but, before we reached the spot, the person with whom he was engaged fell to the ground with a groan. At that moment, we saw our comrade stoop, and tear something from him. "What is the matter?" said one of our party. "Come away," said he, "and I'll tell you as we go along;" and he passed us on his way to the fort.

We were anxious to see who his antagonist was; and, on raising him up, we found that he was one of the French party, who had been with us in the vessel. He had been stabbed in the left side with a Spanish knife, which still remained in the wound. One of the party withdrew it. The blood flowed out of the wound with great force. The poor Frenchman gave a deep groan—a convulsive quiver —and expired!!

"This is a horrid cold-blooded murder," said I. "Where is S——?" At this moment we heard the noise of footsteps approaching, and thinking it might be the comrades of the Frenchman who had been barborously assassinated, we left the place precipitately, our minds filled with horror at the savage deed.

On our way to the fort we overtook S——; but none of us spoke to him. He, however, strove to extenuate his conduct, by saying that he had observed the Frenchman find a purse in a chest, that he had broke open, and seeing him linger behind his party, for the purpose of secreting it about his person, he had gone up to him, and asked a share of it. The man refusing this, a scuffle ensued, and he stabbed him in his own defence, the Frenchman having attempted to stab him. We knew this to be false; for the Frenchman had no weapon in his hand, nor near him; and we had no doubt, from what we knew of S——'s character, that he had perpetrated the murder for the sake of the money, which was gold doublons, He offered to share it with us; but, to the honour of the party be it said, not one would touch it; and, from that time forward, he was shunned and detested by all who knew of the murder. He never prospered after. I even thought that his countenance acquired a demon-like expression, that rendered it repulsive; and we had not been long in Portugal, when he went

to the rear, and died in great misery. After that we never returned to the vessels.

The Spaniards had a number of hulks moored in the bay, which Lord Nelson had made for them, on board of which they kept their French prisoners, who we understood were very ill used: nearly starved, and huddled together in such a way that disease was the consequence. Many of them died daily. They were kept until sun-set, and then thrown overboard, and allowed to float about in the bay. Every tide threw some of them ashore, and the beach was studded here and there with them continually. When our men discovered any of them, they scraped a hole in the sand, and buried them; but they were totally unheeded by the Spaniards, unless when they practised some barbarity on them—such as, dashing large stones on their heads, or cutting and mutilating them in such a way that the very soul would sicken at the idea.

I was one night on picquet, and along with the sergeant reconnoitering the ground

in front of the fort, as the French picquets were in the habit of coming close down on us when it was dark. We saw something white moving amongst the weeds near the shore, to the left of the battery; and we went down in that direction, to see what it was; but, in an instant, we lost sight of it. When we came to the place where we first saw it, we found the body of a man extended on the ground. This was not an uncommon appearance; but, as we had seen something moving, when we had been first attracted to the spot, I was induced to feel the body, to ascertain whether it was dead, and, to my surprise, I found it warm, and, assisted by the sergeant, I raised him up. It struck us that he might have only fainted, and we rubbed him for some time with our hands. He at last began to recover, and his first action, when he came to himself, was to fall down on his knees at our feet, and cry "Misericordia."* We did not at that time understand what he said; but we asked him, in English, how he had come there. Whenever he heard us speak, he

* Mercy.

sprung to his feet, and seizing our hands, he cried "Vous etes Anglois—oh, bon Anglois—grace a bon Dieu—je suis bien heureux."*

We threw a great coat over him, and took him into the fort, where, placing him before a fire, and giving him some bread and wine, the poor fellow soon recovered himself. When it was discovered that he had no clothes on, one man took off his shirt and put it on him, another gave him a pair of trowsers, and he soon was comfortably clothed; but he could scarcely take time to put on the things for kissing the men's hands. He poured out his thanks in French; but he saw we did not understand the language. He tried the Spanish with like success. He attempted a mixture of both; however with as little effect: but, when he pressed his hand on his heart, and the big drop gathered in his eye, he found, by the sympathizing tear which it excited, that no words were necessary to express the universal language of gratitude.

* You are English?—Oh, good English! thank God—I am very fortunate.

