

archives in the Torre do Tombo at Lisbon, "that the humanity of the one nation," said the Prince, "and the gratitude of the other may be attested to future generations."

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The *dezembargador*, Joam Gaudencio Torres, and Mr. Croft (one of a family which had been long established at Porto, and who was subsequently attached to the British legation) accepted the charge of distributing this grant, and for that purpose, of visiting the districts which had been ravaged, and seeing in person to the distribution. It required no common degree of humanity, and no ordinary strength of heart, to undertake so painful an office. The time, it may be hoped, is approaching, when the usages of war will as little be admitted before man, as a plea for having destroyed the innocent and the helpless, as it will before God. Massena had gone to the utmost limits of that dreadful plea before he broke up from his position. Opposite to the house in which he had fixed his own quarters at Santarem were the ruins of a church, into which a number of wretched children, whose parents had perished, and who were themselves perishing for hunger, had crept, that they might lie down and die. They were found there by the first British troops who entered the town, stretched upon straw and rubbish . . . the dying and the dead together, reduced to skeletons before they died. When the officer, who relates this in his journal, saw them, pieces of bread which our soldiers had given these poor orphans were lying untouched before many who were incapable of eating, and some who had breathed their last. Multitudes, indeed, had been famished before he abandoned his hopes of conquest; but for the subsequent conduct of that merciless general and his army no military motives can be assigned . . . none but what are purely malignant and devilish. Marshal Massena had formerly declared, that if he could land with an army in England, he would pledge himself, not indeed to effect the con-

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Distribution of the
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which the
French left
the country
they had
occupied.*

quest of the country, but to reduce it to a desert. In Portugal it was proved that out of the wickedness of his heart his lips had then spoken ; for on his retreat, he endeavoured, in perfect conformity with the political system of his emperor, to increase by every possible means the horrors of war and the sum of human suffering. The cruelties which were perpetrated by that retreating army formed but a little part of the evils they inflicted upon the brave nation which had successfully resisted them ; and in the districts which they devastated, the inhabitants who perished under their hands were less to be compassionated than those who survived. The famine which they intentionally produced, by destroying every thing in the course of their retreat and within reach of their power, continued to depopulate the country long after it was delivered from its enemies. Endemic diseases were produced by want of food and of raiment, by exposure, by grief, and hopeless wretchedness. The hospitals, with which Portugal abounded, had shared the general destruction : many had been burnt, others gutted, the resources of all destroyed ; and those of the clergy and of the convents, to which the sufferers would otherwise have looked for aid, and from which they would have found it, were in like manner totally dilapidated. The income of the Bishop of Leyria was reduced from 40,000 *cruzados* to forty ; and others had suffered in a like degree. In that district the population was cut down by the barbarities of the enemy, by famine, and by disease, from 48,000 to 16,000 ; and in the subdivision of Pombal from 7000 to 1800. Two hundred families in the town of Pombal derived before the invasion a comfortable subsistence from husbandry ; after the retreat an hundred and sixty-four of those families had totally disappeared ; and the few survivors of the remaining thirty-six were suffering under famine and disease. In a principal street of that poor town the commissioners found one dis-

Pombal.

mantled dwelling, standing alone in the midst of ruins, and containing three wretched inhabitants. Such was the desolation which this more than barbarous enemy had left behind them, that in what had been the populous and flourishing town of Santarem, the screech owls took possession of a whole street of ruins, where it seemed as if man had been employed in reducing human edifices to a state which rendered them fit receptacles for birds and beasts of prey. The number of these birds, and the boldness with which the havoc every where about inspired them, made it frightful to pass that way even in the daytime; insomuch, that a soldier who had been promoted for his personal bravery was known more than once to forego his mess, rather than pass to it through these ruins. Dogs who were now without owners preyed upon the dead. Wolves fed on human bodies in the streets of Leyria; and retaining then no longer their fear of man, attacked the living who came in their way. The servant of an English gentleman was pursued one evening by two, in the outskirts of that city; he escaped from them only by climbing a single olive tree, which, happily for him, had been left standing; it was just high enough to afford him security, yet so low that the wolves besieged him in it all night; three or four others joined them in the blockade, and when he was seen and rescued in the morning, the bark as high as they could reach had been scored by their repeated endeavours to spring up and seize him.

