

calculate, exceeded not forty-two or forty-three thousand men. The matter to be decided accordingly was, whether, with such means, we should be justified in laying siege to a strong place, well supplied, well garrisoned, and covered by an army which, in point of numbers, surpassed our own by nearly one-third; more especially after our late failure at Badajoz, the impression of which had not yet departed from men's minds. There could be but one opinion as to the prudence or imprudence of the undertaking, and that opinion Lord Wellington immediately embraced. He found himself mistaken in the estimate which had been formed of the defensibility of the place, and he now wisely abstained from a vain attempt to accomplish that for which his means were manifestly incompetent. Having placed Rodrigo in a state of blockade by drawing around it a chain of posts, he determined to await the result in the position which he had assumed; and he found comfort under a temporary derangement of his plans, from the conviction that his movement would at least operate as a powerful diversion in favour of other provinces and cities of Spain.

Matters continued in this state, from day to day, and from week to week, without giving birth to any events worthy of record. The blockade was maintained with so much diligence, that the garrison began at last to experience something like

distress, and the preparations for converting it into a siege, though not absolutely laid aside, went on slowly and with languor. Occasionally, too, an affair of posts would occur, in which, I regret to say, the enemy were not always unsuccessful; whilst rumours, as usual, came in to supply with subjects of speculation those who had little in their own immediate occupations or prospects to excite interest. One day brought intelligence of the formidable attitude assumed by the Spaniards in Galicia; the next furnished a detail of their overthrow and dispersion. Now we heard of Blake's arrival in Cadiz, and of the great deeds which he expected to perform in Andalusia; again, of the rapidity with which Suchet and Sebastiani were completing the subjugation of the southern provinces; and the probability that Grenada and Carthagená would shortly be reduced. But it was not till towards the end of August, that certain indications of a movement on the part of Marmont, gave to our own situation its ordinary character of interest; and September was far advanced before we learned to believe that important operations were really at hand.

The first expectation of hostilities about to recommence, was excited by a report that Marmont had broken up from his cantonments, and that his columns were in march towards Castile. This came in about the 24th of August, and as it was

supposed to rest upon tolerably good evidence, Lord Wellington made instant preparations to meet the threatened danger. The divisions which had hitherto occupied cantonments between Fuente Guinaldo and the Tagus, closed up; the first and fourth passing the Coa, and stationing themselves at Nave d'Avel, Fuentes de Honor, Villa Formosa, and Valdelamula; whilst the remainder took post on the heights of Pastores, at El Boden, at Montiago, Albergaria, and the places near. By this arrangement, the several brigades of the allied army were so distributed, as that they could, at a moment's notice, concentrate between the Agueda and the Coa; whilst all the principal defiles of the mountains beyond being watched, the possibility of throwing a corps unobserved either into Rodrigo, or upon any link in our communications, was prevented. A point d'appui, likewise, for those in front, was constituted at Fuente Guinaldo, where a position was marked out, and strengthened by respectable intrenchments; in a word, every precaution was taken which the circumstances of the case appeared to demand, and which would enable Lord Wellington either to fight to advantage, should it be his policy to risk a battle, or, having kept out his advanced corps to the last moment, to fall back upon his resources.

We were thus situated, the expectations of all

being excited to a high degree, when there fell into our hands letters and other documents, which threw a good deal of light, as well upon the amount of the enemy's means, as upon the plans which he had been lately devising, and the manner in which he proposed to carry them into execution. Of the letters, one, and not the least interesting, was addressed by General Foy, from his head-quarters at Almaraz, to General Gerard, commandant of the 5th corps at Zafra. It bore date so long ago as the period of our first arrival in our present line, and informed the writer's correspondent of the march of the British army towards Ciudad Rodrigo; of Lord Wellington's designs upon that place; and of the measures which the French were about to adopt, for the purpose of defeating them. General Foy, it appeared, was under orders to join Marmont at Plasencia, whilst Gerard was to move upon Almaraz and Truxillo; eight thousand men were on their march from the army of the centre; and their arrival at the Tagus might daily be expected. As soon as these should come up, Marmont was to push, with the whole of his army, through the pass of Baños, and to advance upon Ciudad Rodrigo from the side of Alba; whilst General D'Orsenne, with as many troops as he might be able to collect, was to threaten the blockading force from Salamanca. Such was a general outline of the

