

NEW AND IMPROVED SERIES.

No. 27.

THE
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OF THE
DUKE OF WELLINGTON;

CONTAINING

AN ACCOUNT OF HIS EARLY LIFE;

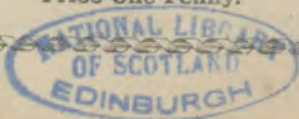
HIS BRILLIANT ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE PENINSULAR WARS;

AND

HIS CROWNING VICTORY AT WATERLOO.

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NO. 10

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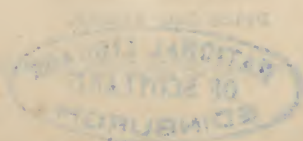
THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF

THE MOST ANTIQUARIAN AND HISTORICAL TRACES OF

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LIFE OF THE

DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

THE HON. ARTHUR WELLESLEY, third son of the Earl of Mornington, was born at the family seat, on the first of May, 1769. The loss occasioned by the early death of their father, was supplied to the family by the prudence and attention of their mother. Of the childhood and youth of the distinguished subject of the following biography, no incidents worth recording have been preserved. After having studied at Eton, having made choice of the profession of arms, he was removed to the military school of Angers, which at that time enjoyed great celebrity, and was a diligent student of those various branches of theoretical and practical science which are necessary to the formation of the accomplished soldier. He received his first commission as ensign in the 73rd foot, in 1787, when in his eighteenth year. As subaltern and captain he served both in the cavalry and infantry; in 1793, he was appointed to a majority in the 33rd foot; and in the spring of that year, he became Lieutenant Colonel of the same corps, by purchase. All this time he was busily engaged with professional studies; but being now in command of a regiment, he was naturally anxious for active service. An opportunity was soon afforded, and his regiment landed in Ostend, in June, 1794, having been sent to join the forces commanded by the Duke of York. The state of affairs upon the Continent was then critical; the allied forces were placed in a disadvan-

tageous position, and had already sustained several reverses of fortune. The Austrians had been thrice defeated; the Hanoverians had been compelled to evacuate Bruges; the Duke of York had been driven from his position at Ghent, and Lord Moira, with a force of 8,000 men, originally intended to make a descent on Brittany, was compelled to hasten to his assistance. Colonel Wellesley's regiment, with two other battalions, was directed to proceed by sea to Antwerp; and here the future conqueror first beheld an army in the field. Yet, to an ardent mind, the movements of the British in this campaign, which were wholly defensive, must have been somewhat disheartening. Few opportunities of distinction presented themselves, but these few were improved. The 33rd regiment was engaged in several sharp skirmishes; and so well did its young commander acquit himself, that, towards the close of the campaign, he was selected by General Dundas to cover, with the brigade to which he was attached, the difficult and trying retreat from Holland; the manner in which Colonel Wellesley discharged this trust, rendered him a marked man, and was an earnest of his future fame. The army had formidable obstacles to struggle with. Their route lay through a deserted and flat heathy country; the villages, or rather hamlets, were small and at distant intervals; the ground was covered with snow, and the wind and sleet beat directly against their faces. Many perished from cold and fatigue. The army, however, returned to England with untarnished honour, if with doubtful success; they had failed because of divided councils, deficiency of supplies, and scanty numbers. Yet though his first campaign was far from brilliant, the active observation and energetic mind of Colonel Wellesley must have derived many advantages from it. He had seen something of war upon an extended scale; had felt the need of forethought and energy; had become aware

of the defects of the regimental economy at that time (defects afterwards amply remedied by the diligence and wisdom of the Commander-in-Chief); his position had fostered that coolness and caution so visible in his after career. He had become familiar with the sound of war, amid which so much of his subsequent life was to be spent; he had heard the inspiring cheer of the British soldier, and felt that confidence in his nerve and vigour, which in his future fields, taught him to rely on their powers, in those great and daring actions, which his skilful combinations crowned with success.

The 3rd regiment was soon after ordered to accompany the fleet of Admiral Christian, destined for the West Indies; but the protracted and furious gales caused the expedition to be abandoned, after six weeks of most tempestuous weather at sea. In the spring, however, of 1796, Colonel Wellesley's corps was ordered to embark for India. Their commander was then labouring under a severe illness, but immediately upon his recovery, set sail and joined them at the Cape, and after arriving at Bengal, reached Calcutta early in 1797. It was remarked that during his passage, he occupied much of his time in the perusal of the chief works relating to India, thus storing his mind with well-digested information, and preparing it to meet future emergencies.