There were parts of the country where the people, having no other sustenance, allayed the pain of emptiness without supplying the wants of nature, by eating boiled grass, which they seasoned, such as could, with the brine and scales left in the baskets from which salt fish, or sardinhas had been sold, these being at that time the scarce and almost only remaining articles of food. Among a people in this extreme distress, the com-

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missioners had the painful task of selecting the cases which could bear no deferment of relief, when every case was urgent, when multitudes were perishing for want, and when the whole amount of the means of relief at their disposal, economized as those means were to the utmost, was deplorably inadequate to the just and pressing claims upon it. Eighteen months after the retreat, the price of provisions in the wasted provinces was about six times higher than before the invasion; a fact from which some conception may be formed of the misery endured in the course of those months, and of the state of things when the commissioners entered upon their arduous and painful task. Inadequate to this dreadful necessity as the aid of England was, yet, while it is to be feared a greater number perished for want of human, or of timely help, 43,000 sick and 8000 orphans were saved by it. The relief was not bestowed in food alone, and in the means of removal, but in the means of future subsistence . . . cows, oxen, implements of agriculture, and seed of various kinds. The gratitude of the people, to their honour it should be said, was more in proportion to the intention and good-will which were thus manifested, than to the actual relief which was afforded. And if in Portugal, as there would have been in any other country, men were found whose hearts were so hard and their consciences so stupified that they sought only how to make the necessities and miseries of their fellow-creatures an occasion of lucre for themselves, it may safely be asserted, that never in any public calamity was there less of such wicked selfishness displayed than at this time. The commissioners who were employed ten months upon this service, (which was not less hazardous than painful, for it exposed them continually to contagious disease as well as to the constant sight of suffering,) performed their office gratuitously, and would not consent to have their personal expenses reimbursed: the secre-

tary and assistants who always accompanied them refused to accept any pecuniary recompense for their time and labour: and the house of the Vanzellers of Porto advanced money for purchasing great part of the cattle, and would receive no commission whatever upon the negociation and payment of the bills. A brother of that house, while the allied army occupied the lines, received under his own roof at Lisbon, and at his own cost maintained more than forty refugees, who were all personally unknown to him before that time: and at his mother's country house near Porto, as many as came daily were fed in her own presence, from seventy to an hundred and upwards being the usual number. It is consolatory to record such examples in a history where so many errors and crimes must be recorded. When the distribution was completed, the Portuguese Regency assured the British Government that there did not appear to have been a single complaint against the justice and regularity with which it had been made, and that this scrupulous and efficient application of the grant to the ends intended was owing to the unwearied exertion of Mr. Croft and his colleagues: they added, that they should lay those high services, as they properly denominated them, before the Prince of Brazil, and expressed their desire that Mr. Croft's conduct might be made known to the Prince Regent of Great Britain. That gentleman was, in consequence, created a Baronet, and received the royal Portuguese Order of the Tower and Sword.

No measure could have had the effect of inspiring the Por-

Political effect of this distribution.

* This lady is known with her own hand and that of her waiting woman, to have vaccinated above 12,000 persons. The Royal Academy of Sciences at Lisbon presented her with a medal in acknowledgement and commemoration of the services which, in public and private, she was continually rendering to humanity.

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tugueze people with so much confidence, as this public distribution of seed corn, and tools, and cattle. They who had been most apprehensive of another invasion, were convinced that Great Britain would not have conferred such a gift, if what was now bestowed upon them were likely to be wrested from them by the enemy; and under that conviction they resumed in hope those labours, from which despair might otherwise have deterred them. But it was far from Lord Wellington's intention to deceive them into any fallacious opinion of their own security; on the contrary, his first thought, after he had driven the French beyond the frontier, was to warn the Portugueze that the danger might yet be renewed. "Their nation," he said, "had still riches left, which the tyrant would endeavour to plunder: they were happy under a beneficent sovereign, and this alone would make him exert himself to destroy their happiness: they had successfully resisted him, and therefore he would leave no possible means unemployed for bringing them under his iron yoke." He appealed to all who had witnessed the successive invasions of Junot, Soult, and Massena, whether the system of the French had not been to confiscate, to plunder, and to commit every outrage which their atrocious dispositions could devise? and whether from the general, to the lowest soldier, they had not delighted in the practice of such excesses? "The Portugueze," he said, "ought not to relax their preparations for resistance. Every man capable of bearing arms ought to learn the use of them: those who, by their age or sex, were not capable of taking the field, should beforehand look out for places of safety where they might retire in time of need: they should bury their most valuable effects, every one in secret, not trusting the knowledge of the place to those who had no interest in concealing it: and they should take means for effectually concealing, or destroying the food, which, in case of necessity, could

not be removed. If," said Lord Wellington, "these measures are adopted, however superior in number the force may be which the desire of plunder and of vengeance may induce the tyrant to send again for the invasion of this country, the issue will be certain, and the independence of Portugal will be finally established, to the eternal honour of the present generation." Having issued this proclamation, and made arrangements for the blockade of Almeida, Lord Wellington, leaving his army under Sir Brent Spencer, took advantage of the temporary inaction of the enemy to go into Alentejo.

