

CHAP. X. to the besiegers. The place held out till the
1810. tenth of July ; and capitulated only when several
July. practicable breaches had been effected, the principal defences destroyed, and the enemy had assembled in the trenches for the assault.

The siege of Ciudad Rodrigo was carried on almost in the very presence of the British army. The outposts were near enough to hear even the report of musquetry ; but, with every temptation to relieve the brave garrison of the place, Lord Wellington declined assuming the offensive. With so large a proportion of his troops half-disciplined and untried, and with so mighty an interest at stake, he could not, without imprudence, have encountered an enemy so greatly superior in numbers. It was not his object to risk his army for the sake of petty or temporary triumph ; and having already laid down a plan by which Portugal would eventually be rescued, he could not be induced to swerve from it by any circumstances, however painful to his feelings, or apparently derogatory to his reputation.

On the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo, Massena detached a portion of his army to the relief of Astorga, which had been placed by General

Mahy in a state of blockade. This object was easily effected; and General Echevarria, who was engaged at Alcanizas in organizing a body of raw levies, was surprised by a detachment under General La Croix, and his force was nearly annihilated.

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On crossing the frontier, Massena issued a proclamation to the Portuguese. The Emperor, he declared, had placed one hundred and ten thousand men under his orders, to take possession of the kingdom, and expel the English. It was the wish of Napoleon to conciliate and promote the true interests of the Portuguese people. The English—that insidious people, who for selfish purposes, had involved the country in war and disaster—were their only enemies. “Let the arms they have put into your hands be turned against themselves. Resistance is vain. Can the feeble army of the British General expect to oppose the victorious legions of the Emperor? Already a force is collected sufficient to overwhelm your country. Snatch the moment that mercy and generosity offer! As friends you may respect us, and as friends become the object of our respect. As foes you must dread us, and in the

CHAP. X. conflict must be subdued. The choice is now
 1810. before you, to meet the horrors of a bloody war,
 July. to behold your country desolated, your villages
 in flames, your cities plundered; or to accept
 an honourable and happy peace, which will ob-
 tain for you every blessing, that by resistance
 will be lost for ever."

On the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo, the enemy ad-
 vanced against Almeida. Fort Conception was
 blown up on their approach; and General Craw-
 ford, with the light division, took post with his
 left flank resting on the fortress, and his right
 on the high ground above Val de Mula. Lord
 Wellington had directed that officer to avoid
 any engagement with the enemy, and on their
 approach to fall back across the Coa. General
 Crawford, however, determined to await the
 arrival of the French columns, and not to retire
 till pressed by superior numbers. On the morn-
 Jul. 24. ing of the twenty-fourth the piquets were driven
 in by the French skirmishers, which covered the
 advance of their columns. A vigorous attack
 was then made on Crawford's position, in which
 the whole corps of Ney was engaged. The
 British were compelled by superior numbers to
 give ground, and retreated down the hill to the

Coa. From the rains the river was unfordable, and some confusion took place in crossing the bridge. The rear-guard had to sustain a violent attack, and the French endeavoured to push a body of cavalry across the stream ; but the opposite bank of the Coa being precipitate, and occupied both by infantry and artillery, the attempt, though repeatedly made, was unattended by success. Nor were the enemy's endeavours to gain possession of the bridge more fortunate in result. The British, who were posted behind walls which formed a kind of natural retrenchment for its defence, kept up so warm a fire on the assailants, that they were uniformly repulsed, notwithstanding their great numerical superiority ; and General Crawford having maintained his new position till evening, fell back under cover of the night. The loss of the light division in this honourable engagement amounted to thirty killed, and two hundred and seventy wounded. That of the enemy was much more considerable.

The French had already commenced that shameful system of cruelty and plunder, which disgraced the army of Massena throughout the whole of its operations in Portugal. Even in

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CHAP. X. the villages which submitted without resistance, the most infamous excesses were committed.

