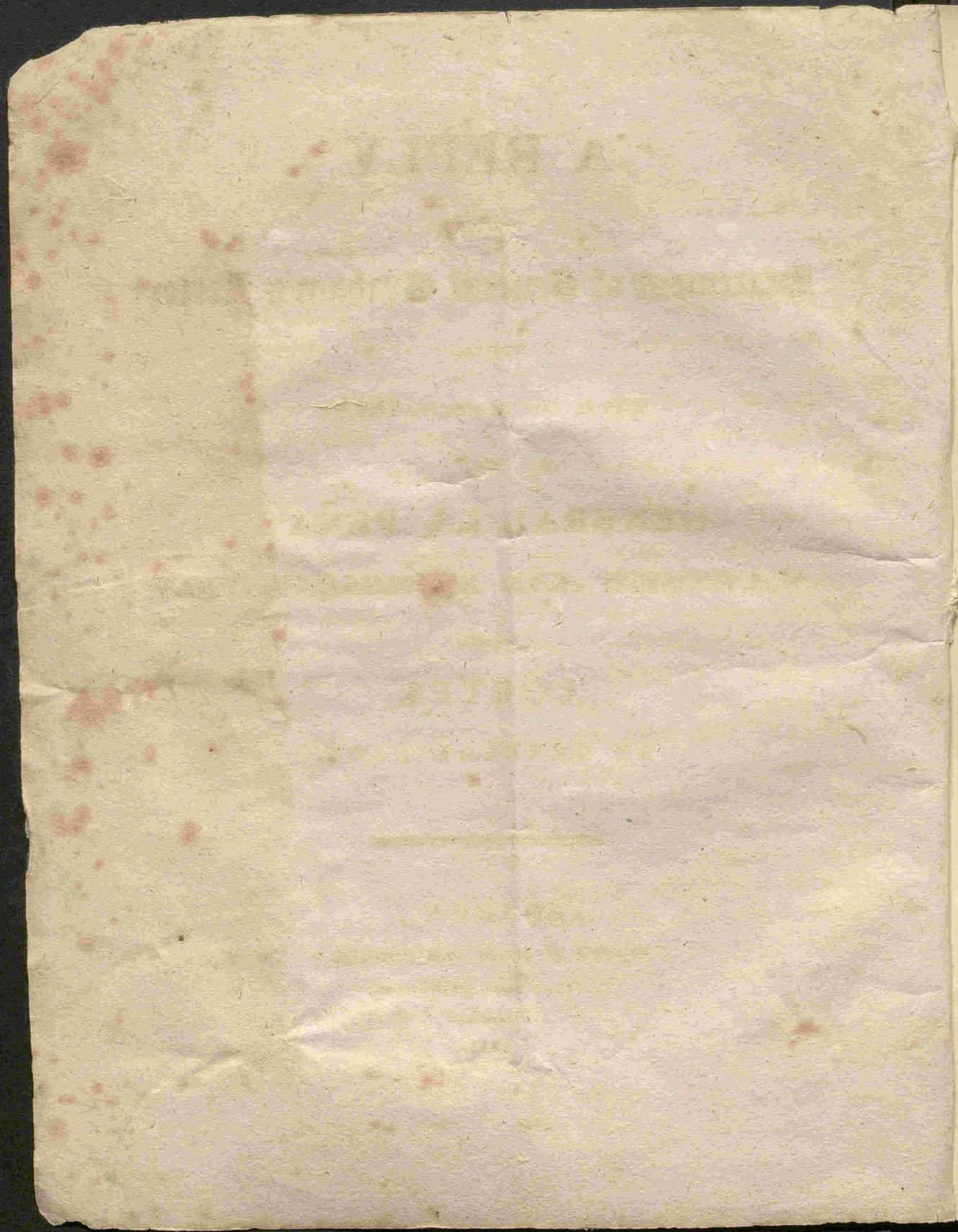


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A REPLY

TO THE

Statement of General Graham's Letter

OF THE

24TH OF MARCH, 1811;

ON

GENERAL LA PEÑA'S

MANIFESTO AND REPRESENTATION

TO THE

CORTES.

BY GENERAL LACY.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY VOGEL AND SCHULZE,

18, Poland Street, Oxford Street.

1811.



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A HISTORY

OF THE

Statement of General Graham's Letter

TO THE

18th OF MARCH 1811;

BY

GENERAL LA PÉRIÈRE

TRANSLATED AND REPRINTED

BY

CORTEZ.

BY GENERAL LACY.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY WOOD AND SONNERS

15, Lombard Street

1811.

REPLY

To the statement which General Graham gives in his letter of the 24th of March, 1811; transmitted to the Spanish Government, and which he has since caused to be handed about in print, in order to clear himself of what blame he thinks may be attached to his conduct, in consequence of General La Pena's manifesto and representation to the Cortes.

