

oath of fidelity to the French, and that to avoid it when it was to be tendered, they had fled at all hazards, not waiting for safer opportunities. A representation in their favour was made by Silveira ; and Marshal Beresford in consequence mitigated his former censure. It would, he said, be the greatest satisfaction to him if he should find it confirmed that these officers had not pledged themselves to the enemy ; but what he wished to enforce upon them was, that an officer ought to consider not merely the end at which he aims, but the means also by which to bring it about, that both may be alike honourable. He referred their conduct therefore to a council of inquiry, under Silveira.

The Portuguese regency now declared Alorna a traitor, and offered a reward of a thousand moidores for bringing him in alive or dead. The Marquis of Ponte de Lima, the Marquis of Loule, the Count of St. Miguel, the Count of Ega, Gomes Friere de Andrade, and D. José Carcome Lobo, were also declared traitors, and their property declared to be confiscated : but they had powerful friends in the state ; and it is said that, notwithstanding the decree, their property remained untouched, in the hands of persons in whom they could confide. A change had lately taken place in the Portuguese regency. The Marquez das Minas resigned, in consequence of an illness which soon proved fatal. The other two members were, the Bishop of Porto, who was Patriarch elect, and the Marquis Monteiro Mor. Four new members were now added ; the Principal Sousa, brother to the Conde de Linhares, who was minister in Brazil, and to the Portuguese ambassador in England ; the Conde de Redondo ; Ricardo Raymundo Nogueira, who had been law professor at Coimbra ; and the English ambassador, Mr. Stuart. Admiral Berkeley was at the same time appointed by the Prince of Brazil commander-in-chief of the naval, as Lord Wellington had been

CHAP.  
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September.

*Changes in  
the Portu-  
guese re-  
gency.*

CHAP. of the military force of Portugal. There are few things in the  
 XXXII. annals of Great Britain more honourable to the national cha-  
 1810. racter than the perfect confidence reposed in the English nation  
September. by its old ally, and the manner in which that confidence was re-  
 quited. While the enemies of both countries were endeavouring  
 to incense the Portugueze against the English, by telling them  
 that the British government designed to usurp Portugal; and  
 while the enemies of administration were traducing and insult-  
 ing the Portugueze people, crying out that they would not de-  
 fend themselves and could not be defended by us, and therefore  
 that we ought not to attempt to defend them, the English army  
 and the Portugueze people were acting with the most perfect  
 unanimity, for the common interests and common safety of  
 Great Britain and Portugal.

*Conduct of  
 the Portu-  
 gueze go-  
 vernment.*

The spirit of the people, without which all other means of  
 defence must have been ineffectual, was what England could  
 neither give nor take away; but for the measures by which that  
 spirit was so directed as to secure its end, Portugal was indebted  
 to British councils. Military and financial resources, of which  
 the nation had not supposed itself capable, were called forth;  
 and the Portugueze were addressed by their rulers in language  
 to which they had long been unaccustomed, . . . the language of  
 hope and confidence, and of conscious rectitude as well as con-  
 scious strength. Like the Supreme Junta, the regents reminded  
 the Portugueze of their heroic ancestors; they spake of the  
 wickedness of the enemy, the inexpressible miseries which would  
 accompany their yoke, and the certainty of glorious success, if  
 those exertions and sacrifices were made which the emergency re-  
 quired; but the Portugueze regency did not, like the Spaniards,  
 speak to the people of the causes which had rendered this in-  
 vasion possible, and produced the decay of Portugal; nor did

they hold out the promise of the restoration of their rights, the redress of their grievances, and the due execution of their laws. Such promises were not necessary as excitement; a people who were literally defending their hearths and altars, and fighting to save their wives and daughters from violation and butchery, or to revenge them, needed no additional feeling to goad them on: . . . as pledges they were not held out; because the government had not the prudence to think of reforming itself. In providing for the defence of the country, it acted providently and bravely, with wisdom and with vigour; but in other things, the old leaven discovered itself, and made it apparent that the pleasure of the minister was still the law of Portugal. A decree was published, assigning to the widows, children, or dependent brethren of those who had fallen at Almeida, the full pay of the deceased, and half pay to the families of those who were made prisoners. "The Prince," it said, "would not believe that any of his faithful vassals could have entered the service of the enemy; and if any had been compelled to do so, he trusted they had only yielded to compulsion, with the purpose of effecting their escape. He suspended, therefore, his justice; but if a month elapsed before such persons acquitted themselves by appearing, they would be considered as traitors." Now, the treason of the lieutenant-governor and the major of artillery was open and undoubted: Lord Wellington had stated it in his dispatches to the minister at war; their names were given in those dispatches here in England, but suppressed in Portugal, out of favour to their connexions.