1810. The confidence manifested by the unfortunate
August. inhabitants in the promises of Massena was repaid by conflagration, murder, robbery, and violation. A proclamation, therefore, was issued by Lord Wellington, commanding all individuals to remove their effects out of reach of the enemy. "The Portuguese," said this document, "must now perceive that no other means remain to avoid the evils with which they are threatened, but a determined and vigorous resistance, and a firm resolution to obstruct, as much as possible, the advance of the enemy into the interior of the kingdom, by removing out of his reach every thing that may contribute to his subsistence, or facilitate his progress. The army under my command will protect as large a portion of the country as is possible; but it is obvious that the people alone can deliver themselves by a vigorous resistance, and preserve their goods by removing them beyond the reach of the enemy. The duties, therefore, that bind me to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent of Portugal, and to the Portuguese nation, oblige me to make use of the power and authority

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with which I am intrusted, to compel the careless and indolent to make the necessary efforts to preserve themselves from the dangers which threaten them, and to save their country. I therefore make known and declare, that all magistrates, and persons in authority, who shall remain in the villages and towns, after having received orders from the military officers to remove from them; and all persons of whatever class they may be, who shall maintain the least communication with, or aid and assist the enemy in any manner, shall be considered as traitors to the state, and tried and punished as an offence so heinous requires.”

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Almeida being a place of greater strength than Ciudad Rodrigo, Lord Wellington was entitled to expect that its defence would have been at least equally protracted, and that the advance of Massena would have been retarded till the commencement of the rainy season, when his difficulties would have been greatly increased. Lest he should determine, however, on pushing forward without waiting for its surrender, Lord Wellington drew back his divisions from Pinhel and Trancoso, and posted them along the Valley of the Mondego, in rear of Celori-

CHAP. X. co. By this arrangement his army was placed
 1810. several marches in start of the enemy, and
 August. time afforded for a leisurely retreat, whenever
 that measure should become necessary.

Massena, however, had determined to besiege Almeida; but his operations were delayed by the difficulties of the ground, and fire was not opened on the place till the twenty-third of August.

Aug. 27. On the twenty-seventh, however, the town unexpectedly surrendered. The cause of this unfortunate event was the explosion of a magazine, containing nearly all the ammunition of the place, which destroyed a large portion of the town, and buried the inhabitants in its ruins. The greater number of the guns were dismantled; huge masses of stone were thrown into the trenches, by which twenty French soldiers were killed; all the troops employed in guarding the ramparts were swept away by the violence of the shock; the citadel was overthrown; and the walls were rent in many places. Under these circumstances, the governor, General Cox, endeavoured to capitulate, on the condition of being suffered to retire with his garrison. This proposal was rejected, and the French again opened fire on the place. On the following day, how-

Guingret
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ever, a capitulation was agreed upon, which stipulated, that the regular troops should be considered prisoners of war, but that the militia should be suffered to return to their homes, on condition of not resuming arms during the contest.

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These terms were perfidiously broken by the enemy. A body of twelve hundred militia was forced to serve as pioneers; and every inducement was held out, through the agency of the Marques de Alorna and other Portuguese renegades, to prevail on the troops of the line to enter the French service, and assist in the subjugation of their country. As the alternative, in case of refusal, was a French prison, it was not difficult to obtain their assent. Massena, however, did not profit by his dishonesty. Nearly all the men found means to escape, and in a few days rejoined the standard of their country; and Lord Wellington, indignant at a breach of faith so dishonourable, did not hesitate to re-incorporate them with his army.

The fall of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, in the immediate vicinity of the English army, was made, as might be expected, the subject of unmeasured boasting in the French bul-

CHAP. X. *letins.* These first successes were hailed as the certain forerunners of approaching triumph, and held up to the world as new and unanswerable proof of the folly of attempting to obstruct the French armies in their career of conquest. The siege of the important fortresses in question, it was said, had been carried on under the very eyes of Lord Wellington and his army. Yet he had not dared to advance to their rescue. He had sacrificed his allies, to his fear of French valour, and of that army which was speedily, by one decisive victory, to drive him from the Peninsula.

In England the apprehensions of all classes had been strongly excited; and the army, ignorant of the vast preparations which had been made for the defence of Lisbon, regarded retreat but as the prelude of embarkation. Even the British Government was hesitating and fearful. No precise course was pointed out to Lord Wellington to pursue; but his instructions were couched in terms which showed the Ministry to be averse from any measures of boldness and hazard. He was directed to avoid all operations by which the safety of the army might be compromised, and was informed, that his Majesty

would be better pleased that the troops should be immediately withdrawn, than that their safe embarkation should be risked by unnecessary delay.

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In such circumstances, Lord Wellington, with the firmness and confidence that became him, did not hesitate to assume the whole of that responsibility, from which it was evident, in case of disaster, the Government would be solicitous to escape. In no word or action of this great leader was vacillation discernible. He stood firm and collected, resolute in purpose, when all around him were wavering in hope; and, in the unfettered exercise of his energies at such a moment, exhibiting a degree of moral intrepidity which it is impossible to contemplate without admiration.