His success in India sufficiently proved that he was well fitted to serve his country with profit and honour. In the spring of 1802, he was promoted to the rank of Major General; and two years after, he was created a Knight Commander of the Bath.

In 1805, Sir Arthur Wellesley returned to England, and being appointed to command a brigade in the army of Lord Cathcart, sailed with it for Hanover in November of that year. But the battle of Austerlitz rendered it prudent to recall the expedition without any advantage having been gained. On his return, Sir

Arthur was appointed to the command of a home district; and upon the death of Marquis Cornwallis, was made Colonel of the 33rd regiment, in which he had served for thirteen years as Lieutenant-Colonel. In 1806, he became a member of the House of Commons, having been elected representative for Newport, in the Isle of Wight. In the same year, he married the Hon. Catherine Pakenham, sister to the Earl of Longford.

In April, 1807, he was appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland, and a Privy Councillor under the Duke of Richmond. One of the chief measures introduced by him in the former capacity, was the establishment of a police in the city of Dublin, which, though violently opposed, was at length carried, and has since proved an important benefit. Several other arrangements of a civil and municipal nature, were likewise adopted at his suggestion.

But his exertions in the military service of his country, were now to be claimed anew. The restless ambition of Napoleon, incessantly directed against the commerce and prosperity of Britain, was bent upon the creation of a power that might rival her upon the seas. In furtherance of his object,—by the establishment of a continental system to place England in a state of blockade, by all the European powers,—he had resolved to close the Baltic ports against our ships. He seems to have formed the design of seizing the Danish fleet, probably to make it the basis of a futuro navy, with which, not only to blockade the ports, but also to be used in the invasion of England. It appeared necessary, therefore, that this formidable weapon of mischief should be taken out of his hands.

An armament, consisting of twenty-seven ships of the line, got ready in secrecy, was wisely planned upon a large scale. The troops, amounting to 20,000 men, were commanded by Lord Cathcart. Sir Arthur Wellesley was at the head of the reserve. The fleet

was under Admiral Gambier; one division sailed by the Great Belt, in order to blockade Zealand; the other, with the army on board, having arrived in the Sound, prepared for active operations. .

In the only combat of any importance, which took place near Kioge, Sir Arthur Wellesley commanded. He attacked a body of Danish troops, which contested the position; pursued them to a strong entrenchment in their rear; again driving them from this by assault, he forced into the town, and routed them with considerable loss. This action accelerated the conclusion of the campaign, by depriving the Governor of Copenhagen of all hopes of assistance from the army.

On his return to England, Major-General Wellesley having resumed his seat in the House of Commons, was addressed by the Speaker, who returned the thanks of the country to himself, and his brave coadjutors, in the following terms:—"I should be wanting in the full expression of those sentiments which animate this House, and the whole country, if I forbore to notice, that we are on this day crowning with our thanks, one gallant officer well known to the gratitude of this House, who has long trodden the paths of glory; whose genius and valour have already extended our fame and empire; whose sword has been the terror of our distant enemies, and will not now be drawn in vain to defend the seat of empire itself, and the throne of his King. I am, Sir Arthur Wellesley, charged to deliver the thanks of this House to you, and I accordingly thank you in the name of the Commons of the United Kingdom, for your zeal, intrepidity, and exertion, displayed in the various operations necessary for conducting the seige, and effecting the surrender of the navy and arsenal of Copenhagen." Sir Arthur's reply to this high eulogium, was truly characteristic. "The honour which this House has conferred on myself and my friends, is justly considered by the officers of the navy and army,

as the highest the country can offer; it is the object and ambition of all who are employed in his Majesty's service; and to obtain it, has doubtless been the motive of many of those acts of valour and good conduct which have tended so eminently to the glory, and have advanced the prosperity and advantage of this country."

Having resumed his duties as secretary for Ireland, Sir Arthur Wellesley frequently took part in the deliberations of the House concerning Irish questions; but a new scene of action was now opening before him; the laurels he had acquired on the plains of India, were to be thrown into the shade by the glorious conquests of his Peninsular campaigns; he was to lead the British troops from one victory to another, to be cheered by the shouts, and rewarded by the enthusiastic thanksgivings of a liberated people.

