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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE YOUNG DRAGOON: EVERY DAY LIFE OF A SOLDIER ***

A.W. Drayson

"The Young Dragoon"

"Every Day Life of a Soldier"

Chapter One.

Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please;
How often have I loiter'd o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!

Goldsmith.

I am a soldier, Frederick Trenchard, at your service. The prospect before me in my early days was, that instead of following the drum I should have followed the plough. My father was a farmer, living in the Midland counties; and I am the only one of a numerous family and a wide circle of family friends who ever took the Queen's Shilling, and turned the ploughshare into a sword. My grandfather was a farmer; my uncle was a farmer; my cousin who married the heiress was a gentleman farmer; my cousin who fell in love with beer and skittles was a farm labourer. We were all of us sons of the soil, and it was the popular opinion in our family, that even sailors were no better than they should be (and, Heaven help us all, I suppose we none of us are), but that soldiers were utter outcasts—Sawney Beans in her Majesty's livery—vultures in red coats and pipeclay—at which even Job Chequers, of the Green Man, shook his head, objecting strongly to the billet, and assuring everybody whom it concerned, or did not, that he would sooner pay the billet twice than lodge a soldier once.

There was a tradition in the village of a certain young Meadows who had gone for a soldier; what became of him I never heard, but always was taught to imagine the worst; as whenever it happened that any youngster had been engaged in a frolic, the wiseacres shook their heads, and said—"Ah! they saw how it would be—just like Meadows." Now, I would not for a moment lead any of my readers to suppose that a soldiering life is the best a man can lead. Very far from that is the case. When I enlisted it was said of me, that I had given up a good home, sacrificed the esteem of every member of my family for the life of a vagabond. This was very far from being the case either. To be sure I gave up a good home, exchanging it for a life in barracks to begin with, and a life of peril to go on with; but I was not a vagabond, neither was there anything in what I had done to forfeit the esteem of good people. All sorts are wanted in this world. When we have all learned to be peaceable; when there is no foe to withstand, no skulking enemy to overcome, then I suppose Cincinnatus will return to his cabbages; till then the soldier is a necessity, and by his good sword and his strong arm the wealth of our country is preserved from the hand of the spoiler, and our honour maintained in the face of the world.

I am thinking of that dear old home of mine; the quiet village street, the little church, the *littler* clerk (forgive the grammar) who said Amen on Sundays—I am thinking of the squire's house, encircled by a brotherhood of ancient elms, of the green pastures that led down to the river, of the yellow uplands that made the farmer's heart rejoice—I am thinking of our own quiet homestead. A middling-sized farm was ours, but it had been ours for many a long year, and it was not burdened by mortgage; we were able to pay our way, and if father, when he rode his old cob "Billy" to market on Mondays, and dined with other farmers at the "Stag's Head," grumbled, do not all farmers grumble? and I expect they have done so ever since the first sickle was thrust into ripened corn.

Well, I was to be a farmer. I was getting into farming habits. I was speculating what I should do when my turn came to ride to market. To market, however, I never rode—my style of riding was learned in another school, and it would rather have startled the steady paced villagers of — to have seen me, as once on an October day I rode—dashing

forward wildly with a whole body of brave-hearted fellows—right in the face of destruction, but steadily forward in the name of duty—even though duty meant death.

And now, apologising for this introductory chapter, let me briefly tell you why I became a soldier.

Chapter Two.

> Angels and ministers of grace defend us!—
> Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,
> Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
> Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
> Thou comest in such a questionable shape!
>
> Shakespeare.

Situate about a quarter of a mile from the village near which my father resided, was the parish church, a venerable structure clad with ivy. Near by a large yew-tree spread its branches over the centre of the churchyard. About one hundred yards from the church stood the cottage of Nicholas Hartley (more generally known by the name of "Old Nick"), the sexton and bell-ringer. He also carried on the business of a cobbler. "Old Nick" was by no means so sober a man as he ought to have been, considering the serious nature of his calling. He was quite as often to be found at the Green Man as at his own cottage. There were several youths in the village, including myself, who were prone to practical joking, and one unfortunate night we concocted a scheme to set the whole of the people in the village in wonder and fright.

It was a dark and stormy night in December, more than twenty years ago, when our plans were matured and successfully accomplished. Eight of us met, by a preconcerted arrangement, in the old churchyard, a little before midnight. One of the actors in the drama was the son of the blacksmith, who had found a key to open the door of the belfry. With this we gained admission. Thence unbolting a door, we were enabled to reach the roof of the chancel; this was composed of lead, and was quite flat, with a high stone coping all round it. Having gone so far we descended to the churchyard, and tied fast together the legs of the chimney-sweeper's donkey, that pastured among the grave-stones. Sheltered under the yew-tree, and binding him so as to prevent his struggling, we attached a stout waggon-rope, procured from my father's barn, to Neddy's body. Leaving one to guide his ascent with a guy rope, the rest of us hauled him up to the roof of the chancel. We then untied the rope that bound his legs, and enveloped him in a snow-white sheet, tying his long ears down to his neck with a piece of twine, and so adapting the sheet to his body as to prevent its getting disarranged by the very high wind.

Thus was his "mokeship" left standing in the middle of the roof, apparently as contented as where we found him under the yew-tree. After this we fastened one end of the rope to the "pull" of the only bell in use, and passing the other through the grated hole in the wall of the belfry, carried it over the roof of the chancel and dropped it to the ground. The two doors were now made secure as we had found them, and one of us mounting with the rope to the very top branch of the yew-tree, we there made it fast; after this final step it was considered the best policy to move away as fast as we possibly could.

Being placed on rather high ground, the wind swayed the old yew-tree to and fro without hindrance, the consequence being that the solitary bell tolled forth its notes with strange, supernatural, and most irregular tones, all the more astonishing from their occurring at that time of night. The inhabitants were soon aroused, as we could distinctly see from our hiding-place, by the number of lights in the windows, and the lanthorns flitting about the main street—no gas or oil-lamps existing in our village. At length, a strong muster of farm-labourers, with "Old Nick" and the parish constable at their head, repaired to the church, the principal instigators of the mischief bringing up the rear. Knowing, as I did, that there was nothing to be alarmed at, I volunteered to accompany the sexton and policeman into the belfry. This was a job neither of them relished when they found the door securely locked, for they had at first an idea that some drunken men had broken the lock and were amusing themselves at the expense of the whole village. Just at the moment we reached the door of the belfry, a piercing shriek was heard from a female in the midst of the crowd below—an arm was stretched out, with the finger pointed in the direction of the donkey, enshrouded in the snow-white habiliments as we had left him. Sir Moke played his part excellently well; one of his ears had escaped from under the twine, and moved to and fro in such a manner as quickly to be designated "one *arm*" of the "ghost" waving to the crowd to retire—and retire the more timid portion of them did, helter-skelter; but those with stouter nerves did not leave the churchyard. The wind moaned through the old yew-tree, and the ivy that covered the walls of the church-tower rustled and flapped in the strong midnight breeze; and the strange, irregular tolling of the bell continued, to the horror and surprise of the crowd.

There stood the "ghost!" He had moved from the middle to the corner of the roof—his "arm" moving backwards and forwards, and the white sheet flapping in the wind like a pair of huge wings. Old Howard, whom people called an atheist, had died in the village about ten days previously. The minister had refused to bury him in the churchyard, so he was interred outside the wall by the roadside. His exit from the world was said to have been "awful" in the extreme; he left the bed upon which he had lain for weeks in great agony, was brought down stairs, and died on the kitchen sofa. He had been one of Tom Paine's disciples, but he died, people said, fearfully convinced of his error.

This circumstance had quite prepared the minds of the simple people for his re-appearance; "he could not rest in his grave," and the excitement was intense. I was frightened myself—not at the "ghost," but at the turn things were taking. My companions were all on the spot, and quite as uneasy as myself, with the exception of one Dick Smith, who said that "if he could be certain that the 'ghost' was old Howard's, he would fetch his gun and shoot at it. It could not be murder to shoot a fellow that was already dead." The proposition was negatived by every one present old enough to have a voice in the matter. The minister lectured Dick, and he slunk back into the crowd. Hours passed

away, nobody was bold enough to enter the belfry, and the "ghost" stuck to its post on the roof of the chancel; however, the wind dropped about four o'clock, and consequently the tolling of the bell ceased, soon after which the "ghost," being tired of standing, lay down, and its *body* being entirely hidden by the high stone coping was effectually concealed. It was said to have "vanished;" and the people retired to their homes, but many neither to bed nor to sleep.

Just as daylight dawned next morning, John Durden, a carrier, on his way through the village to D— from an adjacent town, had to pass by the church with his donkey and cart. The "ghost," recognising the footfall of an ass and a brother, rose from his hard bed to salute him with a very long-winded *bray*.

Seeing the apparition on the church at such a time, Durden took to his heels; his donkey, profiting by the absence of the carrier's cudgel, stood still, pricked up his ears, and returned the salute after his own familiar fashion. The villagers again crowded to the spot; all was discovered; daylight revealed the rope that connected the yew-tree with the bell-pull. The "ghost" had got his other ear at liberty, and his tail was wriggling, two hundred movements to the minute, with evident pleasure at beholding one of his race in the roadway below. With considerable labour he was lowered from his elevated position.

And now commenced the more serious part of the business for myself and my fellow-conspirators. The sheet was marked at one corner in red silk, with the names of "J. and E. Smith." Now as there was only one family of that name in the village, and as they only had one son—the aforesaid Dick—the constable forthwith took him into custody on *more than* suspicion of being concerned in the business of the preceding night. It was well known that he never could have raised the donkey to the roof of the church without assistance; therefore Master Dick was induced to give up the names of his wicked accomplices. Five of the number, including Dick, were apprehended. Myself and two others only escaped by flight.

Chapter Three.

Roger he swore he'd leave his plough,
His team and tillage all, by gum;
Of a country life he'd had enou'; -
He'd leave it all and follow the drum.
He'd leave his threshing in the barn,
To thresh his foes he'd very soon larn;
With sword in hand he would not parley,
But thresh his foes instead of the barley.

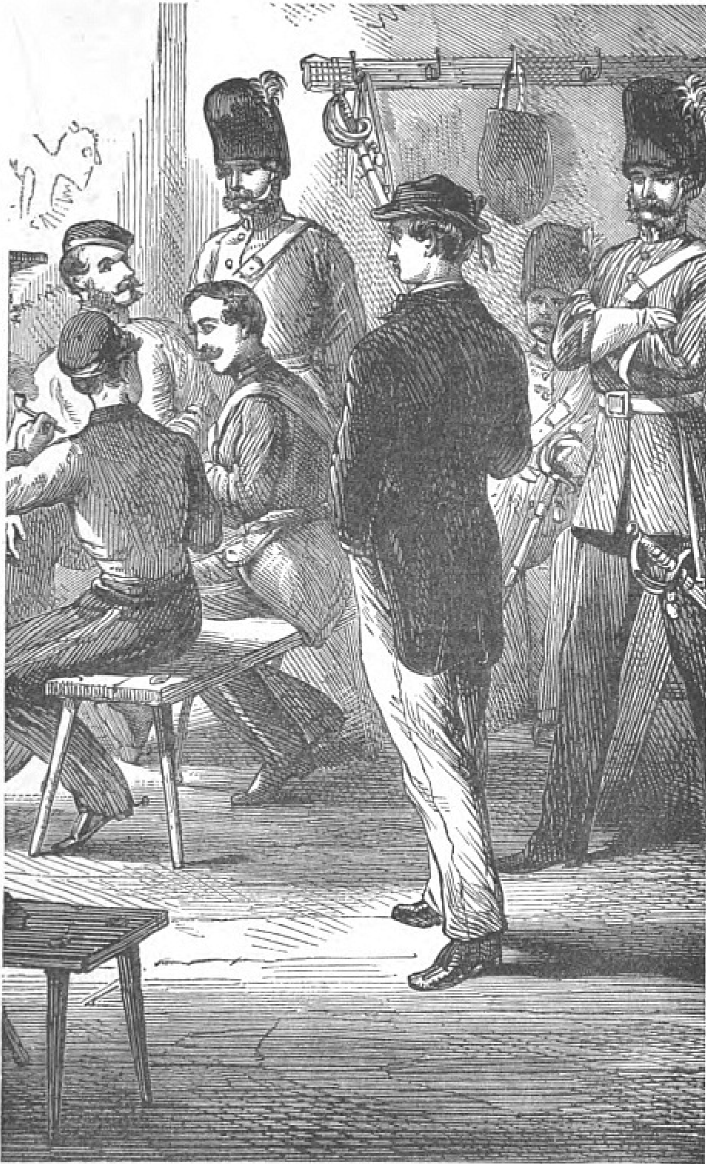
The names of my companions were Harry and Ned Glover, two brothers, the sons of the surgeon, or rather village apothecary, aged respectively sixteen and seventeen. Avoiding the main road as much as possible, we trudged on through the wet ground, over hedge and ditch, until we began to feel hungry. It was getting dark, and, on counting our coppers, we made the startling discovery, about which we had never previously thought, that we had but two shillings and eightpence halfpenny in our pockets, all counted. We held a consultation, and decided to sleep in a cow-shed, sitting under a hayrick adjacent to the shed where we intended to pass the night until quite dark. I went over the fields to the nearest point where I perceived a light, and found a provision shop; there I purchased three oaten cakes, at a penny each, and a pound of cheese for eightpence. I also made out that we were sixteen miles from our homes. Unfortunately I lost my way in returning to the place where I had left the two Glovers. After rambling among the fields, shouting and whistling until well-nigh exhausted, I came to a little mud hut inhabited by a besom-maker, and but for the oaten cake and cheese I believe I should have been worried by a large dog that resolutely opposed my approach nearer than about one hundred yards. Throwing down the cakes, however, the dog immediately seized them, and the man, coming out of the hut, warned me, whoever I might be, to "cut off, or he would put a bullet into me."

Forgetting everything in my fright, I held a parley with him at some distance in the dark. The dog having made short work of the cakes, barked as furiously and appeared as intent upon worrying me as before. I told him all, and finding that I was a mere lad, he consented, for a shilling, to let me come into the hut, where a good fire was burning. I told him that my companions could not be far off, and described the place where I had left them. The good old fellow returned me my shilling, and placed some barley bread before me to eat to my cheese, while, he said, he would soon fetch the other two; but as I did not relish staying in the hut alone, and not feeling comfortable to eat until my companions were found, I decided on accompanying him. The night was pitch dark; but, aided by his dog, the besom-maker was not long in finding the haystack under which I had left them sitting. Tired out with walking, and weary of waiting for me, they were fast asleep on some loose hay pulled out of the rick. We had some difficulty in waking them, after which we all proceeded to the hut, made a hearty supper of barley bread and cheese and spring water. Our host placed a log of wood on the fire, and we slept upon the bed of heather that formed the working material for his brooms until morning, when the kind-hearted old man trudged off to the village, and soon returned with a can of nice new milk and a huge loaf of barley bread, of which we ate our fill; and after promising him to return to our homes, where, he said, "all would blow over in the course of a day or two," we left him, and made our way on to the high road. We then held a council as to whether we should return home, or continue our course as far as Sheffield, and enlist in a regiment that we knew to be quartered there.

Hal Glover was the first to turn tail, and at once commenced his journey homewards. Ned bid him good-bye and called him "chicken-hearted," and trudged on with me in a contrary direction. However, he frequently turned round to look at Harry's fast receding form.

At last we came to a sharp turn in the road. A tear stood in the boy's eye as he came to a standstill.

“I cannot leave *Harry* and my *mother*, Fred.” said he; “I will go back to W—, let the consequences be what they may. Good-bye, Trenchard,” and as he took my hand in his I could see the big tears rolling down his cheeks. He could not speak; but he pulled me towards him, as much as to say, “Come with me,” and if the truth must be told, I would rather have returned with him than have gone on; but I thought of the taunts and jeers that I should be sure to experience from the greater part of the lads in the village. So I wended my way to Sheffield.



“‘This way, my lad,’ said the corporal, and forthwith he entered the guard-room.”

I arrived at Sheffield on the same night, and at once inquired my way to the barracks. The Second Dragoon Guards (Queen’s Bays) were lying there at that time. Entering the gates, I was at once interrogated by the sentry as to what I wanted.

“I want to enlist,” said I.

It was nightfall. A rousing fire was burning in the guard-room, through the window of which I could perceive a group of soldiers seated around, some smoking, some eating, others talking and laughing, more or less.

I saw a slightly-built, gentlemanly looking figure at the door.

“Corporal of the guard,” shouted the sentry, and that functionary instantly appeared. “This *young fellow* wants for to join the reg’ment.”

“This way, my lad,” said the corporal; and forthwith he entered the guard-room.

Presently he came out, and I never saw him again. I learned, however, that the next day an old limb of the law hunted him up, and induced him to give up his intention of enlisting, and made all things pleasant with the Queen’s Bays by leaving them a golden medal of their mistress.

It was my turn now. I walked in.

“Well, my hearty,” said one of the soldiers, “come up to the roast,” as he made way for me to be seated near him. The corporal cast his eye from my head to my feet as I neared the light.

“Not big enough, nor never will be,” he said, folding his arms.

The standard of dragoon guards at that period (more than twenty years ago) was not less than six feet for full grown, or five feet ten inches for growing lads whose appearance indicated that they would attain the desired height ere they had left off growing. I was under five feet seven, and was at once pronounced as "never likely to be a six-foot man," and therefore not eligible for *their* regiment; however, the corporal said I could sleep in barracks that night, if I thought proper, and he would introduce me to the recruiting sergeant of another regiment—then in the town—on the following day. To this I consented; and the guard orderly escorted me to one of the barrack-rooms, in which there were eight beds ranged side by side.

The bedsteads were of iron, and the beds stuffed with straw. To one of these I was shown as belonging to one of the men on guard and therefore vacant. There was an air of snug comfort in the room that contrasted favourably with the cold blustering wind outside. A good fire was burning in a large grate, the white belts, black sabretaches, and burnished scabbards hung around the room and glittered in the fire light. The carbines were neatly arranged in the "rack" with a bone "snapper" in each hammer—placed there in lieu of the flint—for the new percussion-caps were not in use at that period. The uniforms—scarlet coats with swallow-tails, and brass shoulder-scales—were neatly wrapped up and piled with the kit and spare clothing upon a shelf over each man's bed. The men were apparently as happy as a family—some were smoking and chatting, one was reading a newspaper, another writing a letter, and one, a "mounted orderly" just come in from a long ride, was busy cooking two herrings for his supper.

"Come to the fire," said one of the men.

I walked up and took my seat on one of the wood forms near the grate.

"I feel very dry," said the one who had now commenced to eat the herrings.

"Divil doubt you, an' so you ought to feel dhry, you murtherin cannibal, for there you sit ating two as fine fellows of your own spacies as ever tuk a bath in the salt say," said an old looking soldier.

"Jerry," said the "orderly," "have you any money?"

"Niver a farden," said Jerry—the man who had jokingly called him a "cannibal."

"I've got some," said I, displaying one shilling and fivepence—all I had left.

"Bravo, youngster," said the orderly, "will you pay for a quart of ale?"

"Yes, for two quarts if you like," said I.

"Might as well have a gallon while we are about it, that'll jist be a pint apiece," said a big lump of a fellow rising from one of the beds, where he had been lying and smoking a dirty short pipe without speaking a word until now.

"Mind your own business, you moon-snuffing omedhaun, and let the lad do as he plases," said the Irishman.

"I've only this one shilling and fivepence in copper, or I would pay for two or three gallons of beer," said I.

"Do you live in Sheffield?" inquired the orderly.

"I came here from W—, to enlist, but they say I'm not tall enough," said I.

"And what are you going to do next?"

"'List in another regiment," said I.

"S'pose you don't pass the doctor, what shall you do then?"

I had never thought of that, and therefore could only say I didn't know.

I now began to see the extent of my folly in leaving home in such a pitiable plight, without money or friends. If I did not enlist and *pass the doctor*, only fivepence would stand between me and absolute starvation. The orderly no doubt perceived my embarrassment.

"I'll not hev any ale to-night. Hand me that pitcher of water there beside you," said he.

"Faix an' you must be a foolish young gossoon to lave home widout money. You'll be in a purty fix if you don't pass the doctor widout aither money or frinds, an' thirty miles from home."

My spirits were lowering fast. But, after all, I could *walk* home again; my seventeen pence would be enough to prevent me from starving by the way. Therefore, though I was not a little vexed and humiliated that the soldiers would not accept my treat, I was glad when I considered that the expenditure of my money would have reduced me to beggary, and I soon after retired to my bed of "long feathers" as the Irishman designated it. So long as the soldiers were up and moving about the room I never thought of home, but after the last trumpet had sounded, a little after nine o'clock, and the men were all in their beds, I began to think of my mother, brothers, and sisters, one of the latter being particularly attached to me, and I wished in my heart that I had returned to W— with Harry and Ned. Being very tired, however, I soon fell asleep, and did not awake until the morning.

Chapter Four.

"Who'll serve the King?" said the Sergeant, aloud,

Loud roll'd the drum, and the fife played sweetly.
"Here, Mr Sergeant," says I from the crowd,
"Is a lad that will serve your turn completely!"

Old Sons.

I was aroused by the sound of the réveillé at six o'clock on the following morning. The soldiers all arose, rolled up their beds, or rather straw palliasses, turning up the bedsteads—made with a hinge in the middle—placed the roll of bedding upon it, folded the sheets, blankets, and coverlid neatly one by one, and arranged them on the beds in such a manner that the room presented the appearance of a draper's shop in less than five minutes. They then went to stables, leaving me in bed. I soon got up and dressed myself, making a sorry attempt to put my bedding in the same state as the rest, and sauntered through the long passage down a flight of stone steps into the barrack-yard, until it was getting daylight. By this time I had made up my mind to return home at all risks, and in pursuance of this resolve, I started for the front gate, but having to pass the guard-room, I again came in contact with the corporal who had so kindly volunteered to find me a night's lodging. He beckoned me towards him, and said that he had just sent for his friend the recruiting sergeant, of whom he had spoken the previous night, and that he expected him up every minute.

Wishing to avoid him, I said that I would go out and get breakfast, and might come back in the course of an hour. But the corporal probably suspected I might *not* return, and managed to keep me in conversation until the arrival of his friend the recruiting sergeant of a regiment of hussars.

Sergeant Brailsford, for that was his name, was a man eminently calculated for the duty to which he had been appointed. His splendid uniform, evidently got up for the purpose of dazzling the eyes of the unwary, was decidedly the handsomest suit of clothes I had ever seen.

He asked me to breakfast with him at an adjacent public-house: we had ham, eggs, and coffee, after which he invited me to have a walk with him. I felt quite proud of being seen in his company, as I trudged along the street in my blue smock-frock, round white hat, strong hob-nailed boots, and thought little of how my countrified gait contrasted with his fine soldierly bearing. The sergeant was in the full dress of his regiment, termed "review order" when mounted; but I afterwards found that, for the sake of effect, he wore the uniform of a *commissioned* officer, with the single exception of the "bars" or stripes on his arm, to indicate his rank. A bell-topped shako, the front of which was emblazoned with gold mountings, surmounted by a huge plume of cocks' feathers; a dark blue dress jacket literally covered with gold lace, a handsome sash, blue overalls with broad gold stripes, and nicely-polished boots and spurs, were sufficient of themselves to make a country "gawky's" mouth water; but the crowning part of the dashing sergeant's attire, and one that most took the attention of passers-by, particularly the girls, was the bright scarlet pelisse—loose jacket—profusely trimmed with gold lace and bear-skin, hanging carelessly over his left shoulder. He had a jet-black moustache, not then so common as it is now, and no doubt thought no "small beer" of himself as he stalked majestically over the pavement, glancing in the shop windows that reflected his figure as he passed them. On our return towards the point from whence we started, we met the regiment of "Queen's Bays," in "complete marching order," a style in which cavalry frequently turn out and march a few miles, to perfect the men in packing their kit and being ready to move quickly in case of emergency. They were all mounted on bay horses with *docked* tails; the band was playing "Paddy, will you now?" and although a dull and foggy December morning, the black and smoky streets through which the troops marched looked gay and animated. Every one admired the soldiers. My resolution was fixed. I had never before seen a cavalry regiment mounted and in full dress. The sergeant probably noticed the effect produced on my weak mind, and struck while the iron was hot.

"Better 'list and be a soldier," said he. "I don't mind if I do," said I. On arriving at the rendezvous he took me up a narrow staircase, on the landing of which was a standard, fixed to indicate the height of intending recruits. I was one inch below the standard height of the regiment, he said, but being young and evidently growing fast, *that* was immaterial. We descended to a sort of tap-room, where a huge fire was burning, and several soldiers with dirty-looking female companions were seated around, smoking and drinking. The men rose, and proposed my health. At a sign, however, from the sergeant they were seated, and were comparatively silent. The sergeant, assuming a pompous air, then put the following questions to me:—

"Are you married? Are you an apprentice? Did you ever serve in her Majesty's army or navy? Have you ever been cupped or marked with the letter D?"

To all these questions my answers were an emphatic "No."

"Are you free, able, and willing to enlist in her Majesty's —th regiment of Hussars?"

"I am," said I.

He then gave me a shilling, and informed me that I was a soldier, and that in addition to the shilling, he would advance me three or four days' pay to stand treat to *my comrades*, several of whom—recruiting parties from infantry regiments—had by this time joined our company. The sergeant handed me four shillings; this, with the *seventeen pence*, amounted to six shillings and fivepence, and was soon spent in drink and tobacco. It was the beginning of a new era with me, and (shame though it be) I must tell the truth, and say that I rather liked it. I, however, managed to keep the enlistment shilling; and although now more than twenty years ago, during which I have passed through some strange scenes, I have still retained that identical coin, through which I had a hole drilled, and for the most part wore it suspended round my neck under my shirt by a lock of my youngest sister's hair, sent to me about six months after in a letter, with a post-office order for five shillings to pay for its being plaited by the hairdresser.

On the day following my enlistment I was introduced to the doctor appointed for the purpose, who requested me to

strip perfectly naked, after which I was subjected to a close examination, and declared sound. Two days after this I was forwarded, with five more recruits, to Norwich, the head-quarters of my regiment, and on our arrival we were again examined by the *regimental surgeon*, and we all “passed.” My companions were mostly labourers, except one, who said he was a cutler out of work: he afterwards turned out to be a married man with one child, when he was punished and afterwards discharged.

Being supplied with my regimentals, I was ordered to “make away” with my old clothing, dealers in which attended the barrack-rooms every morning in search of plunder. My suit was rather primitive, and not likely to fetch much; still it was worth more than that of a fellow recruit who happened to be domiciled in the same room with me, for he had been a sort of labouring boy in a tallow-chandlering concern, and the sergeant had ordered him to take his greasy clothes away out of the room and bury them in the dung-heap. He had, however, a good silver watch, and therefore his *personal* effects were worth more than mine.

Like mine, his best clothes were at home; he had left home in a “hurry.” Every atom of clothing had to be sold. I tried hard to keep the blue worsted stockings which my poor old mother had knitted with her own blessed hands, and the calico shirt my sisters had made at the village school, but the hard-visaged, firm-toned sergeant of my squad was inexorable.

“Bundle ’em up, bundle ’em up, and be handy about it; you will have more to think about besides yer mother *now*,” said he.

I never liked the “old ruffian,” as the men frequently designated him, after that; and it was a relief to the whole troop when he fell one of the first victims to a fever that broke out in the camp at Chobham a few years afterwards.

I looked affectionately at my old clothes: the blue smock-frock, artistically worked with white thread all over the part that covered the back, breast, and shoulders—the white “Jerry” hat, in the brim of which stuck a feather from the wing of a rook hatched in the old rookery that had for many years before I was born stood at the corner of the bridlepath leading from my father’s farm-yard to the hills we called the “sheep pastures;” but the sergeant was inexorable. “Bundle ’em up, bundle ’em up.” I snatched the feather from under the greasy band, and for years it was deposited in the bottom of my sabretache. That simple crow’s feather I thought had flown over the old house at home, and I looked upon it as a sort of connecting link between myself and my family, and often have I gazed upon it until sick at heart. It may seem strange; and those people who have an idea that a soldier has no feeling—I have often heard people say that soldiers have *no souls*—may feel disinclined to believe my statement when I say that nothing in the shape of money, unless it would have insured my discharge, would have induced me to have parted with that simple *feather*.

But to return to my story. The hob-nailed boots stockings, shirt, fustian trousers, and waistcoat—I had no coat—were all sold to an Irishwoman for four shillings and sixpence: I spent the money among my comrades. My fellow recruit kept his watch, but freely assisted to drink the proceeds of my wardrobe.

I duly received my “kit,” which I may here remark absorbed the whole of the “bounty” (at that period amounting to four pounds, eleven shillings, and sixpence), and left me upwards of two pounds in debt; this was deducted from my daily pay of sixteen pence. The rations consisted of three-quarters of a pound daily of boiled meat—soup, potatoes, coffee, and bread—all of good quality; and these only cost eightpence, which, together with the stoppages, left me in the receipt of a daily income of threepence. The obliging corporal of my squad handed me over that sum every morning at breakfast-time. One penny of this I generally invested in a herring, rasher of bacon, or a lump of rancid butter, at the little chandler’s shop adjacent to the canteen in the barrack-yard; the other twopence was generally expended in beer, for I had not then learned the expensive habit of smoking. The cleaning materials—such as Bath-brick, soap, pipeclay, chrome-yellow, oil, blacking, etc—we could any time procure on credit from the sergeant-major of the troop, who booked our account and rendered it monthly. For these we paid most extravagant prices; and it was more than *eight months* before the two pounds, in which I was indebted at commencement, was paid off. I had, however, a new pair of overalls at a guinea, and a pair of Wellington boots at sixteen shillings and eightpence, during the interval. It is not, I believe, generally understood that, in addition to his rations, the soldier has to pay for a good portion of his clothing.

The regiment was composed of about equal numbers of Irish and English; and, to give the sons of Erin their due, I found them quite as agreeable and more obliging in their manner to recruits than their Saxon comrades. Strange to say, there was only one Scotchman in the corps, and he volunteered to the 9th, or Queen’s Lancers, and embarked with the regiment for India, in the winter of 184—.

I soon became reconciled to my new life, and entered on my duty with a determination to excel, if possible, in that most difficult and arduous duty for a cavalry recruit—riding drills, in which I most erroneously imagined I should be all but perfect. I had ridden the cart-horses to water and pasture; had often trotted, and even galloped, my father’s old cob “Billy” to the shoeing smith’s, and had never yet been thrown. The first introduction, however, to those tormentors of the poor recruit—the “rough-riders”—soon convinced me that I was most woefully mistaken, as I found that all I had practised at home must be abandoned, indeed forgotten, before I could be properly said to have advanced one step in the military style of equitation.

The staff of the riding-school consisted of the riding-master, who was also a lieutenant, a sergeant, one corporal, and a private. The riding-master, although an exceedingly clever man, was one of the most ugly and hard-hearted wretches that ever was born. He was only excelled in brutality, to the recruits committed to his charge, by the corporal, who was more like the being always represented as the “Devil,” than any human creature. The sergeant was a mild-spoken, kind-hearted man, who patiently instructed his pupils, whether horses in course of training, or recruits; and I need not add, that he was idolised by the whole regiment, especially the “gulpin” class, or raw recruits. The private was agreeable enough in the barrack-room, or any where out of the riding-school, particularly while being treated to drink by a recruit in the canteen, but being in a subordinate position to the corporal, he was scarcely less

brutal than that fiend in human shape. Many a poor lad has been injured for life by this monster, who was one of the most drunken fellows in the regiment. He had been three times tried by court-martial, and reduced to the ranks, for habitual drunkenness. At last, five years after I enlisted, he was again confined on the charge of drunkenness, and assaulting a private soldier in the barrack-room with a sabre, the private keeping him at bay with some beautiful, but terrible practice, for ten minutes, during which neither was injured. Being at length overpowered by numbers, he was carried like a raving maniac to the guard-room, and there locked up; but on being visited in half an hour afterwards, was found dead with his throat cut.

Chapter Five.

When first I met thee, warm and young,
There shone such truth about thee,
And on thy lip such promise hung,
I did not dare to doubt thee.
I saw thee change, yet still relied,
Still clung with hope the fonder,
And thought, though false to all beside,
From me thou couldst not wander.
But go, deceiver! go;
The heart whose hopes could make it
Trust one so false, so low,
Deserves that thou shouldst break it.

I was fortunate, I have already said, in having the sergeant rough-rider (a superior man to the corporal in every shape) for my instructor generally during my "griffinage."

"Well, youngster," he would say, "suppose you give me your serious attention through this drill." He fully and most patiently detailed his instructions in such a manner that I could properly understand both what he said and what he meant.

"I know," said he, "that it is a very difficult matter for you to *practise* the instructions I am giving you. Yet, by perseverance, and, above all, a determination to overcome every difficulty, you, like the rest of us, will ultimately succeed, and, I hope, become a very smart and well-conducted hussar."

I did persevere, and felt proud to do my best for such a man. My nerves were stronger, and my ideas more collected, than when subjected to the abuse of the corporal; the result being that the sergeant frequently applauded me. I soon became the leader of the "gulpin's" ride, a post always allotted to the most intelligent recruit.

Having passed through the ordeal of riding without saddle, as also in a saddle without stirrups, I was allowed to ride with a sword. By this time I had learnt the sword and carbine exercise on foot—had, in fact, gone through my "facings," and been drilled to marching, etc, for two hours every day in the barrack-yard, under the immediate instruction and supervision of the "drill corporal," "drill sergeant," "regimental sergeant-major," and "adjutant." At length, being considered quite perfect as a rider in the saddle, I commenced my drills with the sword and carbine on horseback, loading and firing the latter at a fast canter, "attack and defence," "pursuing practice," etc, with the sabre; finally being put through all the difficult manoeuvres of the "double ride," and the high school of equitation, leaping lessons, etc, until I was considered fit to rank as a soldier, and do my duty as such.

Eight months had now elapsed since my enlistment, and I was much more reconciled to my soldier's life; and now that I was a full-fledged hussar, I began to grow conceited. My appearance had undergone a complete change for the better: I could both *ride* and *walk*, and no mistake.

My moustache was beginning to bud, and the short down was carefully dyed by the aid of an old toothbrush and a small square of india-ink, presented to me by a *sweetheart*. Every soldier must have a sweetheart: mine was old enough to be my mother, but I did not care, because I had now dropped all my country diffidence, and grown "cheeky," as my comrades designated my impudence. She courted *me*, and frequently came to barracks for the purpose of inviting me to her house, where she carried on a very respectable business as a milliner and dressmaker. Strange fancy, perhaps, but she professed to be *very* fond of soldiers: she confessed to having had *three* or *four* soldier sweethearts. I met her in the pit of the theatre, in company with another *milliner*, to whom one of my comrades, who was with me, had been paying more than ordinary attention. I may as well confess that I did not care a rap for my girl ("Old Dorcas" my comrades used to call her, when chaffing me); but she was very kind to me at times. In fact, her house was my home on all occasions when I could be spared from my active duties. Every Sunday, Denis Mulroony (my comrade) and I took tea, and sometimes supper, with his Nelly and my Dorcas. We always had rum in our teas, plenty of ale to our suppers, and more rum *after* supper. At last the time came for us to part. Having learnt that my father was a well-to-do farmer, and that I had fairish expectations, "Old Dorcas" conceived the idea of purchasing my discharge, and offered to lodge the money (30 pounds) at once, if I would "marry her *first*." Bah! I never thought of *marrying*—not I; indeed, I had never given her any cause to harbour such an unnatural design upon me—a mere boy.

I was not partial to soldiering, and glad as I would have been for my discharge, I sickened at the idea of selling myself. Only fancy my going home again, with a woman fastened to me!—what would my father say? I shuddered as I thought of the heavy pig-whip, of which I had more than a slight acquaintance.

I had been led into this dilemma by Denis Mulroony, who was eight years my senior.

“Denny,” said I, after parting with the two women at the barrack-gate, one night at watch-setting, “what shall I say to ‘Old Dorcas,’ when I go again?”

“Arrah, now, don’t be talking, you great mahoney. Can’t you get the money first, and marry her when it is *more convanient*? Shure she’ll give it you, no fear; and if she’ll not part wid the whole, no doubt she’ll be after giving you the half of it.”

We were at that time under orders to march; in fact, the route had come for a change of quarters, and I had promised to see her again on the following night, when, as good luck would have it, Denny was on guard, and therefore could not go with me. I went, saw, and told her that I was too young to marry, and that I must decline her generous offer to purchase my freedom. This she took all in good part, and I left her.

When Denny came off duty I told him all.

“Faix, thin,” said he, “I wonder would she marry me? Throth I’ll go and thry her this very night.”

“What’ll you do with Nelly, for she is sure to be there expecting you, it being the last night we have to stay here?” cried I.

“Shure I’ll send Andy Ryan down to tell Old Dorcas that you want to spake to her onest more before you lave her for ever.”

Andy Ryan was a fine, handsome man as ever stepped. He had been twelve years a soldier, and was near upon thirty years of age. Denny opened his mind and told him all the particulars, whereupon Andy started on his mission directly the trumpet had sounded the “dismiss from stables.” That was the last either I or Denny ever saw of Andy. He deserted, and most probably went abroad with or without “Old Dorcas.”

Chapter Six.

Bring forth the horse: the horse was brought;
In truth he was a noble steed,
A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,
That seemed as though the speed of thought
Were in his limbs.

I think no part of a cavalry soldier’s duty is so agreeable to him as a long march during spring or summer weather. Apart from the change of scene and a variation to the dull monotony of barrack life, the ride through the country to some distant part, frequently of ten to thirty days’ duration, is always looked forward to with feelings of pleasure. Country people, who seldom see soldiers, look upon the marching of a squadron of cavalry through the small towns and villages as a sort of pageant, especially if it be the head-quarters of a corps, which is always accompanied by the band.

Young and inexperienced as I then was, the prospect of a sixteen days’ march in the merry month of May through the most delightful part of England held out unusual charms for me. The dress of a soldier was my sole weakness—I cared for nothing else; and I cheerfully endured all the miseries of military slavery and short-comings of a comfortable home for the sake of being thought something or somebody above the majority of individuals in my walk of life. My sole object was to attract the attention and, if possible, the envy of others—an idea too frequently indulged by young soldiers, until dear-bought experience teaches them their mistake.

I have stated before, that the costume of our regiment at the period to which I allude included a “pelisse” or loose jacket, slung carelessly over the left shoulder; but no man was allowed to wear this until he had been dismissed from drill, and deported himself in such a manner as became a smart, intelligent, and well-disciplined soldier. Those recruits who had enlisted about the same time as myself, but who were not yet proficient in horsemanship, etc, were told off to travel by railway; but to my great joy, the sergeant of my squad read out my name in orders at stable time the night before, to assemble with the detachment in “complete marching order” the following morning at seven o’clock.

I had a most beautiful, blood-like, dark-chestnut gelding for my trooper: his coat shone like a mole, and his mane flowed from his finely-arched neck almost to his knees. He was known by the general appellation of “Number Seventeen, D Troop,” but I gave him the name of “Restless,” from his habit of capering and prancing at every unusual noise or object that presented itself. He was neither nervous nor vicious, but impatient and anxious to be moving when he ought to stand still; and though the slightest feel of the rein imaginable would restrain him, he would champ his bit and throw the foam from his mouth all over his breast and my uniform in flakes as white as snow. One tap of the drum or a blast of the trumpet was a signal for “Restless” to show off his splendid form in a succession of graceful capers, if on the move; or if standing on parade, he would soon get up a shower of foam, and bespatter the horses on each side, all the while paddling with his feet and scraping the ground continually.