The Portuguese, aghast at the approaching peril, watched with fearful anxiety the gathering of the cloud which was about to burst in thunder on their devoted country. The Government, aware of their own utter helplessness if deserted by England, adopted the only policy by which their country could eventually be saved, and entered with manly earnestness into the views of Lord Wellington. The nobility

CHAP. X. and higher classes, submissive to misfortunes
 1810. which they could not avert, were generally
 September. faithful in their adherence to the cause of their
 country. The lower orders were animated
 by a detestation of their treacherous enemy, so
 powerful and unchangeable, that every confi-
 dence might be placed in their devotion and at-
 tachment, even in circumstances the most ad-
 verse.

Sep. 16. The fall of Almeida left no further obstacle
 to the enemy's advance, and on the sixteenth of
 September, having been joined by the corps
 of General Regnier, Massena commenced his
 march into Portugal. His army was formed
 into three columns. Junot's corps advanced by
 Pinhel and Trancoso; Ney's by Alverca; and
 the third, under Regnier, by Guarda and Ce-
 lorigo. At Vizeu, however, the whole army
 was concentrated; and from that point, in one
 immense body, pursued their march along the
 road on the right bank of the Mondego. Each
 French soldier carried provisions for seventeen
 days; a period which, at a moderate calculation,
 was considered sufficient to enable the army to
 reach Lisbon.

Of the country now to be traversed by the

hostile armies it may here be expedient to say something. The road selected by Massena for his advance was of the worst description; full of natural impediments; and by all the officers, by whom it had been surveyed, considered almost impracticable. The direct, and in every respect preferable, road to Coimbra and Lisbon runs along the left bank of the Mondego. By this Lord Wellington retreated, in a line nearly parallel with that followed by his opponent. Had Massena determined on advancing by the road on the south of the Mondego, he must have previously encountered the British army in the strong passes of the Estrella, a high mountain chain, extending from the Tagus to the Mondego. This, however, did not comport with his project of the campaign; and, notwithstanding its numerous disadvantages, he directed his march along the road to the northward of the river. After passing Vizeu, the road declines from the ridge into a lower and more level country, and is subsequently crossed by the Serra de Busaco, which terminates abruptly on the Mondego. On the southern bank of that river there is another range called the Serra de Marcella, which forms

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an obstacle of equal magnitude to the advance in that quarter. To penetrate by any tolerable road from Vizeu into Estremadura, it is necessary to cross one or other of these mountainous chains. Lord Wellington having ascertained the direction of the enemy's march, accordingly crossed the Mondego, and occupied the Busaco range with his whole force, and in that strong position awaited the approach of the French army.

The corps of General Hill had hitherto been stationed on the line of the Tagus, in order to protect that route, while the intentions of the enemy remained dubious; and General Leith, with the reserve, remained at Thomar, ready to support either Hill or Wellington, as occasion might demand. Both of these divisions, by a rapid and well-regulated march, joined the army on the twentieth, and took post on the ridge of Busaco.

The position thus occupied consisted of one lofty ridge, extending from the Mondego northward, for a distance of about eight miles. It attains an elevation of two hundred and fifty feet above the ground immediately in front, and is covered by gorges and defiles of extreme dif-

faculty. Its principal disadvantage as a position lay in its extent, which was manifestly too great to admit of its being occupied at all points by an army not above sixty thousand strong.

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Some skirmishing had occurred on the twenty-third, between the light division and the advanced guard of the French. The former destroyed the bridge across the Criz, on the road to Coimbra; but, on the following day, the river was passed by the leading divisions of the enemy, and on the twenty-sixth, the whole French army was concentrated in front of the British position.

Sep. 23.

Sep. 26.

Even at this period, Massena seems to have formed no just appreciation of the skill and activity of his opponent. He had calculated on deranging his schemes, by the rapidity of his march, and imagined it impossible that the army should have been joined by the corps of General Hill. On reconnoitring the position, therefore, he considered its extent too great to admit of successful defence, and is said to have observed to one of the unworthy Portuguese by whom he was surrounded, "I cannot persuade myself that Lord Wellington will risk the loss of his re-

CHAP. X. putation by giving battle ; but if he does, I have
 ——— him! To-morrow we shall effect the conquest
 1810. of Portugal,—and in a few days I shall drown the
 September. Leopard!”

