

on the high ground to the left of Castalla, having in this unequal conflict both inflicted and sustained very considerable loss. Two mountain guns fell into the enemy's hands; they could not be brought off, because they were disabled; Colonel Adam therefore directed Captain Arabin to fight them to the last, and then abandon them. Before day closed, the French were seen in great force on the road to Biar, and on the hills opposite the position; but darkness prevented any further operations for the night. At daybreak they were perceived in great numbers along the defile of Biar, and in the plain ground which separates it from the hills near Castalla; and in the course of the morning they posted several large masses of infantry, as if in preparation for a decided attack. Their success against Elio's corps had increased their confidence; and they had accustomed themselves to speak of this army as composed of the rabble of the allied nations, and to talk of driving them into the sea.

About one, they pushed forward a large column of cavalry to the village of Onil, about two miles in front of Castalla, and this movement was continued parallel to the front of the allies, until nearly opposite the right of the position. Sir John Murray had foreseen this; the ground was unfavourable for cavalry, and no notice was taken of the movement. Three masses of infantry at the same time moved rapidly from their right, crossed the plain ground in front of the pass, and with a gallantry, which, in the words of the British general, entitled them to the highest praise, commenced an attack on the centre and the left. The left had been weakened; for about an hour before the attack, General Whittingham had been ordered, with the three regiments which he had in position there, to make a reconnoissance upon the enemy's right flank; but this was the key of the position; and the consequence of thus weakening it might have been dis-

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*Battle of  
Castalla.  
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astrous, if Colonel D. Julian Romero had not opportunely arrived there with two regiments from Alcoy. Upon this point, from whence more than half its force had been withdrawn, the main attack was made; and notwithstanding the difficult approach to it, the assailants gained ground. The Spaniards, who had expended all their cartridges, were observed to be retiring, and the enemy moving in considerable force to the left of our centre. The moment was critical. Just as the assailants had gained the summit, Colonel Adam, whom they were proceeding to attack in front, prevented them; and giving them no time to recover breath after the exertion of such an ascent, charged and overthrew their column, killing, wounding, or taking prisoner, during the pursuit, almost every man opposed to his brigade. The Spaniards resumed their ground. Whittingham too had no sooner apprehended the intention of the enemy, than he returned with all speed, and arrived in time to take part in the action, in which, and in the pursuit, the Spaniards distinguished themselves. The total failure of the enemy here seemed to be felt along their whole line of attack; they retreated every where. The cavalry, which had now advanced toward the front of the allies, fell rapidly back on perceiving this unexpected reverse, and entered the defile in such confusion, that had the advantage been vigorously pursued, a signal victory might, in all likelihood, have been obtained. Suchet, having united his broken battalions with those which he kept in reserve, took up a hasty position at the entrance of the defile. Sir John Murray, still retaining the height, moved a considerable part of his army into the plain, and formed it in front of the enemy, within cannon-shot, his right flank covered with the cavalry, his left resting on the hills. In this state, Marshal Suchet thought that the English did not choose to make an attack, and Sir John Murray, that the French did not choose to wait for one; . . . for the line of the allies



was scarcely formed when the enemy began their retreat, and continued it through the night, the action terminating at dusk with a distant cannonade.

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The French had 18,000 infantry in the field, and 1600 cavalry: the allies were not much inferior in infantry, but greatly so in horse. The loss of the allies was 670 killed, wounded, and missing, the greater number of the killed being Spaniards. 800 of the enemy were left dead in front of the line which they had attacked: no prisoners were taken except such as were wounded; but Suchet sent 2000 of Elio's soldiers prisoners to Tortosa on their way to France, and represented that his success on the one part of the operations balanced his failure on the other. If this had been the case numerically, which it was not, it was far otherwise in reputation. He had suffered a mortifying defeat; but what must most have tended to console him for it was, his satisfaction at perceiving that there was no intention on the part of the allies to pursue their victory. He retreated that night to Villena through Biar, where he left many dead and dying. Sir John, on the following day, marched his army in two columns to Alcoy, hoping (though with little confidence in that hope) that he might force the strong pass of Albayda, and reach the intrenched position of the enemy at S. Felipe before they could; this he thought better than a direct pursuit, because the road which the French had taken was favourable for cavalry, and he was greatly inferior in that arm. In the vicinity of Alcoy, he remained till the 17th, and then advanced with the whole army into the open country, to the foot of the Albayda pass, about a league in front of Alcoy. But this being a lateral movement, made after the enemy had so far the start as to have passed all that was perilous for him, and got into a strong country, with his forces collected and re-