When he was perfectly recovered, we reported the affair to the commandant, and the artillery officer speaking the French language, he was questioned by him. In reply, he said that he was a surgeon in the French service; that he had been taken prisoner and confined on board one of the prison ships; that that night he had determined on making his escape, or perish in the attempt; that he had lowered himself down from one of the gun ports, quite naked, and had swam a distance of two miles; but he was so exhausted, when he reached the shore, that he had sunk down insensible at the time we had first seen him; when he recovered, his first idea was that he had fallen into the hands of the Spaniards, who, he well knew, would have butchered him without mercy; but, when he found by our language that we were English, he was overjoyed. He had saved nothing but a miniature of a female, which hung round his neck, and which he seemed to prize equal to his life; for when he recovered, the first thing he did was to feel if it was still there, and raise it to his lips and kiss it.

He was kept until next day in the fort, when he was sent over to Cadiz. He seemed distracted at the idea of going there, lest he should be delivered over to the Spaniards; and, although he was assured to the contrary, still he seemed to feel uneasy.

It was not many days, however, after that, when he was sent back, with orders that he should be escorted to our outposts at night, and left to join his countrymen. When night came, he took leave of the men in the fort with a kind of regret. I again happened to be of the party who escorted him. After leaving our picquet, the sergeant and I conducted him up the path-way, leading direct from the fort, until we suspected that we were near the French picquet, and there we told him that we would be obliged to leave him. He pressed our hands in silence: his heart was too full to speak; but we could easily guess what were his emotions. Joy at the idea of again rejoining his countrymen, with a feeling of regret at parting with those to whom he considered he owed his life, were contend-

ing in his mind; for my part, I felt that I could have almost laid down my life to serve him. "Adieu, mon ami," said he, as he pressed my hand for the last time. I felt the warm tears fall on it, and, I hope it will not be considered weak, when I say that mine mixed with his.

The night was dark, and we soon lost sight of him; but we lay down on the ground, and listened with anxious suspence, afraid that the French outpost sentry might fire upon him, before he had time to explain, and he might thus lose his life on the very threshold of freedom; but we did not hear the sentinel challenge him, nor did we hear any shot fired. We had therefore every reason to believe he reached his countrymen in safety.

During the time we were here, an attack was meditated on the French positions, and a number of troops were landed on the fort for that purpose. A strong party of seamen was also landed at Fort Catalina. They succeeded in storming it, and spiking the guns; but, in consequence of some signals being thrown up by adherents of the French in Cadiz, they

were alarmed, and the troops were obliged to return without effecting what had been originally intended.

We had now been in the fort about two months; and, from the time that we had silenced the small battery that had opened on us, when we first gained possession of the place, the French had not molested us, although they occasionally fired shots at the boats passing up and down the bay. We were well aware, however, that this was only a deceitful calm before a storm; for they had been busy all this time building batteries both in front and to our right in the village I have already mentioned, although they were hidden from our view by the houses.

At last, when every thing was prepared, they commenced their operations one night by blowing up the houses which had hitherto masked the batteries. I was out on picquet at the time; and we perceived them moving round a large fire which they had kindled. We suspected that they designed to attack us, and our suspicions were soon verified; for, in a

short time after, they gave a salute of grape shot, which ploughed the earth on every side of us; but this was only a prelude. A volley of red-hot shot, at the Spanish man-of-war, succeeded, which set her on fire, and obliged her to slip her cable, and drop down the bay. A volley or two more of the same kind scattered our gun boats; and we were then left to bear the brunt of the battle alone. Now it began in earnest. Five or six batteries, mounting in all about twenty guns, and eight or ten mortars opened their tremendous mouths, vomiting forth death and destruction. The picquet was called in.

There was a number of spare fascions piled up on the sea face of the battery, amongst which, for want of room in the bomb-proof, we formed huts. In one of these I lodged. They had been set on fire by a shell that fell amongst them; and, when I entered the fort, the Spanish labourers were busy throwing them into the sea. I ran to try to save my knapsack, with the little treasure which I had gained; but it was too late—hut and all

had been tossed over: there was no help for it. I did not know how soon I might be thrown over also. I was called to my gun, and had no more time to think on the subject. They were now plying us so fast with shell, that I saw six or eight in the air over us at once.

Death now began to stalk about in the most horrid forms. The large shot were almost certain messengers where they struck. The first man killed was a sailor who belonged to the Temeraire seventy-four. The whole of his face was carried away. It was a horrid-looking wound. He was at the same gun with me. "Ah! what will we do with him?" said I to a seaman next me. "Let him lie there," was the reply. "We have no time to look after dead men now." At that time I thought it a hardened expression; but this was my first engagement. Not so with the tar. He had been well used to them.

