the position of Lieutenant-general Frazer’s division (calculated to give further security to the right of our line) induced the enemy to relax his efforts in that quarter; they were, however, more forcibly directed towards the centre, where they were again successfully

resisted by the brigade under Major-general Manningham, forming the left of your division, and a part of that under Major-general Leith, forming the right of the division under my orders.

“ Upon the left the enemy at first contented himself with an attack upon our picquets, which, in general, maintained their ground. Finding his efforts unavailing on the right and centre, he seemed determined to render his efforts against the left more serious, and succeeded in obtaining possession of the village (Palavia Abaxo), through which the great road to Madrid passes, and which was situated in front of that part of the line. From this post he was soon expelled with considerable loss, by a gallant attack of some companies of the 2nd battalion of the 14th regiment, under Lieut.-Colonel Nichols. Before five in the evening, we had not only successfully repelled every assault made upon the position, but had gained ground in all points, and occupied a more forward line than at the commencement of the action; whilst the enemy confined his operations to a cannonade and the fire of light skirmishers, with a view to draw off his other troops. At six the firing entirely ceased; the different brigades were re-assembled on the ground they had occupied in the morning, and the picquets and advanced posts resumed their original stations.

“ Notwithstanding the decided and marked superiority which at this moment the gallantry of the troops had given them over the enemy, who from his numbers and the commanding advantages of his position, had no

doubt expected an easy victory, I did not, on reviewing all circumstances, consider that I should be warranted in departing from what I knew was the fixed determination of the late commander of the forces, to withdraw the army on the evening of the 16th, for the purpose of embarkation, the previous arrangements for which had already been made by his orders, and were in fact far advanced at the commencement of the action.

“ The troops quitted their position about ten at night, with a degree of order that did them credit. The whole of the artillery that remained unembarked having been withdrawn, the brigades followed in the order prescribed, and marched to their respective points of embarkation in the town and neighbourhood of Corunna. The picquets remained at their posts until five in the morning of the 17th, when they were also withdrawn with similar order and without the enemy discovering any of the movements. With the exception of the brigades under Major-Generals Hill and Beresford, the army embarked with an expedition which has seldom been equalled, and the whole was afloat before daylight. The brigade of Major-General Beresford, which was alternately to form our rear-guard, occupied the land in front of Corunna; that of Major-General Hill was stationed in reserve on the promontory in rear of the town. The enemy pushed his light troops in advance soon after eight o'clock on the morning of the 17th, and shortly afterwards occupied the heights of St. Lucia, which command the harbour; but not-

withstanding this circumstance and the manifold defects of the place, there being no apprehension that the rear-guard could be forced, and the disposition of the inhabitants appearing to be good, the embarkation of Major-General Hill's brigade was commenced and completed by three o'clock in the afternoon.

“ Major-General Beresford, with that zeal and ability which are so well known to yourself and the whole army, having fully explained to the satisfaction of the Spanish authorities the nature of our movement, and having made every previous arrangement, withdrew his corps from the land front of the town soon after dark, and was with all the wounded that had not been previously moved, embarked before one this morning. Circumstances forbid us to indulge the hope that the victory with which it has pleased Providence to crown the efforts of the army, can be attended with any very brilliant consequences to Great Britain. It is clouded by the loss of one of her best soldiers; it has been achieved at the termination of a long and harassing service. The superior numbers and advantageous position of the enemy, not less than our own actual situation, did not admit of any advantage being reaped from success. It must be, however, to you, to the army, and to our country, the sweetest reflection that the lustre of the British arms has been maintained amongst many discouraging circumstances.

“ The army which entered Spain amidst the fairest prospects, had no sooner completed its junction, than owing to the multiplied disasters that dispersed the

native levies around us, it was left to its own resources. The advance of the British troops from the Douro afforded the best hopes that the south of Spain might be relieved; but this generous effort to save the unfortunate people, also afforded the enemy the opportunity of directing every exertion of his numerous corps, and of concentrating all his reserves for the destruction of the only regular force in the north of Spain.

