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Sommario/riassunto	Written almost a century after the events they describe, Lewis Butler's two volumes on Wellington's Peninsula War campaigns have rightly been judged a classic of military history. The story of how the Iron Duke turned disaster into triumph, and defeat into a final victory, has surely never been told with more authority. Butler's first volume begins with the Spanish popular revolt against the imposition of Napoleon's brother Joseph as their king and their appeal to Britain for aid. Early British disasters culminate in Sir John Moore's retreat and death at Corunna. Wellington fought back at the battles of Talavera and Busaco, but was compelled by Marshal Massena to retreat once more into Portugal, and only his foresight in constructing the impregnable lines of Torres Vedras, and denuding the country before them, saved the day. The first volume concludes with Wellington taking the offensive again at the battle of Fuentes d'Onoro and Albuera. Both volumes are liberally illustrated with maps and sketches of the battles and other

operations. What Napoleon called his 'Spanish ulcer' has never been more minutely described and dissected, with the author paying a military man's due attention to the sinews of war as well as to the action.

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