

however, for hesitation, and I moved my men down the slope in the direction of the skirmishers.

The position we occupied was singularly favorable; our flanks defended on either side by brushwood, we could only be assailed in front—and here, notwithstanding our vast inferiority of force, we steadily awaited the attack. As I rode from out the thick wood I could not help feeling surprised at the sounds which greeted me. Instead of the usual low and murmuring tones—the muttered sentences which precede a cavalry advance—a roar of laughter shook the entire division, while exclamations burst from every side around me—"Look at him now!"—"They have him—by heavens they have him!"—"Well done—well done!"—"How the fellow rides!"—"He's hit—he's hit!"—"No—no!"—"Is he down?"—"He's down."

A loud cheer rent the air at this moment, and I reached the front in time to learn the reason of all this excitement. In the wide plain before me a horseman was seen, having passed the ford of the Aguada, to advance at the top of his speed toward the British lines. As he came nearer, it was perceived that he was accompanied by a led horse, and apparently with total disregard of the presence of an enemy, rode boldly and carelessly forward—behind him rode three lancers, their lances couched, their horses at full speed—the pace was tremendous, and the excitement intense—for, sometimes, as the leading horseman of the pursuit neared the fugitive, he would bend suddenly upon his saddle, and, swerving to the right or left, totally evade him, while again, at others with a loud cry of bold defiance, rising in his stirrups, he would press on, and with a shake of his bridle that bespoke the jockey, almost distance the enemy.

"That must be your fellow, O'Malley; that must be your Irish groom," cried a brother officer. There could be no doubt of it. It was Mike himself.

"I'll be hanged if he's not playing with them," said Raker. "Look at the villain! He's holding in: that's more than the Frenchmen are doing. Look, look at the fellow on the gray horse; he has flung his trumpet to his back, and drawn his sabre."

A loud cheer burst from the French lines; the trumpeter was gaining at every stride. Mike had got into deep ground, and the horses would not keep together. "Let the brown horse go—let him go, man!" shouted the dragoons, while I re-echoed the cry with my utmost might. But not so: Mike held firmly on, and spurring on madly, he lifted his horse at each stride; turning, from time to time, a glance at his pursuer. A shout of triumph rose from the French side; the trumpeter was beside him; his arm was uplifted; the sabre above his head. A yell broke from the British, and with difficulty could the squadron be restrained. For above a minute the horses went side by side, but the

Frenchman delayed his stroke until he could get a little in the front. My excitement had rendered me speechless; if a word could have saved my poor fellow, I could not have spoken. A mist seemed to gather across my eyes, and the whole plain, and its peopled thousands, danced before my eyes.

"He's down!" "He's down by heavens!" "No! no! no!" "Look there—nobly done!" "Gallant fellow!" "He has him! he has him, by—." A cheer that rent the very air above us broke from the squadron, and Mike galloped in among us, holding the Frenchman by the throat with one hand—the bridle of the horse he firmly grasped with his own in the other.

"How was it? How did he do it?" cried I. "He broke his sword arm with a blow, and the Frenchman's sabre fell to the earth."

"Here he is, Mistor Charley; and masha, but it's trouble he gave me to catch him! and I hope your honour won't be displeased at me for losing the brown horse. I was obliged to let him go when the thief closed on me; but sure there he is! may I never! if he's not galloping into the lines by himself." As he spoke my brown charger came cantering up to the squadrons, and took his place in the line with the rest.

THE HEIGHTS OF EL BODON.

I had scarcely time to mount my horse, amid a buzz of congratulations, when our squadron was ordered to the front. Mixed up with detachments from the eleventh and sixteenth, we continued to resist the enemy for above two hours.

Our charges were quick, sharp and successive, pouring in our numbers wherever the enemy appeared for a moment to be broken, and then retreating under cover of our infantry, when the opposing cavalry came down upon us in overwhelming numbers.

Nothing could be more perfect than the manner in which the different troops relieved each other during this part of the day. When the French squadrons advanced, ours met them as boldly. When the ground became no longer tenable we broke and the bayonets of the infantry arrested their progress. If the cavalry pressed heavily upon the squares, ours came up to the relief, and as they were beaten back the artillery opened upon them with an avalanche of grape shot.

I have seen many battles of greater duration, and more important in result—many have there been, in which more tactic was displayed, and greater combinations called forth, but never did I witness a more desperate hand-to-hand conflict than on the heights of El Bodon.

Baffled by our resistance, Montbrun advanced with the cuirassiers of the guard. Riding down our advanced squadrons, they poured upon us like some mighty river, overwhelming all before it, and charged