“You are well aware with what diligence this system has been pursued, and how it produced the necessity of rapid and exhausting marches, which diminished the numbers, wasted the strength, and impaired the equipment of the army. Notwithstanding all these disadvantages, and those more immediately attached to a defensive position, which the imperious necessity of covering the harbour of Corunna for a time had rendered indispensable to assume,—the native and undaunted valour of British soldiers was never more conspicuous, and must have exceeded what even your own experience of that invaluable quality, so inherent in them, might have taught you to expect. When every one that had an opportunity seemed to vie in improving it, it is difficult for me, in making this report, to select particular instances for your approbation.

“The greatest part of the fleet having put to sea yesterday evening, the whole being under way, and the different regiments, during the embarkation, necessarily much mixed on board, it is impossible at present to lay before you a correct return of our casualties. I hope the loss in numbers is not so considerable as might have been

expected. If I was to venture an estimate, I should say, that I believe it did not exceed in killed and wounded from seven to eight hundred. That of the enemy must remain unknown, but many circumstances induce me to rate it at nearly double the above amount. We have some prisoners, but I have not been able to obtain an account of the number, which is not considerable. Several officers of rank have fallen or been wounded, amongst whom I am only at present enabled to state the names of Lieut.-Colonel Napier, 92nd; Majors Napier and Stanhope, 50th, killed*; Lieut.-Colonel Wynch, 4th; Lieut.-Colonel Maxwell, 26th; Lieut.-Colonel Face, 59th; Lieut.-Colonel Griffiths, Guards; and Majors Miller and Williams, 81st, wounded.

“To you, who are well acquainted with the excellent qualities of Lieut.-General Sir John Moore, I need not expatiate on the loss his country and the army have sustained by his death. His fall has deprived me of a valuable friend, to whom long experience of his worth had sincerely attached me; but it is chiefly on public grounds that I most lament the blow. It will be the conversation of every one who loved or respected his manly character, that after conducting the army through an arduous retreat with consummate firmness, he has terminated a career of distinguished honour, by a death that has given the enemy additional reason to respect

* Major Napier was not killed, but severely wounded and taken prisoner. He lived to fight in many more and brighter fields, and to become one of the greatest generals of his day, the conqueror and legislator of Scinde.

the name of a British soldier. Like the immortal Wolfe, he is snatched from his country at an early period of a life spent in her service; like Wolfe, his last moments were gilded by the prospect of success, and cheered by the acclamations of victory: like Wolfe, also, his memory will for ever remain sacred in that country which he sincerely loved, and which he had so faithfully served.

“It remains for me only to express my hope, that you will speedily be restored to the service of your country, and to lament the unfortunate circumstance that removed you from your station in the field to throw the momentary command into far less able hands.

“I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,
“JOHN HOPE, Lieutenant-General.

“To Lieut.-General Sir David Baird, &c. &c. &c.”

On the day of embarkation, General Hope issued the following general order to the army, dated from Her Majesty's ship “Audacious.”

“The irreparable loss that has been sustained by the fall of the commander of the forces, Lieut.-General Sir John Moore, and the severe wound which has removed Lieut.-General Sir David Baird from his station, render it the duty of Lieut.-General Hope to congratulate the army upon the successful result of the action of the 16th inst. On no occasion has the undaunted valour of British troops ever been more signally manifested. At the termination of a severe and harassing march, rendered necessary by the superiority which the enemy

had acquired, and which had materially impaired the efficiency of the troops, many disadvantages were to be encountered. These have all been surmounted by the conduct of the troops themselves, and the enemy has been taught that whatever advantages of position, or of numbers, he may employ, there is inherent in the British officers and soldiers a bravery that knows not how to yield, that no circumstances can appal, and that will ensure victory when it is to be obtained by the exertion of any human means. The Lieutenant-General has the greatest satisfaction in distinguishing such meritorious services as came within his observation, or have been brought to his knowledge. His acknowledgments are in a peculiar manner due to Major-General Lord William Bentinck and the brigade under his command, consisting of the 4th, 48th, and 50th regiments, which sustained the right of the attack. Major-General Manningham, with his brigade, comprising the 1st Royals, 26th, and 81st regiments, and Major-General Warde, with the brigade of Guards, will also be pleased to accept his best thanks for their steady and gallant conduct during the action. To Major-General Paget, who by his judicious movement of the reserve, effectually contributed to check the progress of the enemy on the right, and to the first battalions of the 52nd and 95th regiments which were thereby engaged, the greatest praise is justly due. That part of Major-General Leith's brigade which was engaged, consisting of the 59th regiment, under the personal conduct of the Major-General, also claims marked approbation.