As the intelligent and impartial part of the public is incapable of withholding from the Spanish warriors that glory which they acquired in the action of the fifth of March last, in the fields of Chiclana, and as the truth on this head was generally admitted, without the possibility of any rational contradiction, even after the publication of the paper written and addressed to our Government by General Graham; I had made up my mind not to refute certain unjust and extravagant criticisms, which envy and malice had disseminated among the vulgar; nor to take any notice of the mistakes which General Graham himself makes in his statement; from my too scrupulous apprehension, of contributing in the smallest degree, to hurt the good understanding and mutual confidence which exists between England and Spain, or lessen the due esteem and perfect harmony subsisting between my fellow-soldiers and the generous leaders of the allied army. But as these false surmises, obscure and despicable in their origin, have spread more abroad than was at first imagined, and have gained a greater footing, particularly

at the Court of London, as appears from the speeches of some honorable members of the British Parliament, and from what Blanco, the degenerate Spaniard, advances with no less ignorance and pedantry than inconsiderate audacity, in the twelfth number of his periodical pamphlet, I can no longer remain silent on the subject. For, besides that the injury and calumnious detraction affects myself so nearly as one interested in the reputation of General La Pena, chief of the staff of our fourth division, and as a sharer in the labours and glory of the expedition against the forces of Marshall Victor, I would not leave in doubt the reputation of our arms, and that of the Spanish commanders and troops, who, during the whole of this campaign, and in the field of battle, behaved with so much intrepidity, dexterity and military skill. I shall therefore answer the articles of General Graham's statement one by one. And as these have, without doubt, given rise to the erroneous accounts and ill-founded opinions, which have happened to make some impression on the minds of the English people; their own conviction, which I doubt not to secure by the fair and moderate exposition of facts, will suffice to induce them to allow us that justice we deserve.

which General Graham himself makes in his statement, from my too scrupulous apprehension, of contributing to the mutual confidence which exists between England and Spain, or lessen the due esteem and perfect harmony subsisting between my fellow-soldiers and the generous leaders of the allied army. But as these false numbers, opinions and descriptions in their original form spread more abroad than was at first imagined, and have gained a greater footing, particularly

LETTER FROM LIEUTENANT-GENERAL
GRAHAM TO THE RIGHT-HONORABLE
HENRY WELLESLEY.

REPLY, &c.

Isla de Leon, 24th March 1811.

SIR,

You will do justice to my reluctance to enter into any controversy for the purpose of counteracting the effects of that obloquy which you yourself and many others assured me, my conduct was exposed to by the reports circulated in Cadiz, relative to the issue of the late expedition. But a copy of a printed statement of General La Pena having been shewn to me yesterday which, by implication at least, leaves the blame of the failure of the most brilliant prospects on me, it becomes indispensably necessary that I should take up my pen in self defence.

Having already sent you a copy of my dispatch to the Earl of Liverpool, with a report of the action, I will not trouble you with the detail of the first movements of the army, nor of any other observation relative to them, than that the troops suffered

1°. It would certainly have been more convenient for all to have begun the march at five in the morning instead of at five in the afternoon from Veger. But as convenience in war is not so much attended to as the securing, at whatever cost, the object of any enterprize, provided the soldier can but go through it, we must examine whether the march by night was better calculated or not for the object we had in view. The solution of this query will be a sufficient reply on this head.

The object was to force the pass of Santi Petri by an attack on the enemy's rear, whether strong or weak; and to effect the junction of our troops with those of the expedition, before the enemy could bring us to a general action. Now, how could this point have been gained but by making a

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much unnecessary fatigue, and marching by night and without good guides.

rapid and covered march which left the enemy in the uncertainty of the real point of attack, till the very moment it took place; when he could not have time to unite his forces and offer us battle before our onset in the quarter which was of most consequence for us to choose? and how could we otherwise have concealed our intentions in such a country than by marching during the night.

It was therefore not only proper but even necessary to do what has been done; as a march of five leagues, with fine weather and good roads, could not fatigue the troops so much as to render them unfit for entering into action upon their arrival.

The guides were as good as possibly could have been found. They were confronted with each other, and all possible precautions were taken to avoid being misled; which indeed never was the case: for, though our own suspicions that the guides might have been mistaken, rather than any uncertainty on their part, made us halt at times, nevertheless we found ourselves at day-break in the very direction we wished to have kept, with-

Considering the nature of the service we were engaged in, I was most anxious that the army should not come in contact with the enemy in an exhausted state, nor be exposed to the attack of the enemy but when it was well collected. And in consequence of representations to this effect, I understood that the march of the afternoon of the 4th was to be a short one to take up for the night a position near Conil, to prepare which, staff officers of both nations were sent forward with a proper escort.

out having strayed in the least. And this perhaps is one of the first instances in which a company of guides has been seen in our divisions organised on principles that many know but few practice.

2°. To what purpose is it to wish for that which is incompatible with the object in view: to have halted in Conil would have been the same thing as to have sent a challenge to Victor, pointing out to him the spot on which he was to have fought; whereas the measure concerted, and to which every one, who now censures it, agreed, was to conceal the real point of attack, and even the feigned one of surprise. The order of march and the plan of attack, which were communicated in writing on the evening of the 4th to General Graham and the other chiefs of division, do not seem to have left any room whatever to doubt that the General in Chief's intention was that the army should be drawn up against day-break upon the *Cerro del Puerco*. The whole and entire reunion consisted in the incorporation of a squadron and a small battalion of light infantry with a few

patriots equipped as cavalry, for the double purpose of covering our right flank during the march, and of drawing the attention of the enemy towards Medina as they actually did; for the four battalions, posted there, did not budge during the whole of the 5th, to come into action. No position was taken near Conil as there was no reason for taking any; since having once passed that village in such order as the ground permitted, a halt was made sufficient for forming the columns into parallels, and they marched in that order up the hill. And if, to the unforeseen accidents which retarded them in gaining the eminence, had been added the delay necessary for taking up the position in question, they must have reached still much later than they did. It was therefore agreed upon that no such position should be taken. The officers of the staff then advanced in order to reconnoitre; and no precaution that could be taken was omitted.