enemy's plan, as far at least as it could be collected from the statements of General Foy; with respect to the amount of resources at his disposal, we possessed other and not less accurate means of information. Of the strength of Marmont's corps, after it should have been reinforced by the promised divisions, little doubt could exist; we set it down, allowing for casualties and sickness, at forty-five thousand effectives; D'Orsenne's we were disposed to calculate at twenty-five or thirty thousand; and there were included in it fifteen thousand infantry, and five hundred cavalry of the imperial guard. The latter fact we learned from a perusal of certain official returns, which, together with the intercepted letters above alluded to, came into our possession; and we were the more inclined to place reliance on their accuracy, from private accounts representing the division of guards as little short of thirty thousand. One of D'Orsenne's generals, for example, in a private communication full of the most extravagant bombast, informed the Governor of Rodrigo, that they were coming with twenty-five thousand guards; and then, added he, "*Nous verrons si ces illustres Anglois nous attendront, ou si, comme à l'ordinaire, ils se retireront.*" This statement was, of course, treated as a gross exaggeration; yet the amount of force known to be at Marmont's disposal was such as we could scarcely hope to fight to advantage;

and as Lord Wellington saw nothing in the existing state of affairs, which demanded that his prudent counsels should be abandoned, he resolved not to hazard a general action at all. On the contrary, it was his intention to retire leisurely across the Agueda, or even further, in case he should be hard pressed; and, from some other and better ground, to act offensively or otherwise, according as circumstances might direct.

I should try the patience of the reader beyond endurance, were I to repeat, in regular order, all the demonstrations and trifling movements on the part both of the enemy and ourselves, which, up to the middle of September, served to keep alive the interest under which we now began again to labour. At one time, a corps of French cavalry was known to have threaded the pass of Baños, and all were, in consequence, on the alert, as at the commencement of great undertakings. At another, the cavalry were stated to have withdrawn; and a rumour prevailed, that Marmont was once more falling back upon Plasencia; and that the design of relieving Rodrigo was abandoned. For this, a variety of causes were assigned. Soult had fought a severe action with Blake, and had suffered a defeat: he had returned to Llerena, and part of Marmont's troops were on their way to reinforce him. The Spaniards in the north, too, were acquiring fresh resolution, and

great things might yet be expected from them. Thus were we amused, day after day, by statements which at the best could be very imperfectly relied upon, and which were not unfrequently devoid of all foundation; till men ceased in the end to turn their eyes, with the smallest interest, to any other part of the stage besides that immediately before them. But matters were drawing gradually to a crisis; and proofs began by degrees to develope themselves, touching the real predicament in which the belligerent parties stood; and the fate which, as a matter of course, might be expected to attend ourselves.

CHAPTER VIII.

Delay on the part of the enemy to commence operations—They advance to the relief of Ciudad Rodrigo; throw in a convoy, and pass the Agueda—Skirmishes along the front of the British line, which falls back upon Fuente Guinaldo—Display of French troops there—Lord Wellington retires to Alfayates—Partial actions during the movement—The enemy withdraw, and the British troops retire into cantonments behind the Coa—Ciudad Rodrigo observed by flying parties—Exploits of Don Julian.

It was now the middle of September, and the enemy's grand movement for the relief of Ciudad Rodrigo was still deferred, though each successive day brought additional proofs that no great while would elapse ere it would receive its accomplishment. We heard from various quarters that Marmont's columns were in march towards Tomames and Val de Fuentes, and that the imperial guards, with other troops to the number of twenty or twenty-five thousand men, were collected in and

about Salamanca. Next came intercepted communications, which stated that a convoy would arrive near the place on the 20th or 21st at the latest; and that the force with which it was proposed to cover its introduction, would render all idea on our part of an attempt at molesting it, inadmissible. Upwards of sixty thousand infantry, cavalry, and artillery, it was said, were prepared to raise the blockade; it was even hinted that a fresh irruption into Portugal was at hand, and that a campaign as active as had yet been performed, and pregnant with results the most important, might be expected. Such reports and surmises, from whatsoever quarter conveyed, or by whomsoever stated, were received with the liveliest interest by the army at large. The sun never rose without an expectation that great deeds would be accomplished, or at least begun, before his setting; and never set without producing a conviction, that when he rose again, it would be upon a scene of carnage and strife. All, however, were prepared to bid that morning welcome, let it come when it might. The best dispositions which his circumstances would allow had already been made by Lord Wellington, and the best spirit prevailed among the men; so that, if one feeling appeared more conspicuous than another, it was of impatience that the game, so long anticipated, should be so tardy in its commencement.