The glorious victory of Talavera added a fresh triumph to many others which the British army had gained. The Central Junta expressed their sense of Sir Arthur Wellesley's services, by nominating him a captain general in the Spanish service, and presented him with six Andalusian horses in the name of King Ferdinand. Higher honours awaited him at home: as soon as the news of his victory arrived, he was raised to the peerage, by the title of Baron Douro of Wellesley, and Viscount Wellington of Talavera and Wellington in Somersetshire.

On the 23rd of November, 1809, Lord Wellington was appointed Marshal General of the Portuguese army. No chief had ever before shown himself more deserving of such confidence from a foreign government; none, by the moral influence of his character, had given such security that it would be used aright. Throughout all his varied life, Wellington's conduct has ever been a model of perfect disinterestedness; his greatest opponent could never lay to his charge one act of rapacity, or needless severity; his virtues

have been followed by blessed results—his laurels are pure and unstained.

With the confidence of a great mind, he took upon himself the charge and heavy responsibility of defending Portugal, looking forward without dismay to the issue of the contest. He had the satisfaction to find that his suggestions were adopted, and that he enjoyed the good-will and respect of all classes.

In March, the French under Junot advanced upon Astorga with 12,000 men; they were at first repulsed with the loss of 2,500 troops, but the garrison afterwards capitulated. Junot then marched upon old Castile, and joined the corps which had already commenced operations against the frontier of Portugal. In expectation of a siege, Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida were put in a state of defence, a British Colonel, with 5,000 Portuguese, being appointed governor of the latter. In May, three *corps d'armée*, called the army of Portugal, had been put under Massena, who had acquired the title of the "Child of victory;" and it was expected by Napoleon that his military talents would succeed in subduing the country, and placing it finally under the French yoke. It was said that the crown had been promised him in the event of success. He was followed by 70,000 of the best warriors of France. But among the hills lay the British army, strong in valour and determination, and presided over by the bold and sagacious Wellington. "The British lion was indeed in the way." Massena, in the full expectation that the British would fly before him, ordered his soldiers to carry food with them for 17 days, confidently hoping that by that time Lisbon would be in his possession. When he saw Wellington's army posted on the Sierra de Busaco, and meaning resistance, he said to one of the generals, "I cannot persuade myself that Lord Wellington will risk the loss of his reputation; but if he does, *I have him*; to-morrow we shall complete

the conquest of Portugal, and in a few days more, I shall drown the Leopard." His rash boasting was soon at an end; he left 5,000 men killed or wounded upon the mountains, and as many more were left disabled at Coimbra.

Ciudad Rodrigo surrendered after a brief defence, during which the besiegers lost 9,000 men. Almeida was the next object of the French; it was expected to resist long, as it was well garrisoned and provided; but on the second day, the powder magazine blew up, and it was no longer tenable.

The fall of Almeida allowed the enemy to advance, and on the 16th of September, Massena commenced his march into Portugal. To meet him, Lord Wellington crossed the Mondego, and occupied the Busaco range with his whole force, awaiting the French army in that strong position.

"The French Marshal was not ignorant of the strength of the position which the English General had now assumed, or of the perilous nature of the situation in which he was placed, for while lying at the foot of the ridge of Busaco, he received intelligence that Colonel Trant had, with ten regiments of militia, attacked the reserved artillery and military chest near Tojal, and captured the whole, with 800 prisoners; and already the communication by the Spanish frontier was entirely cut off by the Portuguese light parties. But the orders of the Emperor were pressing, and he was well aware that fight he must, at whatever disadvantage. Next day, collecting therefore all his force, Massena commenced a desperate attack upon the English position, at day-break of the morning of the 27th. The British army, during the night, lay in dense masses on the summit of the mountain.

"As the first streaks of dawn were beginning to appear over the eastern hills, a rustling noise was heard in the wooded dells which ran up to the crest

of the mountains. It arose from the French outposts, who stealing unobserved during the night, had thus got close to the outposts of the English position without being perceived.