3°. *The march was nevertheless continued through the night with those frequent and harrassing halts*

3°. This I suppose was by way of encomium for the sufferings of the troops, and for those of their com-

which the necessity of groping for the way occasioned.

40. *When the British division began its march from the position of Barrosa to that of Bermeja, I left the General on the Barrosa height, nor did I know of his intentions of quitting; and when I ordered the division to counter-march in the wood, I did so, to support troops left for its defence and believing the General to be there in person. In this belief, I sent no report of the attack which was made so near the spot where the General was supposed to be, and though confident in the bravery of the British troops, I was no less so in the support I should receive from the Spanish army. The distance however to Bermeja is trifling, and no orders were given at the head quarters for the movement of any corps of the Spanish army to support the British division, to prevent its defeat in this unequal contest, or to profit of the success earned at so heavy an expense. The voluntary zeal of the two battalions (Waloons and Ciudad Real) which had been detached from my division, brought them alone back from*

manders who led them on to victory by surmounting so many obstacles.

40. When did the British division begin its march from its position in Barrosa? not when its General parted with the Commander in Chief, in order to execute the orders given; had he, in this short interval, mounted his horse and advanced towards (and not retired from) the van, the only point where the battle was, and where any of the enemy could be discovered, and where this very British division was ordered to advance; in a word, to that very position which it had been determined upon to carry and force, at all risks. Can this be called abandoning them? Such a contradiction and inaccuracy can only be ascribed to the translator. No one questions, nor is it possible to question the views with which the counter-march was ordered. The intention alone makes both him who ordered it, and those who performed it worthy of the glory thereby acquired. But, neither the intention nor the victorious result is at any time sufficient proof of the justness of any determination; because should it prove suc-

the wood. But notwithstanding their utmost efforts, they could only come at the close of the action.

cessful, it still might have been so to a greater extent and with less risk. But in military tactics to succeed while deviating from the rules, is a miracle and ought seldom to be hazarded. The order of the General in Chief was decidedly, that those troops should go to support and secure the advance of the van, where it was supposed that they halted in the place towards which the enemy was directing his march. This was surely an additional motive for not altering the position; since supposing that it had been so agreed upon, there would have been no hesitation about sending them. To desist from an attack determined upon, undertaken, and already in the best possible state of forwardness, and to begin another, is not one of those arbitrary evolutions which it is in the power of a General to make, after having put himself under the orders of another, and in the very act of engaging, especially where nothing was risked in the execution of orders. The infallible consequence of this, is disorder; and that seldom fails to prove the forerunner of defeat. In this instance however a victory has been

obtained, but not without rashly risking the whole, and without reaping any fruit from it. The troops left in the *Cerro del Puerco* (which in this paper is called Barrosa by mistake) were not intended to have kept that post. How could it ever enter the head of a General that two positions could be secured at the same time, being at the distance of three leagues from each other, and without any communication and moreover separated by an immense forest? How could this plan of subdividing the forces have corresponded with the principal object of the attack, viz. that of combining and strengthening them?—These troops remained as the last portion of those who were to charge on the flank, and were actually executing it in the best manner possible on the grounds of Bermeja. They were of course to have followed up at the proper distance of time and place, protecting those who went before; and even as the case happened to turn out, it was not by defending the *Cabeza del Puerco* as a position (supposing it to have been one) that they fulfilled the purpose intended.

The whole army was at that time either engaged, or had penetrated very far into the forest, between which and the Cerro there was a sufficient extent of ground for the enemy to interpose his forces, which he would not have neglected to do; for it must have occurred to the most stupid of Commanders, to have broken the adversary's line when so favourable an opportunity was offered him. Thus, therefore, they wished to have bettered their position, as they did by falling down towards the wood, in order to keep the enemy from entering it; securing in this manner the march of all those who were advancing towards Bermeja, as well as their reunion, should the adversary, actuated by an excess of temerity, or compelled by his loss, have thought of entering it. Consequently, those troops ought at no time to have been supported, since on the contrary they were to have supported the rest of the army who advanced towards a decided battle; and was the supposition that the Commander in Chief had remained in the *Cerro del Puerco*, a sufficient reason for omitting to give

so important a notice as that of having adopted a measure entirely contrary to the plan agreed on and to the disposition made? Could any one think himself authorized to suppose that the Commander in Chief, who was then ordering the whole army to advance, these battalions only excepted, remained (though indeed he did so) a mere spectator. Besides, this mistake would have continued only till the army should have cleared the wood, for the enemy being at that time in possession of the *Cerro*, it is evident that the Commander in Chief could not observe the counter-march on account of the thickness of the wood into which he had advanced. But let us suppose he perceived it from the first moment it took place, what ought the General to have done? Ought he, as is hinted, to have ordered the whole army to make also a counter-march, and consequently to have abandoned the position of Torre Bermeja, renouncing thus at once all idea of support and assistance, and this in the utmost disorder; for it was impossible in any other manner to have marched out of the wood,