Notwithstanding that I was about the youngest “old soldier” in the regiment, and but a short time previously only a common “clod-hopper,” there was none more conceited or perhaps more vain than myself, when mounted on “Restless.”

Not content with the light sprinkling of *down* which nature had planted and was nurturing on my upper lip, I spared from my scanty pay a sum of one shilling and sixpence for a bushy pair of false moustaches, which, however, all my efforts to make stick proved futile: they only made me sneeze; so I was obliged to fall back upon the old toothbrush and square of Indian ink presented to me by Dorcas, wherewith to blacken my young crop, to make believe that I was

more of a man than a boy. The regiment was divided into three detachments of two troops each, and I belonged to the first that marched out of our old quarters, including the band. A large crowd had collected to witness our departure. A deal of hand-shaking and clinging to the stirrups was going on as we filed out of the barrack-gate to the tune of "The girl I left behind me;" and many a tear was shed by those who, having made a short acquaintance with some of the men while they had been quartered here, were destined never to see them again; indeed, I recollect that four of the number that marched with me on that morning died, a few years after, of a fever that broke out in the camp at Chobham; the bones of eight were left to whiten in the death-vale, after the battle of Balaklava; and three were killed during the Indian revolt, whither they had gone, transferred, at their own request, to other regiments. Few, however, of the whole regiment were left when actions, disease, and the short-comings of the commissariat had done their work, at the conclusion of the Crimean campaign. But of this I shall write in due course, and proceed with my narrative and detachment on our line of march.

As is customary on a regiment leaving quarters, hundreds of the "tag, rag, and bob-tail" followed us through the streets to the outskirts of the town, the last to leave us being the girls; and they would have trudged on, keeping our company as long as they could have held out, but for the order to "trot," which the trumpet sounded directly on leaving the street pavement.

"Good-bye, Mary!" "good-bye, Helen!" "farewell, honey, dear!" was followed by a series of wild shrieks that could be heard for some distance above the clattering of hoofs and the clanking of sabres. Our first day's march was a distance of eighteen miles. The billeting party had preceded us in the usual way on the day before, and quarters were provided for every man, in numbers of from one to half-a-dozen, according to the accommodation to be obtained at the various hotels and public-houses in the town where we halted. All the inhabitants appeared to have turned out to welcome us, and they lined the roadside for nearly a mile ere we reached the market-place, where we formed up, surrounded by a dense crowd, while the band played, after which we were dismissed to our respective billets. I was particularly fortunate in having nice comfortable quarters to myself, in a small public-house near the outskirts of the town, kept by an aged widow; and she made a great fuss over me.

"Deary me! why, he is but a child," she remarked, as my gallant "Restless" capered into her stable-yard. The neighbours, such as were left at home, collected about the place.

"Shame on the government for enlisting such a boy! I wonder how his poor mother took it!"

Impudent and conceited though I had become, this allusion to my mother broke through a little of my fortitude. However, I appeared not to notice the running fire of remarks these good-natured people made from time to time, as I dismounted and busied myself in cleaning my horse and accoutrements, after which my kind hostess invited me into her private parlour, to a nice dinner she had provided expressly for me, consisting of a roast leg of lamb, with mint sauce, and a "rhubarb dumpling."

"I always make it a point to treat a soldier to the best I can afford, because he risks his life to save others and their property," she said, as she reached me a chair, and told me to be seated.

Now, I was particularly fond of pudding, but I had never tasted any since I left home, and in reply to her question, as to which I would prefer first, pudding or meat, I preferred the former. A little boy, about six years of age (the old lady's grandson) sat on a stool in the same apartment, and appeared completely absorbed in my every movement. I was very hungry—soldiers are invariably hungry, and thirsty too, after a long march—the nice rich dumpling, turned bottom upwards out of an earthenware basin in which it had been boiled, was already on the table, with the syrup oozing from a fissure in the side into the clean willow-pattern dish.

"Help yourself," said this kind old woman.

I did help myself, with a will too, and she assisted by sprinkling sugar and pouring rich thick cream over the portion I had taken to myself. She then took her seat in the corner, and the manner in which her dumpling disappeared evidently gave her as much pleasure as it did me; but the little boy—Tommy she called him—appeared, as I thought, rather spiteful in the frowns he gave me from time to time, as the demolition of the dumpling continued.

"'Granny, is the souger goin' to eat it aw?'"

The old lady said that "puddings did not agree with her so well as they formerly did." So I took it for granted that she intended the whole of it for myself, and I forthwith commenced to denude the dish of the lot. Tommy could hold his thoughts no longer.

"Granny, is the souger goin' to eat it aw?" said he.

I at once dropped my fork, abashed and disgusted with myself for what might appear selfishness; however, as an act of reparation, Tommy had the satisfaction of clearing up the remnant, after which he appeared in better humour. After doing justice to the lamb and mint sauce, I completed my stable duty, and dressed for a walk until stable time in the evening. For several days nothing occurred that would interest the reader beyond the usual events incidental to a march, such as a few men misconducting themselves in being late for roll-call, not cleaning their appointments to suit the whimsicalities of a sergeant, for which they were reported to the commanding officer and ordered to *walk* from town to town behind the light-baggage cart, under escort of the "baggage guard," their horses being led by their more fortunate, but in many instances more culpable comrades. Walking with high-heeled boots, leather stock, and tight-fitting clothes, with a heavy dress cap on the head in a blazing hot sun, is considered heavy punishment for a cavalry soldier, yet I have known men compelled to walk ten days successively for no other crime than being two minutes late for parade. During this march I came in for my first quota of punishment since I had been a soldier, which was administered in the form of a couple of days' walking in the order I have described, twenty-two miles the first day, and sixteen the next, under a fearfully hot sun; the distance was nothing if I had not been encumbered with a costume totally unfitted for the purpose, and under restraint too, kept up to the pace of a horse's walk so as not to lag behind the escort; and this punishment was awarded to me through no fault of my own.

It was on the seventh day after leaving barracks. Thirty of us were billeted at one house, and the rest upon private houses, in consequence of there being but one public-house in the village. The landlord of this was a farmer and maltster; we had to sleep and stable our horses as best we could; indeed, many of the animals were picketed in the open fields, the men were turned into the malt offices to clean their appointments, etc. The malting season being over there was plenty of room for them to do this. On the day we marched in we were at dinner all together in a "club room" adjoining the house; a loud report was heard, which every one knew to be from a carbine, being much louder than from a common gun. Every cavalry soldier carries ten rounds of ball-cartridge in his pouch on the line of march; these pouches and cross-belts to which they were attached had been left in the places where we had been cleaning them.

On sallying forth in the direction of the report we found four or five boys, apparently from ten to fourteen years of age; each was armed with a carbine, and adorned with a cross-belt. They had stuck a piece of white paper on an apple-tree in the garden behind the house, and were firing away our ammunition at the target, no doubt calculating upon a fine afternoon's sport. Every carbine was loaded (one with the cartridge the wrong end downwards), and when we arrived another youngster was just taking up a position to "present" and fire in addition to the one that had already "let fly" and missed his mark. Whither the ball stopped it was perhaps lucky that no one knew, as both horses, cattle, and people were moving about within range.

One of these ammunition pouches was found to belong to me, and with the rest of the owners of carbines and pouches, I was at once taken before the commanding officer, and we were all ordered to walk a couple of days each. One of the men whose duty it became to lead "Restless," came in for treble the amount of punishment by his failing to keep my horse within bounds. On one of these days the route lay along the road that skirts the ruins of Kenilworth Castle. Across this road runs a wide brook, which has to be forded by travellers. "Restless" seriously objected to be led through this water, and tugged at the bridle to such an extent as to pull the man off his horse plump into the middle of the brook, the result being that both his own horse and "Restless" got loose, and were with difficulty caught. For this accident, the man was ordered to walk the remainder of the march to barracks. I well remember the scene that occurred on the arrival of the poor fellow in barracks after seven days' walk.

"This," said he, "shall be the last day's duty I will ever do in the —th Hussars; not that I care a straw for the walking, as I can walk as well as any man in the regiment, but because I have been punished undeservedly by a man *who is a deserter from another regiment*," this was alluding to the sergeant who had reported him to the commanding officer for "carelessness" in letting the horse loose, although the poor fellow had stuck to his hold on the bridle of "Restless," until actually pulled out of his seat. There was a dogged determination about David Mason (for that was his name, and a better soldier never threw his leg over a saddle) as he uttered these words, while sitting on the edge of his bed and stripping his worsted socks from his blistered and bleeding feet, having limped into the barrack-yard with one hand resting on the rear part of the baggage cart, about half an hour after the arrival of the detachment.

"This is the last day's duty I shall ever do in the —th Hussars," he repeated to a lance-corporal who had heard a portion of his first ejaculation.

"You had better make haste and get down to stables," said the corporal.

I was grooming my horse when David entered the stable, and he at once walked up to the sergeant and confronted him. "Sergeant D—," said he, "you are a *tyrant*, a *coward*, and a *deserter* from the 52nd Light Infantry!"

The sergeant trembled like an aspen leaf, and his face turned as pale as a sheet: turning to me and a comrade in the next stall, "Take this man to the guard-room," and poor Mason was at once escorted to confinement.

They were *both* deserters: Mason from the 82nd foot, and the sergeant from the 52nd; but by some means or other, never explained to me, Mason knew the sergeant while the sergeant did not know Mason, although it was said that he had more than once hinted that the latter had the appearance of a foot soldier in some peculiarity which he probably better understood than any man in the regiment.

Both men had joined our regiment in fictitious names, but Mason had the advantage of knowing the sergeant's real name, and, when taken before the colonel on the following day, he made a clean breast of it by telling the sergeant's name and the date of his desertion, also stating that he was himself a deserter, having enlisted in our corps only two days from leaving his own, solely because he thought he should like to be a cavalry soldier better than serving in an infantry regiment.

The adjutant of the 52nd was communicated with at once, and Mason's story found to be correct. The sergeant was put under arrest, until an escort arrived from his own regiment to take him to head-quarters, where he was tried by court-martial and flogged. Mason also left our corps under an escort of the 82nd sent to fetch him; and I afterwards heard that, although he was tried by court-martial, he got off with a light punishment.

Chapter Seven.

Strengthening fare and a welcoming glance,
More than rich dainties and pleasures entrance;
When to droop we begin,
Mine host joins in,
Health to the soldier, and health to our land.

Some strange things occur during a soldier's time of service, many incidents and occurrences which are thought nothing of by the men themselves, but are nevertheless interesting to civilians. To these little incidents, such as I can remember, I shall confine my story, in the hope that the narration of them will prove more interesting to the general reader than the dry detail of a soldier's duty and his manner of performing it.

A comrade of mine was on sentry in Hounslow barracks from eleven to one o'clock one dark and very wet night in the depth of winter, at a post where the orders were that *no person* was to pass after nightfall. Willie Sherlock was his name, an Irish lad, and, if I remember right, he was from Galway. He had been at sea as a mere boy, and enlisted in our regiment when about nineteen. From his general smartness at drill and exceedingly good-tempered disposition he was a universal favourite. The post where Willie was placed on sentry commanded the approach to a path that led to some small cabins in the rear of the barracks, but out of its boundaries. These were inhabited by the "hangers-on" of the regiment (the locality is well known to those of my military readers who have ever been so unfortunate as to

be stationed at Hounslow). The commanding-officer determined to put a stop to the egress and ingress of certain very fast non-commissioned officers, who, avoiding the front gate, stole out after watch-setting to these cabins for the purpose of playing cards and indulging in various other objectionable practices. We had at that time an uncommonly strict regimental sergeant-major, a regular "tickler," who would confine a man in the guard-room for a mere twist of the eye in the wrong direction when on parade.

This man was one of the most frequent visitors to the "huts," and on the night Willie Sherlock was on duty he was making his way stealthily past the sentry-box, that stood between the riding-school and the end of one wing of the barracks. "Who comes there?" sang out Willie; no answer was returned. "Who comes there?" again he challenged without receiving a reply. "Who comes there?" again repeated Willie, but still he received no answer.

"Be the mortial frost, I'll fire," said Willie as he rammed a ball-cartridge home into his carbine. "Who comes there? answer, or be the piper that played before Moses, I'll sind a ball into ye."

All this time the figure was stealthily gliding past under the shadow of the riding-school. Quick as thought Willie dropped on one knee, by which he brought the outline of the figure between his sight and the sky. Bang went the carbine, and simultaneously a loud yell, succeeded by another and another, rang through the barracks with a strange unearthly sound at that hour of the night.

"Number 2, corporal of the guard," sung out Willie from his post. (All the sentries are numbered, so that if Anything occurs on their post, as in this instance, it is known in which direction to send assistance, should any be required.)

I happened to be in the guard-room at the time, waiting for my turn of duty on another post, and, with the rest of the guard-relief and the corporal, we proceeded in double-quick time to the scene of alarm. The yells and groans continued as we tramped across the barrack-yard. By the time we had reached the post we were joined by the orderly officer and sergeant of the guard.

"Who comes there?" shouted Willie, in a loud defiant challenge, as we neared his sentry-box, where he stood at attention.

"Rounds!" was the reply.

"What rounds?" said Willie, according to custom.

"Visiting rounds!"

"Advance, visiting rounds. All's *not* well," said Willie, and then briefly reported the cause of alarm.

The victim of his vigilance had by this time staggered to the sentry-box.

"Take me to the hospital. I am badly wounded. The scoundrel has shot me."

"Halloo! sergeant-major. How is this?" inquired the orderly officer.

"Pray let me be taken to hospital, sir, and then I will explain," said he; and thither he was escorted.

The assistant-surgeon examined him, when it was found that the ball had passed through the fleshy part of his leg. He soon got round, however, but was tried by court-martial, and reduced to the ranks for leaving barracks at an unseasonable hour of the night by a forbidden way. Willie, of course, only did his duty.

"Be the piper," said he, "I thought I had kilt him intirely by the roar he med."

Not long after this occurrence, Willie volunteered with about twenty mere of ours for service in India, and joined the 9th Lancers in the spring of 1843, that regiment having embarked in the early part of 1842.

At this period, the regiment was constantly being drained of many effective men, who volunteered for service in regiments under orders for or already in India; consequently, we had several recruiting parties out, among whom were a sergeant and a corporal at Liverpool; but they both deserted, and, it was supposed, sailed for America.

About nine or ten months subsequent to this, I was on guard at the front gate—which is always closed at nine o'clock, and all who pass in or out after that time do so through a small wicket door. One of the men had just struck twelve o'clock on a gong that hung in front of the guard-room of the barracks where we were then stationed.

Some one rapped gently at the wicket.

"Who comes there?" said I.

"A friend!"

The door was opened, and in stepped a tall individual, wearing a curious conical-shaped cap, apparently made of raccoon skins.

"Don't you know me?" said he, shaking hands with the corporal of the guard, who was eyeing him over from head to foot; "I am Corporal L—, who deserted with Sergeant B— from Liverpool," said he, laughing heartily.

He was immediately placed under arrest; and afterwards informed us that he had relatives in the United States, to whom he made his way on his arrival in New York. He was a medical student at the time he enlisted, and had wealthy connexions in London. Corresponding with these, he was informed that an old uncle had died and left him a princely fortune, and was advised by the family solicitor to come back to England without delay, give himself up to his

regiment, and when he had undergone the punishment consequent on his indiscretion, arrangements would be made to purchase his discharge.

The most noteworthy portion of his examination before the colonel on the following morning was, that notwithstanding the hints thrown out that he would probably be flogged if he did not render some account of the sergeant who had deserted with him, he steadily refused to give any information.

“I know where he is,” said he; “but you may cut me to pieces before I will tell you anything concerning him.”

He was tried by court-martial, and, notwithstanding the intercession of his friends and the powerful interest employed in his favour, was sentenced to three months’ imprisonment; at the expiration of which he returned, very much broken down and emaciated, and was put to his duty, pending the necessary preliminaries for his discharge, which he gained in the course of a month; and in about three weeks after he left the regiment he entered the barrack-yard, seated by the side of a lovely girl—his wife—in a splendid barouche, drawn by a pair of high-stepping Cleveland bays, coachman and footman in spanking new livery. He had brought his wife down from London to show her a specimen of barrack life.

We were at dinner. He laughed and chatted with all those with whom he had been on intimate terms, and left us a five-pound note. We gave him three cheers as he left the barracks; and, although once only a common soldier, he is now a gentleman, residing with his wife and a numerous family in the suburbs of the West End of London.

We had a youth in the regiment who came from the neighbourhood of Clonmel, Ireland. He also had a great sum of money bequeathed to him, while a private, by a relative who had resided and amassed his wealth in Liverpool or Manchester—I forget which. The amount was said to be upwards of 30,000 pounds, on the receipt of which he purchased his discharge and married the daughter of a farrier in the regiment. She and her relatives indulged in the most extravagant finery and excesses; the women connected with the regiment had all silk dresses presented to them; and the keeper of the canteen would have made his fortune, had not the colonel put a stop to the proceedings by issuing orders that neither one nor the other of the newly-married couple should be admitted in barracks. But the scenes in the public-houses in the vicinity of the barracks were something extraordinary while the money lasted. A drag was purchased, to which was attached a team of four horses, unbroken to work together, and unmatched in every shape. The drag being loaded with a motley lot of his companions, the madcap mounted the box and essayed the task of driving through the crowded streets; but the leaders turned completely round, and, facing their driver, commenced to plunge and kick, finally capsizing the coach, and more or less injuring all the passengers. The result of this foolish extravagance was utter ruin, and not having a shilling with which to bless himself, he was at last obliged to enlist again.

While the troop to which I belonged was stationed at Hampton Court, the chief duty at which place is to guard the various approaches to and about the palace, an incident occurred to one of our men worth relating.

The palace, as many of my readers are aware, is within an easy distance of London, and is visited by vast numbers of pleasure-seekers of all grades during the summer months; and at that period there were frequently families of distinction staying for some time at the Mitre Hotel, situate within a stone’s throw of the front entrance to the palace. The soldiers stationed here always mount guard in full dress, and many a sly leer of the eye is bestowed upon them by the hundreds of pretty girls that pass in and out during a day. The front gates of the palace are always open for visitors to pass without restriction until nightfall. The splendid picture-galleries and other works of art and curiosities are guarded by policemen; but the approaches to the staircases, corridors, etc, are never without an efficient guard of soldiers. One of these posts is termed the “Garden-gate,” situate in rear of the main building, and the entrance to the palace from the magnificent pleasure-grounds, bounded on one side by the river Thames. There is a broad flagway, or promenade, along the side of the palace, where seats are placed, upon which the visitors can lounge, with their backs to the palace and their faces towards the gardens. The sentry has to pace from one end to the other of this promenade, in front of the company that may be on the seats. I well remember, one sultry night in July, it was my turn to relieve a sentry on this post. It was eleven o’clock, and all the visitors were supposed to have been cleared out of the gardens at nine, or soon afterwards. The guard-relief tramped through the long and lofty passages from front to rear of the palace in silence, as far as speech was concerned; but the sound of their footsteps and the jingle of their appointments was quite sufficient to awaken a man, had he been sleeping soundly on his post. We approached and passed the point where it was usual for the sentry to challenge; but all was still. On reaching the promenade, we turned about to look for the sentry. There he sat on one of the seats, unbelted and unarmed, and, as if to keep up the proverbial gallantry of his race, he had his arm around the waist of as pretty a girl as ever the sun or moon shone upon.

Lynch—Pat Lynch—I need not withhold his name now—was the gallant sentinel. The object that had won him from his duty spoke not a word, she held down her head, but we could easily perceive that she moved in superior society. In this Pat was her equal, for his father was an extensive landowner in the county of Waterford.

“Boys,” said Pat, “this is a bad job, to be caught loitering on my post, but this young lady is my sweetheart, and how could I help but sit beside her?”

Pat was marched to the guard-room, and the fair lady tenderly escorted outside the boundaries of the palace, and she was seen to enter the “Mitre Hotel.” Poor Pat was brought before the major on the following day, and sentenced to twenty-one days’ “kit drill,” namely, carrying all his “kit,” strapped on his back with the surcingle, for four hours each day, to and fro a prescribed distance marked out in the barrack-yard.

Shortly after he had completed his term of punishment, the young lady, who had money of her own, purchased his discharge. They were married, and for some years, to my knowledge, lived happily together at the pretty little bathing place, Tramore, in the county of Waterford.

Chapter Eight.

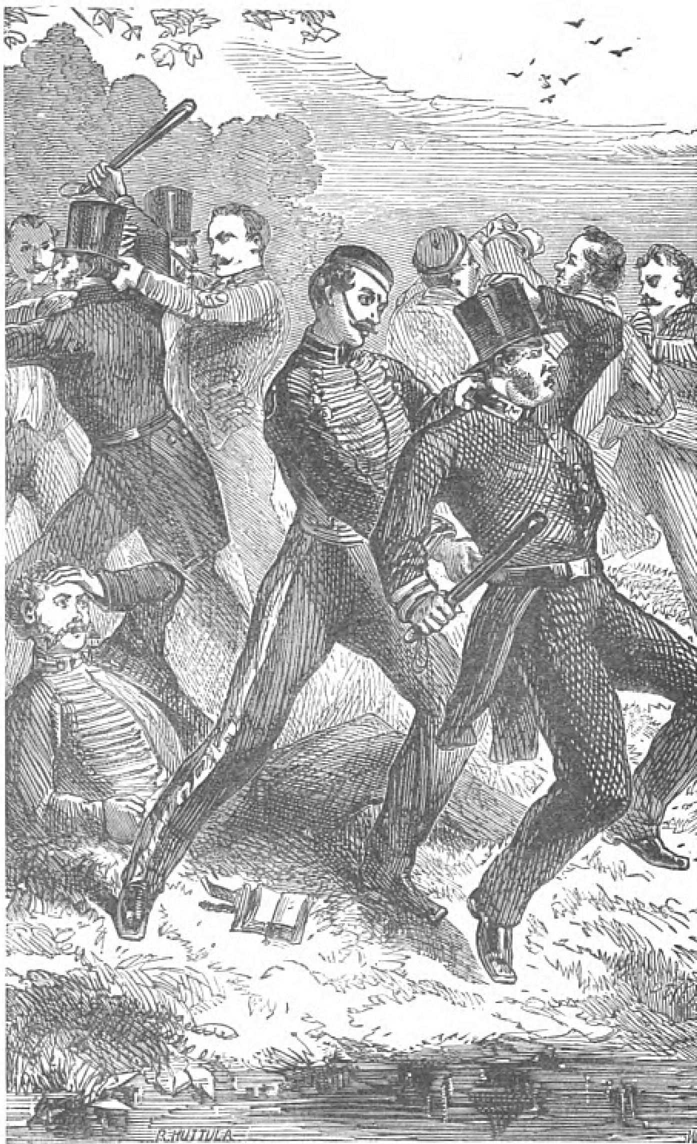
> For once, upon a raw and gusty day,
> The troubled Tiber chafing with her shores,
> Caesar said to me—"Darest thou, Cassius, now
> Leap in with me into this angry flood,
> And swim to yonder point?"

While the head-quarters of our regiment lay in Hounslow, and the out-quarters in Hampton Court, Blackwater, and Kensington, myself and a number of my comrades went to bathe in a stream not far from Hounslow Heath, as had been our custom while stationed at Hampton Court. Whether this water was public or private property, I know not: it was a kind of half river, half brook; probably, however, we were trespassers, as I remember we had to pass over some fields through which there was no public road before we reached it. There were seven of us, and we had no sooner stripped and piled our clothing on the water's edge than four policemen appeared on the scene. Suspecting our intentions, they had followed us from the outskirts of the town, and concealing themselves behind a hedge, like good generals, they waited until we were undressed and had entered the water, before warning us that we were doing anything contrary to the law. Now, if there is one thing that a soldier detests more than another, it is to be interfered with in any way or shape by a policeman. In this instance the police were striving to take a mean advantage over us, and as they seated themselves quietly on the brink of the stream, and collected every vestige of our clothing in a heap beside them, it appeared very probable that they would remain masters of the field, and that—as my own comrades remarked—we should be taken to "a piece of ground with a station-house over it."

The water was no higher than our middles, and we moved down some distance to hold a parley as to the best means of getting out of the dilemma: some were for quietly surrendering to the enemy and trusting to our ignorance of the law to escape punishment. There were no notice-boards or anything to warn us that it was illegal, and what was more natural than that a pure stream of water situated within a mile of a barrack, should be used as a bath during the summer months?

The idea of surrender was rejected by the majority, who were for making a sortie on the police, and thus regain possession of our clothes and secure our liberty at all hazards. Naked as we were, we numbered nearly two to one; and although we should be sure to be freely beaten with their staves, we should ultimately succeed in getting away. We therefore agreed to make a semblance of surrender in order to get possession of our clothes, but arranged that we should all finish dressing at the same time, taking the initiative as to the donning of each article from a fugleman, so as not to be taken at a disadvantage before we were dressed and ready for a run or a fight, as circumstances directed. Accordingly we left the water and commenced to dress, during which one of the policemen produced a book and gruffly asked our names, the rest surrounding us, apparently ready for action at the same time. We looked at each other, and it was at once understood that we should decline to give any such information. By this time we were attired in our shirts, trousers, and boots, but were interrupted by each of the policemen producing a pair of handcuffs. This was too much: I had never before engaged in a serious encounter, but I was ready and willing for anything—indeed, both myself and comrades would have died before we would have submitted to be handcuffed. While one of my arms was in my jacket-sleeve, I was seized by two policemen; the remaining two grappled hold of another soldier. With the help of my comrades I managed to wriggle out of their grasp, but one of the brutes struck me a fearful blow on my arm with his staff, and one of my comrades was felled to the ground by a blow on his bare head.

By this time the fight had become general. Charley Dundas (one of the best soldiers in the regiment, who afterwards died of fever in Chobham camp) took hold of one policeman with his left hand on the collar of his coat behind, and with a firm grab of the right on the back of his trousers, he ran him before him like a wheelbarrow to the edge of the stream, from whence he pitched him headforemost into the water; the other three were thrown bodily into the brook. Hats, handcuffs, coat-tails, and staves, were pitched after them, and away we all started, over hedge and ditch, the nearest way to the barracks—but the policemen never chased us a yard.



"He ran the policeman to the edge of the stream, and pitched him head foremost into the water."

It is very difficult to pick out a soldier that may be wanted by the police for such an offence as this, from amongst so many men of about the same height and weight, all wearing moustaches, and attired exactly alike; and we knew that if we could only reach the barracks, the chances of detection were very much in our favour; but it was policy to separate before we reached the gate, and enter it at different periods with others not of our party, to avoid suspicion, and this we managed very nicely.

The same evening, however, while reconnoitring from the barrack-windows, we espied the four policemen, who, having made a report of the case at the guard-room, were anxiously striving to recognise in the many men passing to and fro the parties who had left them in so ignominious a position. At last they appeared to have found one of the delinquents in one Barney Camel, who was making the best of his way across the barrack-yard from the canteen, with a rasher of bacon in his hand, to his room. Barney bore a striking resemblance to Charley Dundas, the man who had so unceremoniously tumbled one of our enemies into the brook. Like Charley, too, when the police attacked us, he had no jacket on, but his braces were about his hips, his forage-cap was cocked on "three hairs," and the chin-strap turned over the crown. He was, as he afterwards remarked, "whistling the 'Groves of Blarney,' and thinking of nothing but the bacon;" when the four policemen surrounded him and forthwith proceeded to take him to the station-house, followed by a crowd who rapidly gathered from all parts of the barracks. Now, it so happened that Barney Camel had but one hour previously returned with a detachment who had formed an escort of Her Majesty and suite from Buckingham Palace to Windsor Castle (at that period the railway between London and Windsor had not been formed). Barney had groomed his horse, cleaned his saddlery, and was about to enjoy his frugal meal as he thought, in peace, when he was marched off to the police-station. A sergeant, however, was sent to tender evidence in his behalf, viz, that he had been on duty as stated, and at the time the alleged assault was committed on the police, he must have been on the road between Hounslow and Windsor. The result was that Barney was discharged, and we never heard any more of our eventful bathing-excursion, probably because the police had figured so ingloriously in the contest.

While stationed here, the Earl of Cardigan, who was then lieutenant-colonel of the 11th Hussars, frequently came down from London to be present at our reviews and field-days on Hounslow Heath. The gallant earl, when Lord Brudenell, held a commission in our regiment, and he had ever taken a great interest in the corps; indeed, it was said that soon after his duel with Captain Tucket, which occurred about the period of which I write, he had offered our colonel 8000 pounds to exchange commissions. Much has been written and said in reference to the public conduct of this distinguished officer, namely, "that he did not perform his duty at the battle of Balaklava as became a general." To these scandalous and scurrilous assertions I am in a position to give a *decided* and most *emphatic* contradiction.

The many incidents connected with the war in the Crimea, and that action in particular, will form the subject of the concluding portion of these chapters; but I may here observe that the Earl of Cardigan rode as far and fought as well as any other man engaged. The truth is, he never was a particular favourite with the officers of his own regiment, or any other corps collectively, although individually he has ever had many friends. The reason is plain: he invariably kept young officers to their duty. Officers and men must be thorough soldiers—not "Miss Nancy" sort of fellows—to please *him* at a field-day, through which he can, in my opinion, put a regiment or a brigade with more quickness and precision than any other officer in Her Majesty's service.

But it is time to return to my story. One of our officers had a very large monkey of the baboon species, which he kept chained in a kennel in rear of the stables set apart for officers' horses. It was a favourite diversion with some of our men to turn "Jocko" loose, and let him scamper all over the barrack-yard; and this he decidedly enjoyed, until perceived by the dogs, of which there were always a great number of all sorts about the barracks. When once these got sight or scent of Jocko, they would quickly unite themselves into a pack, and, followed by a motley crowd of partly-dressed men and the children of the married soldiers (the most mischievous of all children), Jocko would lead them a chase round and round the yard, until some of the dogs got unpleasantly near, when he would turn round on his pursuers and chatter in the most laughable manner, which mostly kept them at bay until he had got second wind, and off he would go again. On one of these occasions he was more than usually pressed by a new arrival in barracks—a very large Scotch deerhound, a complete stranger to Jocko. The monkey dashed round the barrack-yard at a tremendous pace, looking behind him and chattering to his enemies at every bound. It was during the mid-day stable hour, a period of the day when all the men and officers are supposed to be in barracks. On came Jocko at a tearing pace, with the jaws of Bos, the Highland deerhound, within a yard of his tail, and the rest of the pack scattered a long way behind, at distances according to their ability to keep up the pace. The sergeant-major of my troop, who had been promoted partly in consequence of his growing too fat to serve in the ranks, stood at a stable-door, which was open; and Jocko, being more anxious for a friendly shelter than ever I had before seen him, darted between the fat non-commissioned officer's legs, followed by Bos through the same opening into the stable. The sudden collision sent the sergeant-major plump on his back. Jocko jumped on to the back of the first horse he came near, from whence he sent such a tirade of chatter as set every horse in the stable capering and kicking at the unusual row. Bos was bundled out of the stable, but how to get at Jocko was quite another thing. He evidently thought Bos was waiting for him outside, and, determined not to be moved without a struggle, he stuck his sharp claws into the back of the horse, who, suffering from the acute pain and affright of his novel rider, was nearly mad; now rearing with his fore-feet in the manger, and then lashing out with his hind-feet, it was dangerous to approach him. In vain was Jocko pommelled with the handle of a stable-fork; it only made him stick the faster. At last we hit upon the idea of leading out the horse to the side of Jocko's kennel, which he no sooner perceived than he jumped from the horse's back and entered it.

Chapter Nine.

> Who has done this deed? All are suspect,
> While yet the guilty one is undiscovered:
> We stand alike condemn'd, alike acquitted—
> The guilty innocent, the innocent guilty.
> Let rigid search be straightway made.

Amidst all the scenes of wild fun which even the life of a private soldier is at times enlivened, events occasionally occur that have a depressing effect upon the mind. We had a "sergeant shoemaker" who was at the head of the bootmaking department of the regiment; he was the very soul of "element, divarshun, and fun," as my Irish comrades would say. It was his custom to visit the barrack-rooms every morning, generally while at breakfast, for the purpose of ascertaining whether any boots wanted repairing, or if any of us required a new pair. He always had a kindly word and a joke for such as he was well acquainted with, having served as a private in the ranks until promoted to his lucrative position. Going up to each of our beds, he would take down the boots from the shelf, and turn them soles upwards with as much diligence as the troop-farrier daily examined the shoes of our horses. "Pat," he would say, "you want a new pair of heels on these boots."

"Fred, you are born to be a rich man: your boot-soles are worn out in the middle, and the sides are scarcely touched."

"Terry, I must speak to Sergeant Williams," (the drill sergeant); "you are growing Sheffield-knee'd; the soles of *your* boots are worn down on the inside and not touched on the outside."

"Denny Smith, your mother must have reared *you*, for shure you must have been bow-legged from an infant; *your* boot-soles are worn as much on the outside as Terry's are on the inside."

"Arrah, now, Tim O'Leary, I wonder you're not ashamed of yourself for bringing disgrace on our illegant corps by wearing these thundering ould crab shells wid a patch on the side of each. Shure I'll go bail there's never a man in the regiment would wear a patch on his boots but yourself; I'll report you to your captain, so I will, for the sergeant-major told me your account has been quite clear these four months, and there's never a betther-looking dragoon in the service: pity that you should be spoiled entirely for the matther of a pair of illegant boots." In this fashion he would rattle away with his tongue while examining our boots, and, slinging such as wanted repairs over his arm, bustle out of one room into another.

The barrack-rooms are approached by a flight of stone steps leading from the yard, and one morning when our poor sergeant-shoemaker had been more than usually jocular, he unfortunately missed his footing at the top of one of these flights of steps, and falling headlong to the bottom, broke his neck and died on the spot. There he lay, poor fellow, with his face turned upwards, until the surgeon was summoned and pronounced him dead, when he was carried to the hospital. He was buried in the little churchyard at Heston with military honours, of which he was richly

deserving.

Soon after this unfortunate incident, another occurred that caused some commotion in the corps. There is a powder-mill on Hounslow Heath, where we went through all our field-drill. On one occasion, during a field-day, a waggon was being loaded with powder, to which was attached a team of four horses: we had just thrown out a party of skirmishers, who were firing away some distance from the mill. It was then the custom for the "squad-sergeants" to visit the barrack-rooms for the purpose of serving out blank ammunition prior to the troops marching out to a field-day, and the men were supposed to take their ball-cartridges from their pouches and replace them with blank, leaving the ball-ammunition on the shelf above their beds. On the day to which I allude, the skirmishers were keeping up a brisk fire on an imaginary enemy, when one of the horses attached to the waggon standing at the powder-mill was seen to drop suddenly, struggle for a few moments, and then lie still. Those who were not so intent on their duty as to be able to observe this circumstance, also observed the waggoner making signs as if something extraordinary had happened, and all the while pointing to the prostrate horse, while a crowd of workmen collected out of the mill; the colonel, however, took no heed of the matter until all the movements were at an end, and the skirmishers recalled to their places in the ranks; he then commanded the regiment to "sit at ease," and the excited waggoner was permitted to explain what had occurred.

He said that one of his horses "there lying dead yonder" had been shot "clean through the head." The adjutant rode up to the mill, and found that a *bullet* had entered the horse's head just under the eye. Now, we had never had an officer in the regiment that was decidedly unpopular, and, it was *thought*, never a man that would be coward enough to adopt this manner of retaliation or revenge for any grievance he might be labouring under. The ball that killed the horse *might* have been intended for the breast of a commissioned or a non-commissioned officer, but the impression was decidedly to the contrary—that it was the result of some accident or carelessness which could be explained. Nevertheless, it was necessary that a searching investigation should take place, and, whether through design or carelessness, any man had left a ball-cartridge in his pouch, he would most assuredly be punished. Not one of us could be pronounced free from suspicion, for in the hurry of preparing for a field-day, any soldier (as these matters were then conducted) might have left one or more ball-cartridges in his pouch. The whole regiment was called to "attention," and we were ordered to divest ourselves of the pouches and belts, and throw them on the ground in front of our horses; the squad-sergeants dismounted and made a strict examination of the remaining rounds of ammunition, but not one round of ball was discovered, and every man had his proper number of blank. Notwithstanding this, however, the same uncertainty existed as to which of us had discharged the round of ball that killed the horse, and a number of non-commissioned officers were told off to proceed at once to barracks to examine and count the ammunition left there. It seemed an age, though little more than an hour, till they returned.

At last a cloud of dust was seen along the lane that led from the barracks to the heath, and in a few minutes the messengers halted in front of the regiment: every man's heart beat—at least, I know that mine did—as one of them delivered his report in an under-tone to the colonel. The adjutant ran his eye along the line until it rested on Bob Norris, one of the best, the steadiest, and most harmless men in the corps, who had borne an irreproachable character ever since he had enlisted. He was ordered to the front, and commanded by the adjutant (a man who had risen from the ranks), in a fierce tone and manner, to account for one of his ten rounds of ball-ammunition found to be missing, while one round of blank was found on the floor of the barrack-room close to his bed. Poor fellow, it was evident that he could not explain; indeed, he could not speak; all who knew the man's disposition thoroughly, knew also that he must have made a mistake in the exchange of the ammunition. What so easy and so probable? Other matters of far less importance in the internal arrangement of a regiment were scrupulously observed with a fuss and a bother that was positively sickening to any man of sound common sense: why not have a box with a lock and key in every room, and let the troop-sergeants collect every round of ball-ammunition, and place them in this box prior to issuing the blank for field-firing?

Poor Bob Norris was divested of his arms, and marched off between two of his comrades, a prisoner to barracks. The case was investigated in due course; the owner of the horse was paid for his loss by the Government—60 pounds; and Bob got twenty-one days' kit drill. This was said by some non-commissioned officers to be a lenient sentence, in consequence of his previous good character and the commanding officer taking a merciful view of his case. The ball, he said, "might have been intended for one of the superior officers or it might not," he was willing to take the latter view of the case and give the prisoner the benefit. As a punishment for carelessness, however, the prisoner would, in addition to the drill, be kept on the stoppages as long as he remained in the regiment, and in the event of his requiring to purchase his discharge, he would not be allowed to do so unless the whole of the money advanced by Government to recompense the man for the loss of the horse was refunded.

Thus Bob was placed in a most unfortunate and pitiable position, positively *nailed to the service* for sixteen more years, without ever being allowed to draw a farthing of pay in money, and although he was as good as gold, and true to his colours as steel, he could not "put up" with such hardships as these: he had, he said, enlisted solely because "he thought he should like a soldier's life, and had made up his mind to deserve, and, if possible, to attain promotion." This stroke of pure misfortune had completely crushed all his hopes, he became sullen and morose, and after wearily plodding in the barrack-yard with the heavy burden of his kit (about 60 pounds weight) on his back for four hours during each of six days, he dashed the pack from his back with a heavy thud on the floor of the barrack-room. The expression of his fine open countenance plainly betokened that "something was brewing in Bob's mind," as old Jem Page remarked while burnishing his spurs. When the réveillé sounded the next morning at five o'clock, Bob Norris's bed was empty: he had quitted it and scaled the barrack-wall during the night, and was heard of no more as a soldier in our regiment.