Beresford had accompanied the commander-in-chief in pursuit of the retreating enemy, as far as the Ceyra. There Lord Wellington received news as unexpected as it was unwelcome, that Badajoz had been surrendered by its base governor. Another piece of intelligence distressed him; a Spanish officer of rank and ability, who had arranged the correspondence which was carried on with his countrymen in those parts of Spain possessed by the French, had been made prisoner in the route of Mendizabal's army, and immediately entered the Intruder's service. Lord Wellington acted with characteristic sagacity on this occasion; neither treating, nor considering this person as wholly reprobate because he had shown a want of principle which proceeded from want of courage to endure adversity, he caused a letter to be written to him, containing a hint, that bad as his conduct was, it would be his own fault if he made it unforgiveable. The hint was taken as it was meant; . . . for the motive of ingratiating himself with his new patrons was not strong enough to overpower a natural humanity, a remaining sense of honour, and a prudential consideration of the instability of fortune: the officer kept his secret, and lived to be well rewarded for having done so. The surrender of Badajoz, which left the besieging army at liberty to act against the allies wherever they

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*Marquis
Beresford
goes to
Alentejo.*

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 XXXVII. checked him in what else would have been a career of victory :
 1811. but while he continued the pursuit of the retreating army, he
March. sent the Marshal to his command on the south of the Tagus, to
 provide against the consequences which might result from Imaz's
 baseness.

*Valencia de
 Alcantara,
 Albuquerque,
 and
 Campo
 Mayor
 taken by
 the French.*

Mortier, meantime, not failing to pursue to the utmost the
 advantage which that misconduct had given him, advanced
 upon Valencia de Alcantara, Albuquerque, and Campo Mayor,
 in order that the troops which he knew would be sent against
 him might be deprived of those points of support. The first of
 these places had long ceased to be of any importance as a for-
 tress ; it was taken by surprise, and seven brass guns, being the
 whole of its artillery, were destroyed for want of carriages.
 Latour Maubourg went against Albuquerque ; its fortress, a
 century ago, had been called impregnable ; and might now
 have made some defence, relief being so near at hand ; but the
 appearance of an enemy and a few cannon-shot sufficed to ter-
 rify the garrison ; they surrendered without resistance, and were
 sent prisoners to Badajoz with seventeen brass guns of large
 calibre : the French then razed the works. While these de-
 tachments were thus successfully employed, Mortier himself
 opened the trenches before Campo Mayor : this fortress resisted
 better than its Castillian neighbours had done ; a battalion of
 militia incurred some disgrace by its conduct, but the spirit
 of the inhabitants and the governor was excellent, and the place
 held out eleven days.

March 22.

*Beresford
 arrives on
 the frontier.*

The fall of Campo Mayor was regretted, more for the sake of
 its brave defenders than for any advantage that could accrue to
 the enemy from a conquest which they could not maintain.
 Marshal Beresford arrived at Chamusca during the siege, and
 on the day that it surrendered, assembled his corps at Portalegre,

now strengthened by the 4th division, and Colonel de Gray's brigade of heavy cavalry. On the 24th, every thing was collected at and in front of Arronches; and on the following day he moved against Campo Mayor, meaning, if the enemy should persist in retaining it, to interpose between that town and Badajoz. The main body of the French had by this time returned to the Caya, the whole of their besieging train had re-entered Badajoz, they had removed thither the heavy guns from Campo Mayor, and Soult had given orders to destroy the works there, which were prevented by the appearance of Marshal Beresford's corps. About a league from the town, the allies fell in and skirmished with the enemy's advanced horse: and Brigadier-General Long advancing rapidly with the cavalry, came up with their whole force, which, upon perceiving his movements, had evacuated the place, and was retiring toward Badajoz. It consisted of eight squadrons of cavalry, and two battalions of infantry, commanded by General Latour Maubourg; the latter were retreating in column with two troops of hussars at their head and two closing their rear, the rest manœuvring so as at once to cover the retreat of the foot, and secure to themselves its support: upon the approach of the allies, the French infantry formed an oblong square, and the horse took up a position *en potence*. Long's first object was to dispose of their cavalry; he ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Head, with the 13th dragoons, to attack in flank the three squadrons which were on the same line with the infantry; while he, with three Portugueze squadrons, attacked in front the three which formed the angle to the right of the others: Colonel Elder, with two squadrons of Portugueze, was to cover his left, and turn the enemy's right; and eight squadrons of heavy dragoons to support the attack. As soon as Head advanced, the enemy changed their position, brought forward their right, and met the

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*Affair near
Campo
Mayor.*