Duke of Northumberland to Col. McMahon.

Alnwick Castle 9th April 1811.

My dear Colonel

I have to thank you for your letter of the 1st, as well as for the account of Masena's movement for the probable evacuation of Portugal, & the skirmishes which have taken place with his rear guard. Hitherto he appears to have conducted his Retreat in a very masterly manner. I trust however Lord Wellington will take advantage of the hopes which Masena must infallibly entertain in a Retreat of such length, & not let him quit Portugal, as South did, without attacking, & dispersing, if not destroying, his Army. If nothing more is to be the result, but these attacks on his Rear Guard, Masena's retreat will become as honourable to him, as the famous Retreat from Prague. Lord Wellington is so close to Masena, that he may attack him when he pleases; which will probably be when Masena's attempt to cross the Tabor; & therefore we may expect an account of it every day. Of the Result I entertain no doubt; & on the defeat, Lord W: will actually push him so hard, that I have no doubt but Masena will lose almost his whole Corps.

Colonel Mc Mahon —

Duke of Northumberland to Col. McMahon.

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Thus will the Campaign finish most honourably for Lord Wellington, & most advantageously to the General Cause. L. W: however to complete the Business must never leave him, but continually keep him heard, & ever follow the services of his brother, any, to Madrid, if Ministers should choose to take that Route.

I suppose tomorrow's Papers will bring us an Account of the Result of the Examination of the Physicians before the Queen's Committee. Indeed the Newspapers pretend at least to know every thing, even to a private Conversation between the Prince Regent, & Mr. Perceval; which, if in any degree true, cannot fail to add to that high Opinion, & Popularity, which His Royal Highness has so deservedly acquired throughout the Kingdom.

Be kind enough, my dear Colonel, to present the offer of my most dutiful attachment to His Royal Highness, who, tho he has many more able, has not a more devoted Servant, than myself. The Duchess, with the rest of my Family, desire I will offer their Compliments, & best wishes to you, and Mr. Macmahon, to both of whom I desire to offer my own likewise. Adieu, my dear Colonel, & be assured I ever am

Your's most faithfully

Northumberland.

Duke of Northumberland

P. Opinion 1844