Now if drunkenness had been the primary cause of this dangerous mistake, few men in the regiment would have been sorry for Bob Norris; but he was a *steady, good motif* and it was generally thought that he had been most cruelly used; for be it remembered, that notwithstanding he had deserted and so got rid of his troubles, yet he never could be a happy man. A deserter is always in fear of being retaken, and with good reason, for let him be disguised as he may, one soldier can always detect another. Many, very many men who desert give themselves up again solely because they cannot bear the misery consequent on the constant fear of being retaken; and a more lenient

punishment is administered to a man who voluntarily surrenders, than if he had given much trouble in his capture. A deserter can be taken and placed in any gaol in Her Majesty's dominions, when the police or military authorities forward the report of his capture to his regiment, if they know it; if not, they publish his description in the *Hue and Cry*.

Chapter Ten.

> Though we march, or though we halt,
> Or though the enemy we assault;
> Though we're cold, or though we're warm,
> Or though the sleeping town we storm,
> Still the merry, merry fife and drum
> Bid intruding care be dumb;
> Sprightly still we sing and play,
> And make dull life a holiday.

I was once taken prisoner myself on suspicion of being a deserter, being on a two months' furlough. I was visiting a married sister resident in a village near Derby, and I frequently wore a suit of her husband's clothes to save my regimentals. This is very often done by soldiers on furlough. Walking up the corn-market one day, I was tapped on the shoulder by a recruiting sergeant from the 33rd Regiment.

"Have you got a pass?" said he.

"Yes; I have a two months' furlough."

"Show it," said he.

"It is at Mugginton," said I.

"Yes, or somewhere else," said he; "therefore you had better come along with me to the police-station."

It was market-day, and a crowd soon collected. Two policemen came up, and in spite of my asseverations that I had left my furlough in the pocket of my regimentals at my sister's house, I was marched off a prisoner to the lock-up; but I was allowed to send a note to my sister, and she soon made her appearance in a gig, with all my regimentals and furlough. This satisfied the superintendent, and he set me at liberty.

Every soldier is, on all occasions (except when a reduction of the army takes place, which is very seldom), invested with power to enlist recruits. In time of peace, however, recruiting is not carried on in the cavalry to the same extent as in the infantry; the latter being so much more numerous than the former, and available for service in every part of the British possessions, where fever and change of climate often leave a larger vacancy than death in battle from the weapons of a living enemy. Many recruits enlist in foot regiments, because there are generally recruiting parties in every market-town, which is more convenient for a poor, destitute lad, who is too often compelled to enlist because he has neither money nor food. The presence of a dragoon or a hussar in full regimentals is more of a rarity everywhere than a foot soldier. I was anything but pleased with the "starchy" old sergeant who had interfered with my freedom, and, by way of retaliation, I was determined to enlist some likely-looking young fellows, who stood idling around the door of the "Cross Keys," in the market-place—the recruiting rendezvous,—and who, it afterwards appeared, had made up their minds to enlist in the 33rd Regiment.

Going to the inn where my sister had put up the horse and gig, I rigged myself out in a manner that would have passed muster for a parade before royalty. We were not allowed to take the two jackets (pelisse and dress jacket as well) with us on furlough; but, being the winter season, I wore only the scarlet pelisse, with its many rows of lace and more than a hundred buttons in front, fantastically trimmed with yellow braid behind, with fur collars, cuffs, and waistband, when I left barracks. But I had managed to get hold of a nice dress jacket, which, though cast into store, was in very good condition, from the quartermaster-sergeant. This I put on, and slinging the gorgeously trimmed scarlet pelisse loose over my left shoulder, as in full dress, I sallied out with my high-crowned, bell-topped shako, and black horse-hair plume, into the streets, and strutted proudly up to the "Cross Keys." There I was soon surrounded by a crowd of growing lads likely to make hussars. The crusty old sergeant and his minions looked daggers at me; for, after all, it is the dress of a soldier that allures many of the recruits from their homes into the service, and it was easy to be seen that they fancied my dashing uniform much more than the ruddle-coloured, beer-stained coatees and shovel-shaped shakos of the foot soldiers.

I called for "a gallon of ale," and asked each of the people in the room, including the infantry soldiers, to drink.

Now I had fully made up my mind long before this occurrence not to enlist a recruit, if I could possibly avoid it; and, although I had entered the public-house in defiance of this resolution solely to retaliate upon the recruiting-sergeant for his giving me into custody, I reflected upon the misery I might entail upon the mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, and friends of these poor deluded lads, several of whom looked like the younger sons of farmers; and although I was constantly importuned to enlist them, I refused, and soon after left them a prey to the infantry-sergeant, who, I have no doubt, got them into the meshes of his net before the day was over.

It is often a source of comfort to me to reflect that I never enlisted a recruit in my life; and I thank goodness that I was never sent on the recruiting service, for, although I pretend to be not a whit better than the majority of my comrades in point of morality, I had a particular aversion to inveigle a youth from his home and friends, perhaps for ever, by means of the gross deception and paltry untruths so often practised by recruiting parties both in cavalry and

infantry regiments.

While on this furlough I of course visited my home; but although my mother, sisters, and brothers received me joyfully, and treated me with great kindness, my father positively refused to see or speak to me, and even said that he would “horsewhip me whenever he could get a sight of me;” so, after remaining cooped up in a bedroom for a couple of days, I returned to my kind sister at Mugginton, and shortly after left for my regiment, where, in the spirit-stirring incidents constantly occurring, I soon got over the unpleasant feeling always engendered in the mind of a soldier by the visit to, and leave-taking of, his relatives and friends in his native village. That little word “good-bye” leaves a very unpleasant sensation after shaking hands and kissing a kind and indulgent mother, whose heart is well-nigh broken through her son leaving her, perhaps for ever, to follow the fortunes of war. My mother said she never went to bed but she prayed for me, and she never awoke in the night but her “soldier-son” was uppermost in her mind. She is dead now, and I often think that my leaving home to become a soldier might have hastened her end, for she died at the age of sixty-five. But after all comes the balm to my qualms of conscience for any breach of duty I may have been guilty of to my parents,—I have still done my duty to my country.

Besides these furloughs granted to well-conducted soldiers, they are frequently indulged with a few hours or days’ “passes” to spend with any friends they may have in the vicinity of the barracks. A soldier may be invited to an evening party, or he may wish to spend a few extra hours with a sweet heart, go to church or chapel with her, or, more frequently, take her to a theatre, the admittance to which she generally pays out of her own pocket-money. These “passes” may be obtained by a good soldier about once a week, so that in place of having to be in barracks by nine o’clock, he may, when furnished with a “pass,” signed by the captain of his troop, prolong his stay until any hour that may be convenient to him to return; but the time is generally limited to twelve, one, two, or three o’clock, so as to allow him to have a little sleep before the réveillé sounds, at five o’clock in summer and six in winter. Some of these “late” soldiers are fond of playing practical jokes upon their comrades, who are generally sound asleep when they return from these passes, and enter the barrack-rooms in the dark, for lights are not allowed to be struck on any pretence whatever.

We had a very good-tempered, rollicking young Irishman in our room named Larry Byrne, who often went on pass to meet his sweetheart Nannie McCarthy, who was cook at a gentleman’s house about two miles from barracks. Larry generally came to barracks in high spirits; and he would either disturb every man in the room and keep them awake by a recital of his “divarshuns” with Nannie and the rest of his friends, or quietly play off some practical joke invented before he entered the room.

He had returned from his “coorting” one morning about two o’clock—it was a beautiful bright moonlight morning, and I happened to be awake and could see Larry’s every movement—when he softly entered the room. He was evidently bent on having a lark. Pulling out of his pocket a ball of twine, and after undressing himself, he walked stealthily up to the foot of old Sam Whelan’s bed (a man with none the best of tempers, even when he ought to have been pleased); turning up the clothes, so as to bare old Sam’s feet, he tied one end of the twine round the joint of his big toe, and then, replacing the bed-clothes, got into his own bed at the farther end of the room with one end of the string in his hand. There were eight of us in the room, and it afterwards appeared that, although not a word had been spoken, there were more watching the movements of Larry than myself. All was still for a few moments. I could distinctly see, in the moonlight that bore full upon Larry’s bed near the window, his white teeth grinning underneath his jet-black moustache as he bobbed up his curly head and jerked the string; but there was no response. A suppressed titter from some one reached Larry’s ears. “Whist! whist! ye omedhaun!” said he, in a low whisper; and then, with twofold vigour, he jerked at the line again. “Whah!” sang out old Sam, in a strange, unearthly yell, as he sat bolt upright in bed and peered anxiously around the room. All was, however, as still as the grave; and, thinking it must have been a dream, he lay down again. By his snoring, Larry could tell he was asleep, and that he had not detected the string round his toe. Seizing the end of the string again, which he had dropped at his bedside to slacken the tension on the toe, Larry gave it another regular “twinger.”

“Whah! whah! whah! Murther! Boys, did ye’s see anything in the room?” Larry and I burst out laughing, the rest of the men were awoke by the row; old Sam found the string tied to his toe, and, accusing Larry of the trick, jumped out of bed, seized his sword, and I believe would have killed Larry had not the latter, knowing the customer he had to deal with, jumped out of bed, drawn his own sword from the scabbard, and taken up his position on the defensive, until old Sam could be pacified.

We had a great number of Irishmen in our regiment—brave as lions in action, at all times clever and smart in the performance of their duty, and as merry as crickets in the barrack-room or on the line of march; but some of them, enlisted from the remote country districts, very superstitious and firm believers in ghosts.

A tale is handed down from regiment to regiment to the effect that the ghost of a soldier once flogged to death in Hounslow Riding-school haunts the place every night. I have been on sentry on what is called the “Hospital Post,” near to the riding-school, very many times, but I never saw or heard anything of the ghost.

One man I knew, who had been tolerably well educated, and who, I consider, was by no means short of common intelligence, frequently declared to me that he has, while on guard on this particular post, heard noises in the riding-school just after the clock over the front of the officers’ quarters had struck twelve, as though a ride of twenty or more soldiers were in the school. He asserted that he heard the regular beat of the horses’ hoofs on the floor, the tinkling of the scabbards on the stirrup-irons, and the shouts of the rough-riders. This was supposed to arise from the ghost of a man who had been killed some years previously by a horse rearing and falling backwards upon him. At other times, both he and many others would say, when they were relieved from the post and afterwards sat round the guard-room fire, that they had plainly heard the shrieks of the man’s ghost who was flogged to death.

One of our men, who had been little more than a year in the regiment, having been sent by our Irish recruiting party from the county Mayo, and rejoicing in the rather funny name of Barney Mulgruddery, created quite a sensation in the regiment by the apparent sincerity with which he related an interview with one of these ghosts or some other

spectra.

“Shure,” said he, “I seen a mighty quare thing coming towards me between the sintry-box and the hospital; it was all surrounded wid blue lights, and was like a big dog with a man’s head. Nearer and nearer it came. ‘Faix,’ thought I to myself, ‘Barney, me hold fellow, I wish you were again cutting turf in the bog.’ Well, me jewels, it seemed to grow bigger and bigger until it was as big as me mother’s peat-stack, and more betoken it had horns too. I tried to spake for to challenge, as was me duty, boys; but oh, Meila Murther! I’d lost the power of spache. Well, me jewels, it came nearer and nearer, until at last it stood quite convanient to the sintry-box. ‘Bad scan to your impudence!’ sis I (my spache returning all at oncst), ‘is it clane off me post you want for to dhrive me, and desthroy me karacther for ever?’ ‘Hould yer whist; go along out of that, and show me the back ov yer stockings, Barney Mulgruddery,’ sis the ghost, in a tunderhin’ passion. ‘Not a step I’ll take for any ov the likes ov ye. Shure I was placed here by me supariors, and I’ve as good a right to be here as you.’ ‘Be gorra! if yer not off out of this like a shot, you great nagur, I’ll desthroy your body and soul for ever,’ sis the ghost. ‘Why you murtherin’ villain! shure you wouldn’t be afther killing me?’ sis I, keeping me finger on the trigger of me carbine; for you see, boys, I was not going to be dhruv off me post widout a struggle. Oh, blue nagurs! he kem wid a rush right forenenst me. I backed a few paces. ‘Barney Mulgruddery, attention!’ sis I to meself, aloud; ‘make ready! prisint!’ and I brought me carbine up to me shoulder. ‘Hould yer hand, Barney Mulgruddery,’ sis the ghost, beginning to get smaller and smaller every moment, and lookin’ me sthraight in the face all the while, as impidint as a tinker’s dog. But, me jewels, it wasn’t long before the ghost was thransmuggrified into as nice a young lady as ever the moon shone on. ‘Barney, me bold sodger,’ sis she, ‘you’re the bravest man I ever seen on sintry here. Shure,’ sis she, ‘Barney Mulgruddery, you’re a credit to ould Ireland, and you’re sure to be a giniral;’ and wid that she vanished. Och! it’s *she* was the Colleen Dhas. It was right good for sore eyes to look on her, the darlint. It may be a quare notion, but I’m thinking she took it into her head to fall in love wid me. At any rate, shure, she gev me the encouragement and the swate look, as if she was sthruck wid me appearance.”

This extraordinary story proved too clearly that Barney had either invented it from beginning to end; or, what was perhaps as bad, he had been sleeping and dreaming at his post.

Chapter Eleven.

Which of their weapons hath the conquest got
Over their wits; the pipe or else the pot?
For even the derivation of the name
Seems to allude and to include the same:
Tobacco as “to Bakcho”, one would say;
To cup-god Bacchus dedicated ay.

(This includes a joke in Greek script, not a very clever one.)

A few days after this occurrence, Terence Daly, more familiarly called “Terry,” a comrade quartered in the same room as myself, returned from Ireland, whence he had been on furlough, and brought with him a large bladder full of whisky. Now there were few, if any, of us ever calculated the effect of this ardent spirit so pure and so strong as Terry had brought it.

“Boys,” said he, as he tumbled the bladder from his valise on to the floor, “this is the raal dhrop of Irish eye-water—not Jamieson’s eye-water, but a betther soort, by rason of its being distilled in the Bog of Allan, and never paid a farden of duty.”

I had never before taken liquor of any description to such an extent as to make me intoxicated—in fact, I had fully made up my mind to avoid intemperance (the greatest curse of all, to both soldiers and civilians); but Terry, with the proverbial good nature of his race, insisted that I should have “one glass,” as all the rest of the men in the room. Some, unfortunately, were not content with one, two, or three glasses.

We were ordered for a “parade under arms” that afternoon, at three o’clock, and it was dinner-time when Terry produced the whisky. Now, a parade under arms, on foot, requires an uncommon degree of steadiness and precision. We were all steady enough until required to “form” and “dress” in troops before taking our place in the ranks with the main body of the regiment, but it was then discovered that the men who had partaken of the “eye-water,” including myself, could scarcely stand at all, let alone stand or march steady. It is a most serious crime in the army to be “*drunk* for duty;” indeed, a man who has been four times convicted of this crime is “drummed out of the regiment” (a process I shall describe in a future chapter). The result was that we were all confined in the guard-room until the following day, when we were escorted before the colonel.

Each was taken into the office and interrogated separately, and we told the truth, namely, that we had “no idea the whisky would have such an effect.” We were then all taken in together, and received a severe reprimand from the colonel, who ordered us to be “confined to barracks” for fourteen days. Terry, whose furlough did not expire until the evening of the day he returned, did not go to parade, and so he escaped.

Being simply “confined to barracks” is not considered a very severe punishment, as the soldier is only prohibited from passing out of the barrack-gate (except he be on duty), and not subjected to any other punishment. All soldiers undergoing punishment are “confined to barracks” in addition to such punishment, whatever it may be, and are termed “defaulters,” a list being kept in the guard-room, pasted on a board, so that the corporal of the guard, who is supposed to be in or about the door of the guard-room day and night, can always ascertain when a soldier presents himself to “pass out” whether he be a “defaulter” or not. It is the duty of the sentry at the front gate to prevent any soldier passing through until the corporal of the guard has first inspected him, in order to see, in the first place, that

he is properly dressed for walking out in town, namely, that he is clean in his person and attire, has on a pair of white leather gloves, well-polished boots, and bright spurs, a whip or cane in his hand, and his cap "cocked" in that jaunty style that gives him an appearance of smartness, and a proper display of personal pride, without "puppyism." This inspection, though always performed, is very seldom necessary, as the soldier generally possesses a sufficiency of native pride to dress himself so as to *fancy* he is a regular "swell." Most young men, whether soldiers or civilians, are imbued with a certain amount of personal vanity; in some instances this amounts to gross foppishness; therefore the cavalry soldier may readily be excused for any display that may appear superfluous in the eyes of a civilian; for although he has few, if any, worldly possessions, and seldom more than a day's pay in his pocket, yet he is for the most part in the enjoyment of rosy health and a sound constitution. Being subjected on his enlistment to the most skilful surgical examination, in order to ascertain if he be free from every taint of constitutional disease, and that all his limbs and the various organs of his body are perfect, he is more excusable for "showing off" his figure to the best than others, the nature of whose business directs their ideas into a more profitable channel.

Some of the "swells" in a cavalry regiment are more primitive in their style and manner of performing their toilets than their brother "swells" in civil life. The military "swell" is always his own valet and groom, and sometimes his own washerwoman. Rimmel's perfumes, Rowlands' Macassar and Odonto, and the rest of the toilet paraphernalia that forms a very considerable portion of the travelling luggage of a civilian "swell," are all dispensed with in barrack or camp life. When the soldier "swell" prepares for parade or a "show off" in town, he first gives his clothes a thorough brushing, then he "chrome-yellows" the braid of his jacket and the stripes of his trousers, or applies some other "reviver" to correspond with the colour of the "facings" of his uniform, cleans his buttons, spurs, boots, and pipe-clays his gloves; he then whistles a tune, or sings a scrap of a song, as he sallies down to the stable with his towel and a piece of common soap, and drawing a bucket of water at the pump, he gives himself a thorough washing, often from head to foot, a spare stall in the stable being his bath-room; the rest of his toilet is performed in the barrack-room. If he wears only a moustache, and no beard on his chin, the latter part of his face must of course be frequently shaven, so as always to appear clean and respectable; for this purpose there is sometimes a "looking-glass," about eight inches long and six inches wide, placed in some conspicuous part of the room for general use, but more frequently a fragment of a broken mirror about the size of a man's hand, and mostly a three-cornered, or some other "cornered" shape, is all the toilet-glass used or required for the dressing and shaving of eight men. The "swells" will sometimes indulge in tooth-powder, and a species of villainous scented oil purchased at the canteen, but the majority, if they use oil or tooth-powder at all, will be content with *powdered Bath-brick*, a coarse but most effective tooth-powder; and the oil used for cleaning bits, stirrups, swords, and the like, is substituted for "Macassar," to make the hair glossy. The "swells" will generally sport a riding *whip* during their walks in town, and those of their comrades who are not so fortunate as to possess one of their own will sometimes borrow these whips without leave, and then there is a "row in the island." Many of these so-called "swells" have been well educated, and are well connected in civil life, and agreeable, nice fellows they are too; others are arrogant, conceited, and ignorant; these are termed "jumped-up swells-out-of-luck," and are often told by the old soldiers that they are "better off in the army than any of their friends at home." The idea that one man is better than another as a private soldier cannot be entertained, because it is considered that if the one who fancies himself superior to his comrades could by any means raise the money, he would purchase his discharge. The fashion of dyeing the moustachios, whiskers, and beard black, is quite a process, during which the barrack-room presents the appearance of a chemical laboratory. This toilet operation is performed just before bed-time. Procuring some litharge from the chemist's and quicklime from a bricklayer, they mix these two powders together with salad-oil into a paste, and plaster it over every particle of the hair intended to be dyed; sometimes the hair on the head is treated to the process. Over this mixture they place a dock or cabbage leaf, and tie over the whole a bandage to keep the paste in its place, and then retire to rest, presenting, as they lie in bed, much the appearance of an Egyptian mummy about the head. If more than a proportionate quantity of quicklime be used, it will burn the skin; still, a necessary quantity should be added, as it is the principal acting ingredient, the oil and litharge only being added to counteract the burning effect the lime would otherwise have on the skin. When they rise in the morning and take off the bandages, the paste is perfectly dry and crumbles off the hair like dust; the hair is then washed and oiled, after which it presents a beautiful black and glossy appearance, which retains its colour for three or four weeks, and never stains the skin. As respects myself, I am gifted with a very fair crop of dark-brown hair, and, save when my moustachios were just beginning to bud, and I used the old toothbrush and india-ink given to me by my sweetheart "Dorcas" to make me appear more "manly," and which dyed more of the skin than the hair, I have always been content with the colour given it by Nature.

There was little to "dress up" and walk out for in the neighbourhood of Hounslow, the barracks being a long way from the town, and the town itself small, dull, and uninteresting to soldiers of the "dandy school," whose main object is to "show off," as they fancy that every female they may meet will be in love with them.

Notwithstanding that the regiment was divided into four detachments, while the head-quarters was stationed here, we had in the winter season some "idle time" on our hands; and with the proverbial thoughtlessness and improvidence of soldiers generally, we sometimes spent it foolishly enough. Remaining in barracks for a week or more, and "saving up" our superfluous pay, we then used to sally out in parties of about a dozen each, to have what we called a "spree."

About half a mile from barracks, on the road to the town, there was a public-house, the sign of "The Cricketers," if I remember right. This house was frequented by many country people, such as waggoners, market-gardeners, and others, who called to "bait" and refresh themselves. With these people we used to fraternise, and have some fun, at times. I remember one cold, frosty day about Christmastime, about half a dozen of us went to this house for the purpose of having some "mulled ale," commonly called "egg-flip," from its being made of eggs, ale, nutmeg, ginger, etc. When we walked into the room, there was a very large company of the class I have named above assembled. A smoking-match had just been made between two Berkshire waggoners, as to which could smoke four ounces of tobacco in the east time for a wager of half-a-crown each. Nothing was said about the kind of pipes to be used by either party.

The tobacco and two short clay-pipes were placed on the table, and one of the competitors, called Sam by his friends,

at once commenced smoking and puffing away at a great rate; the other, whose name was Dick, looked calmly on, while his tobacco and pipe lay on the table untouched.

“Go on, lad; I shall overtake thee presently,” said he.

Sam puffed away, emptied the ashes out of his pipe, and filled it again. Dick now made a move, walking into the kitchen. He soon returned with an old teapot.

“This is *my* pipe,” said he, placing it on the table, and putting the tobacco, paper, and all into the teapot, and then seizing the tongs, he selected a red-hot cinder from the fire, placing it on the tobacco, and then applying his capacious mouth to the spout, he sent forth a perfect volcano. This was *smoking* with a vengeance; we were obliged to open the door and windows, or we should have been partially suffocated. In vain Sam rammed the weed into the small bowl of his pipe and smoked away with all his might. A very short time sufficed to settle the business, and Dick, with his novel pipe, was declared the winner of the five shillings and the price of the tobacco. But Sam objected to pay: he had been *outwitted*, not *outsmoked*. There was a violent altercation, and, finally, the “sodgers” were requested to settle the dispute, which they did by calling upon each person to pay for his own tobacco, and smoke the wager over again at some future period.

While this uproarious scene was going on, I noticed, sitting in rather a dark corner of the room, an individual who was evidently not of the same class as the rest of the party, yet he appeared to be quite at home in their company, as they called him “Doctor.” He was a tall, miserable-looking specimen of human kind, attired in a rusty black surtout coat, buttoned close up to the throat, as if to conceal the disagreeable fact of his having no shirt on; his trousers, of the same material as his coat, were greasy and threadbare, and ragged at the bottoms; his boots were out at the toes: still he appeared cheerful and happy under the circumstances, and even cracked a joke now and then with the “Johnny Whopstraws,” who sat near him, one of whom, referring to the dilapidated shoes, asked him if they did not “let the wet in sometimes.” “What of that? they let it out again,” said he. Next to the “Doctor,” on a sort of wooden-seated sofa, sat another individual, well known in barracks as “Soapy,” who existed chiefly by collecting horse-droppings, and assisting the forage-carters to unload hay and straw.

“ Soapy was eating something that he appeared anxious to conceal.”

“Soapy” was eating something that he appeared anxious to conceal, and, by the manner he put his hand up to his mouth, I suspected it to be horse-beans. He appeared confused whenever his gaze met mine, and therefore was not a little relieved when the party got up to dance to a tune that a merry little journeyman shoemaker was whistling and

drumming on the table with his knuckles.

A rough-looking fellow took hold of the "Doctor."

"Come, Doctor," said he, "you must stir your old stumps."

"Now, Soapy," said another; and in a moment "Soapy" and the "Doctor" were hustled round and round; we preferred to sit still and witness the fun, otherwise our spurs would have left their marks on the shins of the clodhoppers. Tired of dancing, they began to push one another about. One man had his face blackened, but he was evidently unaware of it; some one pushed this man against the "Doctor," and they both fell on the saw-dusted floor together; "Soapy" was pushed on the top of them, Dick and Sam, the rival smokers, being topmost of all. "Murder!" shouted the "Doctor;" the landlord came, and peace was soon restored.

After this row I noticed a lot of little round objects strewed all over the floor, which on examination proved to be empty pill-boxes. The mystery was now unravelled: the "Doctor" was a travelling quack, and "Soapy" had been eating his pills, to which he had helped himself from the "Doctor's" pockets. When asked how he liked the pills, he said they were "very good," and he thought they were "only comfits" (a mixture of flour and sugar). He had abstracted and actually eaten the contents of seventeen boxes, enough to "kill six horses," as the "Doctor" said, by reason of their powerful purgative properties. He felt "Soapy's" pulse, and talked of the stomach-pump, which did not in the least alarm the half-wit, who declared that he "could eat a wheelbarrow full of them."

"Well," said the Doctor, "I would not be in your place for all the world."

We remained over an hour after this, during which no change took place in "Soapy's" ordinary health, and meeting him in barracks about ten days after, I asked him whether the pills had made him ill. He replied, "No, not yet, but I expect they will do so, before long."

Chapter Twelve.

> *Cassio.*—I will rather sue to be despised than to deceive so good a commander, with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk? and speak parrot? and squabble? swagger? swear and discourse fustian with one's own shadow?—O, thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee—devil!
>
> Shakespeare.

Our visits to public-houses during the winter months must not be accepted as a sign that we were loose and careless as to our morals, as we frequently attended church or chapel on such evenings as we could, in our turns, procure leave from stables, and such of the inhabitants as were attendants at these places of worship gave us every encouragement to come more frequently by opening their seat doors, and beckoning us to sit beside them. We had a library, too (as provided in every barracks), for our especial use, in which there was no lack of entertaining and useful books.

There can be no question that the morals, general conduct, intelligence, and appearance of a youth are very much improved by enlistment. I know that one section, at least, of the public hold a contrary opinion. I have, however, carefully observed the habits of men, who in civil life would have degenerated into drunken reprobates, and contrasted them with the class from whence they have been enlisted, when the balance is found immeasurably superior to their companions who prefer to remain civilians. The general public imagine, that because a youth is a "worthless fellow," or a "lazy, drunken blackguard," before he is enlisted, that he must for ever remain so; and that, therefore, he is a fair sample of soldiers generally. Nothing can be more erroneous than this idea. A youth who has given himself up to habits of idleness, and, perhaps, drunkenness in civil life, must reform when he becomes a British soldier. He finds a master in the army, if he never had one before; his whole habits are soon changed, and his general demeanour and bearing are, in the course of a few days, seen to be such as to distinguish the effects of order and discipline from the habits and manners of an untrained rustic, or a village vagabond. It is imperative that not only the dress and appearance but the conduct of the soldier should be such as to create in the minds of all civilians, as well as the soldier himself, a respect for the military service; and though, in a few instances, cases do occur where soldiers grossly misconduct themselves, yet they are at all times most strictly enjoined to avoid being mixed in broils or disturbances, or in meetings where party or political subjects may be agitated, or where intemperance may produce argument and discussion, which lead to no useful result, but too frequently end in breaches of the public peace.

I have before remarked that drunkenness is the source of almost every evil that can befall the soldier; and, although he is allowed to purchase liquor to any extent that his means allow, and his inclination may prompt him, yet he is so well aware of the severe penalty that any undue indulgence in liquor will entail upon him, that a confirmed drunkard is more rarely to be met with in a regiment than is generally supposed. Solitary confinement, or confinement in the "black hole," are at all times reserved for cases of drunkenness; not violence or insolence to superiors. The penalty awarded by the articles of war for "habitual drunkenness" is discharge from the service with ignominy. Thus the Government prove beyond a doubt, that habitual drunkenness cannot be tolerated in the army with the same degree that we all know it to exist in civil life.

When orders have been given, as the result of a court-martial, for discharging a soldier with ignominy, commonly called "drumming him out of the regiment," the whole corps is assembled and formed in double rank, facing inwards (towards each other), one flank of each rank reaching close up to each side of the front gate, which is generally besieged by a mob of people (the fact being previously known in the neighbourhood of the barracks that a man is to

be “drummed out”); thus a sort of lane is formed for the culprit to walk through, so that every soldier can see him. He is then escorted by an armed party from the guard-room; the several crimes and irregularities of which he has been guilty are read over, as also the sentence of the court-martial for his dismissal from the service; together with his discharge, in which is noticed his disgraceful conduct. The buttons, facings, lace, etc, are then stripped from his clothing, his discharge is handed to him, and he is then marched down the ranks, with the drummer behind him, to the front gate, which is closed behind him for ever; and he is launched upon society a ruined, disgraced, and broken-down individual. Soldiers serving abroad, who have been sentenced to be discharged with disgrace, are not finally discharged until they reach the depot of their regiment at home; but they are sent home as prisoners (though not kept in confinement on the passage) for the purpose of being finally discharged, in the manner above alluded to, in a few days after their arrival.

Corporal punishment is but seldom inflicted now; indeed, I never saw but one man flogged, and that was for knocking down a sergeant: he had only fifty lashes, and bore it without flinching. We had three men in our regiment who had received two hundred lashes each, for being drunk on guard at a post requiring great vigilance; their backs were frightfully scored with blue ridges, or “wheals,” from the neck to the bottom of the waist. They each said that they scarcely felt the pain of infliction after the first fifty lashes; but the greatest agony of all was the application of a lotion after being taken to hospital. They were good soldiers; and, contrary to the general impression, that flogging has the effect of “debasing the mind of a soldier,” they seemed to think that they deserved it, because they knew how to avoid it.

Generally speaking, soldiers would rather be flogged than handed over to the civil power, and imprisoned in a common gaol, or sentenced to a long term of “kit drill” in hot weather—the latter punishment blistering the feet, and causing as much pain as the lash on the bare back, and it has to be endured so much longer.

Flogging is, however, after all, a most unfair and degrading punishment to a man who may at any time be called upon to lay down his life in the defence of his country. Sentences of corporal punishment are inflicted in the riding-school, and always at head-quarters. A triangular-shaped frame of timber is placed against the wall; the whole regiment is then assembled under arms, and with drawn swords; the culprit is brought from the guard-room, handcuffed, into the hollow square formed by his comrades; the colonel reads the particulars of his crime and sentence; he is then conducted to the triangle, and divested of his jacket and shirt; his hands are tied to the apex and his feet to the base of the triangle; the surgeon takes his stand, as also the colonel, adjutant, and other officers. The instrument of torture (cat-o’-nine-tails—a whip with nine lashes, made of catgut) is produced by the farrier-major, under whom are the requisite number of troop-farriers to inflict the punishment, so many lashes each. The culprit is considered as having expiated his offence when he shall have undergone, *at one time*, as much of the punishment as, in the opinion of the surgeon, he is able to bear. The idea, often promulgated by the newspapers, that a soldier who has been flogged until ordered by the surgeon to be taken down, because of his physical inability to undergo the punishment the first time, is again brought out to undergo the remainder of his punishment, is not correct. The infliction of corporal punishment a second time, under one and the same sentence, was never resorted to in the British army.

The punishment of marking a deserter with the letter D is inflicted on the parade-ground in presence of the whole regiment, and under the personal superintendence of the surgeon. The operation is performed with an instrument made for the purpose, and the punishment is inflicted in the cavalry by the trumpet-major, a person who is responsible for the observance of discipline and duty of the troop-trumpeters, and in the infantry by the drum-major or bugle-major, and these are first instructed by the surgeon how to apply the instrument or ingredient (generally gunpowder or ink) properly and effectually.

Flogging is the penalty of the following offences only:

First.—Mutiny, insubordination, violence, or offering violence to superior officers.

Second.—Drunkenness on duty.

Third.—Sale of, or making away with arms, ammunition, accoutrements, clothing, or necessaries, stealing from comrades, or other disgraceful conduct.

In former times, desertion was included in the above crimes, but imprisonment, and the degradation of being branded for life with the letter D, is considered a sufficient punishment.

In cases where non-commissioned officers misconduct themselves, they are not confined in the guard-room, but considered as placed under arrest in their own room, without a guard over them. In serious cases, where it is necessary to hold a court-martial over them, and the offence is established, they are generally sentenced to be reduced to the rank and pay of a private, being stripped of their stripes in the presence of a parade of the whole regiment.

Chapter Thirteen.

> Reputation, reputation, reputation! O, I have lost my reputation! I have lost the immortal part, sir, of myself, and what remains is bestial.

The sergeant; to whom I alluded in a former chapter as having deserted from Liverpool, where he was stationed in command of a recruiting party, was the first non-commissioned officer that ever I witnessed “broke” and reduced to the ranks. It was two years after the corporal with whom he deserted gave himself up, and the regiment was then stationed at York. The sergeant had been to the “gold diggings” in California, or part way there; but, after a great

deal of privation and suffering, he resolved to come to England again and run his chance of being taken as a deserter. Landing in Liverpool, spirit-broken, and with but little money in his pocket, he set out for his native place, somewhere near Sheffield, travelling by railway; and having to change carriages at Victoria Station, Manchester, he was recognised by our adjutant (the son of a Liverpool brewer), who had been on a visit to his friends, and of course given into the custody of the police until an escort could be sent to bring him to head-quarters. He was tried by court-martial in the ordinary course, and, having made away with all his regimental clothing, kit, necessaries, and some money belonging to the regiment, he was sentenced to three months' imprisonment in York gaol, and reduced to the rank and pay of a private soldier. Some months after he had returned to his duty, I was on guard with him one very cold night in the depth of winter. We were sitting round the guard-room fire waiting for our turn to go on sentry. The ex-sergeant, was dull and morose generally, and more especially when on guard; "the time above all times," he used to say, when he reflected the most upon his disgrace, was as he paced to and fro in the dark and deep stillness of a winter's night. We had a gay young Irishman in the same relief, Jerry O'Neil, who had told several good stories in the course of the night and so got the party into good spirits. Singing was not allowed in the guard-room; and, therefore, story-telling was always the most approved method of entertainment. We had each told our story, and it came round to Brailsford's turn (that was his name); and, now that he was a private soldier, he was always addressed by his surname, like the rest of us. The fire was replenished, pipes reloaded, and both the corporal and sergeant of the guard drew dearer to the hearth, so as to hear the ex-sergeant relate an incident that occurred to him on his way to the "diggings," the substance of which I have reduced, and endeavoured to render in a readable form.

"You are all aware, boys," began the ex-sergeant, "that I deserted in a moment of temptation, and with Corporal — went to America. Soon after our arrival in New York, the corporal left me to go to some of his friends in the state of Ohio, and I was left to shift for myself, intending to get some kind of situation in New York. Having plenty of money, however, to keep me in idleness for some time, I joined a party of 'gold-seekers,' who were going by the overland route to California. I formed one of six men. We had six horses, three pack-mules, and two dogs; and, although we journeyed for days with the heavy plodding ox-teams of the main body of our party, and intended to keep their company more or less all the way, yet we were equipped for, and intended to have some hunting and sport, diverging from the main track in the morning, and sometimes returning to it some distance ahead, so as to fall in with our party in the evening. Frequently, however, we missed the track; or, having game in view, we slept away from the main body.

"One bright summer morning we were up and broke camp earlier than usual. Old Ben Walton, our captain and guide, to whom these wilds were home, had promised that this day we should strike the great buffalo trail, by which mighty herds of those animals migrate from their winter pasturage in the south to fatten on the prairies of Utah and Oregon. For several days we had been separated from the rest of the party, and found ourselves, according to Ben's calculation, on one of those great dry prairies that skirt the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains, near the northern boundary of New Mexico; we were suffering from want of water, the last quart remaining in my canteen I had shared with my horse in the morning. It was now mid-day, and our course lay due east, beneath a broiling sun; the plain was dry and parched, and it seemed that if we could not get into the track of our head-quarters, or find water, both man and beast must soon give way. Old Ben promised us water within a few miles, and we jogged on as fast as we could urge our half-famished horses. About four o'clock in the afternoon we came upon one of those singular ravines which the spring floods wash out of the loose soil of these prairies; the banks were perpendicular, the ravine about twenty feet deep, and from twenty to thirty yards wide, and in the sand and gravel bottom we beheld the welcome water, not a running stream, but standing in small limpid pools. The sight was very cheering, yet still it was out of our reach; we turned our course to the south, down the bank of the ravine; continuing thus for near a mile, we came upon a deep, wide pathway or gully worn by the hoofs of the buffaloes, and leading down to the bottom of the ravine. With a wild shout of joy we dashed down, and soon man, horse, and dog were regaling themselves at these delicious fountains of Nature.

"Kettles were swung, and in a few minuted the fragrant coffee, and boiling pemmican (dried buffalo beef, pounded) saluted our nostrils and whetted our appetites. All were busy, some unloading mules, others gathering fuel—the dried droppings of the buffalo, the only fuel of the plain, burning like turf. As we finished our meal, night was coming on, and Ben had advised us all to prepare for rest, when a low, rumbling sound, like distant thunder, started us all to our feet. As the sky was clear overhead, we were at a loss to account for the strange noise, until Ben, throwing his ear to the ground shouted,—

"'Buffaloes! Mount!'

"The order was scarcely delivered before every man was in his saddle, and following Ben up the gully at full speed. On reaching the plain we had not long before crossed, a terrific sight to novices in prairie-life broke upon our vision.

"Away in the distance was a great brown mass, undulating like a sea, and extending miles in each direction. A cloud of dust hung above the mighty herd of buffaloes, darkening the sky. Already they snuffed the water, and were approaching at full speed. A glance was enough for Ben. Wheeling his horse again into the ravine, he shouted for all to follow. His practised eye saw that they were making for the water-course, and in a few moments, if we remained, we should be trampled to death.

"I thought that the hurried manner in which Ben ordered us to re-pack the mules and run up the ravine had something of cowardice in it. It would have been well for me had I partaken of this fear. While my more sensible companions hastened after Ben up the bottom of the ravine, I spurred my horse up the steep path to have another look—I even thought of bagging a few buffaloes, to astonish old Ben. When I reached the level of the plain, I witnessed such a sight as I shall never forget—a moving wall of life! and, within a few yards of me, grizzly, shaggy monsters, with heads to the ground, and tails erect, bellowing like an earthquake, throwing white froth from their parched mouths, while their tread seemed to shake the very earth. With a sudden start my horse reared, twisting round upon his haunches, and, wheeling round, he dashed down the pathway; and, before I could regain my presence of mind, he was galloping at the top of his speed down the ravine, in a contrary direction to that taken by my comrades, who were now out of sight. For nearly a mile he held his headlong course, until a turn in the channel

brought me in sight of a new danger.

