

and from that Time he had Posts in the Hills on both Sides of the Valley, as well as in the Plain in Front of his Army, which was posted on the Heights in Front of Roleia, its Right resting upon the Hills, its Left upon an Eminence on which was a Windmill, and the whole covering Four or Five Passes into the Mountains in his Rear.

I have Reason to believe that his Force consisted of at least Six Thousand Men, of which about Five Hundred were Cavalry, with Five Pieces of Cannon; and there was some Reason to believe that General Loison, who was at Rio Major Yesterday, would join General Laborde by his Right in the Course of the Night. The Plan of Attack was formed accordingly, and the Army having broken up from Caldas this Morning, was formed into Three Columns; the Right, consisting of Twelve Hundred Portuguese Infantry and Fifty Portuguese Cavalry, destined to turn the Enemy's Left, and penetrate into the Mountains in his Rear; the Left, consisting of Major General Ferguson's and Brigadier-General Bowes's Brigades of Infantry, Three Companies of Riflemen, a Brigade of Light Artillery, and Twenty British and Twenty Portuguese Cavalry, was destined, under the Command of Major-General Ferguson, to ascend the Hills at Ebidos, to turn all the Enemy's Posts on the Left of the Valley, as well as the Right of his Post at Roleia; this Corps was also destined to watch the Motions of General Loison, on the Enemy's Right, who I had heard had moved from Rio Major towards Alcoentré last Night. The Centre Column, consisting of Major-General Hill's, Brigadier-General Nightingale's, Brigadier-General Craufurd's, and Brigadier-General Fane's Brigades, (with the Exception of the Riflemen detached with Major-General Ferguson,) and Four Hundred Portuguese Light Infantry, the British and Portuguese Cavalry, a Brigade of Nine-Pounders, and a Brigade of Six-Pounders, were destined to attack General Laborde's Position in Front.

The Columns being formed, the Troops moved from Ebidos about Seven o'Clock in the Morning. Brigadier-General Fane's Riflemen were immediately detached into the Hills on the Left of the Valley, to keep up the Communication between the Centre and Left Columns, and to protect the March of the former along the Valley; and the Enemy's Posts were successively driven in. Major-General Hill's Brigade, formed in Three Columns of Battalions, moved on the Right of the Valley, supported by the Cavalry, in order to attack the Enemy's Left; and Brigadier-Generals Nightingale and Craufurd moved with the Artillery along the high Road, until at length the former formed in the Plain immediately in the Enemy's Front, supported by the Light Infantry Companies, and the 45th Regiment of Brigadier-General Craufurd's Brigade, while the Two other Regiments of this Brigade (the 50th and 9th), and Half of the Nine-pounder Brigade were kept as a Reserve in the Rear.

Major-General Hill and Brigadier-General Nightingale advanced upon the Enemy's Position, and, at the same Moment, Brigadier-General Fane's Riflemen were in the Hills on his Right; the Portuguese Infantry in a Village upon his Left; and Major-General Ferguson's Column was descending from the Heights into the Plain. From this Situation the Enemy retired by the Passes into the Mountains with

the utmost Regularity and the greatest Celerity; and notwithstanding the rapid Advance of the British Infantry, the Want of a sufficient Body of Cavalry was the Cause of his suffering but little Loss in the Plain.

It was then necessary to make a Disposition to attack the formidable Position which he had taken up. Brigadier-General Fane's Riflemen were already in the Mountains on his Right, and no Time was lost in attacking the different Passes, as well to support the Riflemen as to defeat the Enemy completely.

The Portuguese Infantry were ordered to move up a Pass on the Right of the whole; the Light Companies of Major-General Hill's Brigade and the 5th Regiment moved up a Pass next on the Right; and the 29th Regiment, supported by the 9th Regiment, under Brigadier-General Nightingale, a Third Pass; and the 45th and 82d Regiments, Passes on the Left. These Passes were all difficult of Access, and some of them were well defended by the Enemy, particularly that which was attacked by the 29th and 9th Regiments. These Regiments attacked with the greatest Impetuosity, and reached the Enemy before those whose Attacks were to be made on their Flanks: the Defence of the Enemy was desperate, and it was in this Attack principally that we sustained the Loss which we have to lament, particularly of that gallant Officer the Honourable Lieutenant-Colonel Lake, who distinguished himself upon this Occasion.

The Enemy, was, however, driven from all the Positions he had taken in the Passes of the Mountains, and our Troops were advanced in the Plains on their Tops. For a considerable Length of Time the 29th and 9th Regiments alone were advanced to this Point, with Brigadier-General Fane's Riflemen at a Distance on the Left, and they were afterwards supported by the 5th Regiment, and by the Light Companies of Major-General Hill's Brigade, which had come up on their Right; and by the other Troops ordered to ascend the Mountains, who came up by Degrees. The Enemy here made Three most gallant Attacks upon the 29th and 9th Regiments, supported, as I have above stated, with a View to cover the Retreat of his defeated Army; in all of which he was, however, repulsed; but he succeeded in effecting his Retreat in good Order, owing, principally, to my Want of Cavalry, and secondly, to the Difficulty of bringing up the Passes of the Mountains with Celerity, a sufficient Number of Troops, and of Cannon, to support those which had first ascended. The Loss of the Enemy has, however, been very great; and he left three Pieces of Cannon in our Hands.

I cannot sufficiently applaud the Conduct of the Troops throughout this Action. The Enemy's Positions were formidable, and he took them up with his usual Ability and Celerity, and defended them most gallantly. But I must observe that although we had such a Superiority of Numbers employed in the Operations of this Day, the Troops actually engaged in the Heat of the Action were, from unavoidable Circumstances, only the 5th, 9th, 29th, the Riflemen of the 95th and 60th, and the Flank Companies of Major-General Hill's Brigade, being a Number by no means equal to that of the Enemy:—their Conduct, therefore, deserves the highest Commendation.

I cannot avoid to take this Opportunity of expressing my Acknowledgments for the Aid and