“The alarm was instantly given, and the troops started to their arms at all points. It was full time, for in a few minutes more the French, in two massive columns, were upon them. Ney, with three divisions, numbering 25,000 combatants, advanced against the British left, by the great road leading to the convent of Busaco; while Regnier with two, moved by St. Antonio de Cantara, against their right, about three miles distant. The first, headed by Loison's division, preceded by a cloud of light troops, came rapidly up the wooded hollow which leads to Busaco; and the British sharpshooters, driven before them, soon emerged from the woods, breathless and in disorder. Crawford, whose division stood at that point, had stationed his artillery most advantageously to play upon the enemy during their ascent from the hollow; but though the guns were worked with extraordinary rapidity, nothing could stop the undaunted advance of the French troops. Emerging bravely from the hollow, they took their stand upon the edge of the mountain. The British artillery was quickly drawn to the rear. The shout of victory is already heard from the French line, when suddenly, Crawford, with the 43rd and 52nd regiments, springing out of a hollow behind the highest part of the ridge, where they lay concealed, appeared on the summit, and 1,800 British bayonets sparkled on the crest of the hill. The head of the French column instantly fired, but in vain; it was broken and driven back; both its flanks were over-lapped by the English, and three terrible discharges, within a few yards' distance, drove them headlong down, in wild confusion, and with dreadful loss, to the bottom of the hollow.

“The attack on the British right by the two divi-

sions of Regnier's corps, met with no better success. The ground in that quarter was indeed of comparatively easy ascent, and although the British and Portuguese skirmishers opposed a vigorous resistance, and twenty pieces of cannon played incessantly on the advancing column, yet nothing could arrest the ardour and gallantry of the French, who mounted with an intrepid step up the hill, and after routing a Portuguese regiment stationed before them, established themselves on the summit, and were beginning to deploy to the right and left; at this instant, however, when the British position in this point appeared to be almost carried, and the third division, (part of which had been forced to give way) could with difficulty maintain itself against the dense and intrepid column which had forced itself into the centre of its line, General Leith and General Pieton brought up their divisions, and charged them with such vigour, that the enemy, after a desperate struggle, were hurled down the hill, the British firing upon them as long as their muskets would carry, but not pursuing, lest their ranks should be broken, and the crest of the hill be again won. The other French divisions of Regnier's corps, which advanced up a hollow way a little to the left of his main column, were repulsed by the left of Pieton's division, before they reached the summit of the mountain."

The battle of Busaco produced an astonishing effect at the time at which it was fought; and in its ultimate consequences, was beyond all question one of the most important that took place in the whole Peninsular war. After several other engagements, in which the superior generalship of Lord Wellington was displayed, the French were driven out of Portugal. They had advanced, confident in their superior numbers, to "drive the English into the sea," and a disgraceful and dangerous retreat had alone preserved them from destruction. The British cavalry chased

them as far as the Spanish frontiers, after they had been exposed to one unbroken series of disaster and defeat.

Similar conflicts, with the like successful results, took place at Barrossa, Albuera, Almeida, Salamanca, and Vittoria, and Lord Wellington again received the thanks of Parliament, for the able services rendered to his country. He was created a Marquis of the United Kingdom, to which was added the grant of £100,000 to purchase lands, and enable him to support the dignity of the Peerage. The Prince of Brazil conferred on him the additional title of Duke of Vittoria. After the battle of Toulouse, he proceeded to Paris, which he reached on the 4th of May, 1814, and was received with due respect by the sovereigns, statesmen, and generals, at the court of Louis XVIII.; everywhere high honours awaited him, and he had already received the insignia of every distinguished order in Europe. On the 10th of May he quitted Paris, and after paying a four days' visit to Toulouse, repaired to Madrid, where Ferdinand confirmed the honours paid to him by the Cortes, and appointed him Captain-General of Spain. On the 5th of June, he left Madrid, went to Bourdeaux, reviewed the troops, and made preparation for their embarkation. On the 23rd of June, he landed at Dover, under a salute from the batteries, and forthwith proceeded to London; he was recognized as his carriage drove up Parliament Street, and was greeted with shouts and applause. After a short interview with his family, he hastened to Portsmouth, where the Prince Regent gave him a worthy reception: his distinctions honoured him in the face of Europe, for the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia were then at the English court. On the 28th of June, he first took his seat in the House of Lords. A great number of the Peers were present. On this memorable occasion he appeared in a field-marshal's uniform, with the in-