“ The enemy not having rendered the attack on the left a serious one, did not afford to the troops stationed in that quarter an opportunity of displaying that gallantry which must have made him repent the attempt. The picquets and advanced posts, however, of the brigades under the command of Major-Generals Hill and Leith, and Colonel Catlin Crawford, conducted themselves with determined resolution, and were ably supported by the officers commanding these brigades, and by the troops of which they were composed.

“ It is peculiarly incumbent upon the Lieut.-General to notice the vigorous attack made by the second battalion of the 14th regiment under Lieut.-Colonel Nicholls, which drove the enemy out of the village in advance of the left (Palavia Abaxo), of which he had possessed himself. The exertions of Brigadier-General Clinton, Adjutant-General, unfortunately deprived the army of the benefit of his services. The exertions of Lieut.-Colonel Murray, Quarter-Master-General, and of the other officers of the general staff, were unremitting, and deserve the warmest approbation.

“ The Lieut.-General hopes the loss in point of numbers is not so considerable as might have been expected, but laments the fall of the brave soldiers and valuable officers who have suffered. He knows that it is impossible, in any language he can use, to enhance the esteem, or diminish the regret, that the whole army feels in common with himself for their late commander. His career has been unfortunately too limited for the public service, but has been more than sufficient for his

own fame. Beloved by the army, honoured by his sovereign, and respected by his country, he has terminated a life devoted to her interest, by a glorious death; leaving his name as a memorial, an example, and an incitement to those who shall follow him in the path of honour; and it is from his country alone that his merit can receive the tribute so justly his due."

We know of no military compositions, in this class, superior to those quoted above.

General Hope, soon after his arrival in England, received the thanks of both houses of parliament, the personal approbation of the King, the universal applause of his countrymen, and the Knighthood of the Bath.

In August, 1809, he served with the ill-planned and worse-executed Walcheren expedition, under the Earl of Chatham. His division was disembarked on the Island of South Beveland, and escaped the ravages of the fatal fever with less loss than other portions of the army. On his return he was appointed commander-in-chief in Ireland, but resigned that post in 1813, to act as second under Lord Wellington, in the south of France, on the resignation of Sir Thomas Graham, from ill health. Sir John Hope was superior in rank to Lord Wellington, at the opening of the Peninsular war, but when the latter obtained the Field Marshal's truncheon at Vittoria, Sir John volunteered to serve under him, and Lord Wellington joyfully accepted the offer, observing that he was "the ablest officer in the army." He was appointed to the command of the left wing, and assisted materially in the operations connected with

the Battle of the Nivelles, fought on the 10th of November 1813. At the passage of the Nive, on the 9th of December, the position of his corps gave him opportunities of signalising himself by which he attracted the notice of the whole army. Lord Wellington particularly mentioned him in his despatch, in these flattering terms: "I cannot sufficiently applaud the ability, coolness, and judgment of Lieut.-General Sir John Hope." In this action he exposed himself with the reckless bravery of a common soldier, and being a man of unusual stature and size, mounted on a gigantic horse suited to his weight, he became a marked and easy object for the enemy's fire. His escapes were almost miraculous. He was wounded in the leg, and received a contusion in the shoulder; four musket bullets passed through his hat, and two horses were shot under him. The chances were many against his outliving that day of close and desperate fighting. Lord Wellington blamed him for not being more careful, but his own example formed too often a direct contrast to his precept.

In a letter to Colonel Torrens, on this subject, his lordship says, "I have long entertained the highest opinion of Sir John Hope, in common, I believe, with the whole world; and every day's experience convinces me of his worth. We shall lose him, however, if he continues to expose himself in fire as he did on the last three days. Indeed, his escape was then wonderful; his hat and coat were shot through in many places, besides the wound in his leg. He places himself amongst the sharpshooters, without, as they do, shel-

tering himself from the enemy's fire. This will not answer; and I hope that his friends will give him a hint on the subject. I have spoken to M'Donald about it, and I will to Sir John Hope himself if I should find a favourable opportunity, but it is a delicate subject."