“The herd had divided upon the plain, and thousands were crowding down another pathway below me, choking up the ravine with a dense, impenetrable living mass. This new barrier enabled me to control my horse; turning him round I scanned the high bank on each side for an opening of escape. All was vain! There was not a place for a cat to crawl up, and here was coming on either side a mass of buffaloes that would soon crush me between them. A few stragglers, more speedy than the rest, came first, crowding their noses into the little pools of water, and sucking them dry in a moment. Now the mass behind came sweeping like a mighty torrent, completely choking up the narrow ravine. There was no escape; and in less time than it takes me to tell you, boys, I was forced between the two divisions, and my frantic horse made a part of the living stream. The air was filled with sand, gravel, and froth. The hot breath from the feverish mass rose like steam, and sickened me. I felt that I must fall, not to the ground (there was no room for that), but upon the backs of the crushing, sweltering, reeking mass. A furious old bull gored my poor horse in the flank; again and again he plunged his short, sharp, strong horn into my dying horse until his entrails were torn out. I felt him giving way beneath me, his strength almost gone; still he was carried along by the crush. We came to a slight widening of the ravine and the pressure was relieved, but my lifeless horse sank to the earth, and was trampled to a jelly in a moment. As I felt him going, I sprang from the saddle, and landed erect upon the backs of the rushing, ramping buffaloes. I fell, but recovered myself before I came to the ground. At last I landed and lay at full length upon the back of a huge beast; with a feeling of desperation I twisted my hands into his mane, and on with the heaving torrent, my wild courser, mad with terror, throws his head wildly about, tearing the sides of all within his reach, and sprinkling me with a shower of froth and gore.”

Chapter Fourteen.

> We rustled through the leaves like wind,
> Left shrubs and trees and wolves behind.

“On went the buffalo, tearing and crushing all before and around him. How long this lasted I know not; but, although I was very weak, stunned, and nearly blinded, I still madly clung to him! to fall would be certain death. At length he darted up a narrow gully upon the side of the valley from which we had entered it, and dashed off across the open plain. The cold breeze revived me a little, and I began to cherish a hope of life. I gradually drew myself into a sitting position, and began to feel the want of a saddle badly; it required all my nerve, strength, and skill to retain my seat. I could not turn to look back, and dared not slip from the beast for fear of meeting with the fate of my poor horse—not knowing but the whole herd was close in my wake. For miles we held our course, until the silence convinced me that we were alone. I began to reflect on the best means of ending the fearful race. I had bought a revolver and a large bowie-knife in New York, and these I had stuck in my belt, but to wound and not kill the monster would he to expose myself to certain death, as nothing is more terrible than a wounded buffalo. I decided upon the knife as the surest. My bowie was as keen as a razor, with a blade near twelve inches long. I drew it, and, twisting my left hand into the brute’s mane, I gradually leaned down over his shoulders, pressed the point of my knife against the side of his neck, and, with all my strength, thrust it in and down. Thank goodness, the monster began to tremble, the blood gushed forth, he reeled, and with a terrific plunge on his knees, sent me flying over his head on to the springing turf. I remained still to see if he was able to rise. He once or twice attempted it, but when half upon his legs he dropped from exhaustion and loss of blood, and the mountain of flesh lay quivering in the agonies of death.

“I knew not how far I had ridden: my mind was in confusion, and every joint in my frame seemed as if about to snap asunder. I stood upon the body of the dead buffalo and gazed about me. Night was fast closing in, and there was nothing in sight but sky and plain. I felt then for the first time as if alone in the wide world; not a vestige of man or his handiwork was visible. Alone with nature, the stillness to me was painful; even the carcase of the slain brute seemed company, and I determined to remain by it until morning, I felt that with the darkness gathering round, and in my exhausted state, to attempt to reach my comrades that night, even if I knew the direction, would be useless. This point decided, I gathered a quantity of fuel, and soon a blazing fire sent its cheerful glow around me, making the gloom beyond the circle of its rays still more impenetrable. I cut some slices of the buffalo’s tongue and broiled them upon the fire, and of these, seasoned with salt from my pouch, and eaten with some parched corn from the same receptacle, I made a hearty meal.

“My lodgings gave me no uneasiness; so, after gathering a further supply of fuel to make up a good fire for the purpose of intimidating the wolves, that I judged would be drawn by the scent of fresh meat, I placed myself upon the ground, my feet to the fire, and my head and shoulders resting upon the body of the still warm animal. My mind was easy as to the future, though my conscience pricked me when I reflected upon the past. I knew that old Ben had his own reasons for liking me, as I had more money than all the rest of the hunting party together; and I felt sure that he would never leave the vicinity until satisfied of my fate. With this reflection I fell asleep.

“During the night, I was once awoke by the snarling of a pack of wolves. My fire had burned low, and they were gathered in great numbers about me. I had no fear of them; for Ben had told me that the prairie wolf is a cowardly animal, and will seldom molest a man, unless driven to it by famine. For revenge, however, at being disturbed, I fired my revolver among them. A howl of pain followed; then yells and a gnashing of teeth, tearing of flesh, and crunching of bones, enough to convince me that I had hit one or more of them. It is a singular fact, that when blood is once drawn from one of these animals, the others instantly set upon and devour it.

“After replenishing my fire and reloading my revolver, I again lay down, watching the smoke which rose in the stillness of the atmosphere like a column, then spreading out, it formed the only cloud visible. I slept undisturbed until daylight.

“On my awaking, I found myself very stiff and sore, and came to the conclusion, over my breakfast of broiled buffalo-steak, to remain where I was until my friends sought me. I was aware that a smoke would be visible many miles in

the clear air of the plains; and I covered my fire with grass and soil wet with the morning dew. Soon a dense white steam ascended, which I felt sure must attract attention. And so it did, but not exactly in the quarter I would have chosen; for, scarce had I finished my repast, when I saw in the distance a horseman rapidly approaching. I felt sure it was Ben, and was inwardly congratulating myself on a pleasant meeting with my comrades, when the strange movements of the fast approaching person attracted my attention not a little. Instead of coming in a direct line, he took a circular course, gradually drawing nearer, and lessening the circle around me; and I soon saw that it was an Indian, mounted on a splendid horse. The way I saw him handling his rifle convinced me that his morning call would not be a very agreeable one to me. I had lost my rifle with my horse: true, I had a Colt's revolver—the best weapon ever invented for close quarters; but against his long range the odds were sadly against me.

"Tearing a piece of white linen from my shirt sleeve, I waved it above my head as a flag of truce. While in the very act, the tawny rascal raised his rifle and fired. I heard the bullet whistle past my head. Finding that he had missed his mark, he galloped back some distance to reload. This gave me a moment for reflection. As the scoundrel had fired upon my flag of truce, I felt justified in killing him if I could. Throwing myself down behind my barricade of beef, I examined my revolver and drew my knife, determined to sell my life as dearly as possible. Cautiously looking over the body of the buffalo, I saw him drawing near; he saw the motion, and was about to fire, when I withdrew my head. After a few moments' silence I could plainly hear the panting breath of his horse, and detected the click of his gun-lock. The rascal knew very well that to fire on him I must expose myself, and now stood waiting his prey. Placing my fur-cap upon the point of my knife, I gradually raised it above the carcase of the buffalo. The *ruse* succeeded: when he fired, I dropped the cap and gave a loud groan. With a yell he sprung from his horse, with the evident intention of transferring my scalp to his belt—a proceeding I had a decided objection to, and, moreover, I felt that this was the proper time to urge it. As I heard his footsteps approaching, I rose, to his very great astonishment, and pulled the trigger of my revolver; he staggered; another shot eased him of his pain, and I was again alone. No, boys, not alone, for a few yards off stood his horse, tethered to the arm of his defunct master, by a few yards of buffalo hide. I had no trouble in securing him, and a beauty he was. Gathering up some trifles which the dead Indian could have no further use for, such as a rifle, tomahawk, etc, I knocked off a horn from the buffalo as a trophy. I mounted, and, turning towards the rising sun, set the horse off at a brisk canter. Knowing that the instinct of the animal would take him to the water, I gave him his head, and I was right: an hour's ride brought me to the ravine. I soon found a path to descend, but I examined the horizon well for buffaloes before I trusted myself in the gulf.

"I rose, to his very great astonishment, and pulled the trigger of my revolver."

"Finding all clear, I rode down to the water, and, after refreshing myself and my horse, I took my course up stream. A trot of a few miles and a turn of the water-course brought me in sight of my friends, encamped near the mangled remains of my horse, and holding a consultation as to my probable fate. I received a warm greeting from all, and tears ran down old Ben's cheeks as he pressed me to his heart. Over our evening meal I related my story. Ben listened to the finish. 'So you shot a Camanche—eh?' 'Yes, Ben,' said I. 'Well,' replied he, 'you that are on duty to-night had better keep your eyes open, for we shall hear more of this day's work.' 'How could I help doing it, Ben?' said I. 'Wal, I s'pose you couldn't.' With this complimentary remark, he knocked the ashes from his pipe, wrapped himself in his blanket, and fell asleep. When the fire was made, and two of the party had been placed as sentries, and enjoined to keep a sharp look-out for 'Camanches,' I followed his example.

"Nothing occurred to disturb us during the night except the howling of the wolves, to which we were now getting pretty well accustomed. And, after making a hearty breakfast, we considered it advisable to join the main body of our party as soon as possible; as, on the discovery of the dead body of one of their tribe, the Camanches would be sure to attack any detached parties like ours, found in small numbers, in which case we might probably lose our scalps. After riding all day, we at length found the main track, and soon discerned the smoke from their encampment for the night. The story was related again after supper, the whole party anxiously listening to every word. When I had

finished, a tall, masculine-looking woman, who usually had charge of one of the wagons and oxen, struck up with a story for our amusement.

"'When I was a gal,' she commenced, and went on in the pure American dialect, 'and even arter I married my man—poor fellow! he's gone long ago—I used to go out in the woods arter the deer that our hunters had killed and hung up, so that they could go on killin' without losin' time; and I used to bring 'em in, skin 'em, and jerk 'em, too. And that warn't all: I allers attended the wolf-traps, and all sitch like. There's but few mortal men livin' now what's seen as much fun a killin' wolves as I have. Whenever we got one fast in a trap, me and the dogs, we was allers good for him in double-quick time; but occasionally we got a little more than we bargained for. I recollect one time, little Josey (that's my oldest boy) and me, we went to a trap, and found the surliest-lookin' old "bar" (bear) in all creation fast in it by one hind-leg. "Turk" and "Rome" (them was our dogs), they mounted him, and began to do their best to kill him, and Josey and me sick't 'em on, and slapped our hands, but they weren't no more than fleas in his ear. He boxed 'em about hither and thither jest as he liked, till at last he got 'em both in his hug, and I seed he was a squeezin' the life out en 'em; so I told Josey to stop by a big tree, and then I took the axe (for I hadn't nothin' else with me), and run up to help the dogs. By the time I got up to him he'd laid one of 'em cold, and had t'other in a purty fair way. I let drive at his head; but he up with one paw and knocked the axe out of my hand about ten steps. This kinder staggered me, so I felt down like; and the next thing I know'd, the "bar" was a top o' me. I tusselled with him as hard as I could, you may be sure; but it warn't of much use. He squeezed me tighter and tighter, and I begun to think it was all over with me, and my little Josey screeching like mad, when up came my ole man, and cut the bar's wozzen from ear to ear. He'd hearn the noise the dogs and little Josey made, and knowin' there must be somethin' more than common, he'd run out. As soon as the "bar" was dead, he bust out into a loud laugh, and, said he, "You're a purty woman to be caught out here in the woods huggin' a bar, ain't you?" But poor old Rome! we couldn't fetch him to life any more. The bar had crushed all the bones in his body. I recollect another shindy I had when attending the traps. It was some time arter the "bar" scrape. Just afore I got in sight of a trap, I hearn Turk, what had trotted ahead of me, a makin' a dreadful queer kind of a whinin' noise. I ses, ses I, to myself, there must be something wrong with Turk; so I hurried up as fast as I could. And, shure enough there was too. The biggest eagle I ever hearn tell on was a standin' with one claw fast in the trap and t'other clamp up around Turk's nose so fast that he couldn't no more open his mouth than he could a whistled if it had been open. There he stood, with all his legs poked for'ard, a yankin' back, and a makin' all the noise he possibly could. I hunted up a stick, and, after a heap of trouble, I got the life manted out of it; but even then it wouldn't let go its hold on Turk's nose, nor could I get him loose till I'd took my knife and cut its claw off. Turk was always shy of eagles from that time.

"'I never was frightened much by any of the backwoods varmint but once, and then I was but a young gal. Tom Ennis had gone up to Louisville with a load of skins, and it was so far he couldn't make it back the same day; so Sally (that was Tom's wife) she got me to go over to their cabin and stay with her all night for company. Sally had a young baby that weren't very well, so it kept up such a crying that we couldn't sleep for it. I recollect we had the bed made up on the floor. In the middle of the night we hearn somethin' about on the boards of the roof, a scrapin' and scratchin' as if a tryin' to get in. The moon was shinin' atween the boards, and by the light of it we soon seed, whatever the thing might be, that it had got the board slipt aside enough so it could poke a great heavy paw down. Well, it worked on like a trooper, and directly we saw a big whiskery-lookin' head, poked through, and two fiery eyes a glarin' down at us. A little longer, and the hole was big enough to admit its body, and in he bounced on to the floor of the cabin, the biggest kind of an old he-panther. You'd better believe there was a couple of folks scart enough then, for we knowed the cries of the baby had attracted its attention, and it had come on purpose to make a meal out'n some of us. We covered up our heads, and laid there with our hearts a thumping. The panther sat down by the side of our bed, and wriggled his tail a bit, and then he begun to pat us gently with his paws, as if he wanted to play afore eatin' us, like a cat does with a mouse when she ain't very hungry. Just then, Sally, who was so scart that she didn't know what she was at, gave a loud scream, and flirted the blanket right off'n us on to the panther. The movement, being so sudden and so unlooked for, gave the varmint a dreadful scare, and up through the hole he went, like a kite. That was the last we saw or heerd of him, and you may be sartain we were satisfied.'"

The ex-sergeant promised to relate more of his adventures on his way to and from the gold diggings on a future occasion. But the corporal with whom he deserted having frequently written to him since he was taken, at last purchased his discharge, and started him in business at Sheffield; so we saw no more of him after he left the regiment.

Chapter Fifteen.

> Bid him beside, his daily pains employ
> To form the tender manners of the boy,
> And work him like a waxen babe with art,
> To perfect symmetry in every part.

Story-telling is a very favourite method of passing away spare time on guard, or after the lights are extinguished in the evenings when we retire to rest, and as these chapters proceed I shall from time to time relate such as I can remember, always giving preference to those which I fancy will be most interesting to my readers.

Meanwhile, I may be allowed to offer some details of the interior economy of a regiment in barracks.

In reference to the regimental school for the instruction of the children of non-commissioned officers and soldiers, I may state that their object is to instil into the minds of the children the duties of religion; to implant in them early habits of morality, obedience, and industry; to give the boys that amount of instruction which—may qualify them for non-commissioned officers, or enable them to become useful members of civil society. It entirely rests with the children themselves, when they arrive at a proper age, to adopt any line of life to which they give the preference, but

it is considered by the proper authorities to be extremely essential that competent persons be selected from the ranks or roll of non-commissioned officers for the duties of schoolmasters and superintendents of the regimental schools. The boys are all dressed in regimentals corresponding with the stable-dress of the men, and very proud the little fellows are of it too, especially on a Sunday, when they march to church in rear of the regiment and band.

The schools are conducted on military principles, and, as far as circumstances permit, their establishment is assimilated to that of the regiment, being formed, I believe, on a system recommended by a Rev. Dr Bell. In addition to their daily lessons in reading, writing, and arithmetic, the boys are instructed in various ways of making themselves useful, and of gaining a respectable subsistence when they grow to maturity; the trades of armourers, tailors, saddlers, and boot and shoe makers being the most popular with them, because of their being carried on in barracks. The prevalent idea among civilians, that a soldier's son, born in the regiment, *must* be a soldier, or that he is claimed by the Government when he arrives at the proper age, is entirely fallacious: no such system is tolerated in the British army. The education and care of a soldier's child is as much the object of the sovereign's and the Government's solicitude, as the soldier himself.

The female children of the soldiers also equally partake of the benefits of this system of education, whenever accommodation and other circumstances permit, and a liberal allowance for eligible schoolmistresses is granted by the Government. The girls are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, plain needlework, and knitting, so that they are not only useful to the regiment while at school, but qualified to earn their own livelihood in after life.

In reference to the particular trades in which the children are to be instructed, the wishes of the parents are, as far as possible, to be consulted. Many of the boys born in the regiment become so attached to their parents and other individuals serving in the corps, and, moreover, so accustomed to military routine, that they seldom leave it to become civilians. They chiefly enter the band, and many of them attain the position of trumpeters, in which case they are, for the most part, as well off as if they had chosen the life of a tradesman; for I am bound to say that whatever position a man may hold in the army, and however much he may dislike that position and yearn for his liberty, he is, after he attains his freedom, either by purchase or desertion, more or less unsettled by being separated from his comrades. Numbers who have purchased their discharge, having a good home and livelihood in civil life, enlist again, and remain soldiers for the full period of their service.

I may here state, that whatever time a soldier has served prior to purchasing his discharge, that time does not count in his favour on second enlistment: he has still twenty-four years to serve in the cavalry and twenty-one years in the infantry, from the date of his second or any subsequent enlistment.

In reference to the bands of music in either cavalry or infantry, they are supported out of the private purses of the commissioned officers. Every officer on entering a regiment is required to contribute towards the support of a band, twenty days' pay on appointment, and an annual subscription, at the discretion of the commanding officer. In cases of promotion, the officer has to give the difference between twenty days' pay of the rank attained and of that previously held.

The bandsmen are all regularly enlisted and drilled, so as to be effective as soldiers, and they are liable to serve in the ranks on any emergency. They are generally attired in a more gaudy and expensive uniform than the privates in the ranks. The number of a band depends much upon the caprice of the commanding officer, and although the limit is prescribed by Government to a sergeant as master, and fourteen privates as musicians, yet the majority of regimental bands are composed of a band-master, a band-sergeant, a band-corporal, and frequently upwards of thirty privates as performers. The band invariably accompanies the regiment to church. I remember an attempt being made by the officiating minister of a church attended by the 16th Lancers, to prevent that regiment from being accompanied by its band to Divine worship, but Colonel Smyth, who had led the corps with great distinction through the Sikh war, was inexorable. He said, "the band had many times played his regiment in and out of battle, and so long as he remained its commander, it should play him and his men to and from church." It is only right, however, to observe that the minister did not object to it in a religious point of view, only that the regiment having but recently returned from India covered with honours, it attracted such a concourse of people as to greatly impede the comfort of the regular *habitués* of his church, and it was suggested that the withdrawal of the band would, to a great extent, check the assemblage of such vast crowds, that not only choked up the thoroughfares and approaches to the church, but filled the sacred edifice itself. The men and officers all attend Divine service in full dress, with swords; and where they have to attend a church out of barracks, a portion of the sitting accommodation is especially set apart for their use. In some barracks, however, a chaplain is appointed, who preaches a sermon in the riding-school, the children of the soldiers being seated on forms carried from the schools, the men and officers standing around them and the pulpit.

In almost every regiment there are a number of Roman Catholics, who are, of course, free to attend their own place of worship, but the band at all times accompanies the Protestants to the service of the Church of England.

Chapter Sixteen.

> Hast thou given the horse strength? Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?
>
> He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength; he goeth on to meet the armed men.
>
> He mocketh at fear and is not affrighted, neither turneth he back from the sword.
>
> He saith among the trumpets, "Ha! ha!" and he smelleth the battle afar off.

My readers will probably be interested in the mode of procuring and management of troop-horses. In the first place,

the horses which are purchased for the cavalry are selected of a sufficient height and strength, so as to be able to carry a man of average weight and four stone in addition, that being about the weight of a cavalry soldier's kit and necessaries, which he must always carry with him when on a campaign or the line of march. The most favourable season for purchasing troop-horses is considered the autumn, and the commanding officers either attend the large fairs themselves, or they leave the business to a contractor, who has to supply the horses at a stated price (35 pounds for dragoons, hussars, lancers, and artillery, and 45 pounds for black horses for the Horse Guards,) subject, of course; to the inspection of the commanding officer and the professional examination of the regimental veterinary surgeon.

Except in time of war, when large drafts are required to supply the places of those killed in action, or that die of disease, exposure, and want of forage, no horses are purchased for the cavalry at a younger age than three years, and all must be perfectly unbroken, so that their instinct is untainted by any manner of training except the one uniform system in use throughout the entire service.

The trumpeters are generally mounted on grey horses, but the prevailing colours of troop-horses are bay, brown, and black. The Horse Guards (1st and 2nd Life Guards, and Horse Guards Blue, or Royal Horse Guards) are all mounted on black horses, and the 2nd North British Dragoons, or Scots Greys, are all mounted on grey horses. The most scrupulous care is of course taken of them in barracks. The veterinary surgeon is responsible as to their health, as reported to him by the troop-sergeant-major and the troop-farrier daily, the latter being more particularly required to examine each foot of every horse in his troop twice at least every week for any appearance of loose shoes, broken nails, or any change in the healthy condition of the feet. The troop-sergeant-major is supposed to be always present in the stable when the horses are fed, watered, and groomed; and he is therefore responsible for their condition, grooming, and general appearance.

Every horse, as a rule, is supposed to be shod once a month; but so great is the variety in size and formation in feet, and in the degrees of toughness and rapidity of growth of the hoof and sole of different horses, and even on different feet of the same horse and at different parts of the same shoe, that no particular pattern or form of shoe is prescribed. This is left to the skill and judgment of the farrier, to make according to the shape of the foot with which he has to deal. In this particular branch of his business he is far superior to the village blacksmith or the more pretentious shoeing-smiths in large towns, even London itself, where many veterinary farriers keep a lot of shoes by them that have been made by machinery; and, as a rule, they pare, cut down, and model the poor horse's foot to fit *their* shoe, instead of making the shoe to fit the peculiar conformation of the foot. Hundreds of valuable horses used by civilians are constantly ruined by the pernicious practice of cutting the hoof and sole of the horse's foot into a shape quite contrary to that intended by Nature, who has cast it in a mould necessary and proper to support the horse's weight or the peculiar shape of its legs, which differ more or less in all animals, although the basis of their construction is essentially the same. All unnecessary loading of the horse's foot with iron is carefully avoided; and if any farrier is caught in the reprehensible practice of applying a red-hot shoe to the foot, he is very severely dealt with.

A very important point in the care of troop-horses is the prevention of predisposing causes of disease, such as exposure to extreme cold and heat. Of course this cannot be so well carried out in camp as in barracks, and the consequence is that disease is much more frequent in the former than the latter. I, for one, think it very questionable policy on the part of our Government to take horses out of warm barrack-stables and picket them in the open air, as at Aldershot and the Curragh camp, when there is neither war nor rumours of war. Such a course of proceeding only exposes the extreme ignorance of those who have the direction of these affairs. Alternately exposing either horses or human beings to heat and cold is the surest way of bringing on disease and undermining the constitution. The horses, at least of those regiments who are first on the roll for a campaign, ought to remain in camp, and never be allowed to enter a stable, the atmosphere of which is much warmer than the open air, and then they would be always in readiness to proceed to any part, without running the risk of disease and death by exposure, as occurred in the Crimea, where more than half the number of our cavalry were rendered non-effective from want of horses. This plan would not entail the necessity of submitting the men of the regiment to which the horses belong to the hardship of remaining constantly in camp, for there would be nothing to hinder them from being relieved by soldiers from other regiments, who could march to the camp with the whole of their kit and necessaries, and the men who are relieved could pack up their own kit and march out with the horses of the relieving corps. This system would be far better than, for instance, marching our troop-horses from the stables of barracks situate in the inland towns of England to Ireland, and exposing them to the cold blasts that, both in winter and summer, sweep through the camp at the Curragh of Kildare, one of the most bleak and cold parts of either Ireland or England. The soldiers themselves are aware of all this, and it is fast spreading discontent among them, especially those who are stationed at the latter place, where I have myself witnessed horses standing at their picket-posts nearly up to the hocks in mud, while a cold north-east wind was blowing and causing their backs to stick up and their coats to stare like hedgehogs. Let us hope that, if not for the sake of the poor animals, the legislature will, for the benefit of the service and consideration for the soldiers, see the necessity of changing so suicidal a policy as exposing our troops and troop-horses to such sudden changes from barracks (in some places absolutely in want of ventilation) to the most exposed places they can possibly select throughout the length and breadth of our proverbially capricious and changeable climate.

When horses become unserviceable from any cause, they are disposed of by public auction to the highest bidder. Many a gallant old trooper is now dragging out his existence in omnibuses, cabs, and the like, being generally bought for harness work. Every troop-horse is marked on the front of both hoofs of his fore-feet with the number and initials of the regiment in which he served. Sometimes these "cast horses" are bought by dealers, who file out the marks and sell them to novices as young fresh horses just up from the country; but an experienced man may always detect an old trooper by the hollow place left by filing out the marks; and if the horse be mounted, the rider may find out in an instant whether he has been a trooper if he will feel the off-rein and lightly press his left leg to the horse's near side, or *vice versâ*, when the animal will commence to cross his legs and move sideways, as if to "dress" to some imaginary companions in forming line; for whenever a horse has been taught anything and practised in it he never forgets it, and needs but the necessary signals to again remind him that the movement is required.

It is a spirit-stirring sight to witness the embarkation of a cavalry regiment for a sea voyage. In the first place, it is considered advisable, when circumstances permit, for the embarkation to take place immediately after a day's march, when the horses are more quiet and manageable, than when brought fresh out of stables, time being always allowed for wisping them over and picking out their feet to clear them from gravel or any dirt which may accumulate between the edge of the shoe and the sole of the foot (a point too often neglected by gentlemen's grooms after their horses come in from a journey). When all is ready for business, a sling is passed under the horse's belly, and also supports his chest and quarters; the ropes attached to this sling meet over the middle of the horse's back, and are hitched to the chain of the windlass or crane. Two soldiers have each hold of a rein attached to the head-stall on either side of his head, while they soothe and allay his fears by hand and voice, or, if he violently resist, hold him by main force, until he is snatched from the ground and swung over that portion of the sea which intervenes between the beach and the vessel. Some troop-horses fight with all the strength and old-fashioned tactics for which they are especially famous, and they lead the sailors a nice dance when they are guiding them over the hatchway, and conducting them through it into the hold of the vessel.

Once deposited in the hold, however, and released from the slings, a lock of hay and the voice of his master will soothe the animal's fears and reconcile him to his new situation. Horses that are embarked for Ireland are generally conducted on board by means of gangways, as the ships are brought sufficiently near to the piers at Liverpool for that purpose. Great care is taken that they are not overheated or overfed during a sea voyage, and, therefore, bran, with occasional doses of nitre, forms a large proportion of their daily food. The face, eyes, and nostrils of each horse are washed with a sponge and sea-water at every stable hour, and the hold of the vessel is ventilated by means of wind-sails. Sometimes, however, in stormy weather, the hatches have to be closed, or partially so, and it is then very close and hot below, but great advantage is in such cases obtained by washing the manger with vinegar and water, and occasionally sponging the nostrils of the horses with the same. The use of dumb bells, dancing, and any diversion calculated for the purpose of daily exercise, is permitted, in fact, encouraged as much as possible, in order to maintain the health and strength of the men, and they are put through the sword, carbine, and other exercises in parties, according to the extent of the accommodation on deck.

To return, however, to the relation of current events at head-quarters. While our regiment was lying in York, the country, especially the manufacturing districts, was much disturbed by what were called "Chartist riots," or "plug drawing," the latter term being derived from the rioters drawing the street plugs, so as to allow the water that supplied the mill with steam and power to escape and run to waste. The regiment was divided into detachments, and marched in various directions to be quartered in towns where the civil power was considered insufficient to preserve the public peace. Manchester, Oldham, Bolton, Bury, Blackburn, Hyde, and all the manufacturing towns in Lancashire, were in a state of siege for more than a month. Mills and warehouses were fired, machinery broken, shopkeepers were pilfered and openly robbed of their stock in trade, which the lawless mob either destroyed or consumed, and the peaceable inhabitants were kept in a continual state of terror bordering on despair. Nothing but the devoted loyalty of the soldiers, aided by the superhuman exertions of the police, preserved the whole country from revolution and the public buildings from being sacked by the off-scourings of society.

The detachment to which I belonged was despatched to Dudley, so as to be in readiness to aid the civil power in the Staffordshire Potteries. We were there upwards of three weeks, and never slept in bed; some of our horses were kept ready saddled, and we could have turned out the whole fully equipped in "field order" any time at a few minutes' notice. No part of a soldier's duty is more disagreeable than to be called out to quell a riot. To fire upon, ride down, or cut down with the sabre, indiscriminately, any individual that may come within reach, is a proceeding exceedingly repugnant to the feelings of a British soldier; therefore it was with no very pleasureable feelings that we one day noticed a mounted policeman ride hurriedly up to the Stork Hotel, where the commanding officer of the detachment was staying, and in a few moments afterwards the trumpeter sounded "Turn out the whole." We rapidly formed; the command was given, "Threes right," and off we marched at a swinging trot to the place indicated, a town some miles distant, where we found the house-tops literally swarming with human beings, who had ripped the tiles from the roofs to throw at the police and a small troop of yeomanry cavalry, who were totally surrounded by the mob, and getting by far the worst of it, no orders having been given by the civil authorities for the yeomanry to fire; which, indeed, it is questionable whether they could have performed with safety to themselves. As fast as the police arrested any of the mob, they were rescued. The road, or rather street, by which we approached the market-place (a wide thoroughfare) was crammed full of the most lawless-looking ruffians—men and women—it was ever my lot to see together, before or since, in England; they were all armed with sticks, pikes, stones, and some had old guns too, which they now and then fired—more from bravado, I should imagine, than from any intent to kill. The sea of human faces and glistening eyes were turned full upon us as we swept at a rapid trot round a corner into full view of the yelling, screaming mass.

The shops were all closed, and the timid inhabitants were here and there peeping from the corners of the window-blinds from the rooms above. Crash! crash! went the stones at the windows, wherever the mob were foiled in their attempts to break open the doors and plunder the shops. Barrels of ale were rolled into the streets and the ends driven in for the mob to drink out of, many using their hats for drinking-vessels; flitches of bacon and cheeses were handed to and fro over the heads of the rioters; loaves were pitched from the bakers' shops among the people; a draper's shop was on fire, and the contents of a toy-shop were showered among us, just as we arrived in the *mêlée*. The trumpet sounded "Walk," and the babel of yells and shrieks was hushed as if by magic; not a stone was thrown, nor a weapon raised to attack us; all appeared astonished when we came upon the scene, and, with the exception of an occasional cry of "The regulars! the regulars!" scarce a sound was heard above a low hum of human voices, as if in conversation with each other.

The space immediately in our front was soon cleared, as the dense masses opened out, fell back, and trampled upon the more helpless. We walked our horses steadily on, with our sabres still in their scabbards, to the market-place, where our captain found the chief of police surrounded by yeomanry and his own men. An attempt had just been made to break open the doors and sack the town-hall, and they were all in a terrible state of excitement. We rapidly took up our ground and formed in double rank, with the yeomanry and police in our rear. Just then a shower of stones was hurled at us, but they did but little damage; the Riot Act was read, and the captain in command gave the order,

in a clear, ringing voice, to draw swords; but when those ominous-looking weapons flashed in the blazing sun, the dense masses scampered off helter-skelter, and, with the exception of a few rioters, whom the police succeeded in apprehending, we were soon left alone in our glory.

Such is the amount of fear and respect with which disciplined soldiers are regarded by an infuriated and misguided mob, and the simple exhibition of such discipline is generally sufficient to prevent a collision with those pests of society, who, happily for the peace and prosperity of England, do not exist in numbers sufficient to endanger the peace and happiness of its respectable and industrious people.

Chapter Seventeen.

And there was mounting in hot haste; the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder, peal on peal, afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star.

Notwithstanding the opposition and ill-feeling with which the lower orders regard soldiers who may at times be called out in aid of the civil power, it is gratifying to think that, in the event of a war breaking out, it is extremely improbable that our Government would be compelled to have recourse to the objectionable practice which has frequently been pursued by other nations with regard to the draft or conscription. The lower classes are ever more ready to voluntarily enlist in time of war than in peace; and although we are generally understood to be a peaceable, industrious people, and designated as “a nation of shopkeepers,” no other nation on the face of the earth could muster more voluntary recruits, able-bodied and enthusiastic, in time of war, than the British Government. The civilians, too, during the period of a popular war, vie with each other in their treatment and general admiration of the soldier. Many of our militia regiments volunteered to a man to serve “wherever Her Majesty should please to direct” during the Crimean campaign; and should we ever be so unfortunate as to be again embroiled in another struggle of the same nature, I have no doubt that the ranks of the regular army will at once be augmented to the required number from our militia and volunteer regiments. Though the latter may only be engaged and required, under their present conditions, to fight in defence of our homes in case of invasion, they would be sure to be fired with a desire to participate in the honours and distinctions always to be attained in a more or less degree by brave and well-conducted men in the regular army. I am not, of course, presuming that all, or perhaps one-fourth, of the volunteers enrolled would respond to the probable call for men to proceed on active service, in case of a war breaking out; neither would any stigma of cowardice or want of loyalty rest upon those who chose to stay at home. It is at all times advisable for men to stay at home who really cannot enter upon the active and arduous duties of a campaign with a full determination to fight and distinguish themselves, so as to attain not only honour but a pecuniary consideration in the form of pension on discharge, or such promotion while living and serving in the army, as will compensate the respectable civilian for exchanging a comparatively easy life at home for one of privations, dangers, and hardships in a foreign land.

The majority of our soldiers are enlisted from a different class to volunteers. The same restrictions, rigid rules, and discipline to which the former are subjected would be exceedingly distasteful to the latter, whose superior knowledge and discrimination between right and wrong would render them very troublesome to the school of commanding officers of the present day. They would grumble and spread discontent to a degree that might be dangerous to the discipline of the army as at present constituted. It is true that very many of our soldiers are drawn from the strongest, the hardiest, and I may add the most headstrong class of people in the world: for the most part, they are given to habits of intemperance, and always taught from boyhood to consider independence a virtue, and to look upon the higher classes as their enemies. When, however, they become soldiers, they are required at once to abandon all such thoughts, and yield implicit obedience to the restrictions on their habits and feelings. I have already stated that this class of men are really benefited by the change from a civil to a military life, and also set forth my reasons for so stating. But such a change for the majority of our volunteers as they are at present constituted would be anything but welcome, for it must be remembered that, however gallant they may be in action, or however well conducted generally, promotion is very slow in the British army, and, after all, it is not scrupulously awarded according to merit. The habits and manners of the British volunteer in civil life are far different to those of three-fourths of the regular army before they enlisted. But when divested of his clownish manners and rendered obedient to his superiors, the common labourer is in every point of view (except that of making him into a non-commissioned officer) a better man for military purposes than the son of a tradesman. He is quite as moral, as docile, and can stand the change of climate better than three-fourths of the volunteers we see marching so gaily through the streets of our large towns and cities. Soldiers are required to march, to fight, to starve, to encounter storms at sea, pestilence on land, to abandon their native country, relatives, and friends, for years—often for life. They have little pay, few promises of rewards, and still fewer rewards; and when worn out and miserable, and racked with pain from long hardships and wounds, they are too often sent in poverty to their native places, and pine away their lives the lowest of the lowly. The life of a private soldier, infantry or cavalry, would be considered on the whole as one irksome and distasteful to the natural feelings of a great number of our volunteers. The duty of the former is to “work at soldiers,” and the latter only to “play at soldiers.” But, rich or poor, educated or uneducated, they must all be kept in strict subordination in the army, and do their duty, whatever it may be, with scrupulous exactness and punctuality. On the field of battle the one is as good as the other; and who can say that the national spirit, the vital energy, of the thorough Englishman, Irishman, or Scotchman, has not always been as firm on the battle-field with the men descended from poor parents as those who can boast of the great and rich for their progenitors?

My object in making the above observations is to press upon the minds of such of my readers as are already or may

eventually become volunteers, that in the event of a war breaking out, and the spirit of patriotism extending, as it invariably does, to militia and volunteer corps, it would be the height of folly to enter the regular army, without first calculating the consequences of so great a change from the "feather-bed soldiering" at home to that I have described as a matter of imperative duty to the regular soldier on a campaign.

The maintenance of a large volunteer force at home is as much a matter of policy with our Government, as it is to send the regular army abroad to meet the enemy. Therefore, morally, the volunteer is, considering his capability, as much entitled to credit as his brethren in arms, who by nature are better fitted to the post of danger and hardships assigned to them. A certain class of civilians (speech-makers at public meetings, and the like) frequently state that "a better system of rewards, and a milder discipline, would bring a better class of men into the army." No change that could be devised would bring a better class of men into the army. The British army has nearly always conquered every army it encountered: this, therefore, should be proof sufficient that it is the best army. But good as it undoubtedly has been, and, moreover, sorely put to the test, through the incompetency of its leaders and administrators, it never was in anything like the state of efficiency it is at the present time; and it doubtless will continue to improve until engaged in another campaign. When on the line of march, I have often heard civilians question soldiers as to their feelings and individual experience in action. "Did you not feel frightened?" they would say; and I daresay that many of my readers would like to hear the same query truthfully answered. Now, I am well aware that there are some enthusiastic people who would almost consider it a "national crime," so to speak, for any person to assert, or in the most distant manner insinuate, that at the commencement of a battle a British soldier feels anything approaching to fear; yet in making a few remarks upon this subject, I am compelled to admit that all British soldiers are men, and it is peculiar to the constitution of man to be afraid on the approach of death, unless he becomes so excited that his passions overcome his reflection.