signia of the Garter, and was introduced to the house by the Dukes of Beaufort and Richmond. He had not been in England since his elevation to the peerage; and thus, in his introduction to the House of Lords, his patents of creation as Baron, Earl, Marquis, and Duke, were all read on the same day. No ceremony of honour was omitted on this occasion; the Duchess of Wellington, and his mother, the Countess of Mornington, were present, seated below the throne. After the oaths had been administered, and the Duke had taken his seat, the Lord Chancellor Eldon addressed him for the purpose of conveying the thanks of the House, which had been voted to him the preceding evening, for the twelfth time.

On Saturday the 9th of July, the Duke of Wellington was entertained at a banquet by the corporation of London; great cost and magnificence were displayed on the occasion, and he was presented with the freedom of the city in a gold box, and with a splendid sword. In returning thanks, he, as invariably on other occasions, gratefully alluded to the support of his officers, and the bravery of his troops. When he received the sword, he energetically declared that he was ready, whenever called upon, to employ it in the service of his king and country, should it unfortunately happen that the general wish of Europe for a peace should be disappointed. He did not then suspect how soon his pledge would be redeemed.

On the 8th of August, he left England again, having been appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the court of France. On his way to Paris, he visited the Netherlands, and, in company with the Prince of Orange, made a careful examination of the frontier fortresses on that line. On the 24th of August, he was presented to Louis XVIII., delivered his credentials, and took up his residence in Paris.

The intelligence of Napoleon's return from Elba,

struck Europe with amazement. Louis had already fled from the Tuilleries; and on the 20th of March, 1815, the Emperor once more entered Paris, where he was received at the palace by all the adherents of his cause.

The powers who signed the treaty of Paris were then in congress at Vienna, where the Duke of Wellington was present as the plenipotentiary of Great Britain, having left Paris for that capital on the 24th of January. The moment that the news of Napoleon's daring movement reached them, the Congress published a proclamation in these words:—"By breaking the convention which established him in Elba, Bonaparte destroys the only legal title on which his existence depended. By appearing again in France, with projects of confusion and disorder, he has deprived himself of the protection of the law, and manifested to the universe, that there can neither be peace nor truce with him. The powers consequently declare that Napoleon Bonaparte has placed himself without the pale of civil and social relations, and that, as an enemy and disturber of the tranquillity of the world, he has rendered himself liable to public vengeance." All Europe once more prepared for war, and scarcely was Napoleon seated on his throne, before he heard that in all likelihood he must do his best to defend it against 300,000 Austrians, 225,000 Russians, 236,000 Prussians, 150,000 men from the minor states of Germany, 50,000 from the Netherlands, and 50,000 English under Wellington, in all 1,011,000 armed men.

Napoleon, conscious of the stake for which he played, and of the odds against him, was indefatigable. When he landed at Cannes, the army numbered 175,000 men; the cavalry had been greatly reduced; and the effects of the campaigns of the three preceding years, was visible in the deficiency of military stores and arms, but especially of artillery. By in-

credible exertions, and notwithstanding the pressure of innumerable cares and anxieties, the Emperor, before the end of May, had 375,000 men in arms—including an imperial guard of 40,000 chosen veterans, a large and brilliant cavalry force, and a numerous and well-appointed train of artillery.

He left Paris on the evening of the 11th of June; exclaiming, as he entered his carriage, "I go to measure myself against Wellington." On the 14th, at Beaumont, he assembled and reviewed that part of the army which had been prepared to act under his own orders; it consisted of 25,000 of the imperial guard, 25,000 cavalry in admirable condition, 350 pieces of artillery, and veteran infantry enough to swell the host to 130,000 men. Marshal Ney commanded the centre; Jerome Bonaparte the left; Marshal Grouchy the right.