The head-quarters of Lord Wellington were fixed in the Convent of La Trappe, which crowns the Serra. From that elevated position, indeed from the whole summit of the height, the French army were distinctly visible. No sight could be more beautiful and striking. The eye rested on a vast multitude of men, clad in the imposing panoply of war,—their arms glittering in the sun,—standards waving in the air, while the distant sound of the trumpet or bugle loaded the breeze.

Sep. 26. On the evening of the twenty-sixth, the line of battle was formed. The division of General Hill, with those of Leith and Picton on his left, occupied the right of the position. The first division, under Sir Brent Spencer, was in the centre, General Cole's on the left. The light division was advanced somewhat in front of the left and centre. The main body of the cavalry, under Sir Stapleton Cotton, formed in the plains in front of Mealhada, and across the Oporto road ; and the brigade of General Fane remain-

ed on the left bank of the Mondego, to repel any reconnoissance which the enemy might attempt in that direction.

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Such was the distribution of the allied army. Daydawn on the twenty-seventh, shewed the enemy drawn up for immediate attack. The corps of Ney was formed in close column opposite to the Convent of Busaco. That of Regnier appeared in front of Picton's division, prepared to advance by the road crossing the height St. Antonio de Cantara. Junot's corps was in reserve, with the greater part of the cavalry, and was posted on some rising ground about a mile in rear of Marshal Ney.

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In this order, covered by his light troops, the enemy's columns moved on to the attack. The abruptness and inequalities of the ascent contributed to cover their advance, and they reached the summit of the ridge without more serious opposition, than the occasional fire of guns posted on the flanking points. It was with the corps of Regnier that the first hostile collision took place. The regiments, in the part of the line to which he penetrated, had not reached the position assigned to them, and for a moment the height was in possession

CHAP. X. of the enemy. Their leading battalions were in
1810. the act of deploying into line, when General Pic-
September. ton, at the head of a few companies hastily col-
lected, came up, and with these and the light
troops, he kept the enemy in play, until joined
by the eighth Portuguese regiment commanded
by Major Birmingham, when charging the ene-
my's column in flank, he drove them in great
confusion down the hill and across the ravine.

About a mile on the right, the enemy made strenuous efforts to gain possession of the pass of St. Antonio. These, however, were defeated by the seventy-fourth regiment, and a brigade of Portuguese directed by Colonel Mackinnon, who, without assistance, was enabled to maintain his post in spite of every effort to dislodge him. Notwithstanding the complete discomfiture of his first attack by General Picton, on the left of the pass, the enemy's column still continued to press forward, and again reached the summit of the height. From this the eighty-eighth regiment, under Colonel Wallace, and four companies of the forty-fifth, dislodged them by a gallant charge; and a brigade of General Leith's division, coming up at the same moment, the enemy were borne down

the hill with irresistible impetuosity, and desisted from all further attempt on this part of the position.

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The attack of Ney was even less successful; with a division of his corps formed in column of mass, he advanced against the height occupied by the light division. During his advance he experienced little opposition, and without difficulty gained possession of a village situated on the brow of the ascent; but no sooner did he crown the height, than he found the whole division of General Crawford, and General Pack's brigade of Portuguese, drawn up to receive him, and his column became exposed to a most destructive fire, both of musquetry and artillery. This, however, was but of short duration,—yet, so long, that the leading regiments of the assailants were almost totally annihilated. A charge of bayonets followed; the whole column was routed, and driven down the hill with prodigious slaughter. The expression of a French soldier, who was engaged in this attack, and subsequently made prisoner, “*Qu'il se laissa rouler du haut en bas de la montagne sans savoir comment il échappa,*” is sufficiently explanatory of the mode

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CHAP. X. in which the remnant of this division effected
its escape.

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About eight o'clock in the morning, a fog came on, which, for a time, partially obscured the positions of the two armies; when the day cleared, however, it was discovered that the French had placed large bodies of light troops in the woods, which skirted the bottom of the Serra. In consequence, a continued skirmishing took place during the day. It was probably the intention of Massena, by this manœuvre, to draw Lord Wellington into an engagement of some consequence, in a situation where the advantage of position should be less decidedly in his favour. But Lord Wellington was immoveable. He advanced the brigade of Colonel Pakenham to the support of the light troops, but directed them to retire when pressed, leaving his position again open to the enemy, should he think proper to attack it.

Massena, however, was but little inclined to avail himself of the facility thus afforded. The day passed without further attack on the British position; and on the approach of night, the French retired from the ground they had occu-

ped during the day, and the village, from which the light troops had been driven in the morning, was again taken possession of by General Crawford.