In the former chapter a general outline has been given of the order in which the allied troops, from time to time, arranged themselves; it may not be amiss to give here in detail, the nature of the ground which they occupied at this critical juncture. There were two divisions, the fifth and the light, on the right bank of the Agueda; the one occupying Payo, the other Martiago. The latter communicated by its left, through Pastores, with the third division of El Boden; which, again, extending along the river Azava as far as Gallegos, united with the sixth, and thus leaned the left of the whole line upon the Agueda at Cesmiro. At the same time, Fuente Guinaldo, Nave d'Avel, and the posts in that direction, were held by the fourth and first divisions; whilst the cavalry were at Ituero, Espeja, Carpio, and along the plain which skirts the left of the high ground that runs parallel with the Agueda from Fuente Guinaldo to El Boden and Pastores, where it terminates in an abrupt fall towards Ciudad Rodrigo. The two lines of operations, again, which it was probable that the enemy would select, were either by Gallegos and Almeida, passing the Azava and Duos Casas rivers; or along the great road which leads to Fuente Guinaldo, turning the Azava, and making direct for Sabugal. Now, as the country on the latter of these was in every point of view more defensible than that upon the former, Lord

Wellington early determined on making it the line of his retreat; and the divisions upon the more advanced chain accordingly received orders, in case of an attack, to retire, after having well disputed their ground, towards Fuente Guinaldo. Here it was expected that a more resolute stand would be made, under cover of the redoubts and other works which had of late been thrown up; whilst, in the event of further falling back, everything was so settled, that the movement could be executed at any moment, and with comparative security.

Such was the order of the allied army, when, on the 24th of September, a considerable body of the enemy showed themselves in the plain before Ciudad Rodrigo. They came from the Salamanca and Tomames roads, and were accompanied by a countless number of waggons, cars, and loaded mules. Their progress was slow, and apparently cautious; but towards evening the convoy began to enter the place, under cover of about fifteen squadrons of cavalry, which passed the Agueda, and a large column of infantry, which halted upon the plain. Still no symptoms were manifested of a design to cross the river in force, or to attempt anything further than the object which was thus attained; for the advanced cavalry withdrew at dusk, and all bivouacked that night near the town. In the morning, however, as soon as objects became

discernible, one corps of cavalry, amounting to at least five-and-twenty squadrons, supported by a whole division of infantry, appeared in motion along the great road, which, leading from Ciudad Rodrigo to Guinaldo, leaves El Boden on the left; whilst another, less numerous perhaps, but, like the former, strongly supported by infantry, marched direct upon Espeja. They both moved with admirable steadiness and great regularity; and as the sun happened to be out, and the morning clear and beautiful, their appearance was altogether very warlike, and extremely imposing.

As it was not for some time ascertained whether strong reconnoissances only, or the advance of the whole French army, were intended; and as Lord Wellington felt great reluctance to abandon the heights of El Boden and Pastores, unless threatened by numbers which it would have been useless to oppose, our troops neither shifted their ground, nor made at first any general disposition to cover the points threatened by concentration. The enemy's columns, on the contrary, pushed on—not disregarded certainly, but as certainly without drawing us into any premature disclosure of our intentions; till the larger mass, which was moving towards Guinaldo, reached the base of some rising ground, which was held by a portion of the third division. These troops instantly formed; and though they consisted of no more

than one British brigade under General Colville, and one Portuguese regiment of infantry—the ninth—some pieces of Portuguese artillery, and four squadrons of General Alten's cavalry, they contrived to arrest, for a considerable space of time, the further advance of the assailants. It was my good fortune to be particularly mixed with this affair, and as one more brilliant has not often been accomplished by a handful of British troops, I shall take the liberty of giving here a somewhat detailed account of it.