Blucher's Prussians numbered 100,000 men. The Duke of Wellington's varied and motley army amounted in all to 75,000, of whom only 35,000 were English—and these chiefly young soldiers, for the flower of the Peninsular army had been sent to America. The King's German Legion, however, 8,000 strong, were brave and excellent soldiers; and there were 5,000 Brunswickers, worthy followers of their gallant Duke. The Hanoverians amounted to 15,000; the Nassau troops, Dutch and Belgian, under the Prince of Orange, were nearly 17,000 men; but much dependence could not be placed on the Belgian part of the army. The first division occupied Enghien, Brain-le-Comte, and Nivelles, communicating with the Prussian right at Charleroi. The second, under Lord Hill, was cantoned in Halle, Oudevard, and Grammont—with most of the cavalry. The reserve, under Picton, were at Brussels and Ghent. Wellington chose Quatre Bras as the point at which, should Bonaparte advance on that side, he was to be held in check till the allied troops were concentrated.

That junction was ably and certainly accomplished, though all Napoleon's skill in manœuvring and activity of movement were used to prevent it.

On the morning of Thursday the 15th, the French drove in the Prussian outposts on the west bank of the Sambre, and at length assaulted Charleroi: the purpose of Napoleon was now apparent—to crush Blucher before he could concentrate his own army, before Wellington could aid him, and then fall upon Brussels. In spite, however, of a severe loss, Ziethen maintained his ground so long at Charleroi, that the alarm spread along the whole Prussian line: he then fell back in an orderly manner upon a position between Ligny and Amand; where Blucher, at the head of his whole army, excepting Bulow's division, which had not yet come from Liege,—awaited Napoleon's attack. Bonaparte had thus failed in his attempt to beat the Prussian divisions in detail; it remained to be seen whether the second part of his plan, that of wholly separating Blucher from Wellington's army, would succeed.

At half-past one o'clock of the same day, a Prussian officer came to the Duke of Wellington's quarters at Brussels, with the intelligence of the French movements. By two o'clock the Duke issued orders to all his cantonments, for the divisions to break up, and effect a junction on the left at Quatre Bras: there the British general intended his whole force to assemble, by eleven o'clock of the following night, the 16th. That night a ball which was to have been given at the Duchess of Richmond's hotel in Brussels, was intended to be put off; but as on reflection it seemed expedient that the inhabitants should be as little as possible acquainted with the progress of events, at the Duke of Wellington's request it proceeded—himself enjoining the general officers to appear in the ball-room, but each to quit the apartment quietly at ten o'clock, and to join his respective division *en route*.

Soon after, the younger officers were summoned from the dance, for the troops were already mustering. The Duke retired at twelve, and left the town at six next morning for Quatre Bras.

When Napoleon came up from Charleroi, about noon on the 16th, he was at first uncertain whether to make his main attack on Blucher at Ligny, or on the English at Quatre Bras. But the Anglo-Belgian army was not yet concentrated, while the Prussian, with the exception of one division, was : he therefore resolved to devote his personal attention to the latter. The main strength of his army, accordingly, was directed against Blucher at three in the afternoon ; whilst the subordinate, yet formidable attack on Wellington's position, was begun by Ney with 45,000 men.

The battle raged as fiercely on every other point, and night found the English, after a severe and bloody day, in possession of the field. Several regiments were reduced to skeletons, and many brave officers had fallen ; among others, the Duke of Brunswick was shot soon after the commencement of the battle ; and many other regretted names appeared in the list of the slain.

With worse fortune, Blucher fought as severe a battle at Ligny : with 80,000 men, he had to encounter 90,000, led by Napoleon. Though the Prussians behaved with great bravery, the villages of Amand and Ligny were repeatedly taken and retaken during the day ; and a body of French cavalry penetrated to the very heart of the position.

In the course of the day, the brave old Prussian general, in heading a cavalry charge, had his horse shot under him, and in the tumultuous hurry of the fight, was ridden over, unseen both by his own men and the French. But Bulow had not yet arrived, and the successive charges of fresh divisions of the enemy,

compelled the Prussians to retire. Blucher retreated on the river Dyle, towards Wavre.

The Duke of Wellington did not hear of the Prussians' retreat till seven o'clock on the morning of the 17th; for an aide-de-camp whom Blucher had sent to acquaint him of it, was killed. A patrol, however, sent out to Sombref at daylight, ascertained the state of matters; they found out how little real success had been gained over the Prussians by the French, for Blucher had fallen back most leisurely, and his rear-guard did not evacuate Bry till three in the morning. The Duke had already collected his troops at Quatre Bras, and was prepared to have maintained that position; but the retrograde movement of the Prussians rendered it necessary for him to adopt a corresponding movement. He therefore retired by Genappe upon Waterloo, about ten o'clock on the morning of the 17th. His march was conducted so leisurely, and in such admirable order, that the enemy did not venture to molest it; but a large body of horse followed the cavalry of the rear-guard under Lord Uxbridge. Wellington retired to Waterloo in confidence of being joined there by Blucher before the decisive contest began.

