

M - 1428



THE
BATTLE OF VITTORIA.

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This action was fought upon the 21st of June, 1813, in the neighbourhood of VITTORIA, a town seated upon the river ZADORA; the Allies being commanded by THE MARQUIS OF WELLINGTON, and the French by JOSEPH BONAPARTE, having MARSHAL JOURDAN as the Major General of the Army. This engagement terminated in the defeat of the enemy, whose loss amounted to between 6 and 7000 in killed, wounded, and prisoners: 151 pieces of cannon, being the whole of his artillery, were taken; besides 415 waggons of ammunition; all his baggage, provision, cattle, treasure, &c. The total loss of the Allies amounted to between 4 and 5000 killed and wounded: amongst the former of which was THE HONORABLE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL CADOGAN.

Such were the leading features of the great battle of VITTORIA; a battle which will ever hold a conspicuous place in the pages of British history; remaining an almost solitary instance of such brilliant and complete success, purchased by the victors at so small a price, in one single engagement. The important advantages of this victory appear to have been chiefly owing to the celerity and judgment of LORD WELLINGTON'S movements, which prevented the enemy from making those preparations that might have enabled him to retreat without sustaining such immense losses.

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IN matchless pride the rising lamp of day
Now spread o'er eastern clouds his golden ray ;
Creation shone around ; the lark on wing,
The linnet on the spray, began to sing.

But say, HISPANIA ! did thy mournful breast
Partake these joys, or share this gen'ral rest ?

Not so—far other scenes thy thoughts command ;
For on VITTORIA'S plains, undaunted, stand,
To claim the freedom of their native land,
And seek requital for their slighted laws,
Thy angry Sons ;—a great and glorious cause !

But, hark! the trumpet sounds with hideous breath;
 Unfeeling herald of impending death!
 Scarce heard thy voice, when, on LA PUEBLA's height,
 Whole adverse legions mingle in the fight:
 For on LA PUEBLA's heights a Gallic band
 Were now resolv'd all efforts to withstand:
 Strong was the post, important to command;
 Fierce was the contest; but the British lance,
 Still found superior to the sword of FRANCE,
 Soon forc'd a passage thro' the servile train;
 Nor longer could the Gaul his post maintain.

Again the clarion sounds—with quiv'ring spear,
 And brandish'd sword, array'd, the ranks draw near;
 And now upon ZADORA's crimson'd shores,
 And thro' VITTORIA's plains, the battle roars,
 But ALBION was triumphant in the field,
 And GALLIA was at length constrain'd to yield;
 For now her sons, beneath the veil of night,
 Secure their safety by disgraceful flight;

But not till many in the cause were slain ;
 And long, ZADORA, shall thy streams retain
 The sad remembrance of the slaughter'd train.
 Here bled CADOGAN, whose inspiring name
 Imparts such brilliance to the rolls of Fame :
 Thus spoke the dying chief: "E'er yet cold death,
 " Now fast approaching, shall exhaust my breath,
 " Brave soldiers! bear me to some neighb'ring height,
 " From whence I may behold the glorious fight."
 His wish obey'd, around his comrades stand,
 When thus the hero to his faithful band :
 " Forbear such grief; those tender tears restrain ;
 " Nor yet, thus wrongly, at my fate complain ;
 " For know that, having fill'd his blissful eyes
 " With GALLIA's fall, in peace CADOGAN dies."
 So having said, his spirit wings her flight,
 And shades perpetual close upon his sight.
 Nor yet, ZADORA, whilst thy streams remain,
 Shall cease the mem'ry of lamented FANE :

Skilful to fight, as able to advise ;

Fearless in combat, yet in council wise :

The same to him was every clime and blast :

In peril foremost ; in desertion, last.