In another respect the conduct of the Portugueze regency was more inexcusable. Eight-and-forty persons, of all ranks and professions, and many of them unacquainted with each other, were seized in the night; ten of them were sent to the Tower of St. Julian, and the rest to the Limoeiro, the common

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September.

*Arbitrary  
arrests at  
Lisbon.*

CHAP. XXXII. 1810. September. prison of the city. The most alarming rumours were scattered abroad. A formidable and extensive conspiracy, it was said, had been discovered, which had nothing less for its object than a general massacre of the British, for the purpose of delivering up the country to the French. These reports reached England, and received their first contradiction from the Portugueze government themselves, who found it expedient to declare, that neither Lord Wellington nor Mr. Stuart had any part in their proceedings upon this occasion; that the stories of the conspiracy, and of the arms which had been discovered, were false; and that the individuals who had been arrested had been sent out of the kingdom, only because it was the opinion of the police that their residence in it might be prejudicial to the public tranquillity. Some of these individuals were permitted to come to England, others were sent to the Azores, after they had suffered every kind of inconvenience, privation, and indignity, to the alarm and distress of the families of all, and the ruin of some; . . . there was neither proof nor accusation against them; the whole, as a public act, was one of those acts which mark the unheeding and unfeeling folly of an ignorant and obstinate despotism, but of which the secret springs are to be found in private malice or cupidity.

The manner in which the Portugueze government declared, that neither Marshal General Lord Wellington, nor the minister plenipotentiary of his Britannic Majesty, nor any individual of the British nation, had any part in these proceedings, nor any previous knowledge of them, make it apparent that the British general and the British minister disapproved of an act of tyranny which was thus in reality disclaimed on their part. They could not prevent that of which they were not apprised before it was done, nor after it was done could they express their disapprobation better than by requiring to have it thus distinctly stated,

that the regency had neither acted upon their advice, nor received their sanction. It was the more to be regretted, because the other measures of the government entitled them to respect and gratitude. They had restored order in the country, and brought its resources into action, and their public acts and declarations corresponded to the spirit of the people. The ringleaders of the mutiny, which, in its consequences, had given Soult possession of Porto, were brought to trial and condign punishment; and after the most impartial examination of his conduct, General Bernardim Freire de Andrada, who had been murdered at Braga, was declared to have served his country faithfully and well, and the memory of those unfortunate men who perished in the same tumult was cleared of all imputation. An army more numerous than Portugal had ever before possessed was formed, equipped, and disciplined; and the government, when it reminded the people of their strength, did not fear to tell them of their danger. It announced the loss of Almeida, .. "a loss," said the regents, "greatly to be lamented for the death of part of its defenders, and the unhappiness of others, who have thus fallen into captivity, but of little importance to the great cause of the salvation of the country. Wellington at the head of the allied armies; Beresford directing our troops, who are indebted to him for their organization and their discipline; brave soldiers, and a faithful people, who have sworn to defend their prince and their native land to the last extremity; these are the bulwarks which defend us; and these an army of slaves, who are continually wasting away by want and desertion, will never be able to beat down."

