

rality by his successes, less in the dark regarding it than their opponents. Once and again, unable to make out a case for him, and gravelled by what seemed the unanswerable arguments of their antagonists, they had to throw the entire responsibility on their indomitable general; and Wellington was content to bear it. Nor was it in the least wonderful that they should have found the case of the Peninsula a peculiarly hard one. Appearances, as all ordinary, and even almost all superior observers, were able to remark them, seemed sadly against the British. The brilliancy of Napoleon's military tactics,—above all, his splendid powers of combination,—had astonished the world. His marshals had learned in his school almost to rival himself; they were, besides, under his direct guidance; and they had three hundred thousand French soldiers in the Peninsula. The British there at no time amounted to sixty thousand. They had allies, it is true, in the Portuguese and Spaniards, but allies on which they could reckon but little; and yet, such was the apparently inadequate force with which Wellington had determined to clear the Peninsula. What could the man mean? Was he possessed of the vulgar belief that “one Englishman is a match for five Frenchmen at any time?” No; Wellington was perfectly sober-minded; and, with a confidence in the native prowess of the well-disciplined Briton such as that which Nelson possessed,—a confidence that, if opposed, man to man, on equal terms of position and weapons, the Englishman would beat the Frenchman, just as a stronger mechanical force bears down a weaker,—he was particularly chary of risking his men against overpowering odds. On what, then, was his confidence founded? He saw better than any one else the true circumstances of the Peninsula, and the true difficulties of the French. Spain, and especially Portugal, had their strongly defensible lines, which a weaker force, if through neglect it gave the enemy no undue advantage, and