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stored to order, was an unimportant demonstration which had no effect: and he returned after it to his position at Castalla.

Marshal Suchet had not been more successful in machinations of another kind. Before the battle of Castalla, an Italian regiment in the Anglo-Sicilian army had been corrupted, and would have betrayed its post in an attack concerted with that view, if a timely discovery had not been made. A scheme also had been formed for delivering Alicante into his hands, but this also was detected, and three of his emissaries suffered death for it at Alcoy. Frey Assensio Nebot, known as a Guerrilla chief, by the name of *El Frayle*, the Friar, had more than any other partizan annoyed the French in Valencia. His party was well organized, and provided with a regularity which was seldom to be found in the regular Spanish armies: so rigorous were the measures employed against him, that women were put to death for supplying him with means and intelligence; and at length it was affirmed, that three criminals who had been condemned to capital punishment obtained their lives, and the promise of a good reward, on condition of presenting themselves to the Friar as volunteers, and taking an opportunity to assassinate him. Mr. Tupper, who had been the British consul at Valencia, and whose zealous services were never wanting to the common cause, obtained information of this villany, and the Friar was thus put upon his guard.

*Lord Wellington opens the campaign.*

Lord Wellington was now prepared to open the campaign, and, for the first time, with such means as enabled him to act in full confidence of success. If the Anglo-Sicilian army should not achieve any signal service, he was yet assured that it would give sufficient employment to Suchet; so that the Intruder could look for no support from that side. The British force under his command consisted of 48,000 effective men; the Portuguese of



about 28,000; the Galician of 18,000. The enemy were not inferior in number, and could more surely rely upon the whole of their troops; but the change in their Emperor's fortune and in their own had been such, that they looked only to a defensive campaign, and trusted to their strong position on the Douro. In the middle of May, Lord Wellington put his troops in motion. The cavalry which had wintered in the neighbourhood of Coimbra began their movement at the end of April: they went by the way of Porto to Braga, where they rested some days, and proceeding to Braganza, reached that place which was the point of union for the left of the army, on the 22d of May. The left of the army under Sir Thomas Graham crossed the Douro in Portugal, between Lamego and the frontier. The siege of Ciudad Rodrigo in the preceding year could not have been undertaken, unless that river had been rendered navigable far above the point to which the Portuguese barks formerly ascended; it had now been opened as high as to the mouth of the Agueda; and boats had been quietly collected at different points, without exciting any suspicion that they were designed for the passage of the troops. Five divisions of infantry and two brigades of cavalry were thus placed upon the right bank of the Douro, while the enemy supposed that they had only to guard against an attempt from the left. The difficulties of the march were indeed very great; most of the roads are so narrow, that carriages could barely pass between the thick walls which bounded them; and the mountain streams had their course in ravines, from whence the ascent is so laborious, that sixty men could not without great exertion enable the horses to drag the artillery up. Nevertheless, hope and ardour overcame all difficulties; and the advantage which the troops derived from being provided with shelter were sensibly felt: out of a division of 6000 men, there were but 120 sick after a march of 250

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*The left of  
the army  
crosses the  
Douro.*



CHAP. miles, through such a country. When these were far on their  
 XLIII. way, Lord Wellington, with two divisions of British infantry, a  
 1813. Portugueze one under the Conde de Amarante, a Spanish one  
 under Morillo, and some corps of cavalry, advanced from Ciudad  
 Rodrigo by the direct road to Salamanca; the remainder of  
 the army under Sir Rowland Hill moved upon the same point  
 by Alba de Tormes.