The Portugueze, and those especially who were intrusted with the government of their country, cannot be extolled above their merits, for the spirit which they displayed at this crisis, the most momentous, and to ordinary minds the most appalling of the whole war. Their merit is the greater because there was

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*September.*

*Apprehensions of the British government.*

CHAP. not that vigour in the British cabinet which the emergency re-  
 XXXII. quired; and because with all their confidence in British fidelity,  
 1810. they could not have been without some apprehension of seeing  
September. the defence of Portugal abandoned by Great Britain. The enemy  
 had exultingly proclaimed that the English would fly to their  
 ships, and some colour for the boast was afforded by the fact  
 that a fleet large enough to receive the troops was lying in the  
 Tagus, and evidently detained there for such a service. The  
 heavy baggage of the army was actually kept on board; and  
 Lord Wellington was at that time acting under instructions of a  
 character to excite in him any thing rather than confidence or  
 hope. They were to this effect, that his majesty would be better  
 pleased if the army were withdrawn too soon, than that its em-  
 barkation should be endangered by the least delay. Such in-  
 structions must inevitably have drawn on the disgrace and ruin  
 which they anticipated, if they had been addressed to a man of  
 inferior capacity, or meaner mind. A want of courage and of  
 generosity was implied in them which is but too characteristic  
 of British ministries. Instead of assuring the commander of  
 support, whatever might be the issue, if nothing on his part were  
 left undone, he was made to understand that any risk which he  
 incurred must be upon his own responsibility, and that any dis-  
 aster which he might sustain would be imputed to his decision.  
 But Providence was with us, and directed the course of events  
 to a glorious and happy issue, notwithstanding our repeated  
 errors.

Lord Wellington had the farther mortification of knowing  
 that the army, satisfied as he was with its conduct in all respects,  
 partook that despondency which the pestilent activity of a faction  
 at home was continually labouring to produce, and which the  
 events of the campaign had hitherto tended to confirm. His  
 plans had been long meditated and wisely formed; but the rea-

sonable expectations which he founded upon them were disappointed by the accident that drew after it the fall of Almeida. That place might easily have held out till the autumnal rains should have rendered it impossible for the French to advance, and scarcely practicable for them to have subsisted their army upon that frontier. To gain time at this juncture was for him to gain every thing: here he thought to have wintered in the sure expectation that every day would render the Portuguese troops more efficient, and with the reasonable hope that through Marquis Wellesley's influence in the cabinet he should receive such reinforcements as would enable him to act upon the offensive. Accident had frustrated this intent; the enemy were enabled to advance, elated with their fortune, and relying upon it as the only divinity in which they were encouraged to trust; and Massena, whose plans had hitherto succeeded beyond his calculations, and even to the extent of his hopes, had the advantage of relying upon the disposition as well as the efficiency of his army, and the full support of a government which placed ample means at his command, crippled him with no restrictions, and threatened him with no responsibility.

Upon the fall of Almeida Lord Wellington's head-quarters were removed to Gouvea, and the whole of his infantry retired to the rear of Celorico, the outposts continuing in advance of that town. Massena waited till he had been joined by Regnier's corps, consisting of 17,000 men, which having acted with little success against Romana in Extremadura, had crossed the Tagus at Barca de Alconete, early in July. According to the plan which Buonaparte had laid down for the conquest of Portugal, this corps was to have moved by the right bank of the Tagus upon Abrantes; but this design having been altered when the allied army was found more numerous and efficient than the French cabinet had supposed, Regnier had moved upon Zarza-

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*September.*

*Movements  
of Regnier's  
corps, and  
of General  
Hill.*

CHAP. mayor, Penamacor, and Monsanto, in the hope of striking a  
 XXXII. blow against Lieutenant-General Hill, who had advanced with  
 1810. 13,000 men from Abrantes to Portalegre, for the purpose of  
September. supporting Romana. The French hoped either that he would  
 expose himself to an attack, or that Lord Wellington might be  
 tempted to make a movement against Regnier, of which Massena  
 was prepared to take advantage; but the British generals were  
 not thus to be circumvented: and Massena, as well as Lord  
 Wellington, directing his attention to a single object, Regnier  
 joined the invading force, while Hill was stationed at Sarzedas,  
 to cover the road upon Abrantes to Lisbon, or move to Ponte de  
 Murcella, and unite with the main body on the line of its retreat:  
 in either case Major-General Leith's division, which was kept at  
 Thomar in reserve to support him, was to take the same direction.