In the month of February, 1814, Lord Wellington entrusted to Sir John Hope the arduous operation of passing the Adour between Bayonne and the sea, while he, with the main body of the army, conducted a series of combined movements against Soult in person, considerably to the right and higher up the country. The force assigned to Hope amounted to twenty-eight thousand men, English, Spaniards, and Portuguese, with twenty pieces of artillery. On the morning of the 23rd of February, he commenced his bold attack. It was arranged that a detachment of gun-boats and *chasse-marées* from the fleet should appear at the mouth of the river to co-operate with the troops, but a contrary wind prevented their arrival at the appointed hour, and the general, unshaken by the first failure of his combinations, determined to attempt the passage without them. The French right was protected by a flotilla, but the British artillery and rockets soon destroyed some of the gun-boats of which it was composed, and compelled the remainder, with a sloop-of-war, to take refuge beyond their range, and higher up the river towards the city of Bayonne. The French general, Thouvenot, imagined the force under Hope to be much

* Wellington Despatches, vol. xi.

more numerous than it actually was, and his defence therefore became deficient in vigour. He suffered the British to pass in detachments on pontoons, and by twelve o'clock on the 24th, a large body of men had firmly established themselves on the right or French bank, and the expected British flotilla were then seen approaching the bar at the mouth of the river. The assistance of the naval arm proved timely and effective, but from the action of the surge and opposing tide, many daring seamen lost their lives. Hope, finding that his force which had gained the right bank of the Adour, amounted to eight thousand men,—early on the morning of the 25th closed round the citadel and entrenchments of Bayonne on the north side, resting both his flanks on the Adour, which formed a contracted semicircle, favourable to his views, and not much exceeding two miles in circumference. The operation was one requiring to be well planned and executed with precision; but the opposing efforts of the enemy were slight, for the lines of defence they were called upon to man and protect on both sides of the river exceeded in extent the resources of the garrison. During this, a bridge was formed three miles below the fortress, where the breadth of the Adour had been contracted by artificial embankments to eight hundred feet. The conception of this bridge originated with Colonel Sturgeon and Major Todd, of the Royal Staff corps, two of the best executive engineers that the army could boast. A boom was then constructed above the bridge, and carefully guarded to prevent the attack of fire-vessels

coming down the river. All was finished on the 26th, by the indefatigable labour of seamen and soldiers, and the rapid completion of this bridge and boom must be enumerated amongst the most extraordinary achievements of a war which abounds in incidents departing from sober history, and approaching the miraculous. Sir John Hope now, finding his communications firmly established, contracted his line of investment round the citadel of Bayonne, and drove the enemy from his position on the heights of St. Etienne, which brought his advanced posts close under the opposing works. Preparations for a regular siege were then commenced, and the English commander directed his most earnest attention to connect the operations of his three investing bodies. On the south side the French had thrown up an enormous entrenchment, forming a strong exterior line, but they required an army rather than a garrison to man the whole of their works.

Lord Wellington, pursuing his successes, drove Soult from Orthés, and finally entered Toulouse, after a sanguinary battle, on the 12th of April. Sir John Hope, during this interval, proceeded zealously with his preparations against the citadel of Bayonne, and collected a great store of gabions, fascines, and platforms; but he still waited the arrival of the siege guns, with which he had not yet been supplied. Vague rumours of the abdication of Napoleon, and the peace concluded in Paris, reached his camp, and he communicated them to the French general Thouvenot; but no official notification could be made without authority, and the governor of Bayonne

naturally paid no attention to intelligence which might be intended to mislead him. He therefore determined on a sortie, which proved to be the last and most useless episode of a sanguinary war. This enterprise was carried into effect some hours before daylight on the morning of the 14th of April. About one o'clock, a deserter came over to General Hay, who commanded the outposts, and brought an exact account of the intended sally. Hay, being ignorant of French, sent the man to General Hinuber, who immediately interpreted his story, assembled his own brigade under arms, and forwarded the intelligence to Sir John Hope. No additional precautions were taken by Hay, and at three o'clock the French, rushing suddenly from the citadel, to the amount of three thousand picked men, surprised the picquets, and carried the church and village of St. Etienne, with the exception of one fortified house, which was resolutely held by Captain Foster of the 38th regiment. General Hay was killed*, Colonel Townsend of the Guards made prisoner, and the whole of the investing line of the British on that side was thrown into utter confusion. Up to this point, the success of the French was complete. Then General Hinuber moved with his Germans in compact order, rallied a portion of the 5th

* Major-General Andrew Hay was the last general officer who fell during the Peninsular war. He was a native of Banff in Scotland, and had served thirty-five years. His career had been invariably distinguished by zeal, prompt decision, and daring intrepidity. His last act (a moment before he was shot) was an order to hold the church of St. Etienne, and a fortified house adjoining, to the last extremity. This brave officer has a public monument in St. Paul's Cathedral.