Having finished all his arrangements on the evening of the 17th, the Duke of Wellington rode across the country to Blucher, to inform him that he had thus far acted on a plan previously fixed at Bry—expressing at the same time his hope that he would be next day supported by two Prussian battalions. Blucher replied, that after leaving a single corps to keep Grouchy at bay, he would himself march to Waterloo with the rest of his army. Wellington returned to the scene of action, expecting that Blucher would be able to come up in time. But so terrible was the state of the cross roads between Wavre and Mont St. Jean, and such torrents of rain fell, that though Blucher began his march, he found

it impossible to come up until long after the time anticipated.

Between eleven and twelve the battle opened with a cannonade from the French line, instantly followed by a fierce attack under Jerome, on the advanced post of Hougomont, but this having failed, Napoleon directed a formidable attack both of infantry and cavalry upon the left centre. All the firmness and bravery of the British and their commander were here required. During the scene of tumult and carnage, indeed, Wellington was everywhere, on account of the position of the armies, and the nature of the ground, exposing his person with a necessary but painful freedom. There was scarcely a square which he did not visit in person, encouraging the men by his presence, and stimulating the officers by his directions. Many of his short phrases addressed to his troops had a talismanic effect. As he stood before Mont St. Jean, in the middle of the high road, several guns were pointed at him, distinguished as he was by his suite, and the movements of his staff who went and came with orders. The balls repeatedly struck, on the right hand of the road near him. "That's good practice," said the Duke to one of his staff; "I think they fire better than they did in Spain." Riding up to the 95th when in front of the line, and threatened with a formidable charge of cavalry, he said, "Stand fast, 95th—we must not be beat—what will they say in England?" On another occasion, when brave men were falling every minute, he said with cool confidence, as if he had been merely a spectator, "Never mind, we'll win this battle yet." Another regiment, in close combat, was addressed by him in a common sporting phrase: "Hard pounding this, gentlemen; let's see who will pound longest."—All who heard him issue orders, received fresh confidence from his readiness, decision, and cool composure. His staff fell man by

man beside him, yet, seemed in their own agony only to regard his safety. Sir William De Laney fell from his horse, struck by a spent ball;—he said to those who came to assist him, “Leave me to die; attend to the Duke.” Sir Alexander Gordon received his mortal wound while expostulating with his General on the personal danger to which he exposed himself. Lieutenant Colonel Canning, and many others, died with Wellington’s name upon their expiring lips.

As yet, however, it did not seem certain whether all these sacrifices had not been made in vain. The French, though repulsed on every point, persevered in incessant attacks, and the British squares, from the constant firing and assaults, presented a diminished and less formidable appearance. One general officer stated that his brigade had lost one-third of its numbers, and that the survivors were so exhausted with fatigue, that a brief respite, however short, seemed absolutely necessary. “Tell him,” said the Duke, “what he proposes is impossible. He, and I, and every Englishman in the field, must die on the spot which we now occupy.”—“It is enough,” replied the general; “I, and every man under my command, are determined to share his fate.”—“A friend of ours,” says Sir W. Scott, “had the courage to ask the Duke of Wellington, whether in that conjuncture he looked often to the woods from which the Prussians were expected to issue? ‘No,’ was the answer, ‘I looked oftener at my watch than at any thing else. I knew if my troops could maintain their position till night, that I must be joined by Blucher before morning, and we would not have left Bonaparte an army next day. ‘But,’ continued he, ‘I own I was glad as one hour of daylight slipped away after another, and our position was still maintained.’—‘And if,’ continued the querist, ‘by misfortune the position had been carried?’—‘We had the wood behind us to retreat into.’—‘And if the wood also had been forced?’—‘No, no, they could

never have so beaten us, we could have made good the wood against them.'” This brief but characteristic conversation has been adduced to show that even though the English had sustained a temporary disaster, still the plan of the campaign had been so regulated, that Napoleon could only have had a brief and temporary glimpse of success.