The French soon acquired a fatal precision with their shot, sending them in through our embrasures, killing and wounding men every volley. I was on

the left of the gun, at the front wheel. We were running her up after loading. I had stooped to take a fresh purchase, a cannon ball whistled in through the embrasure, carried the forage cap off my head, and struck the man behind me on the breast, and he fell to rise no more.

The commandant was now moving from place to place, giving orders and exposing himself to every danger. No one could doubt that he was brave. Had it been bravery, softened and blended with the finer feelings of humanity, he would have been a true hero; but———. Our artillery officer behaved like a gentleman, as he had always done; and our subaltern in a tolerable medium: the midshipman in the style of a brave, rough and ready seaman. But, alas, how had the mighty fallen!—our brave adjutant, whose blustering voice, and bullying important manner, had been always so remarkable, was now as quiet as a lamb. Seated in an angle of the battery, sheltered from the shot, no penitent on the *cutty stool* ever exhibited such a rueful

countenance. There he sat, amidst the jeering and scoffing of the men, until the commandant ordered him down to the bomb-proof to superintend giving out the ammunition—merely to get him out of the way.

CHAPTER XII.

ACTION CONTINUES—GUN DISABLED—A DISPUTE ENDED BY A SHELL—FIRING CEASES—FEELINGS AND REFLECTIONS—SPANISH FLAG—THE ENGLISH SUBSTITUTED—BREACH IN THE BOMB-PROOF—MAGAZINE—REINFORCEMENT—BLACK PRINCE—LEAVE THE FORT—CADIZ.

THE carnage was now dreadful; the ramparts became strewed with the dead and wounded; and blood, brains and mangled limbs lay scattered in every direction: but our men's spirits and enthusiasm seemed to rise with the danger. The artillery officer stood on the platform, and, when he reported any of our shot taking effect, a cheer followed, and "at it again, my heroes," was the exclamation from every mouth. When any of our comrades fell, it excited no visible feeling but revenge. "Now for a retaliating shot" was the word; every nerve was strained to lay the gun with precision;

and, if it took effect, it was considered that full justice was done to their memory.

We had a traversing gun in the angle of the battery which had done great execution. The artillery sergeant commanded her; and they were plying her with great vigour. In the course of the day, however, as the man was returning the sponge after a shot, and the cartridge in the hand of another, ready to reload, a thirty-two pound shot from the French entered her muzzle, she rebounded, and struck the sergeant with her breech on the breast, and knocked him over insensible. The shot had entered so far that she was rendered useless, and abandoned.

The action was kept up the whole of that day, during which we had lost the best and bravest of our men. Our guns had been well directed at first; but, towards evening, the most of the artillery who had commanded them, had been either killed or wounded; and the direction of them was then taken by men who knew little about it. The consequence was, that much ammunition was used to little purpose. The artillery soldier at

the gun next to me was killed, and two men equally ambitious for what they considered the post of honour, quarrelled about it. From high words it came to blows; but the dispute was soon settled; for a shell, falling between them at that moment, burst and quieted them for ever.

I could scarcely define my feelings during the action; but, so far from feeling fear when it first commenced, and the silent gloom of the night was broken by the rapid flash, and reverberating thunder of the cannon, I felt a sensation something resembling delight; but it was of an awful kind—enthusiasm, sublimity and wonder, mixed with a sense of danger—something like what I have felt in a violent thunder storm.

The firing, on both sides, had been without intermission from two o'clock in the morning; but, as it now became dark, it was partially suspended. I then, for the first time, ventured to go below to the bomb-proof. The scene there was dismal—the wounded filled the whole place, and the doctor had not got through

with the dressing of them. During the day I had little time to reflect on anything: all was noise and bustle: but now, that I had time to look round, and saw the ramparts covered with the pale and disfigured corpses of those, who a few hours before, were rioting in the fulness of health and strength; and others writhing in agony, under the severe wounds they had received; I could not deny that I felt my heart sink within me, and sensations of a melancholy and solemn nature took place of those which had before excited my mind.

