



The London Gazette

EXTRAORDINARY.

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Downing-Street, August 15, 1809.

DISPATCHES, of which the following are Copies and Extracts, were this Day received at the Office of the Lord Viscount Castlereagh, One of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, from Lieutenant-General the Right Honourable Sir Arthur Wellesley, K. B. dated Talavera, 29th July 1809.

*Talavera de la Reyna,
July 29, 1809.*

MY LORD,
GENERAL CUESTA followed the Enemy's March with his Army from the Alberché on the Morning of the 24th, as far as Santa Olalla, and pushed forward his Advanced Guard as far as Torrijos.

For the Reasons stated to your Lordship in my Dispatch of the 24th, I moved only Two Divisions of Infantry and a Brigade of Cavalry across the Alberché to Casalegos, under the Command of Lieutenant-General Sherbrooke, with a View to keep up the Communication between General Cuesta and me, and with Sir R. Wilson's Corps at Escalona.

It appears that General Vanegas had not carried into Execution that Part of the Plan of Operations which related to his Corps, and that he was still at Daniel, in La Mancha; and the Enemy in the Course of the 24th, 25th, and 26th, collected all his Forces in this Part of Spain, between Torrijos and Toledo, leaving but a small Corps of Two Thousand Men in that Place.

His united Army thus consisted of the Corps of Marshal Victor, of that of General Sebastiani, and of Seven or Eight Thousand Men the Guards of Joseph Buonaparte, and the Garrison of Madrid, and it was commanded by Joseph Buonaparte, aided by Marshals Jourdan and Victor, and General Sebastiani.

On the 26th General Cuesta's advanced Guard was attacked near Torrijos, and obliged to fall back,

and the General retired with his Army on that Day to the left Bank of the Alberché, General Sherbrooke continuing at Casalegos, and the Enemy at Santa Olalla.

It was then obvious that the Enemy intended to try the Result of a general Action, for which the best Position appeared to be in the Neighbourhood of Talavera, and General Cuesta having consented to take up this Position on the Morning of the 27th, I ordered General Sherbrooke to retire with his Corps to its Station in the Line, leaving General Mackenzie with a Division of Infantry and a Brigade of Cavalry as an advanced Post in the Wood on the Right of Alberché, which covered our Left Flank.

The Position taken up by the Troops at Talavera extended rather more than Two Miles; the Ground was open upon the Left, where the British Army was stationed, and it was commanded by a Height on which was, in Echelon and in Second Line, a Division of Infantry under the Orders of Major-General Hill.

There was a Valley between this Height and a Range of Mountains still further upon the Left, which Valley was not at first occupied, as it was commanded by the Height before mentioned; and the Range of Mountains appeared too distant to have any Influence upon the expected Action.

The Right, consisting of Spanish Troops, extended immediately in Front of the Town of Talavera down to the Tagus. This Part of the Ground was covered by Olive Trees, and much intersected by Banks and Ditches. The high Road leading from the Bridge over the Alberché, was defended by a heavy Battery in Front of a Church, which was occupied by Spanish Infantry. All the Avenues to the Town were defended in a similar Manner; the Town was occupied, and the Remainder of the Spanish Infantry was formed in Two Lines behind