I have said that the enemy's column was permitted to approach almost to the base of the heights, before any disposition was made, on our part, to harass or impede its progress. The guns, indeed, opened upon his leading squadrons as soon as they arrived within range, and it was consolatory to observe that their fire was well directed; but the infantry continued in close columns of battalions behind the ridge, and the cavalry stood in similar order, each man with the bridle of his horse slung across his arm. As soon, however, as it became distinctly manifest that an attack was in serious contemplation, our troops prepared to meet it with their accustomed gallantry and coolness. The infantry wheeled into line; the cavalry mounted, and made ready to move wherever their presence might be required; whilst the artillery, redoubling their exertions, poured forth a

shower of grape and case shot, which exceedingly galled and irritated the enemy. These arrangements were not lost upon the French; they too gave to their front a greater extent, as speedily as the nature of the ground would permit, and advanced forward.

The attack was begun by a column of cavalry, which charged up the heights in gallant style, cheering in the usual manner of the French, and making directly for the guns. Our artillery men stood their ground resolutely, giving their fire to the last; but there being nothing immediately at hand to support them, they were at length compelled to retire, and the guns fell, for a moment, into the hands of the assailants. But it was only for a moment; for the 5th regiment was ordered instantly to recover them. They marched up in line, and firing with great coolness; when at the distance of only a few paces from their adversaries, they brought their bayonets to the charging position, and rushed forward. I believe this is the first instance on record of a charge with the bayonet being made upon cavalry by an infantry battalion in line; nor, perhaps, would it be prudent to introduce the practice into general use; but never was charge more successful. Possessing the advantage of ground, and keeping in close and compact array, the 5th literally pushed their adversaries down the hill; they then retook the

guns, and limbering them to the horses which had followed their advance, drew them off in safety. Whilst this was going on in one part of the field, repeated and impetuous attacks were made in another upon the handful of cavalry, which, under General Alten's orders, manfully stood its ground. Columns of the enemy's squadrons pushed again and again upon the heights at different points, and under different leaders; but they were overthrown as regularly as they came on, by short charges from our resolute troopers, who drove them down the descent with great slaughter, and still greater confusion. It is worthy of remark that, on all such occasions, the assailants outnumbered the defenders by at least four to one; and that, emboldened perhaps by their recent successes at the outposts, they came on with the reckless bravery which is exhibited only by men accustomed to conquer; but nothing could exceed the steadiness of our cavalry; and their excellence became only the more apparent, on account of the great odds to which they were opposed. There were present in this rencontre two squadrons of the 1st hussars of the King's German Legion, with a similar number of the 11th light dragoons; between whom it was impossible to determine which performed feats of the greater gallantry; indeed I can personally attest that the single source of anxiety experienced by the officers in command, arose

from an apprehension lest these brave fellows should follow the broken multitudes down the cliffs and precipices into which they drove them. To hinder this were the efforts of others and myself mainly directed ; and it was not without considerable exertions that we succeeded.

The action had continued in this state for some time, the enemy continually assaulting our front and left, and we as continually repulsing them, when Captain Dashwood, an active officer of the Adjutant-general's department, suddenly discovered a heavy column moving towards the rear of our right, round which it had penetrated unobserved, and therefore unresisted. Not a minute was to be lost, for even a moment's indecision would have enabled the French to accomplish their object of surrounding us. A retreat was accordingly ordered, and the heights were abandoned. It is scarcely necessary to add, that the peculiarity of our situation compelled us to look rather to the celerity with which this manœuvre could be executed, than to anything besides, and that the retreat of the cavalry was, in consequence, more precipitate than orderly ; but the brigade of infantry, which consisted of the 77th, 83rd, and 5th, covered it, and found fresh opportunities of exhibiting their steadiness and high state of discipline. They formed into squares in the plain in rear of the hussars, and when the French cavalry came on in

overwhelming numbers, and at full speed, opened upon them a fire so destructive, that it completely checked them. This was the last effort on either side. The enemy, overawed by the commanding attitude assumed by our infantry, drew back ; and our troops continued their march upon Fuente Guinaldo, where they arrived, in due time, without further molestation.