The British soldier must have credit, over all others, for steady unflinching courage and cool discipline in standing still under the raking fire of an enemy, until his commander sees a proper opportunity to give the order to advance; but on these occasions the faces of the bravest often change colour, and the limbs of the most resolute tremble, as the fatal thud of the enemy's bullets is heard and seen to take effect upon some respected comrade or favourite officer. Those who have not experienced this peculiar feeling can form but little idea of the effects which it produces on the mind of a soldier at such a time. On such occasions no conversation is supposed to be going on, but now and then a stifled whisper expressing an anxious desire to hear the welcome sound of the trumpet to "advance" is heard. Every minute seems an hour, as bullet after bullet whistles through the ranks, and the round shot, first ploughing up the ground or scattering the dust in front of the brigade, comes crashing amongst the men and horses. Sometimes a huge shell is seen "whizzing" through the air, and hovering for an instant ere it explodes and deals death and destruction in every direction. This appears like cool, unexcited courage, and no troops in the world have ever displayed it with less flinching than the British. But it would be absurd to say that it is done with out fear of death. It is hard to stand still or sit still on your horses and be shot at, with a consciousness that every second of time may be your last, and the next you may be in eternity. But when once the order is given to "advance"—first at a "walk," then a rapid trot, then a fast canter, and finally, amidst the clash of the sabre-scabbards on the stirrup-irons, and the rumbling roll of the horses' hoofs, the shrill voice of the commander is heard as he turns his head to the trumpeter and shrieks out the order "charge," and the latter turns in his saddle and sounds the blast which calls many a good soldier to his last account—instantly the horses stretch out their necks, lay back their ears, and dash into a gallop at full speed; each man clenches his teeth, drops the hilt of his sabre on his right thigh, firmly clutched in his hand, and leaning forward in his stirrups, he is rapidly borne to the ranks of the enemy. Sometimes he has to encounter, as at Balaclava, a field-battery, bellowing and belching forth fire and smoke, first seen, then terribly realised as the men and horses that happen to be riding in the line of fire tumble heels over head in a quivering mass of mangled flesh, blood, and ghastly splinters of bone—seen but for one instant, when seen at all, but long enough to make you remember it for ever; and it renders you temporarily insane with excitement for the time being: your only desire is to kill. On, on, you ride, amidst the fire and the smoke, the blood and the thunder, until you meet the foe hand to hand: a streak of fire flashes simultaneously from end to end of the enemy's front. Many saddles are emptied, and many horses are plunging here and there without riders. Strong men, shot through the heart or the head, throw up their arms, and, falling backwards from their horses, are seen no more; if any life be left in them it is soon trampled out. Behind the field-battery is a solid square of infantry; the front ranks are kneeling with bayonets presented the height of the horses' chests, the rear ranks are standing with their arms at the "present." On, on, the cavalry dash, over the guns or through the narrow passages between them. Those gunners, with here and there an officer, who stand bravely to their field-pieces to the last, are only like so many chopping-blocks for the rear squadrons, who dash forward in rapid succession and keep the front ranks intact. And now the work of carnage is at hand. Crashing into the solid squares with one wild British hurrah, the rattle of bayonets and the clash of sabres are awful evidence that the death-struggle between cavalry and infantry has fairly begun. But little firing is heard beyond an occasional shot from an officer's revolver (the best of all firearms in close conflict); the smoke is not so dense, and you can plainly see the whites of your enemies' eyes, which have a strange supernatural appearance, many rolling in the agonies of death. Now and then you feel the spurting of blood on your hands and face, unconscious at the moment whether it be from your own body, your comrade's, or your foe's. Nothing intelligible is heard beyond the shrieks of the dying, the rattle of steel, the loud groan of some horse who, mortally wounded, drops on the ground, rolls on his back, and struggles with his shoes upwards, until all is over; but you cannot stay to see the end.

The incidents of an action are all taken at a glance; you don't think until safe out of it; and sometimes days elapse before you call to mind the many things that have flitted before your vision in the heat of an engagement. You may see a trooper fairly cleave the head of an enemy, like cutting through the heart of a cabbage; the point of a sword enter the mouth of another enemy and peep out at the other side; a swinging cut or two from your own arm may be delivered so as to sever the jugular vein and all the arteries of the neck of a man on your right, whose bayonet may be within an inch of your ribs. On the other hand, the desperate infantry will thrust their bayonets up to the hilt into the breast or behind the shoulder of a horse and pierce his heart, so that he rolls over, and before the trooper can clear his stirrups, and rise to form his guard, his foe has pinned him to the ground with a thrust through the pit of his stomach, and leaves man and horse to mingle their life's blood together. The cuts one and two with the point are the most effective in close fighting with infantry; but the latter, if well drilled to the use of the bayonet, are at all times

the most formidable opponents that cavalry have to contend with.

Nothing but good horses, with plenty of bone and substance, ridden at a very rapid gallop by determined men, can break up a solid square of infantry composed of good men well drilled in the use of the bayonet. Such squares formed by our own men in the face of the best cavalry that could be brought to bear against them have never yet been broken; but, on the other hand, our cavalry have never been known to fail in breaking up solid squares of our enemies' infantry. A reference to the history of any of our great battles will be sufficient to confirm this statement.

A battle between two regiments or brigades of cavalry is, however, a species of fighting in which our own dragoons excel over every other mounted troops that ever were, or in my opinion, ever will be, opposed to them in action. They are most unnecessarily encumbered with a heavy, unwieldy firearm (the carbine), when a neat and exceedingly effective weapon—a repeating pistol, or revolver—could be loaded with five rounds of ball-cartridge before going into action, and when fairly engaged and surrounded with enemies on every side, the revolver could be drawn from a holster-pipe, and every round it contained fired at such close quarters as to render it a matter of certainty that a man would be killed at every shot.

As an illustration of the value of this weapon, I may state that the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars (one of the regiments engaged in the Light Cavalry charge at Balaclava) had fifty of these revolvers served out to them before embarking for India to assist in quelling the Mutiny in 1858. Soon after their arrival, they were called into action at Gwalior, where they charged the rebels, and in a few minutes the latter were put to flight, leaving upwards of one hundred dead on the field. On examining the bodies, it was found that, with one or two exceptions, they had all been killed by the men armed with revolvers, who composed the front rank. Now, if the leading squadron had simply been armed with a carbine and sabre, the manner in which the majority of our cavalry regiments (except lancers) are armed, the odds are that not a man of the enemy would have been killed, inasmuch as the rebels would have fled before our troops had been near enough to use the sabre.

The carbine, by its great weight, adds materially to the load which the horse has to carry in long and forced marches. Its weight and length also render it a cumbersome and awkward weapon to load and fire in close action; and the continual plunging, unsteady movements of the horse make it a pure matter of chance whether the soldier can take a correct aim so as to hit an enemy at any range. Then, again, it is much in the way of the sword-arm in cutting to the right, and the manner in which it is attached to the saddle is at all times extremely dangerous to the soldier when mounting in a hurry, or if, when a horse is hit or killed in action (a thing of very frequent occurrence), the animal should fall on his off (right) side, the soldier's thigh being wedged, as it were, between the stock of the carbine crosswise, the man's thigh is snapped like a twig, and he is therefore incapable of releasing himself.

After the famous charge at Balaclava some noise was made about the inefficiency of the carbine, and the necessity of equipping our dragoons with a better weapon; but it is very difficult to introduce such a change into the British army.

Corporal Shaw, the life-guardsman, threw his carbine away on the field of Waterloo, and trusted to his sabre, with which he killed eleven men. In the face of the improved equipment of foreign cavalry, it is to be hoped that our dragoons will not be left with this unwieldy, cumbersome, and most useless weapon in future campaigns.

Further reference to this subject, together with my own experience on active service, must be reserved for the concluding chapters of my story. For the present, it will be my especial business to endeavour to amuse my readers with the continuous events and other matters connected with my term of service at home.

Chapter Eighteen.

Upon a bonnie day in June,
When wearing thro' the afternoon,
Twa dogs that were na thrang at hame
Forgather'd ance upon a time.

During our stay in the Staffordshire Potteries we enlisted three recruits. One of these had been a dealer in all kinds of dogs, and, according to his own admission, sometimes a *stealer* of canine property; but dog-stealing was at that time not considered a felony, nor indeed was it a punishable offence at all, so far as I remember. At the time he enlisted he had in his possession a very small black-and-tan terrier, of not more than two or three pounds weight. This little animal he called Prim, and was very particular to stipulate, before he enlisted, that Prim should accompany him to barracks. "Perhaps," he said, "the colonel of the regiment, or some of the officers, might take a fancy to it and give me a deal of money for it, especially when they hear its history." This was said in the stable-yard of the Stork Hotel, Dudley, one morning after a party of us had returned from night patrol, the rioters being at that time very troublesome, prowling about the country at all hours, frightening the inhabitants out of their wits.

We were very anxious to hear the history of Prim, the little terrier, and after cleaning our kit and horses, the recruit (a very intelligent fellow for his class, about eighteen years of age) related the following story, while sitting on a truss of hay with Prim on his knee:—

"This here little dog once belonged to a gemman who lived at Hands worth, just outside of Brummagem. This gemman was so well known among the dog-fanciers at Brummagem, that none on 'em would ever steal any of his dogs, and he had lots on 'em, but this was the best of the whole bilin'. Well, not far from where the gemman lived there was a sort of farmer, wot sold milk and kept cows. This farmer had a big, savage bulldog, wot he had bought from a butcher in Brummagem; the dog's name was Turk. The gemman who owned Prim had his house and garden fenced off from the road with boarding about seven feet high, and in this boarding, near the bottom, was a hole just

large enough for the fowls to come through on to the road, whenever they was inclined for to do. Well, Prim was in and out through this here hole quite as often as the fowls. It was just the thing for him; he used for to rush out and snap at any big dog that might be passing, and when the big dogs turned round upon him, the impudent little joker would dart through the hole, and further insult the others by barking at them, knowing very well that they could not follow him; so the big dogs used to trot off, vowing all sorts of vengeance, if ever they got him within reach of their jaws.

“Turk was a very savage dog, but was always upon very good terms with Prim; ’cos why? Prim used for to bring meat and bones from his master’s kitchen every day and give them to Turk through the hole. The two dogs were often seen at play together in the road, for Turk was too big to get through to Prim in the garden. But Turk was always very cross, and whenever he thought Prim was going too far with his marlocks, he would give the little dog a nip and a shake to keep him civil; but Prim never bore no malice, and never forgot to bring Turk a good meal whenever he found the cook off her guard in the kitchen.

“This state o’ things, however, was too bright to last. The older Turk got, the more crusty and ill-tempered he became. He actually growled and snapped at Prim one day because the little un brought him a piece of beef with too much bone. Still Prim’s friendship was as true as ever. One day last summer, Turk set off as usual to visit his friend, who was generally somewhere handy about the garden. When Turk arrived at the hole in the fence, he put his head down to the opening, and not seeing Prim, he barked several times to let the little un know that he was waiting on him coming with the dinner; but Prim was too busy looking out for a chance to pick up something nice, so he took no notice of Turk’s angry yelp. At last Turk thought he would lie down in the warm sun just by the hole. He became sleepy, and lazily opened and shut first one eye and then the other; then he licked his paws, and brushed a fly off his nose, wondered how long Prim would be with his dinner, gradually began to doze, let his head down between his paws, and fell asleep. Turk had only slept a few minutes before Prim made his appearance at the hole, with about half a shoulder of cooked mutton. Seeing Turk asleep, he gently laid down the meat, and thought he would play a trick upon him, although the old un had often warned him not to take liberties, as his temper was not to be trusted. The little un, however, did not think of the consequences, and quickly seizing Turk’s stumpy tail between his teeth, he soon pulled the old dog out of his dreams. Turk jumped up, rolled his eyes about fiercely, while every hair on his back stood on end, and savagely turned to seize the little un. But Prim was too nimble for him; he jumped through the hole in the fence, and was safe. Peering his little impudent-looking head through the opening, he gave two or three short, sharp yelps, as if making game of Turk, who regarded him with that quiet, savage look peculiar to a bulldog, as much as to say, ‘Every dog has his day; wait till I catch you.’ But, angry though he was, he did not leave until he had finished the meal Prim had so kindly brought him.

“Turk’s savage nature now began to show itself. A bulldog, like some human creatures, never forgives an injury. His rage was terrible; his mouth foamed, his eyes grew red as blood, and his teeth grated as if they were already chewing up little Prim’s bones.

“An old bulldog is always a very sensible-looking animal, and as he stood looking at Prim through the hole in the fence, he seemed to be saying to himself as well as he was able, ‘From this day forth I am your deadly foe; revenge shall be my only thoughts by day and my dreams by night. Beware of the future; I will never rest until my teeth are buried in your throat. I hate you and the whole race of dogs, and my temper is so bad that I hate myself and every living thing.’ Turk then cantered off home. On his way he had to pass an old man breaking stones by the side of the road. Between this man and Turk there existed a deadly feud, which had arisen from Turk having once stolen the poor man’s dinner, bag and all. Up to this period Turk had crept through the hedge and trotted along the field, until fairly past the spot where the man was at work, when he would come through the hedge again and trot along until he came to his meeting-place with Prim. Now, on this particular day, Turk was determined not to go out of his way, and if the man should throw a stone at him, or in any way interfere with him, he would attack him and worry him if possible. On he trotted up the middle of the road until he reached a point where the old man caught a sight of him. Rising quickly from his seat on the stone-heap, hammer in hand, he placed himself in the middle of the road, determined to dispute Turk’s passage.

“‘Come on!’ said the old man, ‘and with this hammer,’ (flourishing it over his head) ‘I will be thy butcher,’ said he. Still Turk trotted on, apparently undismayed, until within a few yards of the stonebreaker, who lost his temper and threw the hammer with all his force at the head of Turk. The bulldog jumped aside and avoided the murderous weapon, then, with a short, sharp growl, he dashed at the old man, who turned round and stooped towards the stone-heap for one to throw at the dog. Turk instantly took advantage of the man’s position by seizing hold of his breeches, which he tore to shreds, and then, as if satisfied with the assault, he cantered up the lane and crept into his kennel to meditate upon his plan of revenge upon poor little Prim. How was he to get square with the terrier for biting his tail? Plan after plan was turned over in his mind as he lay with his head between his paws just outside the kennel, his upper lip curled up, and showing a formidable set of snow-white teeth. He hated even the flies as they dropped on his nose, and crawled around his bleary-looking eyes, bloodshot with rage. At last he thought of a plan. True, it would not be a very agreeable one for himself, but what of that? He was a thorough-bred bulldog, and nothing should stand between him and his plan of revenge.

“Hitherto Turk’s appetite had been good; he had never been known to desert a bone until it was as bare and as shiny as his own teeth. He gradually began to leave off his inroads upon the farmer’s kitchen, and the wife thought he must in consequence be sick. In vain he was tempted with the choicest bits, raw and cooked; he gazed at them with a longing look, and even condescended to snuff in their savoury odours, but that was all. One bite sufficed for his breakfast, two or three for his dinner, and be retired into the farthest end of his kennel supperless.

“A Brummagem dog-fancier was sent for, and notwithstanding Turk’s determined opposition, some medicine was forced down his throat, which, it was said, would give him an appetite as good as a famished gorilla in about a couple of days. But the two days passed without restoring his appetite; he grew thinner and thinner, and the farmer at last gave him up as incurable, assigning as his reason that he must be in a ‘dog consumption.’

"Shortly after this unaccountable disease had set in, it had been noticed that, the animal quitted his kennel every night as it was growing dark, and trotted down the road; but no one knew what these twilight expeditions were undertaken for. But the plot was drawing to a head. One evening he departed, as usual, down the road. His tortures were about to end, and his long fast be followed by a feast. Nearing the well-known garden where he had so often met Prim, his movements became curious. He moved like a ghost, and stopped to listen, but nothing was stirring. Finally he reached the opening in the fence; he pushed his head stealthily through the hole, his neck followed his head, his body followed his neck, his tail followed his body, and now Turk was fairly in the garden, where he had never been before. Being satisfied with this experiment (which had been repeatedly made since he had brought his plan of fasting into operation, but never successfully until this occasion) he returned to the road and began to bark. In a few moments an answering yelp was heard—Prim was hastening to his doom. Suddenly his little head was popped out of the opening of the fence. A sharp growl escaped Turk—he was too eager for his revenge; and Prim, instead of coming through the hole on to the road (where Turk had often tried to coax him without effect), gave a defiant 'wow, wow, wow,' and was making his way back to his kennel, as much as to say, 'I can't accommodate you to-night.' Quick as lightning, Turk darted towards the hole. At the same instant, a loud report was heard; the figure of a man appeared upon the scene. It was the enraged stonebreaker. Turk rolled over, mortally wounded by a shot from an old blunderbuss. 'Ha! ha! you would steal my dinner, would you, and then rip a good pair of corduroy breeches off my legs all to pieces, would you?' said the old man, giving him a kick over the ribs. Turk made answer by one prolonged howl of disappointment, pain, and despair, which grew fainter and fainter, until it ceased altogether, and he died the victim of his own selfish and revengeful disposition. By the timely arrival and interposition of the stonebreaker the life of Prim was saved, but he never appeared happy afterwards, probably from the fear of encountering Turk and paying with his life the consequences of his harmless joke."

"At the same instant a loud report was heard, and Turk rolled over mortally wounded."

I have endeavoured as far as I could to render the recruit's dog-story as it was given, with as little alteration as possible. When finished, we asked him how he became possessed of Prim? His answer was that he had exchanged a small French poodle with the gentleman for the little hero of the tale. Prim was allowed to accompany the recruit to head-quarters; he lived some years in the regiment, and finally got worried through venturing too near a large monkey kept chained behind the stables, around whom he was accustomed to dance and make fun of him, much in the same manner as he had done with Turk and the large dogs who passed his old master's residence at Handsworth.

Chapter Nineteen.

For gold the merchant ploughs the main,
The farmer ploughs the manor;
But glory is the sodjer's pride;
The sodjer's wealth is honour.
The brave, poor sodjer ne'er despise,
Nor count him as a stranger;
Remember he's his country's stay
In day and hour o' danger.

Burns.

As thousands of my readers have never seen the camps at Aldershot or the Curragh, a slight sketch of each of these great military stations will, no doubt, be interesting. It has never been my lot to be quartered at either place,

therefore I am unable to enter into details as regards the extent of accommodation. I believe, however, that upwards of twenty thousand men of all arms are frequently concentrated at Aldershot, the object of which appears to be the thorough training of troops for foreign service. The authorities in this, as well as many other matters connected with the War Department, display a lamentable degree of ignorance. When first the camp at Aldershot was instituted, the greater part of the men were encamped in huts built of deal and roofed with felt, and some few regiments were under canvas. Gradually the accommodation was extended, until at the present time there are numerous ranges of brick buildings erected on quite a model plan, and superior as examples of barrack architecture to anything in Europe. These are called the “permanent barracks;” the cavalry quarters and stabling, with two spacious riding-schools and other necessary buildings, such as cook-houses, saddlers’, armourers’, shoemakers’, and tailors’ shops, all being separated some distance from the infantry barracks.

Very many infantry regiments and several brigades of artillery, together with one regiment of cavalry and a battalion of the Rifle Brigade, were in huts when I visited the camp in April, 1860. It is the ridiculous system of picketing horses in the open air to which I allude as displaying a great amount of ignorance on the part of the authorities of the War Department. The system entails a great and very unnecessary loss to the country annually. When troop-horses have been used to warm stables—many of them for years—they are certain to take cold when picketed in the open air. Inflammation, influenza, greasy heels, and that dreadful disease, glanders, are almost sure to break out, and in time extend their effects to other regiments who come in contact with them or their quarters. If young horses, on being purchased from their breeders, were never permitted to enter a stable, no harm would come of the system; but moving horses from warm stables to the open air, in such an exposed situation as Aldershot, can only have a parallel in a gardener transplanting his choicest hot-house plants into the open air during the rigours of a severe winter.

Aldershot, in the county of Hants, is about fifty miles from London, on the South-Western Railway. The camp is fourteen miles in circumference, and is completely surrounded by piquets (soldier-police-men), mounted and on foot; so that if any poor, discontented wight makes an attempt to desert, it is a guinea to a gooseberry in favour of his being caught, and walked back under escort to camp. When I alighted at Farnborough Station my eye at once rested upon the fine bronzed countenance of Sergeant McGuinness, of the 10th Hussars (one of the Kertch heroes), who was at that period provost-sergeant in charge of a piquet always on duty between Farnborough and the camp, a distance of three miles. No ticket is allowed to be issued at the Farnborough or other stations to soldiers until the provost-sergeants have inspected the “pass,” or “furlough,” which they ought to have duly signed by the captain of their troop or company.

As an instance of the want of discretion before spoken of, in reference to the unnecessary exposure to the weather of men and horses, I may state, that while I was visiting the camp, the 40th Regiment and a few companies of the 41st Regiment of infantry arrived, having come direct from the West Indies, where they had been stationed many years. I was at the railway-station when they were disgorged from the special train, in all about 1000 men, besides women and children. The sick, some partially blind, others lame, and many suffering from extreme weakness, were assisted into the ambulances sent from the camp to convey them from the station to the hospital. The main body looked sadly emaciated, and in want of warmer and more comfortable quarters than are to be found at Aldershot. I have seen thousands upon thousands of soldiers embarked and disembarked, many with more than a chance of certain death staring them in the face, but none with such miserable-looking countenances as these poor men. It was a cold, showery day for the time of year, and they were accompanied by many women and children, who had to toil through to camp on foot as best they could; some with infants at the breast, and others toddling and fretting at their side. Why a few ambulances were not sent down from the camp to convey these women and children to their quarters, Lieutenant-General Knollys (then in command of the troops at Aldershot) can best answer.

“They were accompanied by many women and children. . . . . One of the men carried a goat, which was lame, across his shoulders.”

It is, however, impossible not to ask why soldiers, calling themselves *men*, should marry women to such misery as this? And why do women ever marry soldiers at all? The Legislature ought either to prohibit the marriage of soldiers, or treat their wives as women, and not worse than dogs.

It was curious to see the number of parrots and birds of beautiful plumage, together with monkeys and goats, the men had brought with them from the West Indies. I noticed a soldier carrying one of the latter, which was lame, across his shoulders; I also noticed several pure-bred Arab horses, especially two noble-looking greys of high caste, with flowing manes and tails, and showing a perfection of symmetry such as I very seldom see in Arab horses imported into this country. Those of the officers who had wives assisted them to cabs, and then took their own places in the ranks; the colonels mounted their Arab chargers, and "Forty-ninth, fall in! Forty-first, fall in! Attention! Right form four deep! Quick march!" the columns stepped off with the left foot, and commenced their measured tramp to the music, which sounded as a mockery to the horde of weary women and children toiling in their rear, and who were soon left far behind.

The road from Farnborough station to the camp is pleasant enough in fine weather to those who are light-hearted and free, but it is miserable at any time, with nothing but more, misery at the end of the journey, to the unfortunate individuals I have described. I mounted the box of an omnibus which meets every train, and we trundled merrily away along the sandy lane, bounded on each side for a part of the way by stately firs. The 'bus stops a few minutes at the "Queen's Hotel," a temporary building of iron and glass, situate on the edge of what is called the north camp, and on an eminence overlooking the south camp in the far distance. To the right, almost as far as the eye can reach, is a barren desert, with only here and there a patch of stunted heather; and, although the showers have been heavy, I notice a dense cloud of black dust, moving now here, now there. Hark! I hear borne on the wind that well-known trumpet-sound, "Halt!" and when the dust (which has been trodden up by the horses' feet) has partially cleared away, I can perceive the gay pennons of that time, newly-raised corps, the 5th Royal Irish Lancers. Lower down in the valley are the 18th Royal Irish Hussars, another regiment raised since the close of the Crimean campaign; these, at the time I write, are about embarking for India. The old time-honoured "Green Horse," the 5th Dragoon Guards, are with them at field-drill, and all are in a high state of efficiency. I saw them march to their quarters an hour afterwards all begrimed with dust, which made them appear as black as sweeps, the whites of their eyes rolling beneath their shaggy eyebrows, like those of the inhabitants of an uncivilised region, more than British dragoons.

The first range of huts that met my eye after passing the Queen's Hotel was occupied by a battalion of the Rifle Brigade—a fine, well-made class of men, of more than ordinary intelligence: these were at drill, all on the run (double) on the wide sandy plain in front of their huts. In the rear of these huts, and nearer to the north camp railway-station (on the South Eastern line), are a couple of squadrons of the 16th Lancers not long arrived from York, the men in huts, and the horses picketed in sand-pits; and farther on still I could distinguish a party of foot guards, attired in their white flannel jackets, at rifle practice. Lower down, on our way to the south camp and permanent barracks, is the canal with its pontoon bridge, the connecting link between the north and south camps. Away the omnibus trundles along the Farnham road, leaving the aforesaid encampments on our left, until it reaches the Club-house, for the use of officers only, and situate in a fine space of pleasure-ground: it is a prettily designed structure of wood, iron, and glass, painted green and white. Opposite the Club-house we diverge from the main road, and enter the precincts of the south camp, and pass by the innumerable huts, which would be black and sombre enough but for the scarlet uniforms of their inmates, hung here and there while being brushed and pipeclayed, which helps to relieve the everlasting blackness of their asphalte-bedaubed roofs and sides.

The first regiment I noticed was the 21st Light Infantry: a smart, well-disciplined corps it is too, hardy-looking, well-built fellows, with plenty of bone and muscle. They wear white facings on their jackets, and have white plumes nodding in their ugly-looking shakos. Passing the 11th regiment, wearing green facings, and the 12th, not long arrived from Australia, where I was told they lost many men, who deserted to the gold diggings, I came to the lines of a militia regiment, their uniform fitting them like sentry-boxes, their forage-caps placed on their heads like inverted quartern measures, and their heads sticking out of their stiff leathern stocks like a cod-fish boiling in a kettle with the head upwards. Why do the militia wear leathern stocks, especially in hot weather?

I have now arrived on the crest of the hill overlooking the south camp, situate in a valley; and travelling on its ridge I can see, far away to my left, the stables of the Royal Horse Artillery. These are constructed of heather, hazel-sticks, straw, and furze; and though in a very exposed situation, they are tolerably warm—a sort of medium temperature between brick-built stables and the open air. These stables have all been burnt down and many horses destroyed since I was at Aldershot. A large open space in front of the stables was covered with Armstrong guns, at which some recruits were at practice. Farther away still is the commissariat—a pile of ugly-looking buildings, full of prime ox-beef, living and slaughtered, ready for the cook-houses, which are here fitted with improved patented apparatus that will bake, boil, or stew with equal facility. Not the least prominent object on the crest of the hill, in the centre of the camp, and hanging on a sort of gibbet-post, is a very large bell, fought for, won, and transported from Sebastopol. Here I have a full view of the permanent barracks in the valley below, together with a range of little shops—butchers', bakers', shoemakers', greengrocers', outfitters', jewellers', public-houses, etc, etc. The first building on my right, after descending the bill, was once a workhouse—it is now an hospital for sick soldiers; and those poor fellows who were able were taking exercise outside its walls. Farther on still I find myself fairly in the middle of the camp, and have little more to say in reference to Aldershot, except that it is the only encampment or station of the British army where the Queen witnesses an occasional review of her troops.

There is one very objectionable matter in connexion with these royal reviews, which is, that her Majesty—known to be so kind and considerate to all persons with whom she comes in contact—invariably chooses the middle of the day at the hottest period of the year to order a field-day in review order, on which occasion it not unfrequently happens that more than one poor fellow is sun-struck, dies, or loses his reason. There is a house or pavilion built and expressly fitted up for the royal family, and the Queen would be far more popular with her army if she would remain all night at the camp, and order the review to take place from four to seven in the morning. As matters now are conducted, the sovereign is by no means welcome by either soldiers or officers at Aldershot; and the sooner the absurd practice of drilling soldiers in the middle of a hot summer's day is dispensed with, the better will it be for the health, the

contentment, and the discipline of the army. The welfare of the army should always be the first consideration of the sovereign and the advisers of the Crown.

The camp at the Curragh is conducted much on the same principle as the camp at Aldershot. It is situate on a vast plain between Newbridge and Kildare, about thirty miles from Dublin, and convenient to the railway-stations at each of the above places. The Curragh is to Ireland what Newmarket is to England—the head-quarters or metropolis of horse-racing and training. There are four race meetings a year at this place—in April, June, September, and October; but they create little interest as compared to former years, when the Marquis of Waterford, Messrs Irwin, Watts, and others of the old Irish school were alive. Unlike the dusty, bleak, and barren desert of Aldershot, the Curragh, all around the camp, is composed of the most beautiful turf, kept short by being eaten by vast flocks of sheep.

The camp occupies a position on the highest portion of the plain, being considered healthy; though many of the horses are continually exposed to the open air, and I have myself seen them over the fetlocks in mud. There are frequently as many as 15,000 to 20,000 men stationed here in the summer months, but many of them are dispersed into winter quarters in the month of October. It was here that the Prince of Wales went through the practical part of his military drill, in 1861-62. I frequently saw him mounted on a grey cob, called “Rupee,” cantering in great glee in company with some young subalterns, little more than his own age, over the beautiful greensward of the Curragh, and many an Irish beggar he has relieved with his own hand. The village or small town of Newbridge is just on the borders of the Curragh, and there is always a cavalry regiment stationed in the barracks, which is the most prominent building in the place.

The revolutionary spirit is, I regret to say, still very predominant throughout the southern and western districts of Ireland, and there are few towns of any magnitude without a regiment or battalion of soldiers; besides this, the police are all, mounted and foot, armed with swords and carbines, being drilled and living in barracks just the same as soldiers. They wear a dark-green uniform with black leather belt. The mounted police have their staff of rough-riders, riding-masters, etc, the same as the regular cavalry: they ride well, and are a fine body of men, but more ornamental than really useful, as they lack the intelligence and detective zeal of English policemen.

Before the camp at the Curragh was instituted, the soldiers stationed in Dublin were drilled and reviewed in Phoenix Park, on the outskirts of the city. This park, for a public one, is the largest and most natural in the kingdom. It is not many years ago since races were held there, but they are now done away with, and it is seldom that troops are reviewed in the park now. There is a splendid monument erected to the Duke of Wellington, a sort of obelisk with the names of all the actions in which he was engaged, reaching from base to summit. The base all around is relieved by bronze castings, representing scenes in the various battles, something after the fashion of Nelson’s monument in Trafalgar Square. One peculiar feature in Phoenix Park is the vast number of very old hawthorn trees, and their red and white bloom has a very pretty effect in the month of May. The viceregal lodge—the residence of the Lord-Lieutenant—is situate in a lovely spot in Phoenix Park. The Chief Secretary’s lodge is also in this park. The space of ground set apart for the drilling of cavalry is called the “fifteen acres,” and it was more of a treat than a toil to be drilled on such ground. The Dublin citizens pay great respect to soldiers generally; they do not, however, like the foot guards, a battalion of whom is generally stationed there—for what reason I cannot understand, as they never leave the city without having a riot with the civilians or the men of some other corps.

There is, however, a way to account for this ill-feeling. The Irish are a very impulsive race, and, as a rule, hate everything English, solely because they are for the most part taught to do so from their childhood. The guards, horse and foot, are mostly English; but other regiments are composed of English, Irish, and Scotch. The Irish agree better with Englishmen in barrack, camp, or on the line of march, than they do among themselves; because, if the one is hot and impulsive, the other will reason: but, knowing the guards to be all English, and never having an opportunity to converse soberly and rationally with them, there is neither time nor inclination to reason, and so they never meet or part without either high words or blows—oftener the latter than the former—and Paddy mostly gets the worst of it.

To foreigners visiting this country, there are no more interesting sights than the camps of Aldershot and the Curragh; and the arsenal at Woolwich has been visited by thousands of distinguished individuals from every country and clime.

Chapter Twenty.

> A triple mounted row of pillars laid
> On wheels (for like to pillars most they seem’d,
> Of hollow’d bodies made of oak or fir,
> With branches lopp’d in wood or mountain fell’d):
> Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths
> With hideous orifice gaped on us wide,
> Portending hollow truce.
>
> Milton.

Woolwich is the great rendezvous and head-quarters of the Royal Artillery, the Military Train, and the Royal Engineers, and few troops, besides marines—who are continually moving in and out with the various men-of-war vessels—are ever quartered at Woolwich. The royal arsenal is the main attraction of Woolwich; and the principal part of the inhabitants derive their support from Government in some shape or other. The admission is by ticket; and the visitor is accompanied in his tour of inspection by policemen. The days of admission are Wednesdays and Fridays.

There are generally about 12,000 men employed at the arsenal; but the ordinary visitor is not allowed to walk into the workshops where ammunition is being made. He is restricted to the paved footpaths, from whence he can see the various artificers at work. The din of hammers, the movement of wheels, the rush of steam, and the roar of the

furnace, is proof of the vast extent of the manufactures which are continually going on. All kinds of shot are cast here —grape, chain, canister, bullets, and cannon-balls. Rockets, percussion-caps, metal fusees, and stores of round shot and shell are accumulated to a vast extent, the two latter being piled up in pyramids to upwards of ten millions. There are store-rooms for saddlery and arms of every description, both ancient and modern; and a park of artillery numbering upwards of 30,000 pieces, which comprise the reserve from which the army, navy, garrisons, batteries, etc, are recruited. Sentries are stationed here and there to keep people in order, as there are great numbers of all classes constantly going through the arsenal. Not the least interesting, though melancholy, feature of the place is, the gangs of convicts chained together, and dragging heavily-laden trucks from one part of the yard to another. Some of these unhappy wretches have chains attached to their leg, and the expressions of their faces are as fierce as those of a hyena, while others look completely spirit-broken.

Nearly every kind of gun is made at Woolwich, from the light field-piece to the guns which form a siege-train. Every gun, after being cast, undergoes a proof process, the strength of heavy ordnance being tested by the fire proof. The guns being laid on the ground in front of a target, or butt, with their muzzles towards it, slightly elevated, they are loaded with the regulation proof charges, and fired by means of a galvanic battery, which is placed in a bomb-proof building, and the current of electricity conveyed to the tubes in the guns through copper wires. Each gun is then searched by a long rod having a number of steel springs at the end, each of which has a spike attached; these springs are released from a grasping ring when at the bottom of the barrel, in the same manner as a cork-drawer. Any flaw in the barrel is at once disturbed in passing the searcher up and down. The soundness of the metal itself is tested by what is called the water proof: a hollow, wooden plug, covered with leather, is fixed in the muzzle of the gun by chains, which pass round the trunnions and are connected with the main pipe of the waterworks. A pressure of about 50 pounds weight to the square inch is thus obtained, and water is forced into the gun barrel until it issues a continuous stream from the vent (touch-hole). A wooden plug is then inserted into the latter, and a few more strokes given by the engine. If any water has penetrated through the thinnest part (the neck), the metal is unsound. The next, and last, test is the sun proof. After two or three days, the bore, being supposed to be perfectly dry, is examined by reflecting the sun’s rays into it by means of a mirror, and if any part appears wet, it indicates a flaw. The sighting process is the last operation.

In the construction of carriages, wheels, etc, many men are constantly employed. The timber used is principally ash, elm, and oak; it is crosscut and planed, and all the holes for rivets, bolts, etc, are bored by machinery; but the various parts of the carriages are finished and put together by hand.

By taking the train from the arsenal station the visitor will easily escape passing through the dirty streets of Woolwich, which lie between the arsenal and the dockyard, and those who have not seen this latter magnificent establishment may spend a very agreeable hour or two. There are the enormous chimney-shaft—a landmark for miles; the engine-house; the saw-mills, with their marvellous machinery; the huge Nasmyth’s hammer, which can be made to crack a nutshell without injuring the kernel, or snap an iron bar like a rotten stick on the anvil. There, too, are the building slips, with the shipwrights hammering with an incessant din on the grand three-decker, piled up beam on beam, to which access is gained by inclined planes, reaching to the top of the factory-like structure. The yard is nearly a mile in length; the docks, the gunboats, the steel-plated floating batteries, the beautiful chapel built by Mr Scott, and a passing look at the craft on the Thames, will afford ample opportunity to indulge and gratify curiosity.

Leaving convicts and policemen, I now ascend the hill, on one side of which, among the trees, may be discerned the splendid new buildings of the hospital, and pass the barracks of the marines, capable of containing nearly 2000 men. A short walk farther, and I pass through a wicket-gate near the guardhouse, in front of which is the open common, with the Royal Military Academy for the cadets on the east, and crowned with the woods of Shooter’s Hill. To the left is the long range of the barracks of the Royal Artillery; while to the right is a park of artillery, gun-carriages, waggons, and limbers, divided by a road leading down to a pretty, picturesque valley, containing a small sheet of water, on which pontooning, passage of troops, diving, and transport of artillery are practised and carried out. Above it, on the opposite side, over the broken undulating ground, diversified by clumps of fir-trees, is seen the tent-like building known as the Rotunda, in front of which is an earthwork, green with turf, but having the dark muzzles of guns peeping through the grassy embrasures of the Repository ground. A monument to Sir Alexander Dickson stands in the enclosure, which is entered by a gate, and near by is a French cannon captured by Marlborough at Malplaquet, and many other specimens of the old style of ordnance. The Rotunda itself was removed from Cariton Gardens, where George the Fourth, then Prince Regent, entertained in it the allied sovereigns in 1814: it now contains models of fortifications, dockyards, every arm used by the artillery, and every conceivable specimen of bomb-ships, shields, kettle-drums, tilting lances, armour, all kinds of weapons, and all sorts of ordnance; trophies won by our soldiers in every quarter of the world; and a cinder that represents what was once fifty-six millions of one-pound notes burned by the Bank of England when they were called in.

The Royal Artillery is now in a high state of efficiency: the men are strong in their build, as well as the horses; no expense is spared by Government to obtain by competitive trials, and the employment of the most talented persons, the very best guns that can be manufactured.

The cavalry dépôts for regiments on service abroad are Maidstone and Canterbury, the former place being the more important of the two, because of the riding establishment being there. This establishment is kept up in order to give full effect to the only approved system of equitation which is in use throughout the whole of the cavalry service. The commanding officers are called upon from time to time to select certain non-commissioned officers and men, and to send them to the riding establishment at Maidstone, for the purpose of being thoroughly practised in horsemanship, and of being rendered competent, on returning to their regiments, to afford instruction and to maintain the system of uniformity in training both men and horses for active service. The selection of both men and horses for this important duty is made with the greatest care; and those men only who are remarkable for qualities constituting the good soldier and the active, intelligent dragoon, are detached upon this essential duty. They are in all cases unmarried men, and able to read and write. No unsound, inactive, or vicious horses are sent to Maidstone; the very best in the corps are generally detached for this duty. Upon the return of the parties to their regiments, they take their places in

the ranks until the commanding officer sees an opportunity to encourage such as are favourably reported by the commandant of the riding establishment whilst under his instruction, by promoting them as opportunities occur, and making them assistants in the regimental riding-school. Thus a foundation is laid for promotion from the ranks to the position of riding-master, who ranks as a commissioned officer. It is always understood that no individual shall, upon any account whatever, succeed to this respectable position unless he can produce a certificate of perfect fitness both as to education, general character, sobriety, and a high degree of proficiency in the established system of horsemanship.

In order to prevent any men being sent to Maidstone who, from weakness of constitution or other cause, may not be fit for the duty of the riding-school, a medical examination is made into their fitness. In addition to the regular pay, a riding-master is entitled to the following fees:—For teaching young officers to ride, three guineas; and for training every horse into a charger, one guinea; and no officer is allowed to ride at field-drill a horse which the riding-master has not certified to the commanding officer as fit to be properly broken as a charger; and no officer is allowed to part with such horse without the commanding officer's permission.

There are always two or more men from every cavalry regiment in the service at Maidstone. The recruits for the regiments in India, China, and the Cape are put through their drill with all possible despatch, both here and at Canterbury, and are generally considered proficient in about six months, after which they are drafted off in detachments to join the head-quarters of their corps on foreign service; and hundreds of them never return to their native land. I have, however, occasionally met with men who, after being discharged, from purchase or some other cause, have preferred to remain in India, the Cape, Canada, etc, until they have amassed sufficient means to return home and live in comparative comfort, like others of the same grade in society.

Chapter Twenty One.

> Excess of bodily exercise may render us wild and unmanageable, but excess of arts, science, and music, makes us faddled and effeminate. Only the right combination makes the soul wise and manly.
>
> Plato.