Still the battle was far from being decided. Napoleon was desperate, and resolved to sacrifice his last chance of retreat before the Prussians came up; though his cavalry was already wrecked, and he had lost, besides, 15,000 men. There was no time to lose, for the Prussian guns were beginning to thunder on his flank, to the great joy of Wellington, who said, “There goes old Blucher at last;” and by the light of the setting sun his forces were seen issuing from the wood.

Napoleon had still 15,000 men of his own faithful Guard, who, placed during the action either on or behind La Belle Alliance, had hardly drawn a trigger. Led by Marshal Ney, they advanced dauntlessly, rallying as they went such of the broken cavalry and infantry as yet maintained the conflict. The British line, by the successes on the right wing, had gradually all pushed forward, and was now changed from a convex to a concave position, so that the artillery raked the French columns as they came upon the causeway; and so accurately were they directed, that the heads of the columns were constantly cut off, and they seemed to make no progress. Borne on however by the impetuosity of those in the rear, they at length reached the plain, and attained the summit of the ridge where the British lay concealed. At this important time, the Duke of Wellington, who had placed himself immediately behind the Guards, when he thought them near enough, gave the order, “Up, Guards, and at them.” They sprung to their feet, as if by magic, poured in on the French a well-aimed

fire, which made them stagger; a second volley put them in a panic; and the Duke, galloping close up in their rear, called out, "Forward, Guards!" They advanced with three cheers, and rushed down the hill upon the French with pointed bayonets; but before they got within twenty yards, the hitherto unvanquished veteran Guards of France—the "Sacred Band" of their army—turned from the shock and fled. Ney fought sword in hand on foot; his clothes were pierced through with balls, and he was the last to quit the struggle. Napoleon's only hope was gone. His army of yesterday, was now a splendid wreck. His own words best describe it—"It was a total rout." Soon after, two large bodies of British cavalry were seen rapidly advancing on either flank, and the Prussians were closing up his rear; now was the time, had his spirit dictated it, to die a warrior's death; but he said to Bertrand, who remained at his side, the fatal words, "All is over—it is time to save ourselves!" With ten or twelve attendants, he put spurs to his horse and fled, leaving to their fate the gallant army which had that day shed their blood for him with such profusion.

The British lost 15,000 men killed and wounded, 100 officers were slain, and 500 wounded, many of them mortally; of the officers who fell many were highly distinguished. The Duke of Wellington was repeatedly in great danger—only himself, and one individual of his numerous staff, escaped unwounded in horse or person. The French loss cannot be calculated; but it was immense; for besides what they lost in the battle, many were cut down in the retreat—and of 75,000 men, the half were never again collected in arms.

By the victory of this memorable day, the Duke of Wellington finished his military career of unequalled glory. Boundless joy—in spite of the heavy number of the brave men who had fallen—was felt at home.

The Duke's despatches, dated the 19th, from the field of Waterloo, reached London late on the night of the 21st June. Next day the thanks of Parliament, and a resolution to erect a public monument to the Duke of Wellington and the army, were carried by acclamation. Parliament also voted thanks to Field Marshal Blücher and the Prussian army. The rewards of merit were extended to every rank and individual of the British army present on the 18th; each regiment was to bear the word Waterloo on its colours; all the privates were to be borne upon the muster-rolls and pay lists of their respective corps as Waterloo men, and each one of them was to reckon that day's work as two years' service.

We cannot resist quoting a remarkable saying of Wellington's which showed how much he felt this heavy loss. "Believe me," said he, "excepting a battle lost, nothing can be half so melancholy as a battle won. The bravery of my troops has hitherto saved me from that greater evil; but to win even such a battle as this of Waterloo, at the expense of the lives of so many gallant friends, could only be termed a heavy misfortune, were it not for its important results to the public benefit."

The Duke has since been called to serve his country as a statesman, and has held the highest place in the councils of the realm. While, however, he is happily spared to benefit that empire by his wisdom, which he has protected by his valour, it would not be expedient, even if space admitted, to enter on a review of his political career. His name is associated with some of the greatest legislative and social changes that this generation has witnessed, and some of them are yet too recent to be discussed with impartiality.