

[ 1832 ]

My LORD,

Head Quarters, Casal Cochim,  
20th October 1810.

I HAVE the Honour to annex the Extract of a Letter I have this Instant received from Brigadier General Blunt, by which your Lordship will see he continues to pick up the Marauders and Stragglers from the Enemy. I have, &c.

(Signed) W. C. BERESFORD,  
Marshal and Lieut.-General.

Extract of a Letter from Brigadier-General Blunt, to Lieutenant-Colonel Arbuthnot, dated Peniché, 19th October 1810.

YOU will be pleased to report to His Excellency Marshal Beresford, that, in consequence of Information, I detached a Party on the 17th under the Command of Major Tavares to fall in with the Enemy's Foragers, but unfortunately the Enemy had retired.

Major Pinto was detached Yesterday for the same Purpose to a Distance of Five Leagues. He succeeded in taking Twenty-three Prisoners, Two of the Enemy were killed and One of the Recruits. It is great Gratification to see the Alacrity with which they offer themselves on every Occasion.

My LORD, *Pero Negro, 27th October, 1810.*

THE Enemy still occupy the same Positions in Front of this Army which they held when I addressed you on the 20th Instant. They have detached some Troops towards Santarem, and on the 23d General Loison marched towards that Place with the Division under his Command; and it appears, from Accounts from the Commanding Officer at Abrantes, of the 24th, that a Body of the Enemy's Infantry and Cavalry entered Thomar on that Day. The Reports which I have received from the Prisoners and Deserters which have been brought in, concur in the Accounts of the Distress felt by the Enemy for the Want of Provisions of all Descriptions. They state that they are collecting and preparing Materials to construct a Bridge over the Tagus; but although we have a good View of that River from different Parts of the Ground occupied by the Army, and have Officers and others employed on the Left of the Tagus, to observe the Motions of the Enemy, I have not been able to discover either where this Work is carrying on, or where the Bridge is to be placed on the River, if it should be constructed.

The Enemy appears to be very anxious to collect Boats; and on the 24th endeavoured to drive a Party of the Ordenanza from Chamusca, by the Fire of Artillery, in order to obtain possession of some which were under that Place.

Colonel Wilton had been at Leyria, with the Cavalry attached to General Barcellar's Division, and had proceeded to Ourem. The Advance of the Infantry was at Pombal.

On the Side of Obidos and Ramalhal, the British Cavalry and a Battalion of Spanish Light Infantry, and the Troops of the Garrison of Peniché, confine the Enemy's Detachments; and they really possess no Part of the Country, excepting that on which their Army stands.

By the last Accounts from General Silveira of the 17th Instant, it appears that all was quiet in the

North; and he had not received any Accounts of the March of Troops in Castille.

The Parties of Guerillas had been more daring than usual; and they had united in the Neighbourhood of Valladolid, early in the Month of October, to the Amount of Fifteen Hundred, in order to carry off a Convoy of Money which had been raised in Contributions from the Country, in which Attempt however they failed.

According to the Accounts of the 21st, from Estremadura, it appears that Marshal Mortier's Corps was still at Seville; and General Ballasteros was observing it from Aracena.

The second Division of the Marquis de la Romana's Corps, under General Carrera, arrived at Lisbon on the 25th, and will be with the Army this Day.—My last Accounts from Cadiz are of the 4th Instant. I have, &c.

(Signed) WELLINGTON.

My LORD, *Pero Negro, 3d Nov. 1810.*

I HAVE not observed any Alteration in the Enemy's Position or Numbers since I addressed you on the 27th Ult.

They have a considerable Body of Troops, principally Cavalry, on the Tagus, between Punhete and Santarem; and I have Reason to believe that Loison's Division of Infantry had not marched in that Direction, as I reported to your Lordship they had in my last Dispatch; some of the Corps composing that Division have certainly remained in the Camps in Front of this Army.

The Enemy have pushed some Troops across the Zezere above Punhete, principally Cavalry, apparently to reconnoiter the Roads in that Direction and the Fort at Abrantes; but I conclude that the Rains which have fallen within these few Days will have swelled that River, and that these Troops will have retired again.

They are still reported to be at Work upon Materials for a Bridge both at Santarem and Barquinha; but I have detached Major General Fane with a Body of Cavalry and Infantry to the Left of the Tagus, from whom I hope to receive accurate Accounts of what is passing opposite to him on this Side; and he will endeavour to destroy these Materials if it should be practicable.

It is reported by all the Deserters that the Enemy's Troops continue to suffer great Distress from the Want of Provisions.

It is impossible to form an Estimate of the Quantity of Provisions which they found in the Villages on the Ground which they occupy; but it is certain, that they can draw none from any other Part of the Country, the whole being in the Possession of our Troops.

The Garrison of Peniché, and the Garrison of Obidos, which Place Captain Fenwick, of the Portuguese Service, has lately occupied, under the Direction of Brigadier-General Blunt, and the British Cavalry, continue to carry on a destructive Warfare in the Rear of the Enemy's Right, while the high Road from Coimbra by Leyria is in the Possession of Colonel Wilton's Detachment.

I enclose a Letter from Marshal Beresford, on the Effects of the Operations of Brigadier-General Blunt and Captain Fenwick.

I have received no Letter from General Silveira of a later Date than the 19th October. He had not