Division, and being also joined by General Bradford's brigade of Portuguese, drove the enemy back at the point of the bayonet. Day began to break as the reserves of the Guards came on, under General Howard, and completed the overthrow; but the allies sustained a loss of more than eight hundred men in killed, wounded, and prisoners. The casualties of the garrison were probably more, but it was impossible to ascertain them with correctness.

On the first alarm, Sir John Hope, with his staff, hastened at full gallop towards St. Etienne, and not aware that the village was already in possession of the enemy, and that his picquets had been driven back, he endeavoured to reach the scene of action by a hollow road which formed the shortest way. Here he found that the French had already taken possession of both banks, and wheeled round to extricate himself from the ambuscade into which he was hastening. The enemy opened fire within a few yards. A shot struck him in the arm, and eight bullets passed through his horse, which fell upon his leg. His followers had by this time escaped from the defile, but two of his personal staff, Captain Herries and Mr. Moore, a nephew of Sir John Moore, turned back to assist the fallen general, and alighting under a heavy fire, endeavoured to raise and carry him off. They were both dangerously wounded, and all three fell into the hands of the enemy. Sir John was immediately hurried to Bayonne, and before he reached the citadel was again severely hurt in the foot by a shot from the English picquets.

It was not known, in the confusion of the moment, what had become of the commander-in-chief, but the fact of his wounds and captivity soon transpired. It then appeared, also, that the French had only been able to extricate the colossal warrior by drawing his leg out of the boot, which was afterwards found under the horse's side.

A night action is always invested with an exclusive awfulness and grandeur. The sortie from Bayonne has been described by the survivors who were engaged as combining these attributes in an eminent degree; and the incident is associated with an additional and melancholy interest, from the fact of its occurring after the great contending powers had agreed to a cessation of hostilities.

Sir John Hope received kind treatment at the hands of his captors, and was soon released on the ratification of peace. He returned to England with a vast increase of reputation, and again received the thanks of Parliament, as also a medal and a clasp for the battles of Corunna and the Nive. On the enlargement of the military Order of the Bath, he became a Knight Grand Cross, and on the 17th of May, 1814, as a further reward for his eminent services, was created Baron Niddry of Niddry Castle, in the county of Linlithgow, with a pension of 2000*l.* per annum. His elevation to the peerage must have proved highly gratifying to his personal feelings, but the dignity merged shortly after in the higher title of Earl of Hopetoun, to which he succeeded on the 29th of May, 1816, on the death of his

elder brother. In 1819 he reached the rank of a full general in the army, and, in 1820, was appointed colonel of the 42nd, or Royal Highlanders. When George the Fourth came to Scotland in state in 1822, he visited Lord Hopetoun, who entertained him with a magnificent *dejeuné* at his seat in Linlithgowshire. His lordship died, somewhat unexpectedly, in Paris, on the 27th of August, 1823.

Lord Hopetoun was twice married; first, in 1798, to Elizabeth, the youngest daughter of the Hon. Charles Hope Vere, of Craigie Hall, by whom he had no issue; and, secondly, in 1803, to Louisa Dorothea, third daughter of Sir John Wedderburn, Bart., by whom he left a numerous family of nine sons and two daughters. His income, after his accession to the earldom, was very large; but his hospitality was unbounded, and he lived expensively. To secure fortunes for his younger children he insured his life for 100,000*l.* At that time he was strong and healthy, and as likely to reach a very advanced age as his friend and brother in arms, Lord Lynedoch; but it so happened that he died within twelvemonths after the insurance was effected, and when he had only completed his sixtieth year. The professional ability of this brave officer has been universally acknowledged. Few men have enjoyed the warm affection of so large a circle of private friends, and it would be difficult to name an individual who combined in such well-poised proportions, the "*suaviter in modo*," with the "*fortiter in re*."