*May.*

*May 26.  
 Affair near  
 Salamanca.*

The line of their retreat in November was still too evidently marked by the skeletons of the poor animals who had been worked to death in that cruel service. A division of infantry under General Villatte had been left in Salamanca, with some artillery, and three squadrons of horse. They evacuated the city upon the approach of the allies, but they lingered too long upon the high ground in its vicinity. When Lord Wellington was within half a league of Salamanca, he and his staff got upon a rocky height which commanded a full view of the city and adjacent country. Below him were his own videttes, and beyond them those of the enemy, each supported by piquets. To the right were the Arapiles, a name known only in topography before, but which had now a place in military history; and in the same direction, but more behind him, the heads of two columns, forming Sir Rowland's division, were seen on two nearly parallel roads. Through a glass, the enemy were observed drawn up; two battalions and a squadron to the right of the city, near a ruined convent; two squadrons on the Tormes, near the bridge; half a squadron guarding the ford, about a mile above the city, near S. Martha; . . . and behind the city a battalion in reserve. Villatte having barricadoed the bridge and the principal communications throughout the town, seemed to have thought himself sure of an easy retreat. The 1st German hussars, favoured by ground which concealed them from the enemy, inclined toward the ford, while the 14th light



dragoons, keeping beyond the reach of fire, edged along the left bank of the river. The enemy appeared in some confusion, but remained stationary, as if waiting for something; and beyond the city, in the direction of Miranda de Duero and Zamora, their piquets were withdrawing, and mules and baggage joining them from all sides. It was now nearly ten in the forenoon, and the day very hot. The head of Sir Rowland's right column, which consisted of cavalry, and a troop of horse artillery, under General Fane, were within two miles of S. Martha, marching for the ford: the enemy now began to move, first in the direction of Toro, but presently, as if wavering, bending to their right, they kept close to the Tormes, in the direction of Arevalo; and retired rapidly, but in good order, when Fane with his six squadrons had crossed the river. It was well for them that this cavalry was already jaded by a long march; but the horse-artillery, as soon as, owing to the ravines and the intricacies of the ground, it could be brought into use, opened upon them with great effect, every shot going through their crowded ranks. They retired with extreme rapidity, but in excellent order, and the artillery pursued as quickly as a very deep country, occasionally intersected with hollow roads, would allow. When the enemy came to Aldea Lengua, there was an opportunity of attacking them with every probability of forcing them to lay down their arms; but strict orders had been given not to pass a ravine just by that village; and the moment (never to be regained in war) went by. When orders came to proceed, it was just too late; the pursuit however was continued, and some three miles beyond the village a charge was attempted by two squadrons, but feebly, for the horses were now far spent; the enemy formed into squares, and repulsed them by a volley, though with little loss. The pursuit was continued about three miles farther. Some of the French

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CHAP. were taken, being unable to march farther from fatigue; and  
 XLIII. many threw away their knapsacks, and sacks full of biscuit, and  
 1813. of corn, but no troops under such circumstances could have  
 behaved better; . . . and some proofs were given of what better  
 deserves to be called ferocious intrepidity than courage. One  
 of their men who was severely wounded attempted to destroy  
 himself; and another obstinately refusing to surrender when it  
 was not possible for him to escape, compelled those who would  
 fain have saved his life to cut him down. The affair ended in  
 front of Aldea Rubia; a corps of infantry and cavalry retiring  
 from Alba, when threatened by Major-General Long and by  
 Morillo's division, joined the enemy here; and Lord Wellington,  
 as his infantry had not come up, recalled the troops from the  
 pursuit. Above fourscore of the French lay dead on the road,  
 and many fell among the standing corn: some 200 were made  
 prisoners; and some baggage, ammunition, and provisions, with  
 Villatte's coach, were taken.