*Massena  
 advances  
 into Portu-  
 gal.*

Had Massena despised the allied army in truth as he affected  
 to do, he would now have marched by Castello Branco, Abrantes,  
 and Santarem, direct upon Lisbon, leaving Lord Wellington  
 behind him; but he remembered the fate of Junot, and had too  
 much respect for the enemy with whom he had to contend. Re-  
 lying, however, upon numbers and fortune, and taking into ac-  
 count the indecision and timidity which seemed to characterize  
 the British counsels, he expected that Lord Wellington, being  
 too weak to risk a battle, would retreat, if not fly before him,  
 with no other hope than that of reaching the ships and  
 securing his embarkation. Under this imagination he or-  
 dered the French army to provide itself for seventeen days, by  
 which time he expected to finish the campaign triumphantly.  
 The only impediment which he apprehended on the way was  
 from the difficulty of transport. For this reason very few women  
 were allowed to accompany the army; they were left at Ciudad  
 Rodrigo, where so many had assembled to share in the spoils and  
 pleasures of Lisbon with their friends and husbands, that the



place, because of the round of gaieties which was there kept up, was called Little Paris. From thence they were to follow when the easy conquest should be completed; and this was thought so certain, that engagements were made for parties to be given in the capital. With this confidence, and this levity of mind, the French entered upon their third invasion of Portugal. They began their march in three bodies, Junot's corps with the artillery and cavalry proceeding by Pinhel and Trancoso, Ney's by Alverca, and Regnier's by Guarda. At the same time, Lord Wellington, aware of the enemy's intent, began to retreat towards Coimbra deliberately, and with such evident forethought and determination, that this retrograde movement did not in the slightest degree abate the spirits of the army. No stores were abandoned, no men and horses foundered; the operations were all performed with regularity and ease; the soldiers suffered no privations, and underwent no unnecessary fatigue; the inhabitants retired under their protection, and assisted them in breaking up the bridges, destroying the mills, and laying waste the country; so that Massena found a desert as he advanced. In the town of Celorico there were only two inhabitants, and nothing but bare walls. At that place the corps of Regnier and Ney effected their junction. The appearance of the former made it evident that there was no intention of acting upon the Tagus; and it appeared also, upon their taking the road by Fornos, that it was Massena's intention to proceed upon the right side of the Mondego, not upon the left by way of Penalva and Ponte de Murcella, where he thought Lord Wellington would be prepared to resist him in a strong position: he calculated upon turning this position, and so making himself master of Coimbra and the resources which the fertile country about that city would supply. But he did not calculate upon the foresight and decision of the British General, nor upon the spirit of the Portuguese

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*September.**Ney and  
Regnier's  
join him at  
Celorico.*

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*September.*

*Sept. 20.*

people: he hoped to delude them by promises, and to find them as he advanced remaining patiently in their towns and villages, in expectation of the conquest which awaited them. With this intent he gave orders that the troops should halt before they entered Viseu, till the inhabitants might be assured of protection for themselves and their property. No persons were found abroad there; the soldiers were still forbidden to enter any house forcibly on pain of severe punishment, and Massena himself remained a while in the streets, expecting the effect of his condescending patience. Night was setting in, and the word was at length given that the soldiers might quarter themselves. The doors were presently broken open, . . . but neither inhabitants nor provisions were there; every thing had been carried away, all had fled; even no lights were to be found, except those which were burning in the churches. The only living souls remaining there were a few poor wretches in the hospital, who were in too pitiable a state for removal: one medical attendant had been left with them; he also had fled upon the entrance of the French, but upon the information of his patients he was pursued and overtaken, and ordered to continue at his post, and assure the town's-people when they ventured back that no ill treatment was to be apprehended from the French conquerors.

*The French  
army col-  
lected at  
Viseu.*

Here Junot, with the artillery and cavalry, joined the army; but this junction, which completed the concentration of the French force, was impeded by Colonel Trant with some Portuguese militia and dragoons, who attacked the convoy near Tojal. Had this enterprise been executed as well as it was planned and timed, a blow might have been inflicted which the enemy would have felt severely; but the French, by their prompt discipline and judicious boldness, deterred the militia from pursuing their success, and the park fell back on Trancoso. This delay, however, was no light advantage for the allies: it compelled Massena to

*Jones's Ac-  
count of the  
War, i. 297.*