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The loss of the French army in this engagement amounted to between five and six thousand men, including four General officers, one of whom (Graindorge) was killed; another (Simon) wounded and made prisoner. The British and Portuguese loss did not amount to twelve hundred men. About three hundred of the enemy were made prisoners.

Though the victory of Busaco exerted little influence on the operations of the campaign, its moral consequences were in the highest degree important. The Portuguese troops, which had hitherto been the object of contempt to some, and of mistrust to all, on that occasion established their character both for courage and discipline, and proved that, though exposed for centuries to the action of debasing influences, there existed in the unbroken spirit of the people, a germ of high qualities, which, by proper management, might be made to fructify into a glorious harvest. The contemned and vilified Portuguese had now fought side by side with

CHAP. X. British soldiers, and had borne themselves
 1810. with honourable courage. Lord Wellington de-
 September. clared he had never witnessed a more gallant
 charge than that made on the column of General
 Regnier, in which the eighth Portuguese regi-
 ment bore part; and the confidence which he
 was now enabled to repose in their steadiness
 and energy, was worth more than a victory, even
 greater and more splendid in its consequences
 than that which he had achieved.

It was from the meritorious exertions of
 Marshal Beresford that this result had pro-
 ceeded. The task allotted him of organizing
 and habituating the raw levies of the country to
 a steady and rigid system of discipline, was one
 for which his powers peculiarly fitted him; and
 he performed it well. No man could be more
 profoundly versed in the minute technicalities
 of his profession, or more laboriously attentive
 to the dry mechanical details of military dis-
 cipline. The extent and value of his services
 were made known by the battle of Busaco, and,
 in consequence, he was shortly afterwards re-
 warded by the knighthood of the Bath.

Sep. 28. On the morning of the twenty-eighth, the ar-
 mies still maintained their respective positions,

and the light infantry were again partially engaged on the left of the line. Towards mid-day, Massena having ascertained, from some Portuguese peasants, the existence of a practicable road across the Serra de Caramula, leading by Boialvo to Sardao, and the great road from Coimbra to Oporto, he determined to put his army in motion by that route, and thus, by a flank manœuvre, to turn the position of the British. In order to conceal his intention, the second corps continued to make demonstrations on the position of the allies, till the baggage and artillery had defiled; but the position of Busaco commands an extensive prospect, and towards evening a large body of the French army was observed to be in motion from the left of the centre to the rear, and from thence their cavalry were seen in march along the road leading from Mortagoa across the Serra, in the direction of Oporto. Lord Wellington was at once aware of their purpose, but it was too late to counteract or impede its execution.

In truth, the probability of the enemy's attempting to turn the position by this route was not unanticipated; and Colonel Trant, with a body of Portuguese militia, had been

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CHAP. X. directed to take possession of the strong mountain passes in the neighbourhood of Sardao and Avelina. Unfortunately, however, Trant was sent round by Oporto by General Silveira, in consequence of a small force of the enemy having occupied St. Pedro de Sul; and notwithstanding every effort, he found it impossible to reach Sardao before the night of the twenty-eighth, when the enemy were already in possession of the ground. By this untoward failure, the French army were suffered to continue their progress unopposed through a series of defiles, which they could not otherwise have passed without severe loss.

On ascertaining the movement of the French army, Lord Wellington gave instant orders to quit the position of Busaco, and continue the retreat. With the main body of the army he moved on Coimbra, while the corps of General Hill retired on Santarem by Espinhel and Thomar. Colonel Trant was ordered to take post with his corps along the northern bank of the Vouga; and a body of militia was directed to enter Vizeu, in order to cut off the enemy's communication with Spain.

The banks of the Mondego are generally high

and rugged, presenting many favourable positions in which the passage of the French army might have been successfully opposed. But such was not the policy of the British General. With a more advantageous position in prospect, he resisted every temptation to fight a second battle on the Mondego; and, crossing the river on the thirtieth, he continued his retreat to Leiria, where he arrived on the second of October. During the whole march, the cavalry, under Sir Stapleton Cotton, covered the rear of the army, and were engaged in several affairs with the enemy's advance.