Whilst the right of our line was thus employed, large masses of the enemy's cavalry and infantry bore likewise upon our left, and drove back the advanced posts from Carpio, and the stations near. They were opposed chiefly by the 14th and 16th dragoons, which charged with great gallantry as often as opportunities offered ; but as it was highly improbable that demonstrations thus made in force upon both flanks would not, sooner or later, end in an endeavour to bring on a general action, Lord Wellington early began to make his dispositions for the event. For this purpose, the light division was commanded to cross the river, and hold the right of the line at Fuente Guinaldo ; the third and fourth divisions, with General Pack's brigade, took their ground so as to be flanked by the redoubts ; the seventh, which had hitherto been in reserve at Albergaria, closed up ; whilst the fifth remained still on the right bank of the Agueda, with a view of giving additional security to that flank of the position. The cavalry, again, were all moved into

the centre, and took post in front of the town. At the same time the sixth division defiled from Gallegos and Espeja towards its right; whilst General Graham, who commanded the force on the left of Ituero, and was, with the first division, at Nave d'Avel, received instructions, in case the right should be sorely pressed, to march at the shortest notice to its support. Every movement was made, and every object accomplished, on the night of the 25th, without the slightest confusion or risk; indeed the only circumstances which befell during the progress of operations, at all deserving of record, occurred at Pastores, where the 74th and a battalion of the 60th regiments were posted. By some mistake or another, the orders for the retreat of these regiments did not arrive till all support had been withdrawn, and the enemy were seen in their rear; upon which Colonel Trench of the 74th, the senior and a very distinguished officer, with great judgment passed the Agueda, and made good his retreat by the right bank. He fell in, during his perilous journey, with a party of French cavalry, most of whom he succeeded in making prisoners; and having re-crossed the river, overtook his division about midnight, with the two battalions unbroken and uninjured.

The night of the 25th was spent by us as it is customary for soldiers to spend a night upon which they have reason to expect that a day of

battle will rise; that is to say, the superior officers lay down in their cloaks upon the floors of the houses, whilst the men slept on their arms, round large fires, which blazed along the range of the position.

Long before dawn, however, all were astir and in their places; and the different regiments looked anxiously for the moment which should behold the commencement of a game as desperate as any which they had been yet called upon to play. But, instead of indulging our troops as they expected, Marmont contented himself with making an exhibition of his force, and causing it to execute a variety of manœuvres in our presence; and it must be confessed that a spectacle more striking has rarely been seen. The large body of cavalry which followed us to our position, and had bivouacked during the night in the woods adjoining, were first drawn up in compact array, as if waiting for the signal to push on. By and by, nine battalions of infantry, attended by a proportionate quantity of artillery, made their appearance, and formed into columns, lines, echelons, and squares. Towards noon, twelve battalions of the imperial guard came upon the ground in one solid mass; and as each soldier was decked out with feathers and shoulder-knots of a bloody hue, their appearance was certainly imposing in no ordinary degree. The solid column, however, soon deployed into

columns of battalions—a movement which was executed with a degree of quickness and accuracy quite admirable; and then, after having performed several other evolutions with equal precision, the guards piled their arms, and prepared to bivouac. Next came another division of infantry in rear of the guards, and then a fresh column of cavalry, till it was computed that the enemy had collected on this single point a force of not less than 25,000 men. Nor did the muster cease to go on, as long as daylight lasted. To the very latest moment, we could observe men, horses, guns, carriages, tumbrils, and ammunition-waggon, flocking into the encampment; as if it were the design of the French general to bring his whole disposable force to bear against the position of Fuente Guinaldo.