and have attacked the enemy in front, while another division of his forces threatened the rear. And in case of our not conquering, which was but too likely, the whole army must have either thrown down their arms and surrendered, or else have rushed, or have been driven, into the sea. Besides this I know not what could have been done. Is it not supporting a division engaged, when we secure its only practicable retreat and draw off from it, by repeated attacks, the reinforcements detached against it? Is it not supporting it, to manœuvre on the right flank; keeping thus in check the enemy's left? It would seem that in order to support, cover, and sustain any body of troops, it were necessary to mix into the very ranks. I know not if three quarters of a league should be accounted so short a distance as that a general should be blamed, if supposing that reinforcements could and ought to have been sent, they did not arrive in time, when the heat of the battle was over in less than half an hour. I can only affirm that the English General neither knew nor could have

known so as to be able to venture the assertion before the public " that no orders were issued at the headquarters, that any corps of the Spanish troops should move to support the British division to prevent its being defeated in so unequal a contest. Let General Lardizabal, let the regiments of Africa, and Canaries, let the Zapadores, and patriots equipped as cavalry, say if this was not the case. The most effectual and surest way to support one who, without knowing why, had put himself into danger by overturning a plan which till thus interrupted, was succeeding to our utmost wish, was not to make all run into the same blunder, but rather to endeavour to repair it and so prevent a total defeat by securing the only resource left us for a safe retreat. Notwithstanding it is given out that the divisions of Rufin and Laval saw no other troops but the English. Where was the division of Beguines, the Walloons, and that of Ciudad Real, and the whole of the cavalry, except one squadron and one company? Where did they suffer that loss in the

staff which is noticed and which all the corps more or less are said to have experienced? The English closed their line and charged with an intrepidity which made victory decide for them (to the immortal glory, be it said, of these brave soldiers). But for all this, as many troops as were in that quarter did not fail to contribute towards the fortunate issue of this affair. Those corps are always distinguished who have the good fortune to decide a battle; but they should never take to themselves the whole glory of the success, much less should they strive to humble those, who had not the opportunity of reaping for themselves the same laurels.

5°. *Had the whole body of the Spanish cavalry with the horse artillery been rapidly sent by the sea beach to form in the plain and to envelop the enemy's left.*

5°. The cavalry which remained with the Commander in Chief in the position of Bermeja, consisted only of one squadron of horse and a single company; and the light artillery consisted only of four pieces, a force scarcely sufficient to enable him to hold out. So that he must either have abandoned it or have kept the few forces he had, especially when all the remainder, and even 24 pieces

of ordnance with the six squadrons were stationed in the vicinity of Cerro del Puerco, and consequently at the disposal of him who formed and directed the action without his being aware of it. A General who resolves such a thing ought at least to take all such precautions as may contribute to his intended purpose, and thus as he takes upon himself the greater, he ought to order and dispose the less. As from the counter-march resulted two actions within half a league's distance; how is it possible for the same General to order the partial movements of both at the same time? Even had he thought beforehand of this very unusual disposition of giving battle, he must have been obliged to entrust one of the actions wholly to another commander. So that, although the cavalry and artillery mentioned, had not instantly manœuvred, no blame could have attached to him who being at half a league's distance was not at all apprized of it, and when he could gain a full knowledge of it, the action was already over.

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6°. *Had the greatest part of the infantry been marched through the pine wood in our rear, to turn his right, what success might not have been expected from such decisive movements?*

6°. All the infantry at the Commander in Chief's disposal, consisted then of three thousand eight hundred men, with whom he was to cover and protect, in preference to every other point, (for the reasons already given) the position of the Torre Bermeja, and Molina de Almanza, which was so vigorously attacked by its left flank, that it was necessary to wheel on the left to face the attack. Those who are fully acquainted with the extent of the said position, will own he had no troops to spare. Notwithstanding, he caused the regiments of Africa and Canaries to advance, with no other view than to support the charge which he observed had taken place on his right; and if, on noticing that the firing ceased, he had not ordered them back, they would have arrived at the point here designated.—To pretend that in an action quite unforeseen, and decided in so short an interval, assistance could have been given soon enough, and measures taken at the distance of half a league, is to pretend impossibilities.

One would think it had been a battle.

which lasted hours and days, when it not even gave the General time to form any clear and distinct idea of what was going on there from the accounts he received. From having only observed firing at that distance and in such covered grounds, ought he not at once to have supposed that these were the divisions of Rufin and Leval? Ought not the two thirds of his army, which were there, to have sufficed to beat them back? Should he, for this circumstance, have given up the first object of his plan, even though they were disputing it with him, and without further thoughts or motives, betake himself to flight across a forest, leaving one part of the enemy, which was within gun-shot, to attack another at half a league's distance from him; thus abandoning his project of enticing the enemy towards the spot where it was most proper to offer them battle, (for, in all respects, they were superior to ours) and to risk the whole, the whole I say, in a contest so unequal in every point of view? I will grant that such operations are always deci-

7°. *The enemy must either have retired instantly and without occasioning any serious loss to the British division, or he would have exposed himself to absolute destruction; his cavalry greatly out-numbered, his artillery lost, his columns mixed and in confusion, a general dispersion would have been the inevitable consequence of a close pursuit; our wearied men would have found spirits to go on, and would have trusted to finding refreshment and repose in Chiclana.*

sive, but not that we ought to expect them always to turn out fortunate.