The army halted in Leiria till the morning of the fifth, when Lord Wellington, having ascertained that the enemy were coming on in force, gave orders that the retreat should be resumed. Massena had entered Coimbra on the first, where he hoped, by the rapidity of his marches, to have come up with the rear of the British army. Deceived in this, he immediately pushed forward to Condeixa. There the exhaustion of his troops, and the want of provisions, compelled him to halt till the third. With a degree of imprudence, utterly unaccountable, the large stores of Coimbra, instead of being reserved for

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CHAP. X. the regular supply of the army, were suffered
 1810. to become the subject of pillage to the soldiery.
 October. But the immediate wants of the troops having
 been thus satisfied, the pursuit was continued;
 and the wounded, whose transport had hitherto
 been a serious impediment to the army in its
 rapid advance, were left in hospital at Coimbra.

Oct. 9. In the meanwhile, Lord Wellington and General Hill continued their retreat by leisurely marches; and on the ninth the former reached Sobral and Torres Vedras; the latter Alhandra on the Tagus. The proclamations which had been issued requiring the inhabitants to fall back on the approach of the enemy, and the fearful memory they entertained of the former barbarous atrocities perpetrated by the French troops, induced the whole population of the country traversed by the armies to fly from their dwellings, bearing with them all the property for which conveyance could be procured.

The British army, during its retreat, was accompanied by crowds of miserable and despairing creatures, driven forth as outcasts; and, though escaping with life, yet destitute of all means by which life could be supported. They quitted their homes—the scenes of all their

hopes, their memories, and their affections, in
 the conviction that they were never again to
 behold them. Mothers with infants at their
 breasts; children happy in their ignorance, and
 smiling amid the scene of desolation which sur-
 rounded them; palsied grandsires smiling too in
 the second infancy of dotage; men robust and
 vigorous, with features wrenched by strong
 agony of the spirit;—the blind, the maimed, the
 cripple, the diseased, all animated by the com-
 mon and overpowering motive of escaping from
 the savage cruelties of the invaders, were seen
 crowding the roads, and flying for protection to
 the capital.

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The multitude of sufferers increased as the
 army approached Lisbon. The wayside became
 strewn with articles of furniture which the
 wretched fugitives were unable to carry far-
 ther. Those who, in the weariness of exhaust-
 ed nature, had cast themselves on the ground,
 started up with unnatural and convulsive energy
 to renew their journey, on learning that the
 enemy's columns were approaching.—But it is
 useless to enlarge on a spectacle of suffering of
 which the pen can give no adequate description.
 By no one who bore part in that memorable re-

CHAP. X. treat, can it ever be forgotten. Other scenes may
 1810. fade in the changes of succeeding years, or pe-
 October. rish utterly from the memory,—the impression
 of this can be effaced only by death.

Oct. 10. On the tenth the British army moved into its
 position in the lines prepared for its reception,
 and on the day following was joined by the
 Marques de la Romana, with about six thousand
 Spaniards from the Alentejo.

When Lord Wellington commenced his re-
 treat from the frontier, it had been the im-
 pression of all ranks, that his intention was
 to embark, and finally relinquish a contest
 too unequal to be maintained with any pros-
 pect of success; but the measured, leisurely,
 and imposing manner in which the retreat was
 conducted; the knowledge that not an article
 of baggage had been sacrificed; that during the
 whole movement the infantry had never seen the
 enemy, but to defeat him on the heights of
 Busaco; and that, in the engagements of caval-
 ry, the balance of success had uniformly been
 in favour of the allies,—contributed in some de-
 gree to restore confidence, and gave rise to a
 vague yet powerful hope that a retreat, in all re-
 spects so admirable, was not destined to termin-

ate in embarkation. It was not, however, till CHAP. X.
 the army reached the lines of Torres Vedras,

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 that the full tribute of admiration was paid to October.
 the skill and prescience of its leader. There the
 troops at once found themselves placed in a
 strongly fortified position, in which they might
 securely bid defiance to the utmost efforts of the
 enemy.

On the tenth, Massena advanced to Sobral, Oct. 10.
 and drove out the force by which it was occupied.
 Then it was that he first became aware of the
 formidable position in which the allied army
 awaited his approach. He instantly halted; and
 as soon as it was dark a retrogressive movement
 was made, and three days elapsed before he
 again ventured to advance. From this circum-
 stance it was easy to infer his dismay at the un-
 expected strength of Lord Wellington's position.
 For several days he was engaged in recon-
 noitring the ground; and though the chief fea-
 tures of its strength remained concealed, what
 he saw was, to an eye so experienced, enough to
 convince him of the extent and character of the
 obstacles opposed to his progress.

From the first, therefore, he appears to have
 given up all intention of attack, and placed two