The position of Fuente Guinaldo was held at this time by three divisions only of the allied army, not one of which could bring into the field so many as 5000 bayonets. Our numerical inferiority was, therefore, very great; and as there was nothing in the nature of the ground calculated to make up for a superiority in numbers so decided, Lord Wellington at once determined to abandon his works, and retire. In accordance with this resolution, we began our retreat immediately after dark on the 26th; the right wing taking the two roads which lead, one by Castelhas dos Flores

and Furcalhos, the other by Albergaria and Aldea de Ponte to Nave d'Avel, whilst the left fell back upon Bismula, and behind the Villa-major river; and the troops went off in such perfect order, that not only were there no stragglers, but not an article of baggage, however valueless, was left behind. Our movements had, however, been closely watched by the enemy; for on the morning of the 27th they appeared in two columns, each consisting of twelve squadrons of cavalry, and a division of infantry, upon the two roads by which our right wing was retiring. These columns mutually supported one another; and their great object appeared to be, not so much to overtake and force us to give battle, as to hurry us in our march; but they were in no single instance successful. On the contrary, their obstinacy on two different occasions enabled portions of our corps to beat them back with some loss, and with a great deal more of confusion.

The enemy's force which marched by Furcalhos, was stopped at that place by the infantry of the light division. They had fallen in with the cavalry early in the day, which, retiring before them, drew them to some broken ground, where the infantry was formed; and a few discharges from the skirmishers served to convince them that here at least our line of march was not to be pressed. They therefore abstained from making

the attempt; but the corps which followed the Aldea de Ponte road seemed animated by a more daring spirit, and pushed vigorously to obtain possession of a range of heights which lead from that village to Nave d'Avel; and had they succeeded, the communication between the right and left wings of our army would have been destroyed. But Lord Wellington no sooner observed their design than he took effectual measures to defeat it, by commanding the 3rd, 4th, and light divisions, with a considerable force of cavalry, to halt and concentrate upon the point threatened. The disposition was hardly effected, when our people were assailed by clouds of tirailleurs, which, as usual, covered the front of the French columns, and a very brisk skirmish ensued. It fell chiefly upon the 4th division, supported by General Pack's Portuguese brigade and the cavalry; indeed, the brunt of it was borne by the fusileer brigade under Colonel Pakenham; but though warm for the moment, it was not of long continuance. The enemy were chased at once from the high grounds which they had gained. They fled, rather than retired, beyond Aldea de Ponte, and they were pursued with the impetuosity which English soldiers generally exhibit, considerably further than it had been intended to follow them. The consequence was, that our light troops were, in their turn, driven back by the

enemy's supporting column, which, roused by the sound of firing, had crossed over from the Furcalhos road, and were compelled to retire upon the divisions in position, which had not, since the commencement of the affair, once changed their order.

An opinion now began to prevail, that it was Marmont's intention to push us across the Coa, with the rapidity of one who had already conquered, or was, at all events, secure of conquest. Lord Wellington himself adopted the idea, and indignant at the presumption which all his adversary's movements displayed, he resolved to render the proposed task somewhat more difficult of performance than it appeared to be regarded by the French Marshal. There were some heights, or rather acclivities, about Rendoa and Soito, which offered an extremely favourable position, the Coa covering both flanks, and a retiring angle of the river forming their point d'appui. Thither the army moved on the night of the 27th, and there it was proposed to fight a battle on the morrow, in case the French should persist in the design for which we gave them credit. With this view the fifth division received orders to pass the Agueda at Navas Freas, and to form the right of the line above Quadraseias. The fourth division was to draw up upon the left of the fifth; the light above Soito; the third in front of Pouca Tarenha; the

first and sixth at Rendoa, where the ground was peculiarly strong; and the seventh, with the cavalry, in a second line in the rear. There cannot be a doubt that we should have fought here with much greater security to ourselves than at Fuente Guinaldo; because the natural defences would have shielded our troops far more effectively, whilst the approaches for the enemy were both difficult and exposed; yet there were objections even to this position, which the most sanguine found it difficult to overlook. There was no secure retreat. With a river like the Coa in our rear, it would have been absolutely necessary, either to repel, at all points, the enemy's attacks, however formidable, or to perish; for the line, once broken, could not be withdrawn without suffering a loss, which, in our case, must have proved fatal. As it happened, however, the excellence of the position was not destined to be tried, for the enemy never approached it. Whether it was that Marmont's provisions failed him, or that he deemed it unwise to attack us upon ground so formidable, I know not; but on the morning of the 28th, the strength of his columns had disappeared, and only a rear-guard of cavalry remained to keep possession of Aldea de Ponte.