The difference between the walk of a cavalry and infantry soldier cannot fail to be noticed, even by a person the most indifferent to military matters. The gait of the dragoon is distinguished for its ease and elasticity over that of the foot soldier, which may be accounted for by the mounted exercise having the effect of suppling the loins and hips of a recruit in the first stages of drill, which seldom, if ever, becomes eradicated in after life, even though the man may leave the army after a short term of service. Horse-exercise brings every muscle of the body into play, and thereby imparts to the proper method of walking, attained by infantry drill, an amount of ease and grace never seen in our infantry soldiers.

As I shall probably write a series of articles on horsemanship in a separate form, I shall, for the present, confine my remarks to the manner in which both cavalry and infantry soldiers are taught to throw off that lounging, shuffling style of walking, into which many young gentlemen fall, through habits of indifference and carelessness, which grow with their growth until the limbs become set and modelled with age, so that no amount of drill or gymnastic exercise can alter or improve the figure.

Volunteering has now become all the fashion; every high-spirited boy looks forward with hope to the time when he is big enough and old enough to join his companions in some town or provincial volunteer corps, and shoulder the rifle. Now, I am not particularly *au-fait* at the new rifle practice, and therefore I shall not attempt to forestall the many effective drill sergeants appointed to the duty of instructing their companies of "civilian soldiers," but a few remarks in reference to the position-drill, without arms—to which both the cavalry and infantry recruit is first subjected on donning his uniform—may be useful and probably interesting to my young readers. The practice of the following instructions, either in schools or at the homes of those boys who wish to expand their chest and develop their figure as they progress towards the age of adults, by giving them the general "set-up" and bearing of the soldier without any of his stiffness or constraint, which, however necessary it may be for the ranks, would certainly detract from the appearance of the thorough gentleman on the promenade or in the ball-room.

The first instruction conveyed to a recruit at drill is to stand straight and keep his head up. But as the simple command to do this would only cause him to endeavour to comply in his own particular way, he must be instructed in detail at first, as one movement involves many others, which, when he becomes perfect, can scarcely be distinguished while changing position. In order to stand in the proper position at "attention," the heels must be in a line with each other and close together, the knees straight, the toes a little turned out so that the feet may form an angle of about sixty degrees, the arms must hang near the body, the little finger touching the thighs, and the thumbs placed as far back as the seams of the trousers; the elbows and shoulders must be kept back, the belly rather drawn in, and the chest advanced, but without stiffness or awkward constraint; the body must be upright, but inclining forward so that the weight of it principally bears on the fore part of the feet; the head must be erect, but dignified and without stiffness or the appearance of a forced attitude. The position in which a soldier moves also determines that in which he should stand still, and too many methods cannot be used to render the recruit supple and easy in his walk, so as to banish the air of the rustic; but that excess of setting up which stiffens the body to such an extent, that a person appears as if he had swallowed a poker, is contrary to every true principle on which the movement of the human body ought to be regulated, and should therefore be carefully avoided. On the instructor giving the command "stand at ease," the recruit draws back his right foot about six inches, and the greatest part of the weight of the body bears upon it, the left knee is a little bent, the hands are brought together before the body the left being locked in the right, but the shoulders must be kept back, the head square to the front, and the whole attitude without constraint or stiffness. On the word "attention," the hands are to fall smartly down the outside of the thighs, the right heel must be brought up in a line with the left, and the proper, easy, unconstrained position of a soldier and a

gentleman immediately resumed.

The above instructions may, by a slight alteration, be applicable to boys or adults, who, having no taste for a military life or the inseparable drill connected with a soldier's duty, may, nevertheless, wish to attain that ease and grace of movement which ever distinguish the soldier from the undrilled civilian. For instance, the majority of civilians, whether gentlemen or rustics, both stand and walk on their heels; very many, from habit alone, turn their toes in while walking, and, when either standing or walking in their best position, they push out the belly in place of drawing it in and advancing the chest. When a boy is told to hold his head up, he simply throws it back by raising his chin and jerking his neck, in place of throwing back his shoulders, pushing forward his chest, and drawing back his chin, which three movements, all combined in one, at once has the desired effect of improving the figure, raising the head, and imparting dignity to the whole upper part of the body. In the instruction of boys or adults, not intended to become soldiers, it is not necessary that the heels should be placed close together, or the hands to touch the trousers when standing at attention as above directed, but a similarity of position should be adopted, if the rule is not strictly adhered to. In obeying the command "eyes right" or "eyes left," the soldier is required to look to either side with the slightest possible turn of the head. These motions are used in the dressing or keeping in line in the wheeling of divisions, and particular attention is necessary to be paid in the several turnings of the eyes to prevent the soldier from moving his body, which should be preserved in a position perfectly square to the front. If a civilian, ignorant of military drill, were told to look to his right or left, he would either give his neck a sharp twist, or turn his whole body in the direction indicated.

Having explained how those of my young readers, who have no ambition to become either soldiers or volunteers, may improve their appearance, it now becomes our duty to put those whose intention is to become volunteers, or to enter the regular service, "through their facings." In going through the facings, the left heel never quits the ground, the body must rather incline forward, and the knees be kept straight. On the command "to right face,"—1st. Place the hollow of the right foot smartly against the left heel, keeping the shoulders square to the front. 2nd. Raise the toes, and turn smartly to the right on both heels. "To the left face,"—1st. Place the right heel against the hollow of the left foot, keeping the shoulders square to the front. 2nd. Raise the toes, and turn to the left on both heels. "To the right-about face,"—1st. Place the ball of the right toe against the left heel, keeping the shoulders square to the front. 2nd. Raise the toes, and turn completely round to the right-about (reversing the direction of the face) on both heels. 3rd. Bring the right foot smartly back in a line with the left. "To the left-about face,"—1st. Place the right heel against the ball of the left toe, and keep the shoulders square to the front. 2nd. Raise the toes, and turn to the left-about on both heels. 3rd. Bring up to the right smartly in a line with the left. The greatest precision is observed in drilling of recruits to these facings, for if they are not exactly executed, a body of men, after being properly dressed in line, will lose their dressing, and cause the line to be crooked on every small movement of facing. It will be seen that by placing a number of men in line their execution of the command—"together, right face"—will instantly bring them from the line into Indian file (one behind the other), or the "right-about face" will as quickly reverse the front of their line; and supposing the command "march" to be given while the men are in Indian file, although so close together as to nearly touch each other's backs with their chests, if they each step off at the same instant, with the left foot, the sound of their feet will enable them to keep step and time, and march about in this form, as directed by the instructor, to the leading file, "right turn" or "left turn," without confusion. On the command "halt" being given, the step is finished at the last sound of the word; and at the command "front" each man faces to his left, as above directed, and they will then be in line as before.

In marching, the soldier must maintain, as much as possible, the position of the body as before directed. He must be well balanced on his limbs; his arms and hands must be kept steady by his sides; and he must not be allowed to stoop forward, still less to lean back. His body must be kept square to the front, and thrown rather more forward in marching than when standing still, so that it may accompany the movement of the leg and thigh, which movement must Spring from the haunch; the ham must be stretched, but without stiffening the knee; the toes a little pointed outwards, and kept near the ground, so that the boot-soles may not be visible to a person in front. The head should be kept well up, without stiffening the neck, and straight to the front, and the eyes not suffered on any account to be cast down; the foot, without being drawn back, must be placed flat on the ground. The length of each pace, from heel to heel, is thirty inches; and the recruit is taught to take seventy-five of these steps in a minute, without tottering and in perfect steadfastness. This is the ordinary step, being the pace on all occasions whatever for both infantry and cavalry, unless greater celerity be particularly ordered, which is called the "quick step," and the "double," or run. Each individual recruit is very carefully trained and thoroughly instructed in this part of his duty, as it is considered to form the basis of the proper deportment of the soldier.

In the regular army, where men are enlisted from all grades of society, it requires the most unremitting perseverance and accurate knowledge of the part each instructor has to teach, as also a clear and concise manner of conveying his instructions, allied to a firmness that will command from all classes of men a perfect attention to the directions he is giving them. He must allow for the weak capacity of the recruits, and exercise patience and good-temper, without rigour, where endeavour and good-will are evidently not wanting. Quickness in military drill is not at first required, because it is the result of much practice; but if officers and instructors are not critically exact in their commands, and in observing the execution of what is required from others, slovenliness must take place, labour will be ineffectual, and the end proposed will never be attained. The recruit must be carried through his drill progressively; he should comprehend one thing perfectly before he is required to learn another.

In the first lessons as to position, the instructor should carefully place the hands, arms, etc, of the recruit in the form desired. When he is more advanced, he should not be touched; but from the example shown, and the directions prescribed, be taught to correct himself when so admonished. Recruits are not kept too long at any particular part of their exercise, so as to fatigue or make them uneasy. Music is not used in the early stages of the recruit's drill; and he is taught and confirmed by habit alone to the cadence of step which he is afterwards required to maintain in his march to the enemy, in spite of every variety of noise and circumstance that may tend to derange him.

A very useful movement for a civilian to learn is to "change step." We frequently see two persons walking together (often arm-in-arm) in different steps, that is, while one is stepping forward with the left foot, the other has his right

foot advanced, which causes them to roll and jostle each other in a very unseemly and awkward manner. To remedy this, without stopping, one of the parties should complete his pace with the advancing foot, and bring the toe of the other quickly up to the heel of the advanced one, which instantly makes another step forward, so that the cadence may not be lost, and both parties will then be found walking "in step," each with the same foot in advance.

If any of my young readers will practise the movement according to the above directions, they will be surprised at its simplicity, and the rapidity with which it may be acquired, and it will be extremely useful in after life, especially while engaged in the pleasing duty of escorting their female friends, for nothing looks so ungainly as a gentleman walking in one step and a lady in another. The "back step" is a very useful movement in foot drill, by which the recruit is taught to move straight to the rear, preserving his shoulders square to the front, and his body erect. On the word "halt," the foot in front must be brought back square with the other; only a few paces of the back step is, however, necessary at one time, in military tactics. After the cadence of the ordinary step has become perfectly habitual to the recruits, they are able to march and manoeuvre in small squads, and are taught to march in what is called quick time, which is 108 steps in the minute, each of 30 inches, making 270 feet, or 90 yards in a minute. The command "quick march" being given with a pause after the word "quick," which is to be considered as a caution, the whole of the recruits must remain perfectly still and steady, until the word *march* is given, when they step off with the left feet foremost, keeping the body in the same posture, and the shoulders square to the front, the foot to be lifted off the ground, so that it may clear any stones or other impediments in the way, and to be thrown forward and placed firm, the whole of the sole to touch the ground, and not the heel alone; the knees are not to be bent, neither are they to be stiffened so as to occasion fatigue or constraint; the arms must hang with ease down the outside of the thigh, a very small motion to prevent constraint may be permitted, but not to swing to and fro, and thereby occasion the least unsteadiness or movement of the shoulder; the face is to be kept to the front, the body upright, and an easy, dignified demeanour preserved. As the being able to march straightforward is of the greatest consequence, he who commands at the drill should take great pains in making his squad do so, and for this purpose he should frequently go behind the squad or division, placing himself behind the flank file (the end-most soldier), by which the squad is ordered to move in marching, and taking a point or object exactly in front of that file, he will then give his command *march*, and remaining in his place, he will direct the advance of the squad, his object being to keep the flank file always in a line between himself and his object: it is also from behind that one soonest perceives the leaning back of the soldier, and the bringing forward or falling back of a shoulder—faults which ought instantly to be rectified, as it is productive of the worst consequences in a line, where one man, by bringing forward a shoulder, may change the direction of a march in such a manner as to break the line, or cause the wing of a battalion to run, in order to keep dressed in line. In short, it is impossible for the instructor to labour too much at his duty in making the soldier march straightforward, keeping always the same front as when he set off: this is effected by moving solely from his haunches, keeping the body steady, the shoulders square, and the head to the front, and will without difficulty be attained by my young friends, by a strict attention to the rules herewith given, with a careful observance of an equal length of step, and an equal cadence, or time of march. In a cavalry regiment, corporals and sergeants are appointed to instruct recruits in all the preliminary stages of foot drill, for which they are responsible to their superior officer (the regimental sergeant-major), the same as the corporal and sergeant-rough-riders are responsible to the riding-master for the recruit's progress and efficiency in riding drills. For the first two or three months the recruit is subjected to the "manual exercise" as well as the drills above named; this exercise consists of a series of gymnastic movements of the arms, legs, and body; the object of which is to render the limbs supple, set the shoulders back, and expand the chest. If any recruit shows a disinclination to practise this manipulation of the body according to the prescribed rules, he is put through the "dumb bell" exercise, which, having to swing two heavy pieces of iron, one in each hand, over and around his head, while practising some rather novel contortions, is very hard work indeed, as compared to the ordinary "manual exercise."

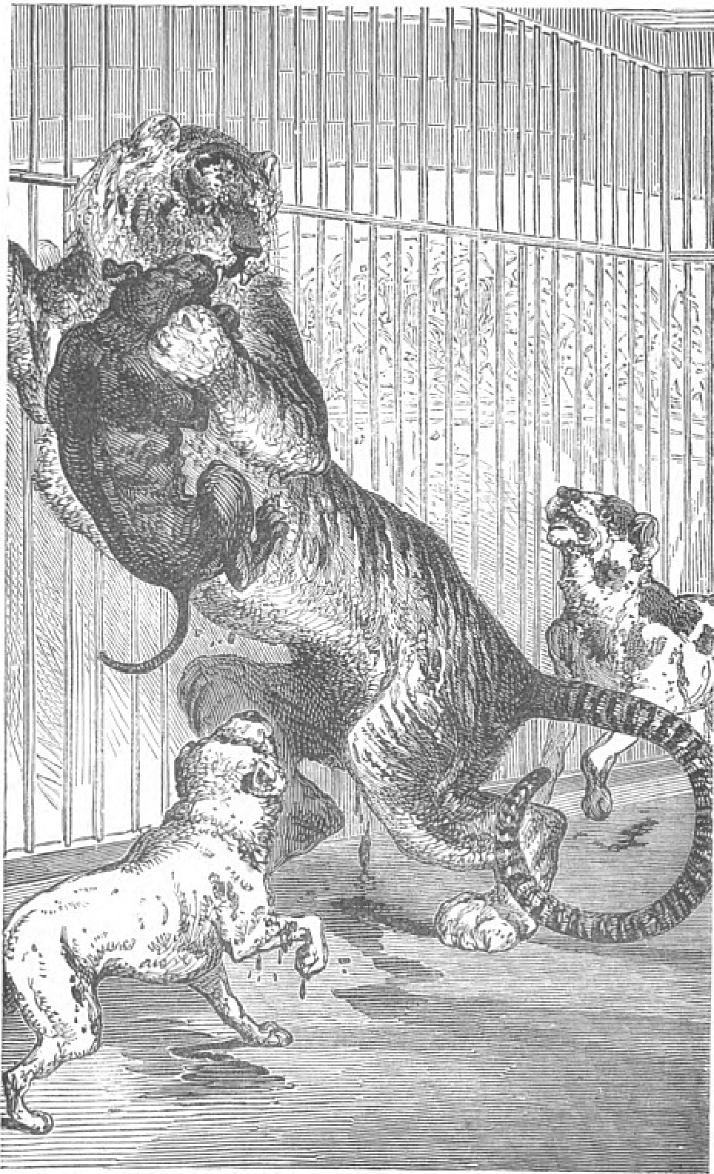
Chapter Twenty Two.

> Such the ungentle sport that oft invites
> The Spanish maid, and cheers the Spanish swain.
> Nurtured in blood betimes, his heart delights
> In vengeance gloating on another's pain.
>
> Byron.

When I first joined the army, we had a drill sergeant who had been in the Queen of Spain's service, a most intelligent and agreeable fellow, as I afterwards found out when I was myself promoted and allowed to associate with him; but, while I was a recruit, I would freely have given one of my ears, on one or two occasions, to have been fairly out of his clutches. We were sergeants together, and I, in common with the rest of my brother non-commissioned officers, have been often amused and interested by the relation of his experience in the Spanish service, which by his account is immeasurably inferior to our own; indeed, the treatment to which private soldiers in the Spanish army are subjected, would soon incite the British army to open mutiny. My friend was a commissioned officer in Spain, but I have frequently heard him say that he would much prefer to be a private dragoon in the British army. He was about thirty-five years of age when I enlisted, standing about 5 feet 9 inches high, with jet-black curly hair and an olive complexion set off by a handsome soldier-like figure. His word of command to young recruits was divested of that croaking harshness and fierce demeanour so predominant with drill-corporals, sergeants, and adjutants generally; still he was very severe and very exacting, for the slightest appearance of carelessness or inattention he would report a recruit and get him punished. This, however, arose from excessive zeal more than an unkindly disposition, and he never made an enemy who remained so for many hours. He never alluded to his family, and his name—which I forbear to mention—was generally understood to be assumed, but it was evident he was well bred and well educated. After my promotion to the rank of full sergeant, I was necessarily thrown more into his society, particularly at the sergeants' mess (for sergeants have a mess and dine together as well as officers), where I have often listened with a great degree of interest to his stories of bull-fights in the amphitheatres of Madrid, which I do not particularly

remember to repeat, but his relation of a fight between a full-grown Bengal tiger and three bulldogs at Havana I perfectly well remember. He said, “I took my seat in the amphitheatre, in front and within forty feet of the tiger, who was perfectly quiet in a cage about twenty-four feet long and fifteen feet wide, at times walking about, apparently indifferent to the noise which the multitude made around him. Some circus performances were first introduced, after which a couple of trained elephants went through some novel antics, one of them turning the handle of a barrel-organ, while the other danced to a lively Spanish air. These performances occupied about an hour; the three dogs matched to fight the tiger were then introduced, and the instant they caught the eye of the tiger he gave a loud roar, and lashed his tail angrily from side to side. The dogs were of the purest bull breed. One was a brindle, with his ears and tail cut, and of large size; the second dog had neither his ears nor tail trimmed, but he had a very ferocious look—he was all white, and looked as if ready to fight to the death; the third dog was black, with long tail and ears, but had nothing very striking in his appearance beyond a powerful frame and a set of blackguard-looking teeth, always visible through the shortness of his upper lip. I had anticipated seeing the large bloodhounds of the island, one of which weighs as much as all these three, and when I saw these I felt that the tiger would easily conquer them. Boards being placed through the bars of the cage as a partition, the dogs were put in one part, while the tiger was in the other.

“The moment the dogs were put in the cage, all the combatants became infuriate. The tiger, with the hair on his back bristling, rushed to the partition, and the dogs were anxious to get at him. While removing the boards to give them the satisfaction of meeting, the tiger thrust his paw under the board, which was at once seized by the white dog; the board was immediately withdrawn, all pitched in, and the fight grew fast and furious. The white dog was most active, and attacked his monster adversary with great pluck. The tiger vented his first act of anger upon him, giving him a bite in the back of the neck which injured him severely, but, pressing on with a courage which could not be exceeded, he received another wound which evidently touched his spine, and rendered him almost entirely *hors de combat*, as he could not do any further damage, but he was game to the last. While the blood was flowing from his neck, and he staggering and constantly falling from the injury to his spine, he still endeavoured to assist his brothers in the fray. At the time the white dog was engaging the attention of the tiger, the black had fastened his teeth in his flank, and the brindle was assailing him about the neck. He did not notice the black, but gave the brindle an ugly stroke with his paw. The tiger appeared surprised at such rough treatment, he leaped over all the dogs, and would have run off, if he could have got away; but the dogs followed him up, and now a regular ‘rough-and-tumble’ fight ensued, the black again fastening on the flank of the tiger. The fight had lasted about five minutes, and the tiger began to show signs of giving up. He lay down apparently exhausted, the white dog was disabled, but the black was busily engaged worrying the tiger’s flank, and the brindle was tearing away at his neck and shoulders, but presently he rallied, and gave the brindle a crushing blow with his paw, which, although it did not kill the dog outright, so disabled him that he had nothing more to do with the fight. Black was all this time worrying at the tiger’s flank and hind-legs.



"The dog caught him by the under jaw, and gave him a severe bite."

"At length the tiger sprang into a corner of the cage, when the dog caught him by the under jaw and gave him a severe bite, but the tiger shut down his upper jaw upon the dog's head, and gave him a severe wound. At this time active hostilities ceased. The tiger was evidently willing for an armistice, and quietly lay down in a corner of the cage to lick his wounds; the dogs, however, disabled as they were, staggered up to him and vainly attempted to renew the contest, but the tiger after a snap or blow of his paw ran to another part of the cage.

"There was much excitement evinced by the owner of the dogs, who claimed the victory on the ground that the tiger had run and would not continue the fight. True, he had run, and would probably have run away soon after the fight commenced, could he have done so, but he was not beaten—he was still in good condition, while all the dogs were more or less disabled.

"The nature of all the cat species is to run away, and fight on the defensive; they will spring upon an enemy, fight, run off, and steal back again to spring, fight, and run away. The bulldog has no such traits—he knows only to stand up and fight, to conquer or die. It was decided a drawn battle by the referee.

"The dogs were taken out of the cage, the brindle and the white being carried out of the amphitheatre on a litter, the tiger never taking his eyes off them all the time. The black dog was able to walk away, though sadly mangled. The tiger, after the departure of his visitors, walked about his cage in his ordinary way, as though nothing had happened to him, although he must certainly have felt sore about the flanks and hind-quarters. The fight lasted altogether about twenty minutes."

Chapter Twenty Three.

There through the piny forest half absorbed,
Rough tenant of these shades, the shapeless bear
... stalks forlorn;
Slow-paced and sourer as the storms increase,
He makes his bed beneath the inclement drift,
And with stern patience scorning weak complaints
Hardens his heart against the assailing storms.

Thomson.

My friend the sergeant had, at some period prior to his enlistment into our corps, been to the gold diggings in California, probably from Mexico, where I believe he was born of English parents, though nothing could be ascertained in regard to his origin. The stories he told at various times would have filled a tolerable sized volume, and, had I ever thought of writing these pages, I would have preserved notes of his most interesting adventures, which he was ever ready to relate to us, either in barrack, camp, or on the line of march.

One particular story, in reference to trapping a grizzly bear, I have heard him relate so often that I can repeat it in almost his own words.

My readers should first be informed that the grizzly bear is the largest and most powerful wild beast that ranges the wilds of North America. The early pioneers of the route across the Rocky Mountains to Oregon and California, told of the wondrous size of these animals, and their reports were looked upon as fables until later research confirmed their truth.

The grizzly is found throughout the whole range of the Rocky Mountains from Mexico to British Columbia, but he attains the largest size in New Mexico and Upper California. Unlike most other bears, the grizzly cannot climb a tree; the method of hunting him is mostly with dogs trained for the purpose—a pack, consisting of a dozen small terriers and four large mastiffs or bull-dogs, being best suited for the sport, if sport it can be called, which involves so great a risk of life. This bear, being a heavy limbed and sluggish brute, seldom travels far from his wonted haunts, although he can go very fast when pressed or in pursuit of his prey, of which he is not very particular in the selection. Buffalo, wild horses, deer, or man, are alike acceptable to him. He will crush in the head of the largest buffalo with a single stroke of his paw, and, throwing it across his back, carry it for miles to his lair.

The sergeant stated that the Indians talk of bears of this species that have inhabited the same region for many years, and, as they live in deadly fear of the monsters, the advent of a party of grizzly-hunters is most welcome to them, and they willingly render all the service in their power in the hunt, but retire in fear when the game is brought to a stand. When pressed by hunters, the bear generally takes refuge in a thicket of bushes among the rocks, where it is hardly possible to get a shot at him; and, indeed, it is of little use shooting at this stage of the hunt, for, unless you can hit him in the eye, his skull will turn an ounce bullet as if it were a putty-ball. The skin is so thick, and so well covered with hair and fur, that it is almost impenetrable, and, unless you can hit him just beneath and behind the shoulder, you might as well spare your powder.

When his retreat is discovered, the large dogs are held fast and the little terriers turned into the thicket; they yelp, snap at his heels, then fall back to avoid the strokes of his paws. Thus they worry and tease him for hours. Meanwhile his roars of anger, loud as thunder, seem to shake the very earth; sometimes the small dogs approach too near his head, and receive the penalty of their temerity in the form of a stroke which leaves them a mangled and lifeless mass, bearing little resemblance to the canine species. When the bear becomes completely tired, he seats himself upon his haunches, and turns this way and that, so as to always keep his face to the dogs. Now a hunter creeps stealthily up and endeavours to plant a ball in a vulnerable spot. If he succeeds in getting a clear sight of the bear, he generally wounds him, and he then breaks cover. The large dogs are now loosed, and fasten on him in the rear; the riflemen drop their shot at him, taking care to miss the dogs.

It often requires hours to overcome the monster, whose tenacity of life is most wonderful. This is accounted for by the fact that the heart of the bear is thickly covered with fat, which prevents its bleeding; there is also a coat of fat just beneath the skin, which closes after the passage of the ball and prevents the blood flowing.

The sergeant used to commence his story as follows:—

“In the autumn of the year 1846 (being then only seventeen years old), I was encamped with a party of gold-diggers upon the head of the Sacramento River, at the western base of the California range of mountains. Our party consisted of a dozen men, myself being about the youngest; we were living in a small cabin constructed of poles and logs, and a happy, merry lot we were. All were engaged in washing the glittering gold-dust from the bed of the river, save a friend and myself, who were assigned the duty of victualling the camp with game and fish, now and then making a trip of four or five days’ duration to a trading port about sixty miles down the river, for tea, sugar, ammunition, etc. My friend, a young Irishman, generally went with me; we rode a couple of mustangs (horses bred in a wild state), and led or drove two pack-mules.

“The ‘Emeralder’ and myself had formed a project to secure a menagerie of wild native animals, and adjoining our lodge we had a large cage, in the compartments of which were wolves, foxes, California lions, pumas, panthers, and a host of smaller fry, including birds. These we had, for the most part, secured when very young. We had long been most anxious to get a specimen of the ‘grizzly,’ but all our efforts in that way had failed. One morning, while we were at breakfast, a Mexican hide-dealer, who lived in a cabin a few miles from us, and from whom we had purchased several animals, called on us accompanied by four or five half-naked Indians, and told us that a large ‘grizzly,’ called by the natives ‘Mountain Thunder,’ had come down from the hills during the night and made a supper of a fat ox belonging to the Mexican. The Indians we had met in our hunting excursions had frequently told us of this monster. According to their reports he must have been near one hundred years of age, and of a size that a bear had never before attained. Their fathers had known that he lived years before they were born. This was not unlikely, for bears live to a great age; even in captivity they have been known to live a hundred years. We set out for the cabin of the Mexican. Near the house was the cattle-yard, the scene of the last night’s affair. The yard covered an area of about an acre, surrounded by a stout fence formed of large poles or stakes driven into the ground, and about ten feet high; within this the stock were all driven at night to preserve them from the attacks of bears, wolves, etc. On the side of the yard farthest from the dwelling, Bruin had made his entrance and left full proof of his strength behind him. Three or four large posts, about twelve inches in diameter, were torn from the earth in which they had been firmly planted

to the depth of four feet; one had been broken at the surface of the ground, apparently by a stroke of the bear's paw, as the indentures of his claws were an inch deep in the solid timber.

"After seizing the ox, he had thrown him on his back and decamped. We followed his track up the banks of a small stream towards the mountains for some miles. I measured the prints of his hind-feet in the soft clay, and found they were eighteen inches in length from the heel to the mark of his claws, and a little over nine inches wide.

"As we ascended the stream the course became more narrow and rocky, with a dense thicket of rough bushes clothing the hills on each side. Here the bear had made his feast; a few bones, horns, and hoofs, were all that was left, the wolves having eaten what the bear had left; some of the larger bones had been crushed like straws by his powerful grinders. After his brief banquet he had taken to the hills, where the party, with the exception of the Emeralder and myself, declined to follow him. After a brief consultation we determined to capture the 'grizzly' alive, if possible, and we set out on our return to our own cabin to complete our arrangements. The idea was scouted by our companions, but we determined to make the attempt. We felt sure, from the many footmarks, that the ravine was a favourite walk of the bear, and that he would return to the cattle-yard again in the course of a few nights. Loading our mules with tools at the lodge, we returned to the ravine and selected a suitable place where timber was plentiful. We then set about felling trees, and constructed a pen of logs about twenty feet square and six feet high, covering it with large poles, all firmly pinned together, and lashed with the bark of the 'leather wood.' It was midnight when we completed our task, and we could take no further proceedings that night. The next morning we returned, bringing with us a yearling heifer as a bait. We now raised one side of the pen about four feet, and placed a 'figure four,' or what is there termed a 'dead-fall' trap, beneath it, so arranged that, by pulling a cord attached to the 'spindle,' the edifice would come down with a run. We next staked the yearling under the cage, giving her plenty of grass, and led our cord out several yards down the stream, making it fast to a small tree which commanded a view of our trap, and in the branches of this tree one of us was to remain, ready to pull the cord, each night, until Bruin was captured. We fitted up a dry cave with buffalo-skins, near by, as a sleeping apartment.

"We watched two nights without success, passing a portion of our time in the day, when not sleeping, in fishing, cooking, and cutting grass for the heifer. About the middle of the third night, I was perched in my tree—the Emeralder had just retired to rest—when I heard a rustling of the bushes on the hill-side above me, and a low growl, which was unmistakably a signal of Bruin's approach. My companion heard it as well, and put his head out of the cave. I motioned him to remain quiet. Soon the bear came slowly down into the ravine below me, and walked into the water-course to drink. When he emerged from the shelter of the bush into the bright moonlight, I was astonished at his size; he seemed like an elephant cut off at the knees. He took a drink, snuffing the water and the air around him, as if his instinct told him all was not right. I was fearful that he would go down the stream towards the Mexican's cattle-yard, and thus we should lose him.

"The proximity of the bear alarmed the yearling; as if from instinct, she gave a low bellow of terror. Bruin caught the sound, and started off in a trot in the direction of the trap. He passed directly under my perch, stopping for a moment as if he scented me, which he no doubt did; and if I was not frightened, I certainly felt better when he moved on. I watched him until he reached the cage, around which he walked to reconnoitre. His love of veal soon overcame whatever scruples he might have had as to the nature of the structure, and my heart went pit-a-pat as I saw him stoop and crawl under the raised side.

"I waited until I heard the doomed calf's bellow of pain; then I gave the cord a strong pull. With a crash, the machine came down; and the bear gave such a roar as I never heard before, or care to hear again. He made good his Indian title of 'Mountain Thunder.'

"The terrible sound rolled down through the ravine, and was echoed from hill to hill like the reports from a battery of artillery. Wolves, panthers, and hundreds of birds answered the sound with screams of terror in every direction. In a trice my mate and myself were on the spot, shouting with delight at our good fortune. We drove some large stakes, which we had previously prepared, into the earth, and lashed our cage firmly to them.

"Meanwhile, the bear was rushing about the trap, tearing and crushing the poor yearling to atoms, biting and breaking the timber which had formed the 'figure four,' as if he knew it was the author of his woes. We made a fire, and watched by him until morning. By this time he had found all his efforts to escape futile, and he stood in a corner of the cage with his nose to the ground in sullen silence.

"At daylight my mate left me on guard, while he returned to the cabin to make arrangements for moving him. Towards mid-day the bear ate up what was left of the calf, and laid himself down, first scratching a large hole in the ground, in which he wallowed like a pig. I had a visit during the day from the Mexican and Indians, who were much astonished and rejoiced at our success.

"The second day after the capture, the Emeralder returned with our friends from the cabin, who were wonder-struck at the huge size of our prize. They brought with them a large cage constructed, at the cabin, of heavy bars of lancewood, rudely but strongly secured with iron. It was mounted upon one of the heavy waggons we had brought from Saint Louis across the plains, and drawn by six oxen.

"We managed to fasten the bar into one side of the trap by shoving poles through; then we cut an opening in the other side big enough for his egress. We then sank the wheels into the soil, bringing the door of the cage down to the opening of the trap; then, by using burning firebrands, we forced Bruin into the cage on the waggon, and secured him.

"Over a bottle of whisky we christened him, in our style, after his Indian name, 'Mountain Thunder,' by which title he was afterwards well known throughout California. We gave him some water, which he drank eagerly; and, after satisfying himself of the strength of his new lodgings, he lay sullenly down, and gave no further trouble. On reaching the cattle-yard, we gave him the carcase of a sheep, which he soon ate up, bones and all. In a few days after our

arrival at the camp, the bear appeared perfectly reconciled to his new position. He ate, drank, and slept well, and at times appeared inclined to gambol, if he had room enough.

“The Emeralder and myself, a few weeks after the capture of the bear, bade adieu to our gold-seeking friends, and with a small train of wild-beast waggons took our line of march for Sacramento City, where we made plenty of money by exhibiting our menagerie.

“While there a Mexican butcher made a wager that his six large bull-dogs could ‘flax out’ ‘Mountain Thunder.’ A huge amphitheatre was constructed, and Bruin turned loose; we had over one thousand visitors that day, at one dollar per head. The six dogs, of the largest size, trained and used to throwing wild cattle on the plains for the butcher’s knife, were turned in and resolutely attacked the bear with great pluck. In about six minutes six mangled masses of dog’s meat were strewed about the amphitheatre, while the bear had not a visible scratch. ‘Mountain Thunder’ was weighed at Sacramento, and found to pull down eighteen hundred and sixty pounds.

“We next went to San Francisoo, where we reaped a rich harvest, and afterwards shaped our course for the city of Mexico, where ‘Mountain Thunder’ fought a battle with a fierce Spanish bull in the bull-ring. The bull gored him slightly in the mouth, which enraged him to the highest pitch of ferocity, and giving him one blow of his paw he sent him flying across the ring, with his back and shoulder broken and his ribs crushed in. The bear performed a similar fête at Vera Cruz, where he was shipped for New Orleans. Here we chartered all the ferry-boats plying between New Orleans and the opposite side of the Mississippi for one day, and leased the race-course at Algiers for the same period. We then advertised that ‘Mountain Thunder’ would fight a bull on that day, and the speculation turned out a success. I first thought the bear would be killed, he appeared so very slow and stupid. The bull, a large and fierce black one, plunged his horns against his ribs, nearly upsetting him; even then he did not seem disposed to resent it, and not till he came again did he show signs of pluck; then as the bull came bellowing on, with eyes flashing fire and head to the earth, Bruin coolly raised one paw and struck him between the eyes. The blow was terrific; blood and brains flew from his ears and nose, and on examination it was found that the entire front of his skull was crushed in and his neck broken.

“The Emeralder and myself finally sold ‘Mountain Thunder’ to winter in a museum at Cincinnati; the various other animals and birds were also taken at a good price by the Curator. We divided the money equally, and found ourselves in possession of thirteen hundred pounds each.”

Chapter Twenty Four.

> Portance in my travels’ history;
> Wherein of antres vast and desarts idle,
> Rough quarries, rocks and hills whose tops touch heaven,
> It was my wont to speak.
>
> Shakespeare.

“Having done so well with our wild-beast speculation, we determined to return to, the Rocky Mountains on another cruise after bears, panthers, or anything we could manage to secure likely to make money.

“Providing ourselves with stores, ammunition, etc, we set out with a train of four waggons and eight horses. Two of these waggons were constructed for the safe keeping of wild animals: one was laden with stores, and the other was a covered van to live in.

“We engaged two assistants, named respectively Jake Barnes and Pete Tonsley. Onwards we trudged, slowly but surely, over our, at times, uncertain track in the wilderness. Jake and Pete, who were two overgrown lads, were continually breaking away into the bush after birds of beautiful plumage, which were continually flitting across our path, and armed with short pieces of stick they killed many that were valuable for the sake of their skins. Pete was the wildest of the two, and we had on several occasions to halt for hours awaiting his return ere the night set in. On one occasion Pete had been away most of the afternoon, promising before he started to take his bearings properly, and keep the smoke from the chimney of the caravan in sight; Jake, whom he left behind, promising to feed the fire well with green leaves, in order to make the smoke more dense.

“It was fast growing dark, the smoke was no longer visible, and we had reached a thick piece of wood where, Pete being still absent, we determined to come to a halt. Rifles were fired, and we had all shouted until we were quite hoarse. Poor Pete was evidently lost in the bush, or had fell a prey to panthers, or perhaps Indians. We determined to find him dead or alive, if possible. Feeling our way through the bush, each with a lantern and candle, Jake and I started in search of our missing mate, leaving the Emeralder in charge of the waggon-train. We had not proceeded far when a series of screams and smothered sounds, as if produced by some one in great distress, reached us from a point not far from our left.

“‘What’n all creation’s that?’ said Jake, coming to a sudden halt.

“‘Indians,’ said I, looking ahead as far as I could.

“‘Ingins! No, sir, it’s Pete; and that’s somethin’ a-hurting him. Let’s run out that way,’ said Jake.

“‘H-o-o-o-o! bah-h-h! he-e-e-oy! murder-r-r! hoo-o-o-oy!’ came the sounds, so thick and fast that it was scarcely possible to distinguish any space between them.

“We dashed off towards the point from whence the sounds issued.

“‘Bla-a-a-blah! bla-a-a-bloo! ho-o-o-oyh!’ went the sufferer, if such it really was, and ‘ipitty-tip’ through the thick shrubs went Jake and I, now nearly out of breath. Nearer and nearer came the sounds, until presently the light of a fire broke in upon our visions.

“‘What kin all this mean, guvner?’ said Jake.

“‘It’s an Indian decoy. We’re in for a fight,’ said I, loosening my bowie-knife.

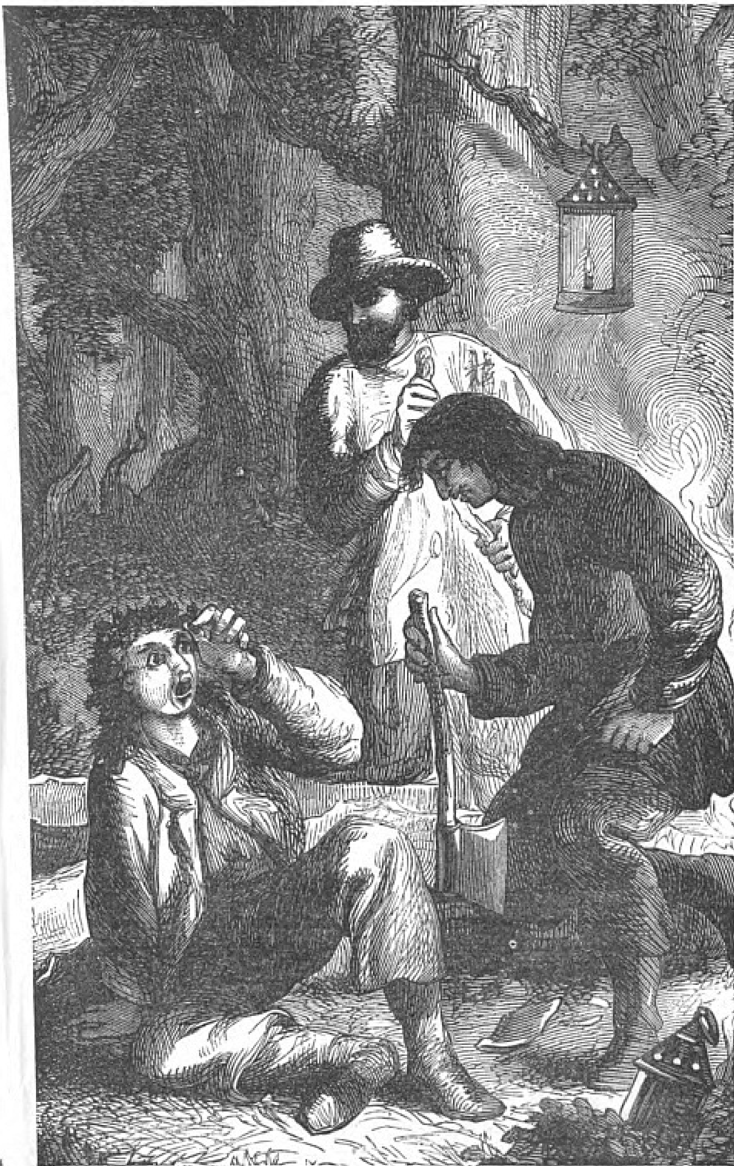
“‘No. Don’t think it’s Ingins; tha wouldn’t a’ kindled a fire that-a-way. No; can’t be Ingins! ’Sides, tha is friendly now,’ said Jake, as he dodged behind in my footsteps, striving to appear brave.

