

that Massena's troops had made the cruelties which they inflicted a matter of diversion to themselves! Every day the bodies of women were seen whom they had murdered. In one place some friars were hanging, impaled by the throat upon the sharpened branches of a tree. Every where peasants were found in the most miserable condition; poor wretches who had fallen into the hands of the French, and been tortured to make them discover where supplies were hid, or made to serve as guides, and when their knowledge of the way ended, shot, that they might give no information to the pursuers. The indignation of our army was what it ought to be; men and officers alike exclaimed against the atrocious conduct of their detestable enemies. "This," said Lord Wellington, "is the mode in which the promises have been performed, and the assurances fulfilled, which were held out in the proclamation of the French commander-in-chief, when he told the inhabitants of Portugal, that he was not come to make war upon them, but, with a powerful army of an hundred and ten thousand men, to drive the English into the sea! It is to be hoped that the example of what has occurred in this country will teach the people of this and of other nations, what value they ought to place on such promises and assurances; and that there is no security for life, or for any thing that renders life valuable, except in decided resistance to the enemy."

The retreating army had no provisions except what they plundered on the spot, and could carry on their backs, and live cattle, with which they were well provided. As far as Condeixa the allied troops had been supplied by transport from Lisbon, to their own admiration, so excellent had been the previous arrangement. But as they advanced, they suffered more privations than the enemy whom they were driving out of the country, for the French left the land as a desert behind them, and the

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commissariat could not keep up with the rapidity of such a pursuit. The dragoons always kept sight of the enemy ; they were constantly mounted before daybreak, their horses were never unsaddled, and were obliged to carry their own sustenance, which, it may be supposed, was sufficiently scanty. In the midst of a country where the people regarded them not merely as allies, but as friends, brothers, and deliverers, that people had not even shelter to afford them, and none of the troops had tents ; those which they occupied in the lines were left there. But they reaped an abundant reward in the success of their general's well-concerted and patient plan, in the anticipated applause of their own countrymen, in the blessings of the Portugueze, and in that feeling, . . of all others the happiest which can fall to a soldier's lot, . . that they were engaged in a good cause, and that the wickedness of the enemy rendered it as much a moral as a military duty to labour for his destruction. With these feelings they attacked them wherever they were found. Massena had taken up a formidable position on the Ceyra, which falls into the Mondego a few leagues above Coimbra, and is one of the Portugueze rivers in whose bed gold has been found ; a whole corps was posted as an advanced guard in front of Foz de Arouce, on the left side of the river. Here Lord Wellington again moved his divisions upon their right and left, and attacked them in front. In this affair the French sustained a considerable loss, which was much increased by a well-managed movement of the English 95th. That regiment observed a body of the enemy moving off in two parallel columns. There was a woody cover between them, into which the 95th got, the fog and the closing evening enabling them to do so unperceived ; from thence they fired on both sides, and retiring instantly that the fire was returned, left the two columns of the French to keep up a heavy fire upon each other as they passed the cover. The

darkness of the night increased their confusion: many were drowned in crossing the river, . . . a mountain stream swoln by the rains, . . . and it is said that one column blew up the bridge while the other was upon it. Much baggage, and some ammunition carriages, here fell into the hands of the pursuers. The light division got into the enemy's bivouac, and found not only some of their plunder there, but their dinners on the fires. A heavy fog had delayed the movements of the army, and prevented a more serious attack, from which much had been expected.

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Having blown up the bridge, the enemy's rear-guard took a position on the bank of the river, to watch the ford. The loss which they had sustained on the preceding day was betrayed in part by the bodies which they had thrown into the water to conceal it, but which were seen as the stream bore them down. Lord Wellington was obliged to halt the whole of the following day for supplies, the rains having rendered bad roads almost impassable. Here, too, the ill news from Badajoz compelled him to order toward that frontier a part of his army, which should otherwise have continued in the pursuit. During the night, the French moved off, and the pursuers forded the Ceyra on the 17th. On the 18th, they advanced toward the Ponte de Murcella; the French, who, during the whole of the retreat, made their marches by night, putting their troops in motion a few hours after dusk, had retired over this bridge and destroyed it, using the very mines which the British had constructed for the same purpose, on their retreat in the preceding autumn. They were now posted in force on the right of the Alva. Lord Wellington turned their left by the Serra de Santa Quiteria, and manœuvred in their front; this compelled them to retire upon Mouta. It was believed that they had intended to remain some days in the position from which they were thus driven, because many prisoners were

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 XXXV. Mondego, and ordered to return to the Alva. During the night
 1811. the staff corps constructed a bridge which was ready at day-
March. break for the infantry. The cavalry passed at a ford close by,
 and there was some difficulty in getting the artillery across. On
 the 19th, they were assembled on the Serra de Mouta, the enemy,
 as usual, having retired in the night. From this place they con-
 tinued their retreat with the utmost rapidity. Lord Wellington
 kept up the pursuit with only the cavalry and the light division
 under Sir William Erskine, supported by two divisions of in-
 fantry, and by the militia on the right of the Mondego. The
 remainder of the army was obliged to halt, till the supplies,
 which had been sent round from the Tagus to the Mondego,
 should arrive; this was absolutely necessary, for nothing could
 be found in the country.

