

## The War in the Peninsula.

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The Spaniards derived great advantages from the favorable issue of this battle. It opened a road to Salamanca, and at the same time compelled the French to evacuate it. Three days after the battle, (21st Oct.) the duke del Parque crossed the Tormes towards Ledesma, while he pushed on a column in a contrary direction, as if he meant to reach Salamanca, by Muniguela. When he arrived on the heights to the north of Salamanca he was informed that the French had evacuated it, and were retreating towards Toro, laden with plunder from the churches. Once more in the possession of Salamanca, the Spaniards were enabled to direct their attention towards their grand object—the recovery of Madrid. As long as the duke del Parque could retain possession of that city, he could co-operate with the army of La Mancha; and if a junction of these armies were effected, the French could scarcely be expected to oppose their march to the capital. It was, therefore, highly important that they should be driven from Salamanca, and for this purpose the French gradually accumulated a force of nearly 20,000 men. But what they could not, probably, have done, of themselves, the Spaniards incautiously did for them. The duke del Parque, elated by the victory he had recently achieved and anxious to co-operate with the other army, in the proposed advance on Madrid—quitted a position where he could have defied his enemies and crossed over to the right bank of the Tormes. Here he encountered the marshal Kellerman (duke of Dalmatia) who was posted there with a very superior force. Nevertheless the young duke offered him battle.—The armies met at Alba del Tormes, and the action terminated in the total defeat and dispersion of the Spaniards. The troops, disdaining all order and controul, fled in every direction, leaving in the hands of their enemies 15 pieces of cannon, six standards, 10,000 muskets, upwards of 2000 prisoners, and about 3000 killed.

The army of La Mancha, was not more fortunate than those of the right and left. The officers and men were resolved to force their way to Madrid and never to cross the Sierra Morena, until they had effected that object. It was commanded by general Areizaga, and was connected with the army of the duke del Parque, by that of Estramadura, under the duke of Albuquerque. The plan was to cross the Tagus at Aranjuez, and to penetrate directly to Madrid, leaving one division to watch Toledo. The operations of their chief army engaged the hopes and expectations of all Spain: no expense had been spared to prepare it for the field and it had been five months under discipline. The troops were full of ardor and felt the greatest confidence in their leader: and the purpose to be attained was calculated to excite their warmest feelings. To oppose them Joseph once more quitted the capital, attended by the duke of Dalmatia, the duke of Treviso, the duke of Belluno, and general Sebastiani, the commander of the cavalry. The duke of Belluno was dispatched across the Tagus near Faente Duanna, to intercept the retreat of the Spaniards, if they should take that direction.

Aware of the inferiority of the Spanish cavalry in skill and discipline, the French endeavored to entice them into the open plain. For this reason they were suffered to pass the Tagus without opposition. But fortunately the manœuvre was perceived by the Spanish general who recalled them, and posted his whole force at Occana. When Areizaga

beheld the force of the enemy, it is said that he was dismayed, and perceived, when too late, that he had committed an error which could not be retrieved. The French state their force at 24,000; the Spaniards make it 44,000; the usual number of a corps is 23,000, and the Spanish account is therefore most probably nearest the truth. The disposition of the Spanish army was not judicious.—Areizaga had arrayed it in two equal parts, one on each side of the town, which thus divided his line: his second line was so near the first, that if the first were thrown into disorder, there was not room for it to rally. Most of the cavalry were stationed in four lines upon the right flank, a disposition neither imposing in appearance nor strong in reality. The artillery was upon the two flanks.

The action began about seven in the morning, and general Zayas, a young officer who had often distinguished himself, attacked the French cavalry with the advanced guard and drove them back. Between eight and nine the cannonade began. Mortier having reconnoitred the ground, resolved to make his chief attack upon the right wing, and, after having cannonaded it for a while from a battery in his centre, he ordered Leval, with the Polish and German troops to advance, and turn a ravine which extended from the town nearly to the end of this wing of the Spanish army. Leval formed his line in compact columns; the Spaniards met them advancing along the whole of their right wing, and Mortier himself admits that his first line wavered. It was speedily reinforced; the Spanish artillery was well served, and four regiments displayed a resolution which has never been surpassed: 450 men of the 5th regiment of Seville were in the field; these were the men who behaved so nobly with sir Robert Wilson at the Puerto de Banis—and only 80 of them were accounted for when the day was over! The first battalions of guards, which was 900 strong, left upon the field 14 officers and 450 men. But the right wing was broken, and a charge of cavalry completed the confusion on this side. The left wing stood firm and cheered Areizaga as he passed them;—an able general might yet have secured a retreat, but he was confounded at the disaster which he ought to have foreseen, and quitted the field, ordering this part of the army to follow him. Lord Macduff, who was with the Spaniards, then requested the second in command to assume the whole command; but while he was exerting himself to the utmost, the French cavalry broke through the centre, and the route was complete. Never indeed could the Spaniards have been defeated in a more unfortunate situation; they were upon an immense plain, exposed to the pursuit of cavalry, where they were followed and cut down on all sides. Victor, who crossed the Tagus at Villa Mensigar, pursued all night. So rapid was the flight of the Spaniards, and so great their fear of being overtaken, that they passed the Guidiana and fixed upon Duymiel as a place of rendezvous for those who should be so fortunate as to reach it. The whole of their artillery was abandoned. A great number of prisoners were taken, among whom were three generals, six colonels, and seven hundred inferior officers. Upwards of 40,000 muskets were found on the field: their loss in killed and wounded, as may readily be supposed in so fleet an army was comparatively small—that of the French, according to their own account, did not amount to 400 men; but the country people represent it at 6000. Half that number is probably near the truth, for Mortier himself admits that the Spanish fire both of artillery and musquetry was most tremendous. Thus at the close of the year