“At length we reached within hail of the fire, but, although the sounds of distress continued, we could perceive nothing beyond a log and a little brushwood around it on fire. Not a human form was visible; yet the strange sounds came forth as fresh as formerly, and, what was more unaccountable, they appeared to issue immediately from the fire. What was it?—the Evil One, or an Indian decoy, surely, for, as the fire was not larger than a bushel measure, we believed that no creature with life could be in it.

“While we stood gazing, first at the fire, then at each other, Jake’s face, naturally dark, but now darker than usual, became suddenly lightened as with a new idea, and away he bounded to the other end of the log farthest from the fire.

“‘Claw away the fire! claw away the fire!’ shouted he, springing towards the end of the log, which the brushwood had set on fire and burnt away about a foot. I did not know what he wanted the fire ‘clawed away’ from, but I fell to work, and very naturally clawed it away from the log. ‘Wait’ll I come back with an axe,’ said Jake, bounding off towards the waggons, and leaving me alone beside the log, which was hollow and contained something alive—evidently a man—perhaps poor Pete; but the whole circumstance was wrapt in such a great degree of mystery that I could not attempt to unravel it, especially as the sounds of distress had ceased. Presently, Jake returned with a sharp axe, and, mounting on the log without saying a word to me, he brought the implement down with such force as to send the great chips whizzing in every direction.

“Suddenly there appeared something black; Jake had cut through. He stopped, raked the chips away with his bands, and peered into the hollow; a simple glance seemed, to satisfy his curiosity, and, leaping upon the log some six or eight feet farther back from the fire, he fell to chopping again with as much eagerness as before. In a little while the hollow appeared at that point, and then he commenced to split out the block between the two holes. A few strokes started a crack. A few more, very cautiously dealt, and out tumbled the block, as if a box-lid had been suddenly opened, leaving exposed to our wondering gaze the body of a man.



'Pete put his hand on his head to call our attention to the fact that his hair was pretty well singed off, and said 'Nothin.' "

"'Pete Tonsley, as I live!' said Jake. 'Pete, what in thunder are you doing here?'

"Pete rolled over two or three times, put his hand on his head to call our attention to the fact that his hair was pretty well singed off, and then said—

"'Nothin'.'

"'Wal, I think ye wasn't a doin' nothin' only a-hollerin',' continued Jake; 'and if we hadn't just a-heard ye, ye wouldn't soon a' bin doin' that. But tell us how ye come to be in that thar log?'

"'Wal,' said Pete, 'I sees a ground-hog (hedgehog) a sort o' slippin' across this way, soon after I left the track this afternoon, and we had a mortal tight race out to this log here, and then it got here first, and got away. When I sees what the thing went and done, my dander riz, and sez I to myself, Pete Tonsley 'll show you how to slide into a log next time; and then I kindles a fire up in the holler at this end of the log, a-thinkin' I might smoke the varmint out at t'other. Wal, I smoked, and I smoked, but nary a ground-hog could I see come out, and then sez I to myself, it might be that the "wood chuck" had slipt out while I was lightin' the fire, and I had best be going back to the track afore it gets dark. But I didn't like to be beat by a ground-hog, so I got a long pole and punched into the log at t'other end, but nary nothin' would come out, though it struck me I could feel it, and once I thought I heard it chatter, as if a sorter a-darin' me. That made me mortal mad, and, seeing as how the holler was big enough to creep in at yon end furthest from the fire, I lay down, grit my teeth, and slid in, determined to fetch out the varmint, dead or alive. I wound into the log right up to the fire thar, and seed it was all a mistake. I could feel nary a ground-hog in it, and then I began to hitch back feet foremost, but one hitch was all I could make, for just as I was making the second scrouge out, a knot, or a sharp sliver, or somethin' catched into the seat of my britches, and held me as tight as a wedge. The britches bein' new, I could not tear loose. I kickt and I cust, and squirmed around in the log for some time, and then I found one of my legs got fast too. It seemed a funny thing at fust to be in this fix, but when the fire begun to blaze in at the end of the log thar, and to creep atords me, I kinder got to feelin' very oneasy, and when it got right up, and kotched the handkerchief what I tied around my head, I felt mortal skeered. When it came to singin' of my har, I began to holler, and that's what brought you out here, I reckon.'

"It was a lucky moment for Pete that we found him, for fire in ten minutes more would have sent him to his long home."

With these two narratives of the sergeant's adventures abroad, I must close my remarks concerning him. How he lost his money, got into the Spanish service, and eventually in the British army, he never appeared ready to explain.

Chapter Twenty Five.

> Hear the shrill whistle, which doth order give
> To sounds confused; behold the threaden sails.
> Borne with the invisible and creeping wind,
> Draw the huge bottoms through the furrow'd sea,
> Breasting the lofty surge.
>
> Shakespeare.

Beyond the ordinary routine of barrack life, and the every-day duty of a dragoon, nothing very remarkable occurred during my term of service, in addition to what I have related, until the embarkation of my regiment for active service in the Crimea.

The reader will please to observe that I had never before been on a campaign, and the regiment in which I had the honour to serve had never been particularly distinguished in battle for a period of more than twenty years. It had been well understood for years, that whenever a serious war was declared we should be first on the roll of regiments for service. In fact, we had twice been under orders for India—once during the Affghanistan campaign in 1841-2, and again when the Sikh war broke out—but the cavalry already abroad turned out a sufficient force for the purpose.

I may safely remark that three-fourths of the soldiers in the British army would sooner serve on a campaign than endure the monotony of life in a barrack. The former kind of service is just the sort of life for which all really good men join the army. There are many very respectable, educated men serving in the ranks of our dragoon regiments that would cheerfully endure the hardships of a campaign and the privations of a camp life, surrounded by danger, disease, cold, hunger, and even death, in preference to years of drudgery and comparative inactivity in barracks.

It is wonderful to see with what rapidity the ranks of a cavalry regiment proceeding on active service are augmented from other corps not under orders to serve. As may be supposed, when a regiment is told off for service abroad, there are numbers who are physically incapable of enduring the change of climate, and others whose term of service having nearly expired, with other considerations, render it advisable for commanding officers to reject them; consequently, their places have to be filled up by a system of volunteering from other regiments.

On such occasions, orders are sent to the commanding officers of those corps remaining at home to supply a certain number of good men. These orders are read out to the soldiers when they assemble for roll-call at evening stable hour. The regiment, with the locality to which it is proceeding, and the nature of the service in which it is expected to be engaged, together with the number of men required, is distinctly specified; after which, it is stated that "those men willing to serve will step forward." Instantly the words are delivered there is a rush to the front of many more than is required. In my opinion, nothing can be more noble: there stand the gallant fellows ready to sacrifice a life of comparative ease for hardships, danger, and, probably, death in a foreign land.

I have frequently noticed that the men so volunteering are chiefly the most intelligent and best soldiers in the regiment—men who, having enlisted as soldiers, wish to fulfil the purpose for which they joined the army, and not the idle "skulks" who enlist, thinking that a soldier's life in barracks is easier than the occupation in which they are engaged as civilians.

By this system of volunteering, the best men and willing hearts have ever been secured for the desperate struggles in which they have from time, to time been engaged. The amount of enthusiasm which pervades the army and the greater part of the population on the declaration of war, is a striking instance of the bravery of the British race. The deserving soldier—always well treated by civilians in England, Ireland, and Scotland in time of peace—is absolutely idolised when proceeding on or returning from a campaign. I perfectly remember the—I might almost say—triumphant march of a portion of our regiment from barracks for many days, on our way for embarkation at Plymouth. The country people cheered us, shook hands, clung to our stirrups, gave us tobacco, and, at times, too much drink. The ladies—high, low, and middle-class—waved their handkerchiefs, threw us kisses, "wished they were going with us," and many made us handsome presents of money, rings, etc. We were all in good health and spirits, and our horses fresh, sound, and full of spirits.

In this order we entered Plymouth, and were rapidly embarked aboard three transports, and sailed the evening of the day we arrived, amidst many a round of hearty cheers from the thousands of people who crowded on the beach.

Nothing very extraordinary occurred during the voyage to Varna, except that many of our men were dreadfully sea-sick, the nature of our duty on board rendering it impossible for us to lie down, which is the only effectual remedy for sea-sickness.

I was fortunate enough to obtain a mixture, containing a few drops of chloroform, from our surgeon, and I scarcely felt the effects of the buffeting which the vessel sustained a few days after we were fairly out at sea. The horses were sadly crowded, and many suffered from want of exercise and ventilation, a little nitre being served out to us in order to be mixed with the bran mashes, and their eyes, nostrils, and face being regularly sponged with sea-water, at stable hours, tended to refresh them and to allay inflammation, the most frequent of all disorders to which troopers are subject when confined for any length of time aboard ship. I have made no remarks in reference to my personal feelings on leaving friends and relatives in England, for by this time I had many comrades in the regiment to whom I was as much attached as to anyone else, except my mother. It was owing to no want of affection to the latter that,

although I could have had a short "pass" before I left the country, I did not visit her. I knew she would feel it very acutely, and that the little word "good-bye" at parting would have been ringing in my ears during many a weary march.

I saw many a heart-rending scene on leaving barracks, along the line of march, with the friends and relations of our men resident in those country parts, and towns we passed through on our way to Plymouth, and on the evening of our embarkation. Therefore I was not sorry that I had not gone through the ordeal, for, like many of my comrades, I might, even in the garb of a soldier, have betrayed the weakness of a man.

The anticipation of a severe engagement and the shock of battle itself is nothing to the very trying ordeal of parting with a dear friend, probably for ever. The piercing screams of mothers, sisters, sweethearts and wives, are usual concomitants of the embarkation of British soldiers on active service. The grasp of a father's or brother's hand as they linger on the pier, the steady gaze into the soldier's eye, the twitching of the mouth and the smothered sob, prevent the articulation of the word "good-bye!" The soldier's natural pride mostly predominates over tears, and the display of sorrow indulged in by civilians under similar circumstances, but although I did not subject myself to the ordeal of such a leave-taking, I felt deeply for certain of my comrades, who, although as brave soldiers as ever leaped into a saddle or drew a sabre in action, were utterly prostrated with grief after leaving their friends on the beach.

"The twitching of the mouth, and the smothered sob, prevent the articulation of the word 'good-bye.'"

This kind of grief proceeds from a sort of sorrow at having been the cause of suffering to those you love dearly and leave behind. For this I have sometimes thought the soldier is to blame, because, in order to gratify a roving disposition, or other causes, he leaves his home, blasting the hopes of a father who may have given him a good education, and looked forward to the time when the boy grown into a man may be a prop to him in his declining years. He tramples upon the deep and true affection of a mother, and throws to the winds the kindly words and devotion of his brothers and sisters. Next to a soldier's mother, nothing on earth is more dear to him than a sister. Women are invariably fond of soldiers: some like them simply for their gaudy attire, others adore them for their splendid figure, but every woman respects the soldier who risks his life in the service of his country. The last to bid him adieu and the first to welcome him home will be the soldier's sister, if he is blessed with one. The mother may be dead, the father hastening to the grave, from old age and infirmities, but if there is a sister alive, she will always welcome to the most humble cot her gallant soldier-brother, when, suffering from wounds and broken down in constitution, he returns from the wars. Thousands of men (I am too well aware) live and die regardless of the affections of mother, father, brother, or sister, but the majority of our brave fellows in all ranks of the service retain the affections and associations inculcated during early youth.

Superior intelligence in the soldier is as great a recommendation as mere brute strength, and, let the discontented say what they please, the duty of a soldier will never deaden the feelings of a man, who during the most arduous and dangerous campaign can always find time to think.

I never was fond of preaching morality to others. Always cheerful and fond of company, I would never debar the soldier from enjoyment, either in or out of barracks. I do not mind confessing that I have had many a "turn up" with policemen, especially when those so-called "guardians of the peace" have attempted to take an unwarrantable liberty with a comrade. But to those "ruffians" in the uniform of soldiers, who constantly figure in our police-courts on the cowardly charge of fighting with their belts and indiscriminately striking civilians in the streets with the frightful weapons, I would say, "You are no soldiers." Indeed, the whole term of the service of such men is not worth a day's pay. They are only the refuse of society, who have foisted themselves upon the public service with no other object than that they fancy they can eat the bread of idleness, and be better clothed and lodged than by remaining civilians. In the latter case, they would become a burden to the country through being lodged in some gaol or transported, and in the army they are not only a disgrace to their corps in time of peace, but are always the first to scheme and skulk

when any fighting or long marching has to be done.

Such characters would laugh at and deride any display of affection, simply because they never knew it. They would ransack a cottage when campaigning, abuse the inmates, break up the furniture through sheer wantonness, and commit all sorts of frightful excesses; but show them an enemy in force, let the trumpet or bugle sound the "advance," and they are the first to show the "white feather."

Your genuine blackguard, whether he be a "rough" in a London mob, or a soldier in the ranks, is invariably a coward when he is equally matched. All attempts to reform him by discipline, good advice, and kind treatment, will fail in making a bad man good, but fear of death and the "cat-o'-nine-tails" will make him the most abject wretch alive. Lash him to the halberds after a drum-head court-martial on the line of march and he will writhe about like an eel, and scream like a jay before a lash is laid on his back. I am no advocate for flogging in time of peace, but if it were abolished in time of war, the gallows and the gibbet-post would have to be substituted. A long campaign with plenty of fighting is, however, the best purgative to get rid of these characters, because none of them will enlist or volunteer in time of war; those already in the service will desert or contrive to be taken prisoners if they can, and those who remain in the ranks are kept to their duty by the aid of the "cat," without which I am certain they would neither march nor fight, but always be ready to plunder, and disgrace the British name.

To return, however, to our voyage. The men regained their usual spirits in the course of a few hours, and as the three vessels, which had embarked the greater part of our men and horses, sailed out of the Sound on a beautiful evening in the early part of May, 1854, the joke and song, with the merry laugh at some attempts to dance, told plainly that there was more of gladness than sorrow on board our transport. The sailors especially were very pleased with our company: they donned our clothes, examined our arms, patted our horses, and would have jumped on their backs had they been allowed. After we had been at sea a couple of days a stiff breeze sprung up, and many of the men being unable to drink their daily rations of excellent rum, the sailors tossed theirs off instead, with many a wish for their safe return from "a-lickin' the Roosians." The weather was, however, on the whole favourable, and the men having quite recovered from sickness, before a week had passed were enabled to drink their own rum and eat their rations with amazing relish; indeed, food is never so enjoyable as after a recovery from sea-sickness.

Chapter Twenty Six.

Now all the youth of England are on fire,
And silken dalliance in the wardrobe lies;
Now thrive the armourers, and honour's thought
Reigns solely in the breast of every man.

Shakespeare.

About sixteen days after leaving Plymouth, the vessel I sailed in reached Scutari, where we found one of the transports had arrived nearly a day before us; the other had not come in, but arrived in about twelve hours after us. Many regiments of infantry had a couple of months prior to our arrival landed at Malta, from whence they had sailed for Gallipoli, where they met the first instalment of our allies—the French and the Turks.

The change of climate had already sown the seeds of disease among the infantry, and many who arrived at Gallipoli from Malta got no farther and never came back. The number of our infantry landed at Gallipoli was considerable, consisting of the 93rd, 41st, 77th, 88th, 33rd, 28th, 44th, and 60th regiments, and a portion of the rifle brigade. In addition to the above, about 20,000 French and a large Turkish force had been encamped in the neighbourhood. The commander-in-chief, Lord Raglan, with a portion of his staff, arrived at Gallipoli early in May, and the Duke of Cambridge was only a few days behind him. General Sir George Brown and a numerous staff came out with the first expedition, and the French commander-in-chief, Marshal St. Arnaud, General Canrobert, Prince Napoleon, etc, also sailed, viâ Gallipoli, where they reviewed and manoeuvred the French troops prior to their moving to Scutari, where I first saw them, and it was interesting to witness the curiosity with which some of our men eyed the French infantry, particularly the Zouaves. At first sight the Zouave strikes you as being a native of India, being a deep copper colour, with a flowing beard and huge moustachios. Many suppose them to be Arabs, but the majority are of pure French descent, and I more than suspect that they dye their skin with some liquid to darken it, and give them a more picturesque appearance. Their uniform is loose and easy, forming a striking contrast to the buttoned-up straight-jacket style with which our soldiers are encased and encumbered. The height of these Zouaves runs from five feet four inches to five feet seven inches, and they are proportionately stout and well made, with wiry wearing limbs, and a quickness in their eye and every movement that many of our crack infantry regiments would do well to emulate. They wear a red cap and tassel, in addition to which they have several folds of cloth round their head, altogether forming a sort of turban. Their jackets are blue with scarlet facings; they have also a scarlet waistcoat and a sash to fold several times round the waist. They wear no stocks, and their necks are quite bare; their trousers are red and made very wide, reaching only as far as the knees, where they are met by a sort of yellow gaiter, reaching to the shoes. They regarded a party of ours with as much interest as some of our fellows did them, being particularly struck with the weight of our swords and the pure whiteness of our belts. One of our men remarked, while eyeing over a little consequential fellow (who seemed particularly busy, thrusting his hands into our sabretaches, ostensibly to examine them, but probably for plunder), that he was "so dried up and so hard-fleshed, that no ball could ever enter into his body, no shell could tear him to pieces, and the most experienced carver at a cannibal banquet would have great difficulty in cutting him up." The worst part of these meetings with the French soldiers was, that, notwithstanding the difficulty each party experienced in making themselves understood, they generally managed to get drunk together, and it was certainly laughable to hear a group of a score or more, about equal numbers of French and English, Scotch and Irish, singing together, the former in different language, and the latter in different accents—a perfect medley and no mistake—with no more tune than a pig tied to a gate. Ours would be singing, or rather

shouting, “God Save the Queen,” and “Red, White, and Blue,” while the French were screeching out the “Marseillaise.”

Numerous vessels, chiefly transports, were moored off Scutari when we arrived, all waiting to embark the forces for Varna, a stage nearer to the Crimea. Early in June the encampment at Scutari broke up and proceeded on board the transports, which formed a very considerable fleet. We sailed in the most beautiful weather up the Bosphorus and over the Black Sea, where a dense fog enveloped every vessel, and we had to proceed very cautiously until we sighted the Bay of Varna, where we arrived the day after our embarkation from Scutari.

The Light Division, Rifle Brigade, and several other infantry regiments were disembarked before the cavalry and artillery, during which we had a fine view of the town and neighbourhood, and the busy scene on the jetty, from the deck of our vessel. Cheer after cheer rent the air as each regiment recognised the number of the corps by the colours of their facings. Varna is surrounded by a high wall, behind which are a range of steep hills. These hills were studded here and there with groups of country people; and many of these also crowded on the beach to witness our landing and offer food for sale, principally fowls, which were good and very cheap. A good fowl could be had for eighteen-pence, and a turkey for half-a-crown.

As each regiment landed, they formed on the jetty, and marched off to the merry strains of their band on their way to camp, the men of other regiments cheering them as long as they remained in sight. The encampment was at Aladyn, about a mile and a half from Varna, on a wide, open plain, and only intended as a temporary resting-place before marching to Devna, twenty miles farther up the country.

When most of the infantry had been landed, and the jetty was clear, our disembarkation commenced, after which we marched to Aladyn, and were loudly cheered and played to our lines by the gallant Light Division, composed of the 19th, 77th, 23rd Fusiliers, 7th Fusiliers, 33rd (Duke of Wellington’s), and the 88th Connaught Rangers.

After remaining at Aladyn a few days, we struck our tents and marched out of the encampment for Devna, being accompanied by the Light Division, five guns, and a part of the 17th Lancers. Leaving the Light Division to encamp at a place called Kojuck, about ten miles from Varna, we continued our march through a most beautiful tract of country, but almost destitute of inhabitants, the wild flowers covering the face of the land as far as the eye could reach. Here and there were droves of sheep of a dark-brown colour, and no bigger than a thorough-bred French poodle. We also saw numerous herds of cattle—queer little creatures, about the size of a good Leicestershire ram—but we afterwards found them not bad eating, and not too dear. When the country people found they had nothing to fear, and that we paid them freely for everything they brought, they came into camp every morning, but were never accompanied by women.

We had left two troops of our regiment at Aladyn, but they afterwards came into head-quarters, having lost four men from disease through drinking the bad water, for the ale and porter we had heard so much about had not arrived, or, having arrived, was perhaps being consumed by the staff of the imbecile commissariat. The wine was sour, and gave us the diarrhoea; and the spirits, though cheap enough, were so fiery and villainous that a glass or two drove us headlong into trouble.

Chapter Twenty Seven.

Follow, follow!
Grapple your minds to steerage of this navy,
And leave your England as dead midnight still,
Guarded with grandsires, babes, and old women,
Either past or not arrived at pith and puissance;
For who is he whose chin is but encircled,
With one appearing hair, that will not follow
These cull’d and choice drum cavaliers?

Shakespeare.

While the detachment in which I had honour to serve was in camp at Aladyn, the 5th Dragoon Guards, familiarly called the “Green Horse,” from the colour of their facings (cuffs and collars) being of green cloth, arrived at Varna, having come direct from Ireland in the *Himalaya*. The heavy brass helmets worn by all the Heavy Dragoon regiments were so distressing to the men, that white calico covers were issued in order to counteract the effects of the blazing sun, for which the men were deeply thankful. Some companies of the Grenadiers arrived about the same time, and so much dissatisfaction prevailed among the men in reference to the choking stock, that an order was issued for them to march without wearing them. As regards my own regiment no such order was given, as we only wear stocks when on duty even in barracks, and not having to walk and carry our own kit, like even the most crack regiments of infantry, we were content and happy enough to ride through a beautiful tract of country from our encampment at Aladyn to Devna, a little village chiefly inhabited by small farmers, who, failing to keep their pigs and turkeys without the boundary of the camp, as a natural consequence they lost many of them, and, as another natural consequence, they were constantly complaining that the soldiers *stole* them. The turkeys being small, and the pigs queer little creatures, all at large, and far away from the village, feeding upon grass and acorns in such places, and under such circumstances, as naturally led our men to suppose they were running wild, and that they had as much right to them as any one else, they hunted them as much for the fun of catching as for that of eating them.

A pig is a difficult animal to catch in an open place, and these pigs being in all but a wild state, run very fast—much faster than any I ever saw in my life. The turkeys were brought to grass with short sticks, but they were scarcely worth the trouble, as there was very little meat on their bones worth the trouble of picking off, when killed in this

state before having been taken up to fatten. We had a man from the neighbourhood of Chowbent, in Lancashire, who, it was said, once, when coming off picket duty, ate one of these Bulgarian turkeys, bones, feathers, and all; but of course I cannot vouch for its truth. Of one thing I am, however, quite certain—that soldiers, when campaigning, can eat nearly twice as much victuals as is allowed them in barracks, and therefore it need not be wondered that a turkey, a goose, fowl, or pretty little grunter should mysteriously disappear at times when a regiment is stationed so near to farm villages.

The weather during the middle of the day was intensely hot while we lay at Devna; but the nights being cold, we made fires of wood, which was easily obtainable, as many of the inhabitants of cabins isolated from the village, being frightened at our approach, went away with their families, and left their stores behind them, and it was better for us to burn them than leave them for the benefit of the enemy.

Many men were punished for appropriating this deserted property, especially in the victualling line; but when it is considered that we were frequently short of food, the meat being wretchedly fed, no beer or porter could be got, and not a sight of a potato or a bit of vegetable was seen in camp for weeks, the men could not be blamed for helping themselves to those necessaries which the imbecility of our Government had failed to supply them with. We could get tobacco and tea, but our meat was frequently eaten without the essential flavour of salt.

About the middle of June a detachment of the 6th “Green Horse” and a troop of the 13th Light Dragoons joined us at Devna. They had suffered much from the sun during their march, and scarcely one of them had a bit of skin left on his lips. The hot weather was, however, frequently tempered by heavy showers of rain, and the thunder-storms were awfully grand, and sufficient to terrify our outlying pickets on the hills, in the dead of the night; but the men braved it out, returning to camp drenched to the skin, and almost hungry enough to eat an iron bedstead.

In the early part of July we were joined by the Light Division (infantry), and the remainder of the cavalry regiments, consisting of detachments of the 8th and 11th Hussars, the 13th Light Dragoons, and the 1st and remainder of the 5th Dragoon Guards. They gave us an awful account of the march, the roads, or rather track, being sandy; every vestige of the vegetation with which it was covered at the time we marched over it from Varna was destroyed by the immense traffic of infantry, cavalry, guns, ammunition waggons, and arabas containing stores and baggage. It was, therefore, as cheerless and uncomfortable as a cavalry march would be across the deserts of Arabia, and the men suffered much inconvenience and pain from the particles of fine sand getting into their eyes, which was so intense that they instinctively rubbed them with their hands, which augmented their agony, and the scorching rays of the sun completed their misery. There was, however, plenty of pure water in the lake not far distant from the camp, and a thorough washing alleviated their sufferings, and kept them to their duty.

A few days after the arrival of these additional troops at Devna, Omar Pasha, the Turkish Commander-in-Chief, arrived on his way from Silistria, the Russians having evacuated their position in front of that fortress, and set the garrison at liberty. He was on his way to Varna, attended by a brilliant escort of English and Turkish officers. The troops were turned out to present arms. Only a few squadrons of cavalry, however, took part in the salute; these were from the 8th and 11th Hussars and the 17th Lancers, the Heavy and Light Dragoons, with the artillery, having gone down to the lake in watering order.

I was left in camp with my regiment, and, of course, had a good opportunity of seeing this Turkish general for the first time. He rode a grey entire Arab, and several remarkably handsome horses of the same class, but different colours, were led by servants in rear of the escort. He was a little weather-beaten man, with grey hair and whiskers, and wore a common fez cap, and a plain blue coat with but little lace trimming upon it. He rode with such a remarkably straight leg, that he sat his horse in much the same style as a pair of compasses would appear when crossed over a rail. After the Light Division had been inspected, and our troops had dashed through a few difficult manoeuvres at a brisk trot, canter, and gallop, he opened his eyes, threw up his right arm, appearing highly delighted and astonished. He afterwards reviewed the Turkish troops, and then cantered off in the direction of Varna.

"The instant they saw us they scampered off, but they were soon surrounded, and a few men dismounted and searched them."

In the course of a few days he returned from Varna on his way to Shumla, and again the troops were paraded, and went through some movements for his inspection; after which he vanished with Lord Raglan, Sir George Brown, the Duke of Cambridge, General Yorke Scarlett, etc, in the direction of the General's quarters.

Thousands of the Pasha's troops—the Bashi-Bazouks—encamped themselves in the neighbourhood of our quarters, on their way to Varna, and many a good hiding they got from our men, who frequently caught them stealing our rations; and the Bulgarian villagers had a harassing time of it during the few days they remained around the camp at Devna and Aladyn.

One evening, while returning from the lake, where my troop had been to water, we met about a score of these ruffians, who had been prowling about our tents while engaged with our horses. The instant they saw us they turned to the left and scampered off; but they were immediately surrounded by our horses; a few men dismounted and searched them. They had previously thrown away a valise belonging to our regiment; boots, socks, flannels, shirts, and many other things were found upon them. A man of the 17th Lancers, to whom a pair of excellent boots belonged, picked up one of the scamps upon whom they were found, and threw him into the lake, from whence he crawled after a rare ducking; the remainder were rather roughly handled, and sent about their business. These ruffians were soon afterwards sent away to be drilled into something like soldiers under General Beatson at Shumla.

During our stay at Devna several murders were committed either by the natives of the district or the Bashi-Bazouks, of whom many were left behind by General Beatson; and these found refuge on the hills, from whence they prowled forth at night like wild beasts, seeking what they might devour, and steal or destroy. Many a black crime, which our officers fathered upon the natives, was without a doubt the work of the Bashi-Bazouks.

About this period Lord Cardigan marched with detachments from the 8th and 11th Hussars on a reconnoitring expedition along the desolate track of country by the banks of the Danube towards Silistria; they took no tents, and only a few days' provisions with them, and therefore had to sleep in the open air, with their horses picketed at their feet, to feed upon such scanty herbage as the ground allowed. After being away about ten days, they came in sight of the Russian field column, said to be under General Luders, who afterwards commanded the army in the field after we landed in the Crimea.

Having attained the object of this expedition, during which both his lordship and his detachments might have been surrounded and cut to pieces at any time, so ignorant were our leaders at this period of the position and whereabouts

of the Russian army, Lord Cardigan retired by forced marches to Devna, and nearly every one of the horses had to be long afterwards rested from illness and sore backs. But the men were for the most part well and hearty, and Lord Cardigan experienced but little inconvenience, although it was said he suffered much from the effects of the damp ground some months afterwards in the Crimea.

We had some capital fun while lying at Devna: the officers, on horseback, would hunt the great, lurching, hungry-looking dogs, that many of the men would insist were hyenas and jackals, so wild and savage did they look. When disturbed and started at a dusting pace, the young officers would ride after—them as if for dear life, cracking their whips or flourishing a sword close to their very tails, and then would come, in motley crowd, soldiers in undress, looking as excited as if in front of the enemy, and bringing up the rear would be all the rag, tag, and bob-tail of the camp. The brute invariably ran towards the hills, and if he gained them unscathed he was safe, for both horses and men would be blown ere they could follow up the slopes. Some of these dogs are very savage, and if brought to bay in a corner would dash at your throat in an instant; but as few of us ever had sword beyond our reach, we generally made short work of them if caught red-handed with probably a piece of meat in their mouths, when carelessly left unguarded, prior to its being cooked for the dinners of a dozen men.

Towards the latter end of July the cholera made its unwelcome appearance in our camp, and many men, both cavalry, infantry, and artillery, died after a few hours' illness in extreme agony. Every regiment encamped on the track of country extending for about twenty miles from Devna to Varna lost more or less men from this dreadful scourge; but the troops in and around the latter place suffered most, as many of our men were removed to Monastir, a healthier place farther up on the hills than Devna. The disease was said to be engendered at Varna among the Turks and Bashi-Bazouks, who are horribly filthy, and of not much real service as fighting-men on a battle-field.

About this time we were pleased to hear the news that the 4th Light Dragoons had arrived to join our brigade, henceforth being our brethren in arms; they were encamped with the 6th by the sea-shore, but both regiments lost several men from cholera, and each (especially the gallant 4th) were destined to lose the greater part of their men by the sword, as will afterwards be related. Many of the best, the bravest, and the most light-hearted of my own regiment died of the fearful pestilence at Devna.

At the latter end of August we got the welcome order to march from Devna and Monastir to Varna, with an assurance that we should soon be embarked for the Crimea, and at least be allowed to fight for our lives with a more chivalrous, if not a less relentless, enemy than the cholera. The 5th "Green Horse" lost so many men, that the remainder were for a time (until augmented by drafts from home) attached to the 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards.

Chapter Twenty Eight.

In brief, a braver choice of dauntless spirits,
That now the English bottoms have waft o'er,
Did never float upon the swelling tide.

Shakespeare.

After our arrival at Varna we had to wait a few days for the order of embarkation, and finally sailed in company with the 17th Lancers in the *Himalaya*, Lord Cardigan and his staff being aboard the same vessel; the 11th Hussars, 4th and 13th Light Dragoons being embarked aboard other transports, as also the heavy cavalry at the same time. Never was an army embarked for almost immediate active service under less favourable circumstances. Our ranks were decimated by disease, and the authorities apparently regardless of our health, food, clothing, and comfort, so necessary to render an army contented and vigorous in the face of the enemy. Still our men kept up their spirits, and only one desire pervaded the whole of the cavalry with whom I came in contact, and this was to "meet the Roosians and have done with it." Not a man knew where it was intended to land the army, but it was generally understood that fighting would begin in earnest directly we came in sight of the enemy on the shores of the Crimea. I noticed the gallant 42nd Highlanders aboard the *Emeu*, and the Scots Fusiliers aboard the *Kangaroo*, and no men could be in better spirits.

The 4th Light Dragoons embarked in the *Simla*, and the 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards, with the remnant of the 5th, were conveyed to the scene of action in the *Trent*. The men were all in capital spirits, and their after-service proved that they meant business, as also did the 13th Light Dragoons (who sailed in the *Jason*, if I remember right); and the 17th Lancers, with the old 8th King's Royal Irish and 11th Hussars, proved what British cavalry can do, even under the most distressing circumstances, as shown by their wild death-ride through the vale of Balaklava, where the imbecility of their leaders nearly caused what few of them that the cholera had left, to be annihilated by charging unsupported an army in position. The transports and other vessels necessary to remove the Allied array numbered over 700, which, with the fleet, formed a magnificent sight when fairly out of the bay of Varna. Captain Longmore of ours, who accompanied Lord Cardigan in his reconnoitring expedition along the Danube, died of cholera aboard the *Himalaya* before we sailed, and his body was taken ashore and buried. Not a better officer ever commanded a troop; he was a strict disciplinarian, but not a petty tyrant, and there was not a man in the regiment but who mourned his loss as children would a father. Several more officers and men died before sailing and on the passage, and their bodies were thrown overboard. I saw about fifty Zouaves drowned between the transport on board which they were to embark and the shore: they were all in complete marching order, and thus were prevented from swimming. The boat came in contact with a foreign vessel containing stores, and the former was sunk in less than a minute, the Zouaves disappearing with the most frightful yells; and they never rose again, a few—very few—only being saved.

Lord Raglan, the Commander-in-Chief, and staff embarked on board the *Caradoc*; and some idea may be formed of the expedition when I say that it would have formed a line upwards of ten miles in length. We sailed in the direction of Eupatoria, and when some distance from the place, but within range of the guns of the fleet, the *Caradoc* sailed

towards the town with the white flag of truce, and it was generally understood we were to land there at once. But for some reason the idea was abandoned, and orders were given to sail farther down shore, for about ten miles, until we came to a low sandy beach on the 14th of September. All eyes were now directed to the beach—the first glimpse we had ever had of the Russian soil—and we fully expected to see it bristling with cannon; but all was peaceful and silent; not an armed man was visible as our officers eagerly scanned the shore with the aid of their glasses. Plenty of corn and cattle, and the Tartar farmers were all busy with their harvest. After some hours' delay, caused by having to wait until the whole of the transports—some of whom were slower sailers than others—had come up, the expedition came to anchor from two to three miles from the beach. The French, who anchored some vessels on our right, were the first to lower a boat, with about a score of men in it; they quickly ran on shore, and jumped out, some of them up to the middle in water. A flag-staff was handed out, carried quickly ashore, and in a few seconds they had planted it on Russian territory, with the tricolour streaming from its summit. Shakos were thrown up, and *Vive l'Empereur*! made the welkin ring. All this time the French were busily engaged lowering boats and running their men ashore. The French numbered about 25,000, and the English of all arms about 27,000. The French landed very quickly, and the moment they reached the shore they ran about like antelopes until they were assembled and formed into skirmishing parties, for fear of the enemy being in ambush; but none appeared, save a small knot of Cossacks on a high, rocky hill about a mile off. These Cossacks formed the escort of an officer who had evidently been sent from Sebastopol to ascertain the strength of our force, which they did not think it prudent to oppose on landing. A shell or round shot from the fleet, or a rifle ball or two from the deck of a man-of-war, would have scattered the party; but our officers, ever busy with their glasses, were anxious to gratify their curiosity. Sir George Brown and General Airey were amongst the first of our officers to land, and with a picket of riflemen some distance in their rear, they pushed on to reconnoitre for camping-ground. The generals were on foot, and never dreamt of the enemy being so near as they ascended the hill, behind whose crest the Cossacks were lying in ambush, having seen them some distance from and isolated from their escort of riflemen. The whole affair was seen from the decks of many of the vessels, that of the *Himalaya* being crowded with officers and men of the 8th Hussars and 17th Lancers. The officer in command of the Cossacks dismounted, and his men followed his example. Walking and crouching behind their horses, they approached the two generals, who, the instant they saw the danger, turned and ran down the hill, the Cossacks throwing themselves into their saddles, and flourishing their long lances, preparing to pursue. Their career was, however, cut short, as the riflemen suddenly rose up and fired upon them; but the distance was too far, or the aim too bad to be effective, for no saddles were emptied, and the party rapidly disappeared behind the hill amidst a cloud of dust. We afterwards heard that one of the peasants had been wounded by the fire of the rifles while at work with his team on an adjacent farm.

As each of our divisions of infantry landed they marched away from the beach, some in one direction and some in another, until the shore, as far as the eye could reach, was literally covered with armed men, whose bayonets flashing in the sun had a very pretty effect, as seen from the decks of the transports by the force still waiting their turn to land. At about noon the rain began to fall, and the wind getting up, the whole aspect of things underwent a change for the worse. The rain continued to fall steadily, and, to make matters worse, the men had no tents. Each was landed with his great coat and rations for three days, with a drop of rum to keep him warm. In this state the majority of our infantry had to pass their first night on hostile ground; but the cavalry still remained on board their respective transports. While the disembarkation still went on, some of our men-of-war boats were sent along the shore to reconnoitre, and found a Russian encampment, containing, it was said, about 5000 men; this they shelled, and soon destroyed. The rain continued to fall, but notwithstanding this, no orders were given to land the tents, only one for General Evans being sent on shore.

Sir George Brown and staff were fortunate to procure a native cart, beneath which they slept, and no doubt soundly. Notwithstanding this night's misery, every man being wet through and without a change of dry linen, or a bit of dry wood to make fires, the soldiers were in good spirits, the sea voyage of about fourteen days having freshened them up wonderfully; and they had the ever-cheering prospect before them—although the consummation of their wishes was destined to be long deferred—of eventually being inside the walls of Sebastopol, with the whole of the Russian stores and baggage at their chief disposal. Indeed, the fact that our commanders considered that we should be in the Russian stronghold in the course of a few days, was the reason why the tents were not landed simultaneously with our forces.