*Passage of  
 the Ezla.*

During the two following days, Lord Wellington established  
 the troops which had marched from the Agueda and Extre-  
 madura Alta between the Tormes and the Lower Douro. On  
 the 29th he left Salamanca, and reached Miranda de Duero.  
 The enemy had destroyed all the bridges upon the river except  
 that at Zamora. Opposite Miranda there is a ferry, where this  
 deep and rapid stream is from 80 to 100 yards wide, and the  
 rocks on either side from 400 to 500 feet high. When it is so  
 swoln that the ferry is impracticable, the only way by which  
 travellers can cross is after the old Peruvian manner, in a sort of  
 hammock or cradle, fastened to a rope, which is secured upon two  
 projecting points of rock, about thirty feet above the ordinary  
 level of the water. Here Lord Wellington crossed, and on the  
 following day joined Sir Thomas Graham's corps at Carvajales  
 on the Ezla. This river, which upon good grounds is believed

*Florez Esp.  
 Sagrada,  
 t. 16, p. 3.*



to have been the Astura of the ancients, and in Leon is called the Rio Grande, descends from the Puertos de Asturias, passes by Mansilla to Benevente, near which town it receives the Cea from the east, and the larger river Orbigo from the west, and enters the Douro below Zamora. At daybreak on the 31st, the troops began to ford; the enemy so little apprehended danger on that side, that they had only a piquet there, and thus no opposition was offered to a very difficult and perilous passage. The ford was intricate; the water nearly chin deep; the bottom rough and stony; and the stones large and loose. The hussar brigade began the passage, entering in a body; and as it was supposed that a village on the opposite hill was occupied by the enemy, and as it was necessary that some infantry should cross to support the advance of the hussars, each dragoon had a soldier holding by his stirrup. But this impeded the horses: alarmed both by the stream, and the unsafe footing, they became unmanageable and plunged forward: the men who before could scarcely keep their feet against the force and weight of the stream, lost at once their footing and their hold; they were plunged into the water, their knapsacks overweighed them and kept them on their backs, and in this manner they struggled at the mercy of the current. There were, fortunately, three or four small islands just at this part; and by these most of the officers and men were stopped, but several valuable lives were lost. The hussars exerted themselves with exemplary humanity to assist the infantry, and one of their corporals lost his own life in the performance of this generous duty. In this way the 51st and the Brunswick Oel's corps, as well as the cavalry, passed. Their orders were to ascend the hill and take the village; the enemy's piquet were made prisoners. A pontoon bridge was then thrown across, and the remainder of the corps passed over.

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*June.*

The French seem now for the first time to have comprehended Lord Wellington's plan, and found themselves out-ma-nœuvred by an enemy to whom they had hitherto allowed no credit for any thing except courage, and that only because they had been so often beaten by them that it was no longer for their own credit to deny it. No sooner were they menaced by the advance of the columns than they destroyed the bridge at Zamora, and retired from that city and from Toro. Both cities were entered by the allies; and at daybreak on the first of June, the hussar brigade under Colonel Grant came up near Toro with the enemy's rear-guard, who retired rapidly to the village of Morales, in the direction of Tordesillas. After having been cannonaded by two guns, which were all that could be brought up in time through the deep sandy roads, the French formed behind the village. The hussars passed on both sides of the village, and instantly charged them; upon which they made off with all speed for a little bridge across a marshy bottom, faced about there, being supported by some guns belonging to their infantry, and stood a charge. They were worsted in it, but passed the bridge; part of the 10th hussars pursued, and Captain Lloyd advancing with great spirit, but few followers, was taken; they were again pressed, and retired hastily on the infantry, losing more than 200 prisoners in these affairs, and so many in killed and wounded, that the 16th regiment of dragoons was almost destroyed. Captain Lloyd was ill-treated by his captors, they beat him and rifled him, but left him in their retreat. Though the fighting was almost in the street of Morales, the Spaniards were now so accustomed to sights of war, that within ten minutes after the firing had ceased, the women were spinning at their doors, and the little children at play as if nothing had happened.

Lord Wellington halted at Toro, that the light division and