*Resistance
 made by the
 peasantry.*

The peasants did not every where abandon their villages to the
 spoilers; in some places they found means to arm themselves,
 and their appearance deterred the enemy from making their in-
 tended attack, the pursuers being so near at hand; in others
 they entered the burning villages with the foremost of the allied
 army in time to extinguish the flames. There is a village called
 Avo, six-and-thirty miles from Coimbra, containing about 130
 houses. The ordenanza of that district were collected there;
 they repelled a body of 500 French in five different attacks, and
 saved the village. The little town of Manteigas was less for-
 tunate. The inhabitants of the adjoining country, confiding in
 the situation of a place, which was, as they hoped, concealed in
 the heart of the Serra de Estrella, had brought their women and
 children thither, and their most valuable effects; but it was dis-
 covered, and in spite of a desperate defence, the town was stormed,
 by a force as superior in number as in arms. The officers car-
 ried off the handsomest women; the rest were given up to the

mercy of men as brutal as their leaders. But every where the naked bodies of the straggling and wounded, which the English found upon the way, showed well what vengeance these most injured people had taken upon their unprovoked and inhuman enemies. In one place a party of them were surprised in a church digging the dead out of their graves in search of plunder.

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As the French drew nearer the frontier, their foraging parties assumed more confidence, and at the same time their wants becoming more urgent, made them more daring. They passed the fords of the Mondego near Fornos, in considerable numbers, to seek supplies in a country as yet unravaged; but they were attacked by Wilson, who pursued them across the river and captured a great number of beasts of burthen, laden with plunder of every description, which they abandoned in their flight. He took several prisoners also, and in consequence of the loss which they had thus sustained, a strong division was detached against him, which took a position on the left bank of the river, so as to cover the flank of the retiring columns from any further operations of this militia force, till they had passed Celorico. Lord Wellington, for want of supplies, was not able to proceed till the 26th, when he advanced to Gouvea, halted again the next day, and on the following reached Celorico. The French were then at Guarda, which they occupied in strength, and where they apparently intended to maintain themselves. Between Celorico and that city, the inhabitants of a village, men and women alike, were found dead or dying in the street, their ears and noses cut off, and otherwise mangled in a manner not to be described. The horror and indignation of the allies were raised to the highest pitch by this dreadful sight; and the advanced guard coming up with some hundreds of the guilty troops, whose retreat had been impeded by the premature destruction of a bridge, gave them as little quarter as they deserved. But as the enemy only

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passed through this part of the country, it had not suffered so much as those places where they had been stationary, and consequently had had leisure to prepare * for the work of barbarous devastation which their Generals had determined upon committing. Not having time now to destroy every thing before them, they burnt only the principal houses: poorer habitations escaped; and the peasants who had fled before the retreating army to the mountains no sooner saw the allies come up, than they returned to their dwellings, baked bread for their deliverers from the corn which they had concealed, and did every thing in their power to assist them.

Guarda.

Guarda stands upon a plain of the Serra de Estrella (the Mons Herminius of the Romans) near the sources of the Zezere and the Mondego, and near the highest part of that lofty range; its site is said to be higher than that of any other city in Europe; the ascent to it continues nearly four miles, by a road wide enough for two carts abreast, winding in numberless situations along the edge of a deep precipice, the sides of which are over-spread with trees. The city indeed owes its origin to this commanding situation, having grown round a watch tower (called in those days *guarda*) which Sancho the First erected there in the first age of the monarchy. Lord Wellington collected his army in the neighbourhood and in the front of Celorico, with a view to dislodge the enemy from this advantageous post. The following day he moved forward in five columns, supported by a division in the valley of the Mondego; the militia under Trant and Wilson covering the movement at Alverca against any attempt which might have been made against it on that side.

* A French orderly book was found near Batalha, in which it appeared what number of men were daily ordered upon the service of destroying, as far as they could, that beautiful edifice, one of the finest in Europe.