The morning after our arrival orders were given for the cavalry to land. We had been lurching and tumbling in the waves all night, getting but little sleep, and our horses having been in slings the whole voyage, sadly needed exercise; and although the wind almost blew a whole gale, the order was welcome. Our vessel, the magnificent *Himalaya*, was the first to commence operations. We had nearly 400 horses and about 700 men aboard. The rest of the vessels stood in as near shore as possible, and commenced to land. One of Lord Raglan's horses was the first to tumble off a horse-float into the water, and was drowned; several more followed suit, chiefly officers' horses, through being, perhaps, better fed and higher bred than common troopers. A dozen horses were lowered in slings from the decks of the vessels on to these floats, with a soldier to each horse's head when he got aboard. The floats were coupled to each other to the number of eight or ten, and then they were tugged as near shore as possible by steam-tugs that had accompanied the transports in readiness for any such service. In this manner most of the cavalry were landed, being rowed the remainder of the way until the floats bumped on the beach, when the horses were led or pushed along planks resting on the bow of the float, and walked into the water; through which, with sundry wild plunges and snorting, they romped on to the shingle, shook their sides, gave a shrill neigh to their companions, and trotted after them farther away on shore, both horse and trooper drenched in sea-water. After the cavalry had been disembarked, the tents—so much required the night before—were got on shore, and the men, infantry and cavalry, lay in comparative comfort the second night after our landing in the Crimea.

Chapter Twenty Nine.

> How stands the glass around?
> For shame! ye take no care, my boys;

How stands the glass around?
Let the mirth and wine abound.
The trumpets sound,
The colours flying are, my boys,
To fight, kill, or wound;
May we still be found
Content with our hard fare, my boys,
On the cold ground.

We were now fairly on the enemy's ground, had bearded him in his den, and though our men had been subjected to a long period of suffering, consequent on the cholera ravaging our ranks at Varna and Devna (the one idea prevalent in every man's breast being that he himself might be the next victim), we were still a very imposing force. When our videttes brought in the news that they had been menaced and yelled at in unmistakable sneers by the Cossacks, who were plainly seen in almost every direction galloping their shaggy little horses, and waving their long lances for us to come on and meet them, we were anxious to be among them. Like our own advanced posts, however, their field columns were plainly within a short distance, and any demonstration on the part of our pickets would only have sent them back direct to their lines, while our skirmishers, with their limited knowledge of the ground, might have been surrounded, and either cut down to a man, or taken prisoners. At this time we were said to be within twenty miles of Sebastopol, and the number of effective Englishmen, besides French and Turkish infantry, was about 27,000, who, I may truly say, were most eager to meet the enemy in battle; and no order during the whole campaign was more cheerfully obeyed than that issued by Lord Raglan on the night of the 18th of September, to "strike tents and march at break of the following day." That march will long be remembered by all who were engaged in it. Every brigade, every division, every regiment, troop, battery, company, and every man with his arms and other accoutrements, was examined by colonels, adjutants, and their deputies, with a minuteness that told us plainly it would not be long before our services were called into active requisition. It was not until eight o'clock that the trumpeters of our brigade sounded the advance, and when our horses capered away from the camping-ground, to the merry strains of the various bands, no hearts were lighter than the five hundred cavaliers who formed the advanced guard of the army which has ever gone forth from British shores "to conquer or to die." It was a lovely day, and the heat of the sun was tempered by the gentle sea-breeze, as we marched with our right flank resting on the beach under cover of the fleet.

I was one of the advanced guard formed of men selected from the 8th Hussars, 4th Light Dragoons, 17th Lancers, 13th Light Dragoons, and 11th Hussars, and we were, of course, the first to come within sight of the enemy, who, in place of advancing to meet us, set fire to houses, corn-stacks, and every vestige of harvest produce on the land for miles around. We could see numerous Cossacks driving away the stunted cattle and sheep to their lines, ostensibly to prevent them falling into our hands, but in reality to rob the farmers of their property, which would have been unmolested by us, though, probably, the French would have appropriated it. After marching about two hours we drew nearer to the outlying pickets of the Russian army, who had fallen back upon each other, and so near to their reserves, that the latter could be plainly seen, as stated by Lord Cardigan, who, with a field-glass, rode at the head of our column, and ordered out a skirmishing party. These skirmishers spreading out on each flank of the advancing army like a fan, rode forth to meet the Cossacks, who capered and wheeled about, flourished their lances, and performed many grotesque movements quite new to us. But they finally settled down, and forming up in a very business-like manner, advanced as if determined to meet our skirmishers. Ere we had gone far, however, the "halt" was sounded, it was said by order of the Earl of Lucan, who with several more staff officers had ridden to the front. Emboldened by our halt, the Cossacks commenced to yell, flourish their lances, and some few shots were tired at us, which, however, fell out of range, and it was with a feeling of disappointment that we were forced to obey the trumpeter's call of "skirmishers in," retiring upon the main body which had been pushed forward in anticipation of a general action. During these few minutes, the enemy had brought up a few field-guns, and our men were exasperated beyond measure at the apathy of Lord Lucan, for allowing us to be fired into with artillery, and followed by a horde of yelling Cossacks into the shelter of our lines, like a pack of whipped hounds to their kennels.

It will ever redound to the credit of Lord Cardigan, that in this, his first meeting of the enemy in force, he was most anxious to lead the Light Cavalry to battle, even before our reserves had come in sight; but Lord Lucan, by a rapid communication with Lord Raglan, decided that, not knowing the strength or position of the enemy, it was better to wait until the main body came up, and bivouacked, ere we made an attack. Several of our men were badly wounded, and five or six horses were killed by the Russian gunners, who had got our range and made beautiful practice. At last, however, a battery of six and nine-pounders came up at a gallop, and instantly opened fire. "Whiz," "ugh," "rippety tip," went the balls, some ricocheting and sending up clouds of dust as they danced over the intervening space. The Cossacks ceased yelling when many of them were knocked over, horses and all, like nine-pins, and the remainder scampered off to their lines like frightened sheep. Meanwhile the main body of our army were fast coming up, and forming in order of battle to repel a general attack, should one be made. A shell, however, which was so directed as to burst in the centre of an advanced column of the enemy's infantry, settled their business, for limbering up their guns in great haste they quickly retired, and one of our sergeants (O'Brien Kennedy, a Tipperary man) remarked, that although they appeared to "care but little for cannon-balls, they did not relish bullocks' hearts stuffed with thunder and lightning."

Only one feeling pervaded our brigade that night, which was regret at not being allowed to meet the Russian cavalry hand to hand, and stirrup to stirrup. This little skirmish was always designated amongst us as "that affair of the Bouljanak;" but as we dismounted and patted our horses' necks, we rejoiced that we were fairly up with the enemy. Without laying ourselves open to the charge of vain boasting, there was not a man of us who collected round our bivouac fires that night, who did not resolve that those "yelling Cossacks" should be "skivered" when we were permitted to meet them sword to sword and man to man. It afterwards transpired, from the statements of prisoners and spies, that no less than five regiments of cavalry were in reserve behind the "yelling Cossacks;" therefore it was, perhaps, as well that the recall was sounded, or the story of the "Young Dragoon" might not have been written.

Soundly our grand army slept that night on the cold ground, and thousands awakened only to march forth to certain death up the heights of the Alma. Passing over the events that occurred on the morning of the day on which the battle of Alma was fought, which was spent by our generals in arranging the army in the order of battle to meet the enemy, and beard him in his own earthworks, I now bring my readers to the banks of the river Alma, called a river, but in reality only a brook, which most of our horses could have cleared at a jump, even in its widest part. Our brigade was held in reserve, as, if the infantry should suffer a reverse and be obliged to retire from the hill over the brook on to the plain, we were ready to play our part on that ground. Onwards the army advanced in a vast extended line, so as to prevent the enemy from descending the heights in front and outflanking us. The French were disposed so as to march on our extreme right, in order to attack the enemy's left, who occupied a position which, from its steepness, was difficult to approach; but to our army was assigned the hardest fighting—namely, the forcing of the enemy's centre and right. The whole face of the hill as far as the eye could reach was swarming with squares of infantry intermixed with earthworks thrown up on the slopes, over which peeped the muzzles of muskets ready to deal death and destruction to our dauntless infantry.

As we neared the banks of the stream, towards the right of the Russian position, we noticed myriads of Cossacks, supported by a large force of dragoons wearing helmets, who, when they observed us, descended the hills and boldly crossed the stream. This time we quite expected to meet them, but we were again disappointed, as a battery of our artillery was at once pushed forward and placed between us and glory.

A clump of houses and haystacks had been set on fire some distance to our left, the smoke of which was intended to hide the enemy's cavalry from the view of our generals, and so enable them to charge upon the left flank and rear of our infantry, just at the moment the latter forded the river. But the artillery, before mentioned, with our brigade ready to dash among them, effectually kept them at bay. During this time the enemy had opened fire on our right, and very soon it extended over the whole length of our line. The infantry were ordered to lie down, and while our artillery replied well to the enemy's fire, we sat on our horses passive observers of all that occurred. An occasional shot dropped in the midst of us, and many rolled harmlessly among our horses' legs. Not a hundred yards from where we formed up was Lord Raglan and staff: the commander-in-chief was evidently getting very anxious, as he continually interrogated an aide-de-camp as to something that was passing on the extreme left of the enemy's position.

At length Captain Nolan came up at a tearing gallop. "They are over, my Lord!" said he: then followed a hurried, conversation among the staff, and after a short interval the welcome order was given to the infantry to rise and advance.

By this time it was ascertained that not only were the French over the river, as Captain Nolan had stated, but they were hard at it, climbing the heights and engaged hand to hand with the enemy. Not a moment was to be lost; a splash, a scramble along the whole line, and in a few brief moments British bayonets were introduced to the ribs of Russian soldiers. The Highland brigade being nearest to us, we were enabled to watch their every movement, as well as the excitement consequent upon our position would allow, for we were constantly threatened by the demonstrations of the cavalry on our left. We saw the kilted heroes march at quick time up that deadly incline as steadily as if on parade, and the infantry on their right (as far as we could see for the smoke) followed their example. It appears, however, from the reports of those actually engaged, that the Light Division, being too impetuous, got into some disorder, owing to their being in advance of the main body, and they consequently suffered heavily.

Sir George Brown, who commanded this division, rode in the front of them on a grey horse, and led them on at too fast a pace, for which he nearly paid the penalty with his life, for his horse was shot under him, and a terrible fire being concentrated upon this part of our line, the gallant Light Division was awfully cut up. Onward, however, swept the main bulk of that army, the majority of whom were composed of men who had never been in action before. We could distinctly see at intervals, through the dense columns of smoke, as the fire gradually receded from the base up the slopes and finally died out at the crest of the hill, the belching forth of the musketry from the earthworks as our men neared one ridge after the other. A puff of smoke, a long stream of fire, and down came our men in heaps, but plenty remained to avenge their death. A wild "hurrah," and over the crest of the earthworks they leaped with their bayonets at the charge, followed by a deadly hand-to-hand struggle within the earthworks.

This order of advance, and successive storming of what may almost be termed batteries in position, was unparalleled in the history of war, but it was successful in every instance; for the enemy were either driven from every earthwork, or bayoneted on the spot: yard by yard, inch by inch, they retired up the hill, and were finally driven beyond their last rallying point, a confused, defeated, and humiliated army, flying with their chief, Prince Menschikoff, in the direction of their stronghold, Sebastopol.

In this action the enemy left all their cannon, and upwards of 6000 men dead, wounded, and prisoners, in our hands. Our loss in killed and wounded was estimated at little less than 4000 men. Our own dead, as also the Russians, were buried, and all our wounded were sent on board the fleet, but hundreds of wounded Russians were left in the places where they lay.

Much has been written as to the policy pursued by Lord Raglan, of not following up the retreating enemy and completing their destruction ere they reached Sebastopol. With this I have nothing to do, but I may remark that it would have been worse policy to have left our dead on the field to fester in the burning sun, and so spread disease and death, more terrible than dying in action, throughout the whole army. The wounded would also have been left without succour, for it must be remembered that no assistance was sent from the fleet: the survivors had to bury their dead comrades, and carry the wounded to the ships. A weary, harassing night was that after the battle, in which I had myself happily to take no part, being engaged on picket duty; but I could plainly hear the shrieks and groans of the wounded as the surgeons amputated the poor fellows' legs or arms, and dressed the less serious wounds.

The action was fought on the 21st September, but not until the morning of the 23rd did we leave the vicinity of the battle-field. The fleet had orders to sail about the same time in the direction of Balaclava. On our line of march we

found that our old foes, the Cossacks, had ruthlessly plundered several houses that had evidently been inhabited by well-to-do natives, and we found numerous smaller houses along the banks of the Katcha river, from which the inhabitants had fled, leaving them to be plundered by the bloodthirsty ruffians. Here and there, however, we met with a Tartar farmer, who, more bold than the rest, came forth from their hiding-places to stare at us from motives of sheer curiosity. On arriving at a village called Eskel, we were allowed to dismount, and here we found plenty of newly-gathered corn for our horses, who much enjoyed eating it from the straw, and we equally enjoyed the rich clusters of grapes, which hung invitingly from the vines which surrounded nearly every dwelling. We learned from the few natives who were visible, that the defeated army had reached the village on the evening of the battle in a sadly deteriorated condition, and after only an hour's rest an alarm was spread that our army was pursuing them, and they continued their retreat in great disorder.

Pursuing our march through a thickly-wooded country, we could distinctly see the forts of Sebastopol but we kept well away from the range of their guns, and made all haste, by a flank movement, not the least expected by the enemy, to reach Balaclava, in order to form a base of operations and establish a communication with the fleet. During this march, parties of our corps and the 11th Hussars formed the advance guard, keeping in sight of Lord Raglan and his staff, and we suddenly came upon the enemy's baggage guard, which we quickly dispersed, and an enormous quantity of baggage, principally clothing, was instantly surrounded. The carriage of Prince Menschikoff also fell into our hands, but I did not see it, being otherwise engaged: my share of the plunder was a capital cloak of fine blue cloth, lined throughout with fur, which I took from a box, the lid of which had been smashed open by a private of the 88th regiment, with a blow from the butt end of his rifle. I also managed to secure a couple of flannel shirts, but having pursued the enemy two or three miles on the road, we returned too late to share in the most valuable spoil that fell into the hands of our comrades.

Halting next at the village of Tractir, or Traktir, near which is a place called Mackenzie's farm, which only consists of plantations of fir, and stores of wood grown for the use of the enemy's navy. This the French set fire to, and we left it blazing merrily, to resume our march on Balaclava, where a portion of the fleet arrived before us, and the guns of the *Agamemnon*, commanded by Sir E. Lyons, were at once called into requisition (in conjunction with our infantry), to reduce a fort from whence several rounds of shot were fired on our approach, but the commandant of the place soon surrendered, and we entered the town, or rather village, without further opposition. Having taken prisoner an Englishman named Upton, a relative of the engineer whom the enemy had employed during the erection of the forts at Sebastopol, we found the object of his capture was to obtain information from him as to the strength of the army, the forts, and the positions of the field columns; but he refused to give any information, and, I believe, was set at liberty. From this time the infantry, artillery, sappers, and commissariat were as busy as bees, preparing to invest Sebastopol, landing siege-trains, stores, etc, and the enemy continually kept up a dropping fire upon everything that came within range of their forts. The cavalry from this to the battle of Balaclava was principally employed on picket duty, reconnoitring and foraging, with an occasional skirmish with the Cossacks; but the infantry had a hard time of it in the trenches, and, what was worse than all, the cholera was still busy in our midst; indeed, up to this time we had lost more men by disease than in battle. Worked as hard as labourers on a railway, under fire all the time, fed on scanty and inferior rations, with little or no fuel with which to cook them, any infantry except the British would have revolted *en masse*, and left their rulers to fight their own battles. We had, before our arrival at Balaclava, been reinforced by the Scots Greys, who had been landed from the *Himalaya* at the Katcha river, and here also the French were joined by large reinforcements, said to be upwards of ten thousand men. In coming from Varna to Balaclava, the 1st Royal Dragoons and the Enniskillen Dragoons had upwards of 200 horses washed overboard in a heavy gale of wind, and the men were landed in a very disheartened state. There is nothing so miserable for a trooper on a campaign as to be without his horse: it is part and parcel of himself, as, besides furnishing him with an easy means of transport from place to place, it is essential to his personal safety.

Chapter Thirty.

> Above the tide each broadsword bright
> Was brandished like a beam of light,
> Each targe was dark below;
> And with the ocean's mighty swing,
> When heaving to the tempest's wing,
> They hurled them on the foe.
>
> Scott.

Passing over much that would be interesting to my young readers, I must now bring them to the morning of the battle of Balaclava, celebrated for the most daring cavalry charge that ever was known in the memory of mankind. The time that had been wasted at Gallipoli, Varna, and Devna, had not only greatly diminished by death the number of our men, but our horses were absolutely pined to death for want of forage; not a morsel of grass could be found, and the hay which had been landed at Balaclava in compressed trusses as hard as a stone, and bound together with iron hoops, was much of it musty, while of this not more than a mere handful (a third of the quantity served out in barracks) was given daily, and the oats were also served out in corresponding quantities. The consequence of this bad management was, that our horses soon grew too weak to carry us; therefore it was no wonder that on the 25th October not more than six hundred could be mustered in any degree fit for duty. Our batteries opened fire upon Sebastopol about ten days previously, and the forts had replied with vigour, therefore the fighting was fairly begun, and continued night and day, not only with cannon, but between skirmishers, foraging parties, continual sorties of infantry from the forts upon the men engaged in the trenches, and between riflemen at long range, from every imaginable position, and in every attitude where a cover could be found and a sight of a Russian's head could be obtained. The cavalry, therefore, were doubly diligent, as to them was principally confided the defence of Balaclava, and the keeping open of communications with the camp to obtain supplies from the fleet. Our tents were situate, as

near as I can guess, about three miles from Balaclava, between the latter place and Sebastopol, and arranged partly on the slopes of the hills and partly in the valley, which grew nothing but thistles.

Within a short distance of our encampment were pitched the tents of the 93rd Highlanders, and a little nearer the sea could plainly be seen the camping-ground of the Marines. On the hill-tops, farther away from Balaclava, were erected some earthen redoubts which were armed by heavy ship-guns, and manned by Turks. These redoubts were in tended to hold in check the enemy, should he advance from Sebastopol by any of the roads in the direction of Balaclava.

Soon after daybreak on the 25th October, our outlying pickets discovered a large force of the enemy's horse, artillery and infantry, marching rapidly along the valley, and extending their artillery and cavalry within range of the Turkish redoubts before named. Mounted orderlies were at once despatched to the front for reinforcements. We had not yet broken our fast, neither had our horses been fed with their scanty rations, or even watered. There was not a moment to be lost, and in less time than it takes me to write three or four lines, every available man had leaped into his saddle—a few from each of the five regiments, the 8th and 11th Hussars, 4th and 18th Light Dragoons, and 17th Lancers, or, as they were familiarly styled, "death or glory boys," their regimental badge being a death's head and cross-bones, and their motto, "Death or Glory." The badge of the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars is the "harp and crown," and their motto, *Pristinae Virtutis Memores*, with "Leswarre, Hindoostan," inscribed on their colours and shabraques—the latter being the cloth covering of the saddle. The 4th Queen's Own Light Dragoons had inscribed on their colours and shabraques the names of the various actions in which they had been engaged—namely, "Talavera, Albuera, Salamanca, Vittoria, Toulouse, Peninsula, Afghanistan, Ghuznee." The shabraques and colours of the 11th, Prince Albert's Own Hussars, bore the inscriptions, "Egypt, with the Sphinx, Salamanca, Peninsula, Waterloo, Bhurtpore;" and the 13th Light Dragoons wear the regimental motto, *Viret in aeternum*, with "Peninsula, Waterloo," on their colours.

Thus it will be seen that each regiment, though so very slenderly represented, had to sustain the well-earned honours which had previously been bestowed upon it. For the sake of illustration, I may state that the 17th Lancers wore a blue coatee and trousers with white facings, and a square-topped shako with black plume. The 8th Hussars were at that time attired in blue jackets and overalls, with a blue "pelisse" or loose jacket hanging over the left shoulder and fastened round the neck with a loop. The head-dress was a fur busby and white hackle. The uniform of the 11th was precisely the same as the 8th, with this difference, that their overalls were of crimson cloth; the colours of both regimental facings being yellow, with a profusion of lace running in lines across the breast, and each wore sashes of scarlet and yellow silk and worsted around their waists. The saddles of the men were covered with the "shabraque" before named, and over that was a black sheep-skin; tiger skins being substituted for the latter on officers' saddles, the tiger's head being cured with glass eyes substituted for natural ones, and the tusks revealed as if the beast was in the act of growling. The 4th wore blue coatees and overalls, with scarlet facings, shakos and plumes of horse-hair; and the 13th Light Dragoons were attired in blue coatees and buff facings, shako, and horse-hair plume. Thus attired and thus mounted, we were formed up to await our summons for battle, six hundred of us, all told.

By the time Sir Colin Campbell had his Highlanders under arms, the marines on the hill-tops were forming, and the sailors were rushing to their guns on the heights that commanded the road to the beach. The first glimpse we had of the enemy was a couple of batteries (one behind the other) of field-guns, marching direct upon the Turkish redoubts. About half-a-mile in the rear of the hindmost of these two batteries was another line of heavier guns, reaching right across the valley. Behind these, again, appeared an immense number of cavalry, enough to eat up our brigade, horses and all. After these marched very many squares of infantry, while extended on each flank, and far out to the front, were parties of mounted skirmishers, already firing, although they were not within range. Gradually the leading field-battery nears the Number 1 Turkish redoubt. A puff of white smoke rises from the approaching battery, then a report, followed by another and another. Now the heavy ship-guns boom from the redoubt, but the fire from the approaching enemy becomes too hot, and the Turks take to their heels: the enemy's light cavalry were soon upon them, a flash of steel in the air, and a sweeping cut or lance-thrust laid many of them low; while redoubt after redoubt with the guns were taken, and immediately manned by Russian gunners, and the guns turned against us. The Turks ran direct to the lines of the Highlanders, and in this direction literally swarmed the enemy's cavalry, but they advanced in good order. By this time our heavy cavalry brigade had joined us under General Scarlett, and were at first held in reserve. These were the Scots Greys, the 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards, the 6th Enniskillens, the 1st Royal Dragoons and the 5th Dragoon Guards. The light brigade were formed on the left of the "heavys," and the whole in two ranks, Lord Cardigan, the Earl of Lucan, and General Scarlett were in earnest conversation, while the men were looking anxious at a numerous column of cavalry in the very act of charging the Highlanders, who, much to our surprise, never formed square, as is customary to receive cavalry. The Turks formed on each flank, fired on the first approach of the Russian horse, when far enough out of range, and ran away, leaving the Scots to take care of themselves.

A cloud of dust almost hides the Highland infantry from view; we had seen them fight at Alma, and knew they would stand, but oh, how we longed to dash between them and their foes! The result showed us, however, that they needed no such assistance. Nearer and nearer the horsemen swept, and still undaunted the kilted heroes stood like rocks. Now the Russians appear to be within 800 yards of their line, and quick as lightning the front rank kneel and fire: not more than one or two saddles are emptied, however, the distance was too great. A brief interval, during which the horsemen unchecked ride on until within about 100 yards of the line, when the rear-rank men, over their kneeling comrades in front, each having singled out his advancing foe, and covered his breast with the minié muzzle, pulls the trigger, and down in a confused mass tumble numerous horses and men; the remainder turn "files about," and gallop back under cover of their guns.

It was now our turn, for during the previous events thousands of the enemy's cavalry were moving up the hill, and without halting at the top, they descended first at a gallop, then a canter, then a trot, then a walk, and soon afterwards they halted, probably surprised that we did not scamper off at their approach. They were at least ten to one of us, and their front rank far outflanked us both right and left. Our trumpets sounded the "advance," followed by "charge," and at them dashed the heavy brigade in succession of squadrons. Full tilt at their centre galloped Greys and Enniskillens, shooting through their line as if it were made of rotten sticks. Such a crash, and a cheer, a flash of

sabres for an instant, and they are clean through the first Russian lines, the flanks of which have been brought forward with the intention of overlapping us. Another line of the same formation is charged through, and, close in the wake of their leaders, follow with like success the detachments from the other three regiments, and in an instant afterwards the Russians were in full retreat, leaving great numbers of their cavalry dead on the field, while the number of our killed did not exceed six, and our wounded about thirty.

It is the custom in our army for heavy cavalry to break the line, and the light cavalry to dash in, pursue, and sabre the enemy right and left while they are all in confusion, and before they have time to re-form. Accordingly, we galloped up, and pursued the enemy for a short distance, when the “recall” was sounded, and we returned to the point from whence we had started to wait for further orders. Finding they were not pursued, the enemy retired, cavalry, infantry, and artillery, in the direction from whence they came, and formed as if they expected a general attack from all our available forces, with their field-batteries in front extending across the vale; behind these were squadron after squadron of cavalry, burning with a desire for revenge; and in rear of these, a dense mass of infantry.

On the steep hill-side, beneath whose shelter they formed (a perfect army in position), were placed numerous field-guns; and within range of the captured redoubts (still in their hands), were stationed several divisions of infantry ready to defend them. The redoubts themselves were well manned, and also within the reach of the field-guns before mentioned. By whose orders the “recall” was sounded while we were in pursuit of the disorganised cavalry, after the “heavys” had broken them up, I know not; but it afterwards appeared that either Lord Raglan or General Airey considered that we had been recalled too soon—in fact, that we ought to have pursued the enemy beyond the redoubts, and retaken the guns. Be that as it may, after considerable time had been lost in allowing the enemy to collect their scattered forces, and dispose them so as to protect the redoubts, Captain Nolan galloped up with an order from Lord Raglan, and handed it to Lord Lucan, who appeared not rightly to understand it. Captain Nolan held out his hand in the direction of the enemy, by which (I was told by a sergeant who was near) Lord Lucan at last understood he was to pursue the enemy still further, and re-capture the guns as well. It must be remembered, that the main body of the Russian army was completely hid from view, having only retired, as it were, to draw us into a trap; and, at the time when they were disposing their forces in order of battle within the mountain gorge, there is no doubt but our generals imagined them to be in full retreat, and, therefore, that no serious difficulty would be encountered in re-taking the guns, of which we had been deprived ere the proceedings well began. The order was handed to Lord Cardigan; what he *said*, or what he *thought*, I know not.

Placing himself at the head of the brigade, without waiting for any supports, he commanded the trumpeter to sound the “advance,” which we did, in two lines, as we were formed before the order was given. We galloped on for more than half-a-mile before we came within range of the enemy’s guns, which we now found raked the valley by an oblique fire from guns posted on the hills, as well as from those planted across the valley.

Onwards we dashed at an increased pace, men and horses tumbling dead at every bound, thus sadly impeding our progress. At length, however, we reached the guns, and could see the whites of our enemy’s eyes through the smoke. They met us with a horrible yell, and we answered with a ringing cheer. I felt still unhurt, although bespattered with blood. A forest of bayonets was behind the guns; but neither looking on my right nor left, I pressed my legs to my gallant horse (a powerful, three-parts bred chestnut); he rose beautifully, cleared the field-piece in front of him, and dropped with a crash that I shall never forget, on the other side. Simultaneous with my horse’s leap, three hundred more of my comrades had jumped their horses over the guns, and dropped among the Russian infantry. Others had managed to get through the narrow spaces between each gun; and now we were fighting, with little more than five hundred men, a whole army, hemmed in on every side by artillery, infantry, and cavalry. There was little or no smoke; and, beyond an occasional shot from an officer’s revolver, firing had ceased; but the carnage was extraordinary. Still we rode on, cleaving our way through solid blocks of human flesh: the sabre cuts one and two, with the corresponding points, were most used. Every cut told a horrible tale, and every point extinguished a life. The shrieking infantry, unable to fly, thrust their bayonets up to the musket muzzles into our horses’ breasts, and down the noble animals fell, in quivering heaps; the rider, clearing his stirrups as he fell, would sometimes drop on his legs, and fight like a demon until cut to pieces.

"Neither looking on my right nor left, I pressed my legs to my gallant horse, who rose beautifully, cleared the field piece in front of him, and dropped with a crash that I shall never forget, on the other side."

Many such scenes I saw; still I felt unhurt, and strong as a lion. I distinctly remember seeing Lord Cardigan on my right front, his tall form towering higher than the heads of many around him. His head was bare, and his thin light hair was dishevelled in the breeze caused by the rate at which we had galloped over the valley. I saw but little more, for the enemy had now opened fire upon both their own troops and ourselves. The retreat was sounded; I had already fought my way back, side by side with three or four of the 17th Lancers, and was once more near the guns we had jumped over in our advance. Here my horse was hit on the near side, and falling heavily on his off side, my leg was wedged so fast under him that I found I was quite unable to extricate myself, and in this position I remained lying on my back for at least a minute, the enemy's lancers and dragoons all around me, and falling every instant from their own fire. One miscreant made three distinct cuts at me as I lay, and in putting my hands up to save my head, I was so badly wounded in both, that I could make no effort whatever to release myself. I was also wounded by a sabre cut across my left thigh, my cheek was lacerated with a lance, and I had given myself up to die. In another minute a remnant of the 11th Hussars came up. Luckily I had strength to call out: three of them instantly dismounted, some of the 4th were at hand, and among them I was released, and assisted on a loose horse; my hands were terribly lacerated, but he required no steering. Now we heard coming to our relief the cheers of the heavy brigade and some French light dragoons, the Chasseurs d'Afrique, who covered our retreat and kept the enemy at bay, but failed to carry off our wounded, who were left on the field with the dead. I got safe to camp, where my wounds were dressed, but I was incapacitated for further service, and shortly afterwards was discharged.

Captain Nolan was killed soon after we got within range of the field-guns. Lord Fitzgibbon and Colonel Shewell, of the 8th Hussars, were badly wounded, and soon after died. In all, 13 officers were killed and 21 wounded, 156 men were killed and 197 wounded, 394 horses were killed and 126 wounded. I have put down all the men and horses as actually missing, to the list of killed. Those that I put down wounded returned to camp, but such as were left wounded on the field would no doubt be massacred by the Russians as they lay.

In the next chapter I shall detail the services of the 8th Hussars in India, whither they were sent on the breaking out of the mutiny, and took part in all the important battles with the rebels. These details have been supplied to me by a comrade, who served throughout both the Crimean and Indian campaigns.

Chapter Thirty One.

There's nought so gay this earth can yield,

Nor aught so swift and light,
As we hussars, when we’re afield,
Or rushing through the fight.
When it roars and cracks like thunder-sound,
Then shoot we red as rose;
When blood is spurting all around,
’Tis then our courage glows.

My career as a soldier having concluded with the battle of Balaclava, I can relate no further particulars as to the proceedings of the 8th King’s Royal Irish Hussars that came under my own personal observation; but the following is an outline of the various battles in which the corps was engaged during the Indian mutiny, to which country it proceeded, with the 17th Lancers, immediately after it returned from the Crimea. I have also annexed a sort of history of the regiment for the last sixty years, supplied to me by an old and esteemed comrade, who was actively engaged throughout the suppression of the revolt.

The 8th Hussars landed in India, in 1802, from the Cape of Good Hope, and the following year the corps was actively engaged, under Lord Lake, against Scindia and Holkar, in the restoration of the Peishwa to his dominions. It served at the siege and capture of Agra, when an immense quantity of treasure, guns, ammunition, and stores were captured. Afterwards Lord Lake, with his cavalry, rapidly pursued Scindia’s army, and caught it at Leswarre, where the 8th behaved with great gallantry, frequently charging and fighting most successfully, hand to hand, with the enemy until our own infantry came up, when a complete rout ensued, and forty-four colours, with seventy-two guns, were captured. The result of this brilliant and hard-contested battle, was the overthrow of the power of Scindia, who sued for peace, and the 8th received the honourable distinction of the word “Leswarre” on their appointments.

In 1804, the regiment was again in the field under Lord Lake against Holkar, and, in pursuit of his army from Delhi, marched a distance of 400 miles in eighteen days, and by this rapid march saved Furruckabad from being sacked by the enemy. Lord Lake, in his public despatch, wrote in very high terms of Lieutenant-Colonel Vandeleur and the 8th Hussars (then Light Dragoons) for the rapidity and gallantry displayed in their vigorous charges. They afterwards proceeded with the army to the capture of Deeg, and were again publicly eulogised by Lord Lake for their gallant services. In 1805 the regiment was employed in covering the operations of the siege of Bhurtpore, being detached with other troops in search of a body of the enemy under Meer Khan. When arriving at Putghaut, the 8th swam the river Ganges, and subsequently found the enemy in order of battle at the foot of the Ufzulghur Hills, when two regiments of cavalry charged, with the 8th in support. The charge could not take effect at first, on account of a deep nullah being between our troops and the enemy’s front, when a squadron of the 8th, under Captain Deare, made a détour to the left, and by a dashing and well-timed charge on the right flank of the enemy, put them to flight, rescued a troop of Bengal Horse Artillery, and captured all the enemy’s standards.

The regiment then continued on active service with Lord Lake’s army, pursuing the enemy to the banks of the Sutlej, where a treaty of peace was concluded with Holkar.

In 1808, the 8th took the field under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Rollo Gillespie, but soon returned to quarters, on the submission of the Sikhs.

From 1812 to April, 1813, the regiment was employed against the Pindarees, after which it went into quarters at Meerut.

In 1814 the corps was again called upon to take the field against the Ghoorkas of Nepaul, a squadron being attached to the division commanded by Major-General Sir Robert Rollo Gillespie, on whom devolved the task of forcing a passage into the Deyrah Dhoon. The troops entered the pass on the 25th of October, and commenced the siege of Kalonga, a fort on the top of a steep hill near Deyrah. On the 31st of October, an attack was made by storm, but failed; when, in the absence of any other reserve, the squadron of the 8th was dismounted, and, headed by General Gillespie himself, was led to the attack of the fort. They penetrated through the first stockade, cleaving their way through the dense masses of the enemy with their sabres, and a few actually got into the fort, but for want of further support were finally repulsed. General Gillespie himself was killed, and all the officers, four sergeants, and fifty-one men being wounded out of the squadron of one hundred sabres. After this, the fort was besieged in form, and held out gallantly for a month, but was then evacuated by the Ghoorkas. The regiment next assembled at Saharunpoor, and formed part of the Army of Observation near Delhi, to overawe the Mahratta Chiefs, during the rest of the Nepaul war. Early in 1817, the 8th was present at the siege of Hattrass, and returned to Meerut. In October of the same year, the corps again took the field, under Major-General Donkin, against the Pindarees. After forced marches for several days, they came up with the enemy, and totally routed them. In 1820, the 8th marched to Cawnpore, relieving the 11th Light Dragoons (now the 11th Prince Albert’s Own Hussars), and remained at this station until 1822, when, after an absence of twenty-seven years from Europe, twenty of which it passed under the burning suns of India, the regiment returned to England. His Excellency the Governor-General issued the following order, on the embarkation of the regiment:—

“Fort William, December 6, 1822.

“On the occasion of the approaching departure of His Majesty’s 8th, or King’s Royal Irish Light Dragoons, from India, the Most Noble the Governor-General in Council feels himself called upon, and eagerly answers the call, to express the high sense entertained by Government of the eminently valuable services of the regiment during a period of twenty years in this country. Their career has been marked by everything which can distinguish a cavalry corps. A decided spirit of energy has always illustrated their conduct in the field, where they have invariably exhibited to their fellow-soldiers an example peculiarly worthy of imitation. A cordial unanimity has likewise subsisted between the officers and men of the regiment, and their brethren-in-arms of the Honourable East India Company’s service, who, doubtless, will long cherish

> the remembrance of a corps as much distinguished for their social qualities and orderly conduct, as for that high principle of military feeling which has so decidedly marked the character of the King's Royal Irish Light Dragoons.
>
> "Signed W.L. Watson, Deputy Adjutant-General."

The regiment embarked at Calcutta on the 11th January, 1823, and landed at Gravesend in the following May.

The year 1857 will long be remembered by all taking an interest in military matters, for the breaking out of the Indian mutiny, during which the bloodthirsty Sepoys, under that incarnate fiend Nana Sahib, massacred a number of the wives and children of our officers and soldiers, and cast their bodies into a well at Cawnpore.

No sooner was our army withdrawn from the Crimea, than several of the effective regiments were embarked for active service in India, in order to bring the rebels to submission. The 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars were at once despatched, and they landed at Bombay, December 17, 1857. In January, 1858, the corps re-embarked, 490 strong, besides commissioned officers, all well mounted and in first-class fighting trim, for Mandéree, in Cutch, and proceeded by rapid marches to join Sir H. Roberts' Rajpootana Field Force at Kotah, where it arrived the day before the place fell. Afterwards the head-quarter wing was detached, under Brigadier Smith, to cover the rear of the Central India Field Force, and co-operate with Sir Hugh Rose. It swept the Shahapoor jungles of the disaffected, and then recaptured Chundaree, which the rebels had occupied a second time upon Sir Hugh Rose's advance to Calpee. Smith's Brigade reached Kotah ka Serai, near Gwalior, the day after Sir Hugh Rose had taken Morar, and was hotly engaged the same day and three following days, ending on the 20th of June, 1858, in the capture of the town and fort of Gwalior. On the first of the above days a squadron of the 8th (98 sabres) charged right under the guns of the fort of Gwalior into the centre of the rebel camp, completely routed it, and brought away two guns. During the panic that ensued the Ranee of Jhansee lost her life. This woman was known to be one of the most active instigators of the rebellion, and up to this period had always accompanied the rebels in their marches and engagements. The brigade to which the 8th were attached now marched to Seepree, but on the 3rd August, the rebel Rajah Mann Singh seized the fortified town of Powrie, near Seepree. The brigade immediately invested it, and was afterwards joined by another force under Sir R. Napier, when the fort was captured on the 22nd August, a portion of the 8th being dismounted and taking part in the siege. Soon after this a squadron of the 8th, attached to Colonel Robertson's Flying Column, caught the rebels at Beejapore, near Goonah, September 5, 1858, and inflicted heavy loss upon them. Meantime, the left wing of the regiment, under Brigadier Honner, were following the rebels under Tantia Topee, and caught them at Kotarrhea, on the Bunnass river, thirty-five miles north of Ooderpore, when, by a dashing charge, they completely broke up the infantry force, and drove the remainder, after a long pursuit, across the Chumbul.

A troop of the 8th accompanied Brigadier Parke in his long-continued pursuit of the rebels, accomplishing at one time 251 miles in eleven days, and by so doing dispersed the rebel force at Ghota Ooderpore, December 1, 1858, and saved Baroda, to which place the ruffians were marching. Smith's brigade was sent to co-operate with Sir J. Michel, and under him the head-quarter wing of the regiment took a prominent part in the battles of Sindwaha, October 19, and Koorwye, October 25, by which last defeat the rebels were driven south of the Nerbudda river, tracked incessantly by a troop of each wing of the 8th Hussars as far south as Ellichpoor. The head-quarter wing continued operations on the Betwa river, against the much-scattered insurgents, surprising them at Koondrye, near Seronge, December 15, 1858; and again at Boordah, near Muxoodnugger, April 5, 1859, at both which places the regiment destroyed several hundred rebels with the sabre.

Another squadron of the left wing, under Brigadier Honner, went in pursuit of the rebel chief, Ferozeshah, and the insurgents, and, after chasing them into the Bikaneer desert, and thereby saving the capital, turned them south, and caught them, by a rapid pursuit, at Kooshana, near Jhoodpoor, February 10, 1859, killing a large number. The head-quarter wing of the regiment reached Nusseerabad, May 21, 1859, having been incessantly engaged in operations against the rebels, and gone through two hot-weather campaigns since it landed in Cutch, during which time it shifted camp no less than 300 times, and marched over 3000 miles.

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