7°. The English division would not have sustained such a loss, perhaps none at all, had their march been continued towards the rendezvous; nor would the enemy in that case have been less obliged to go back, if, after forming the counter-march, they had not quitted the wood. What desperate circumstance could have compelled them to abandon such a strong position and to enter into such an unequal conflict? Victor's intention was well known: thinking that Villat would withstand the attack made on the Campo de la Bermeja, and that the other part of our army would remain in the Cerro del Puerco, within sight of the operations, he intended to have interposed with Laval's division, describing a semi-circle from Chiclana to the Casa de las Guardias, whilst that of Rufin, by a still greater semi-circle, should attack the Cerro by the opposite side. Villat and his troops being routed within the forest, his plan was wholly overthrown, and if, instead

of retreating he had plunged into the forest and tried to pass it, what else could we have wished for? It is indeed, much to be regretted, that we suffered such a great loss; had we not suffered it, every thing would have succeeded to our wishes. But there remains the consolation, that he who suffered it was the one who sought it; for he who, of his own accord, throws himself from a tower, must blame no one for it, if he happens to kill himself. I allow that when this action was won, though it cost so dear, the enemy ought to have been pursued; but who could have done this but those who conquered? But I suppose that he who was at half a league's distance, was to have ordered the pursuit. Besides a circumstance occurred which prevented it, as General Whittingham has shewn; therefore it is useless to wish for impossibilities.

8°. The opportunity of entering Chiclana presented itself, not only that evening, but even to a greater advantage the next day; but it was resolved not to go near St. Anna, without being provided with heavy battering cannon, though it was well

8°. *This moment was lost. Within a quarter of an hour's ride of the scene of action the General remained ignorant of what was passing, and nothing was done. Let not then this action of Barrosa form any part of the general report of the transactions of the day.*

known that in Chiclana, there were only wounded men, and the garrison of the fort. Nor was it intended to withdraw from the position of Torre-Bermeja without first bringing up the remainder of the cavalry, which must have remained in the Isla, and three thousand infantry who were to have marched to St. Petri. The unfortunate event which happened there, two nights before our arrival, retarded this operation till the near approach of night. The lateness of the hour and the fatigued condition of the troops who had been marching and fighting without interruption for twenty-four hours, rendered it necessary to attend, before all things, to their rest and refreshment; which could not certainly have been found in Chiclana, that place being not farther than a quarter of a league, as they will have it, but at a league's distance from any of the points where the several actions ended. There are exact plans and charts with scales; there is therefore no need of further proof. But the "General remained ignorant of what was going on;" we may say with more foundation that

they gave him no information about it. For it does not belong to a general to ask; it is the one under him who is to send information. As it is not specified in what degree or circumstance this ignorance is supposed to have existed, this is not one of the least insignificant and improbable assertions of this paper; we however pass it over lightly and only take notice of the assertion that nothing was done. We did what is always done after gaining a battle, when it is not possible to advance immediately; for it was absolutely necessary to allow the troops time to rest and to encamp for the night in the fields: for man, though a soldier, is not of iron. The army was drawn up in the position of Torre-Bermeja and Molino de Almanza. All precautions that could be thought of, to secure the camp, were taken. Matters were so disposed that the troops should breakfast before morning. The artillery, taken from the enemy, was ordered to be collected; and the wounded French and English who remained in the field, were also taken up to the Cerro del Puerco.

Day only was waited for, in order to begin the march, when But it is not yet time to say it. "This action of Barrosa ought not to be included in the general result of the events of that day." Some mistake must have been made here by the copier or the translator, for, as it runs in Spanish, it is literally an absurdity. I really do not know why an action fought by two thirds of the army, and which, thanks to fortune and courage, completely beat two divisions headed by Victor,—I do not understand, I say, why such an action is not to be included in the general result of the events of that day. I own once more, I do not understand it, and my owning it, is no merit in me ; for the same thing has happened to all those of whom I have asked any explanation about this. It is a secret far superior to every common understanding.

9°. *It was an insulated and accidental feature, it was the result of no combination, it was equally unseen and unheeded by the Spanish staff.*

9°. A surrounded situation ! what enemies then did we leave behind or on the flanks ? Had we not our left on the coast, securing thus the means of getting provisions by sea, in case those we had by land had not been

sufficient? Our force being superior by one third of cavalry and infantry to that which the enemy could withdraw from his line, and had actually determined to oppose to us, what could we fear either on the right, in front, or from any other quarter? May every position we take be like that! And supposing that this only alluded to the position we had before the actions; then, from the moment we took possession of the field of Bermeja and its works, a more advantageous position cannot be thought of. "*Want of combination, which was as unforeseen as it was unattended to.*" I ask in what? If in the campaign, surely there was combination; for, otherwise, it would have been a great chance that the division *Del Campo*, passing through Ximeno and *Casas del Castano* should have joined, with the troops landed in Tarifa, at *Casas Viejas*; that both that point and that of Veger, were attacked and surrounded at the same time, that whilst the attention of those of Medina was called off, the main body of the army should proceed along the coast, and that signals should have been