Notwithstanding the apparent retreat of the enemy's columns, Lord Wellington did not consider himself justified in abandoning the line

which he had taken up, till some more decisive proof should be afforded that immediate danger was at an end. About noon on the 28th, however, all doubts on the subject were removed by the return of Major Gordon, brother to the Earl of Aberdeen, to head-quarters; who, so long ago as the 25th, had been sent to the French army as the bearer of a flag of truce, and whom Marmont had very prudently detained during the progress of his late operations. Major Gordon was, as might be expected, well stored with interesting anecdotes relative to the situation and feelings of the French army. He had received the most marked attention from Marmont and others of the generals, with whom he lived on terms of familiarity, and who scrupled not to carry him along with them in their rides, and to give him the fullest insight into all their dispositions and arrangements. He spoke of the enemy's troops as being generally well appointed and equipped, especially the cavalry and imperial guards; and he estimated their numbers at full 60,000, with 120 pieces of cannon. The French, it appeared, expressed themselves in terms of the highest respect touching the military talents of Lord Wellington, of which they considered his retreat from Fuente Guinaldo as furnishing another brilliant specimen; for they had fully anticipated an action at that place, and all their plans were laid to secure a decisive victory.

The great bulk of their army, it appeared, was to have been directed against our right, partly forcing and partly turning it; and whilst the cavalry, of which they brought full six thousand into the field, amused and occupied the centre, our left also was to have been assailed. They were therefore not a little disappointed, when the dawn of the 27th displayed our works and position abandoned; and whilst they lamented the mischance which had thus wrested the laurel from their brows, they gave our chief full credit for the prudence which dictated his determination to fall back. Major Gordon further stated that the French, when they first passed the Agueda, entertained no other design than merely to reconnoitre our position, and to retire again; but that, irritated by their cavalry loss, they pushed on, and were afterwards tempted, from a contemplation of our extended alignment, to bring up, as they did on the 26th, the whole of their army.

Now, however, the campaign was at an end. They were all in full march towards Spain, for the purpose of separating into corps, and retiring to different quarters; that of General D'Orsenne into Galicia, where, after it should have received large reinforcements, and passed under the command of Oudinot, it was to become the army of the north; whilst that of Marmont, with its an-

cient title of the Army of Portugal, was to return to its original station about Plasencia.

The single circumstance of Major Gordon's return sufficed to convince us, that in the opinion which he had formed relative to the future proceedings of the French army, he was not mistaken; since Marmont, had he intended to prosecute the invasion of Portugal any further, would have scarcely permitted him—first, to acquire so much accurate information—and then, to carry it over to the English General; and it ought here to be recorded that the army possessed few more able, intelligent, and active officers, and perhaps none who more largely possessed the confidence of Lord Wellington, than Major Gordon. It became, therefore, evident enough, that, for the present at least, the campaign was at an end. Under these circumstances, a question naturally arose, how was it probable that the allied troops would be disposed of?—in other words, would the close investment of Ciudad Rodrigo be resumed, or should we follow the example of the enemy, by withdrawing into temporary cantonments? Against the scheme of a renewed investment, there were many and powerful reasons to be urged. In the first place, every chance of reducing the place by famine was removed, the late convoys having amply supplied it with all manner of stores; whilst to

the vigorous prosecution of a siege, the approaching rainy season threatened to oppose obstacles, such as we could scarcely hope, even with means more ample than those actually at our disposal, to surmount. But these, though sufficiently weighty, were not the only objections to which the undertaking was liable. The enemy had already given proof that they were disposed to make any sacrifices in other quarters, rather than permit a place so important to fall into our hands; and having once drawn their force to a head, it was very little probable that they would hesitate about doing so again, should similar reasons for the movement be held out to them. To sit down, however, before fortresses, only that he might be compelled to retire again, suited not the policy of Lord Wellington; he therefore determined, at least for the present, to suspend any attempt upon the place, and to give to his soldiers that rest of which their general exhaustion and increasing sickness stood so much in need.

On the 29th of September the allied army broke up from its position in front of Alfayates, and leaving the light and fourth divisions to observe Rodrigo, and discharge the duty of the outposts, passed the Coa, and withdrew into cantonments. By this arrangement, a line was taken up, which extended from Penamacor, on the right, to Celebrico on the left; and head-quarters being estab-