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Downing-Street, September 2, 1809.

A DISPATCH, of which the following is a Copy, was, on the 30th Ultimo, received at the Office of Lord Viscount Castlereagh; one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, from Lieutenant-General Lord Viscount Wellington, dated Deleytosa, 8th August 1809.

MY LORD, *Deleytosa, Aug. 8, 1809.*
I APPRIZED your Lordship on the 1st Instant, of the Advance of a French Corps towards the Puerto de Banós, and of the probable Embarrassments to the Operations of the Army, which its Arrival at Plasencia would occasion; and these Embarrassments having since existed to a Degree so considerable, as to oblige us to fall back, and to take up a defensive Position on the Tagus, I am induced to trouble you more at length with an Account of what has passed upon this Subject.

When I entered Spain, I had a Communication with General Cuesta, through Sir Robert Wilson and Colonel Roche, respecting the Occupation of the Puerto de Banós and the Puerto de Perales, the former of which, it was at last settled, should be held by a Corps to be formed under the Marquis De la Reyna, to consist of Two Battalions from General Cuesta's Army, and Two from Bejar; and that the Puerto de Perales was to be taken care of by the Duque del Parque, by Detachments from the Garrison of Ciudad Rodrigo.

I doubted of the Capacity of the Garrison of Ciudad Rodrigo to make the Detachment to the latter, but so little of the effectual Occupation of the former, that in writing to Marshal Beresford on the 17th July, I desired him to look to the Puerto de Perales, but that I considered Banos as secure, as appears by the Extract of my Letter which I inclose.

On the 30th Intelligence was received at Talavera, that Twelve Thousand Rations had been ordered at Fuente Dueros for the 28th, and Twenty-four Thousand at Los Santos for the same Day, for a French Corps, which it was believed was on its March towards the Puerto de Banós.

General Cuesta expressed some Anxiety respecting this Post, and sent me a Message, to propose that Sir Robert Wilson should be sent there with his Corps.

Sir Robert was on that Day at Talavera, but his Corps was in the Mountains towards Escalona; and as he had already made himself very useful in that Quarter, and had been near Madrid, from which City he had had a Communication, which I was desirous of keeping up, I proposed that a Spanish Corps should be sent to Banós without Loss of Time.

I could not prevail with General Cuesta, although he certainly admitted the Necessity of a Reinforcement when he proposed that Sir Robert should be sent to Banós; and he was equally sensible with myself, of the Benefit to be derived to the Cause, from sending Sir Robert back to Escalona.

At this Time we had no further Intelligence of the Enemy's Advance, than that the Rations were ordered; and I had Hopes that the Enemy might be deterred from advancing, by the Intelligence of our Success on the 28th, and that the Troops in the Puerto might make some Defence; and that under these Circumstances it was not desirable to divert Sir Robert Wilson from Escalona.

On the 30th, however, I renewed my Application to General Cuesta, to send there a Spanish Division of sufficient Strength, in a Letter to General O'Donoghue, of which I inclose a Copy, but without Effect; and he did not detach General Bassecourt till the Morning of the 2d, after we had heard that the Enemy had entered Bejar, and it was obvious that the Troops in the Puerto would make no Defence.

On the 2d we received Accounts, that the Enemy had entered Plasencia in Two Columns.

The Marquis de la Reyna, whose Two Battalions consisted of only Six Hundred Men, with only Twenty Rounds of Ammunition each Man, retired from the Puerto and from Plasencia, without firing a Shot, and went to the Bridge of Almaraz, which he declared that he intended to remove; the Battalions of Bejar dispersed without making any Resistance.

The General called upon me on that Day, and proposed that Half of the Army should march to the Rear to oppose the Enemy, while the other Half should maintain the Post at Talavera.

My Answer was, that if by Half the Army, he meant Half of each Army, I could only answer that I was ready either to go or to stay with the whole