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made to those in the Isle, from the Cerro del Puerco, on the moment of our arrival there. The proof whether the combination was good or bad; that, notwithstanding that the principal data on which it was founded, namely: 1st, that the attack upon the out-works might begin before sun-rise; 2nd, that at the same time they should be threatened in front; 3rd. that many false attacks should be made all along the line, and a real landing made on the Coast of Rota; 4th. not to allow the enemy to give us battle before the entire reunion of our forces; and, in spite of all, we accomplished the principal and prime object of the plan of this enterprise, which was: to threaten powerfully all the points of the front of the enemy's line, and to turn it by its left flank, with a greater number of troops than what the enemy had to cover his long and extensive line. If it be with regard to the battle of the 5th, that it is said that combination was wanting, I will answer this by saying, that he who, from the beginning, had acted quite contrary to the orders he

had received, has certainly no right
 to judge of what would have hap-
 pened, had he obeyed the said orders.
 Let the military world, to whom I am
 speaking, represent to themselves an
 enemy in a line of columns and in the
 best order to resist, attacked by in-
 ferior forces, which, coming out of a
 very thick wood, are to extend them-
 selves, and successively deploy before
 the enemy's fire, rank by rank, a line
 of battle, with two or four deep ;
 and to this very adversary, having to
 go through a forest half a league in
 length, and that too, fighting his
 way through, and meeting after all,
 with a position, impregnable by its
 flanks, and defended by a force, supe-
 rior by double its numbers, formed
 upon two and more lines upon the
 same basis of posterior operations ;
 and they will judge which way his
 defeat would have been more com-
 plet and inevitable. In case that
 he would not venture to attack us in
 so strong a position, (which is more
 probable) and that, seeing the ope-
 ration he did that day entirely frus-
 trated, as it is fully demonstra-
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 probable) and that, seeing the ope-
 ration he did that day entirely frus-
 trated, as it is fully demonstra-
 ted, he had taken his position

to wait for us the next day, should we not likewise have the great advantage of being far superior in numbers, of having the point of attack left to our choice, and lastly, of knowing, all of us, what we were about to do? Therefore, it is to be hoped, that this rare example of acting contrary to all principles, though with success, will seldom be followed; for we may observe, that, when that is the case, the advantage never makes up for the loss. Though I am but too sure that both the combination and plan were excellent, not to grant the greatest honour to any one who would attribute it to the Spanish staff, but it is but too due to him who deserves it, therefore I cannot help observing that the duties of the staffs belonging to the Spanish army do not include responsibility, (I suppose it is the same with other nations) for the combination and plan of the campaign. Were that the case, what would remain for the Commander in Chief to do? The staff's business is to give the general material and even help him in his task, but the idea and direction of the plan are left wholly to him. The staffs, in such cases, are

10°. *The British division, left to itself, suffered the loss of more than one fourth of its number and became unfit for further exertion. Need I say more to justify my determination of declining any further cooperation in the field towards the prosecution of the object of the expedition; I am however free to confess that having thus placed myself and the British division under the direction of the Spanish Commander in Chief in the field (contrary to my instructions) I should not have thought myself justified to my King and country to risk the absolute destruction of this division in a second trial. But I have right to claim credit for what would have been my conduct from what it was; and I will ask, if it can be doubted, after my zealous cooperation throughout, and the ready assistance afforded to the troops left on Barrosa hill, that the same anxiety*

the means by which he communicates his orders; they are but mere performers; and the Commander in Chief, alone can say, with any foundation, whether the orders were or were not attended to.

10°. Any one who will read this charge, will think that, at the very moment that the English attacked the French, the Spaniards ran away and left them to go through what they had begun; for it is certain that, to abandon a person, it is necessary to leave him; but, it is known that, as soon as the movement, made by the English division, was perceived, by the firing, though it was against the plan of attack and against such directions as the rest had, and with which they were fully acquainted, yet all who could conform themselves to it immediately joined. These were the Walloons, Ciudad-Real, the division of Begines, the Zapadores, and almost all the cavalry, and the Patriots, also on horseback. Though they had executed the movement so much insisted on of protecting themselves by the wood, accomplishing thusevery object

for the success of the cause would not have secured to the Spanish army the utmost efforts of the British division during the whole of the entreprize, had we been supported as we had a right to expect.