So well were the movements concerted, that the heads of the different columns made their appearance on the heights almost at the same moment; upon which the enemy, without firing a shot, retired upon Sabugal on the Upper Coa; for although Dumouriez, with his superficial knowledge of the country, had spoken of Guarda as the key of Portugal, and upon that authority it has been described as one of the finest military positions in the kingdom, the French Generals perceived that its apparent strength only rendered it more treacherous, and were too prudent to attempt making a stand there, against one whom they now could not but in their hearts acknowledge to be at least their equal in the art of war. Their retreat was so rapid that they had not time to execute the mischief which they intended; our troops entered in time to save the Cathedral, the door of which was on fire: the wood of its fine organ had been taken by the enemy for fuel, and the pipes for bullets. They took a strong position, their right at Ruvina guarding the ford of Rapoula de Coa, with a detachment at the bridge of Ferreiros; their left was at Sabugal, and their 8th corps at Alfayates. The right of the allied army was opposite Sabugal, their left at the bridge of Ferreiros, and Trant and Wilson were sent across the Coa below Almeida, to threaten the communication of that place with Ciudad Rodrigo and with the enemy's army.

The river Coa rises in the Sierra de Xalma, which forms a part of the great Sierra de Gata; and entering Portugal by Folgozinho, falls into the Douro near Villa Nova de Foscoa. The whole of its course is through one of the most picturesque countries in Europe, and it is every where difficult of access. Sabugal stands on the right bank. This town was founded about the year 1220, by Alonso X. of Leon, who named it from the number of elder-trees (*sabugos*) growing about it: the place is now remarkable for some of the largest chesnut trees that are

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The Coa.

Sabugal.



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 XXXV. gueze dominions, and its old castle still remains a monument of
 1811. King Diniz, whose magnificent works are found over the whole
 April. kingdom. The enemy's second corps were strongly posted with
 their right upon a height immediately above the bridge and
 town, and their left extending along the road to Alfayates, to a
 height which commanded all the approaches to Sabugal from
 the fords above the town. They communicated by Rendo with
 the sixth corps at Ruvina. It was only on the left above
 Sabugal that they could be approached; our troops, therefore,
 were put in motion on the morning of the third of April, to turn
 them in this direction, and to force the passage of the bridge of
 Sabugal. The light division and the cavalry, under Sir W.
 Erskine and Major-General Slade, were to cross the Coa by
 two separate fords upon the right, the cavalry upon the right
 of the light division; the third division, under Major-General
 Picton, at a ford on the left about a mile above Sabugal;
 the fifth division, under Major-General Dunlop, and the ar-
 tillery at the bridge. The sixth division remained opposite the
 enemy's corps at Ruvina, and a battalion of the seventh ob-
 served their detachment at the bridge of Ferreiros. Colonel
 Beckwith's brigade of the light division was the first that
 crossed, with two squadrons of cavalry upon its right; the
 riflemen skirmished; the enemy's picquets fell back from the
 river as they advanced: they forded, gained the opposite
 height, formed as the companies arrived, and moved forward
 under a heavy fire. At this time so thick a rain came on,
 that it was impossible to see any thing before them, and the
 troops pushing forward in pursuit of the picquets, came upon the
 left of the main body, which it was intended they should turn.
 The light troops were driven back upon the 43d regiment; and
 Regnier, who commanded the French, perceiving, as soon as

*Action be-
 fore Sa-
 bugal.*

the atmosphere cleared, that the body which had advanced was not strong, attacked it in a solid column, supported by artillery and horse. The allies repulsed it, and advanced in pursuit upon the position. They found a strong enclosure in the front lined with a battalion; and the enemy forming fresh and stronger bodies, attacked them with the hussars on the right, and a fresh column on the left. Our troops retired, took post behind a wall, formed again under a heavy fire of grape, canister, and musketry, again repulsed the enemy, again advanced against them, and took from them a howitzer posted in the rear of the French battalion, which was formed under cover of that in the stone enclosure: this gun had greatly annoyed the allies. They had advanced with such impetuosity that their front was somewhat scattered; a fresh column with cavalry attacked them; they retired again to their post, where the battalions of the 52d and the 1st Caçadores joined them: these troops once more repulsed the enemy, and Colonel Beckwith's brigade, with the first battalion of the 52d, again advanced upon them. Another column of the French, with cavalry, charged their right: but they took post in the stone enclosure on the top of the height, from whence they could protect the howitzer which had been won, and they again drove back the enemy. Regnier had moved a column on their left to renew the attack, when part of General Picton's division came up; the head of General Dunlop's column forced the bridge at the same time, and ascended the heights on the right flank; the cavalry appeared on the high ground in rear of their left, and Regnier then retreated across the hills towards Rendo, leaving the howitzer in the hands of those by whom it had been so gallantly won; about 200 were left on the field, with six officers and 300 prisoners. Our loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners, amounted to 161. What that of the French was in wounded is

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