and all the orders they had, and as soon as they perceived the counter-march of the English, and that they were fighting, they immediately went out of the wood again, and instead of only defending it, they advanced and charged the enemy's left which was going to turn the right of the English; they did not go to say here we are, because that would have been losing both the time and opportunity; but the witnesses are too numerous, witnesses that can be relied upon for any one to doubt that, at the same time that the English were fighting, all the corps I have mentioned did the same close to their right and the rest in Torre Bermeja and Molino di Almanza, where the attacks were repeated on both sides, as every thing else depended on that position. And is this *abandoning them*? I will own that a fourth part is a great loss, but there is a great difference between making greater efforts than the one which caused such a loss and renouncing the advantages that might have been gained by such a victory. And if this system of not taking advantage of victory, because

it cost to dear, had been known before, it would not have happened so often, that the best contested battles have decided the fate of a province, and of a whole kingdom. And, as it is quite as strange that they should defend it and support it, never can we say too much to justify it ; but his having put himself in the field under the direction of a Spanish Commander in Chief, against the orders he had previously received, only confirms, that one mistake produces another ; for, if he were not to have done that, not to go against the said orders, much less ought he to have abandoned it in such a manner, being so far compromised, not to violate military laws. Let the whole world know, how much soever he may be surprised at it ; that in a combined, army, a general, commanding one of its divisions, and who daily received the orders, finding himself encamped by night in the second line ; all the rest of the army anxiously waiting day-light, to continue the victories gained the day before : that general, I say, orders at midnight, his troops to repass the river and enter

11°. *There is not a man in the division, who would not have relinquished his claim to the glory acquired by the action of Barrosa, to have shared with the Spaniards the ultimate success which was within our grasp as it were.*

12°. *The Spanish people, brave and persevering, are universally esteemed, respected and admired by all who value independence and liberty; the hearts and hands of British soldiers, will always be with them: the cause of Spain is felt by all to be a common one.*

13°. *I conclude by saying, that the only regret expressed to me at head-quarters, in the morning of the 6th, on not knowing of my intention to send the British troops across the river*

their quarters, without even sending word to the Commander in Chief who was in front of the army; And, notwithstanding that this step produced more obsecrations and prayers than remonstrances, he openly refused to continue co-operating in the most important and advantageous opportunity which can be offered to those interested in our cause.

11°. I do not know what reason can authorise letting go what we had already in our grasp.

12°. We glory in the first and trust in the second.

13°. The Commander in Chief's moderation, did not permit him then, to shew in a more bitter way, how much he resented it; and because, in the case we should not proceed

St. Petri, was, that the opportunity of withdrawing the Spanish troops during the night was lost, and on my observing that, after such a defeat there was no risk of attack from the enemy, a very contrary opinion was maintained. In point of fact, no enemy ever appeared during several days, employed in bringing off the wounded and burying the dead.

farther, it was necessary to pass the river, and when this is done in sight of the enemy, it is always more prudent to do it by night, when it is possible ; but the dispatch which was written and sent before this meeting took place, clearly shows, though with delicacy, the great surprise occasioned by seeing the British troops pass to the other side of St. Petri, and how much it was feared, that that operation had taken place with the decided intention of abandoning us in the best part of the enterprise. There was no longer any chance of being attacked in that position : but we must not run the remotest risk when we derive no utility from it. The enemy was not hindered from attacking us by impossibilities, but by not conceiving what could keep us from acting, and indeed, who could ever have found out the cause.

14°. *It may be proper to remark on the reports published relative to the enemy's number at Santi Petri, (4500 from Villat's division) that by the concurrent testimony of all the French officers here, General Villat's division had charge of all the*

14°. As they did not give us time to review nor count them over, it may be, that somebody has made a mistake of 500 in the number.

line. What then must have been the strength of that division, to have afforded 4500 men to St. Petri alone?

15°. Eight Documents.—*In order to establish by authentic documents, facts which may have been disputed, and to elucidate; I enclose by way of appendix, the reports of various officers of this division.*

I have the honor to be, &c, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS GRAHAM.
Lieutenant-General.

P. S.—I must add this postscript distinctly, to deny my having spoken at head-quarters, in the evening of the 5th, of sending for more troops or for provisions from the Isle.

16°. *My visit was a very short one, of mere ceremony; I may have asked if the Spanish troops expected were arrived: this error must have arisen, from the difficulty of conversing in a foreign language. With this I send you a sketch of the ground, &c, of the action of Barrosa, by which it will be seen how impossible, according*

15°. We could bring out more documents equally good for the purpose, but, as what has been said, is too notorious, we think it useless. As to his not having spoken in the headquarters, on the evening of the fifth, about sending to the Isle for more troops and provisions, the Commander in Chief communicated to me the confirmation of this fact, on the morning of the sixth, and even now, will protest the same. Field Marshall Don Miguel Velezcel, inspector of cavalry, Don Henrique Rocambourg, his field adjutant, and Don Llanos, aid-de-camp to General Blake, will affirm the same.

16°. It does not seem that much time was wanted, nor a great deal of freedom required, in order that the explanation referred to by the report of the circumstance "*that the visit was a very short one, of mere ceremony,*" might take place. Neither could the difficulty be a great one, to make themselves mutually understood

to my judgment, it would be, for an enemy to expose his left flank, by making a direct attack through the wood, on the Bermeja position, while that of Barrosa was occupied in force, by the allied army.

in French, which was the language they spoke, for General Graham knows it, and General La Pena understands it perfectly well; as to the rest who heard this conversation, the French language is as familiar to them as their own. But memory is very frail.—I am of opinion also, that a flank supported on a forest of half a league in length, which very few sharp-shooters can defend, has nothing to fear. But let us examine in what situation, or what time, and to whom the enemy presented that left flank. When already in possession of the position of Torre Bermeja and *Molina de Almanza* the enemy would take it again, then he presented it to the troops that marched through the wood, therefore these could not be better directed; for, as they were going to secure the position, they might have turned some of the enemy's corps. By the counter-march they turned their backs to the enemy's flank; and, had not Villat found some one who stopped him, as soon as he saw the action in the neighbourhood of *Cerro del Puerco* well commenced, in a disposition by which the

British line presented him its rear, he would have marched through the wood to attack or threaten it. We may easily conclude from hence, what would have been the consequence. This proves how very misplaced was the counter-march, and that those who were in *la Bermeja*, could not give them a greater or more efficacious assistance, than keeping in check the enemy left in its rear, for the reasons already alledged, in order to secure the communication with the Isle, the only retreat left for the army, and which was the ultimate object of the operations of that day. We may also conclude, from this last observation, what is generally believed, that it would have been better to maintain the position of *Cerro del Puerco*, with a sufficient force to defend it, instead of running all together to secure the position so very important for us. Let us then suppose for a moment, this military absurdity to have taken place, and that a third part of the army being possessed of the position of *Bermeja*, (which, though it was oftentimes attacked, it was imagined

it could not be attacked) the remaining two thirds of the army threatened the enemy's left flank at the distance of three quarters of a league in the position of *Cerro del Puerco*, and that the enemy would have attacked it, as he did, interposing, at the same time, his forces between his front and the Torre de Bermeja; would not this disposition have been entirely contrary to the two great secrets of the expedition, namely, that we should withdraw from the Isle, through St. Petri, all the troops that could be spared, before we should give or accept any general action; and, that this being accomplished, our superiority in numbers would, with much probability, make us sure of the victory? Would not the enemy have infallibly divided our army in two distinct parts? And is there any one who is ignorant of the consequences attending this operation? Let the impartial and experienced part of the military examine the sketch mentioned, and that in which are represented the movements and positions of the Spanish troops,

as well as those of the British; and I will submit myself to their judgement.

The British soldiers, as well as their commanders, are worthy of the greatest praise, and of all our esteem; the Spaniards know how to imitate them, and maintain the fame they have enjoyed in all ages, and in every part of the world; and this reunion of circumstances, is the best guarantee of the good issue of our glorious struggle; and the most worthy tie of the alliance, and generous co-operation of the English people.

LEWIS LACY.

Cadix, the 30th of April, 1811.

Dispositions for the March and Attack of the combined Army, on the Morning of the 5th of March.

The column will consist of the cavalry, the Zapadores, the division of the vanguard, with four workmen ; the 1st division, with four workmen ; 2nd division, with four pieces of ordnance ; and lastly, of the reserve, with the English artillery.

This column will follow the road leading from Conil to the gardens of Orvera, or point of the Lobita : here will remain a battalion, which may be taken from the reserve, with 30 horse soldiers, which will take possession of the vines and plantations of olive trees which stand before that point ; they will carefully search them, beginning by the one on the coast, and proceeding to the one which leads to the hill of Chiclana, establishing a free communication with the post of cavalry which will be left on the said hill.

Another column of 300 horse-men of Ubrique, with the patriots, (except 30 of them, who will alarm by night, the advanced posts of Medina, falling back in the day-time, upon the posts that are upon the road leading from Veger to the said town) will direct itself towards the cottages *del Humo*, through the Veger and Chiclana hills ; after they have passed the *Salado* they will send a duplicated message towards the gardens of Orvera and Conil, in search of the Commander in Chief. They will leave upon Chiclana hill, a piquet of an officer with twenty men, who will search the neighbourhood of that hill, and will send advice to the troops that find themselves before, and to those situated in the Lobita.

From the said point of Lobita, a squadron will detach itself to go upon the strait road leading to Chiclana ; if this happens by night, the squadron will leave some soldiers to maintain the communica-

tion with the column, which is to go from Lobita by the high road of la Barca, of St. Petri. When the cavalry of the vanguard are arrived at the *Laguna del Puerco*, looking towards the pine woods, it will go a little to the left, to let the rest of the troops pass. They will then protect with piquets, a part of the front and right flank of the main force, and the squadron which, posted in the Lobita, will then be as far advanced as this same flank, and will open a communication with the squadron of Ubrique and patriots: all of them will send advanced parties towards the river of Chiclana. The vanguard's destination will be to attack the corps protecting the intrenchments of St. Petri, in order to open that pass, and establish a communication with the troops of the Isle, who will act also on that point. This operation requires a great many advanced piquets; for, the last half league they will have to pass, consists only of pine woods; a sharp look out is to be kept on the right. They will also detach to the left, after having passed the vines opposite the Lobita, a very strong piquet of infantry as well as of cavalry, which latter, will be requested from the general commanding that part of the army. The piquet will take the road from Conil to St. Petri, endeavouring to surprise and not to alarm the enemy's posts there situated.

The line of battle will take its position, so as to support the vanguard, sheltering itself with the Cerro, and Lagune de la Cabeza del Puerco; send a battalion in piquets, towards that part of the wood opposite to their front and to their right flank, and also through the road *De la Casa de Campano*, towards Chiclana.

The reserve will place itself behind the line of battle, on the road it now takes, in a close column. LACY.

Weger, the 4th. of March, 1811.

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