When day-light came in next morning, the firing again commenced as warmly as the preceding day; and the precision the French had attained with their shot was very remarkable. We had a flag staff of the usual size, on which was hoisted the Spanish colours. They had cut it across with a cannon ball, it was repaired, and again replaced; but it was not five minutes up, when another shot brought it down again. This occurring four or five times successively, gave great offence to the sailors, who attributed all that we had

suffered to fighting under the Spanish flag, and swore that if the union jack was up in its place, the French would not bring it down so easily. "There 's that bloody Spanish flag down again," said one of the tars. "D——n it, Jack, I have got our boat's ensign here—let me go, and I'll soon run it up." He went, and assisted in repairing the flag staff; but, instead of again bending the Spanish flag to the halliards, he put the English in place of it.

A general huzza greeted its appearance. "Now, d——n it, we'll beat the French dogs" said the seamen; but the cheering had attracted the notice of the commandant, and he ordered it to be hauled down again. Never was an order so reluctantly obeyed. In a few minutes, a shot cut through the flag-staff. "There it goes down again—Oh, d———," was the surly reply. "Let it lie there;" and there it lay; for no one would meddle with it. "Better to fight without a flag at all, than under such a bloody treacherous flag as that," said an old sailor. "I never could bear it, unless when I saw it flying at the mast head of an enemy."

By this time three of our guns were rendered unfit for service. They had made great impression on our parapet, and a breach in the end of the bomb-proof. A corporal of our grenadier company had gone below to get some refreshment, and just sat down on his knapsack, and was raising a tin with some wine in it to his mouth, when a shot entered the breach, and striking some small arms, that were placed against the wall, shivered them to pieces. One of the splinters entered his head, and he fell dead on the spot. The rest wounded several of the men beside him.

A shell fell, about the same time, at the magazine door. A blanket was the only partition between it and the powder. We were sure all was over, that it was impossible but the magazine would be blown up. We stood in awful suspense for the few seconds between its fall and bursting—it burst—and we already imagined ourselves in the air; but, fortunately, it did not communicate with the powder. There were two artillery men in the magazine at the time, whose feelings could not be very enviable.

In the course of the morning, General Stewart came over from Cadiz to inspect the state of the fort, when it was found that it could not stand out much longer. A reinforcement of men from different regiments had been sent over to assist us, in case of the enemy attempting to storm us in our disabled state; but we received little assistance from them, unless in eating our rations, and drinking our liquor.

One of our sergeants, who, from his complexion, was called the "Black Prince," had installed himself commissary; and, on the pretence of preventing the men from getting drunk, had seated himself beside the cask, which contained our ration wine; and he fulfilled his duty so faithfully that he would not even give the men their allowance; but gave it away very liberally to any of the strangers who could "*tip him the blarney*;" and among hands "he did not forget himself." He got rather tipsy at last; and, the men getting clamorous for their just allowance, to settle the dispute, he staved the cask, and spilt the wine about the place.

This was scarcely worth mentioning,

only that it will serve to show on what an uncertain basis a soldier's fame rests; for he was extolled to the skies, and subsequently got a situation in the commissariat department for that action; while others, who had distinguished themselves by their valour and intrepid exertions, were passed by unnoticed. So true it is, that in general the surest passport to promotion in the service, is to evince a disposition to tyrannize over your fellows, and to seem regardless of their feelings and interests.

As it had been found that we could not keep the place, boats were sent to convey us to Cadiz. Mines had been previously laid, and a major of engineers had come over to superintend the operations for blowing up the fort; but he had scarcely taken six paces on the battery, when he was struck by a cannon shot, and fell a lifeless corpse.

It is remarkable to observe the covetousness of some men, even in the midst of danger. When he fell, the epaulettes were torn off his shoulders, and the gold watch was taken out of his pocket. The

watch was afterwards recovered; but not, I believe, until the chain and seals were disposed of.

The men were now busy gathering what things they had together, and moving down to the boats. Some of them had already sailed. I had now time to reflect on the almost naked situation I was left in; for I had thrown off my great coat at the commencement of the action, and some one had taken it away. I ran down to the bomb-proof, to see if I could find any thing to put on; but I met an engineer officer, at the end of the passage, with his sword drawn, who had been inspecting the train laid to the mine. He asked me, if I wished to be blown up, and ordered me off instantly.

On coming up to the ramparts, I found that all the men had left the fort with the exception of three or four, and the commandant. He was watching the motions of a strong party of French, who were evidently coming down to take the place. A number of the men, who had been killed, were lying on the ramparts. Some of them of the same regiment to which I

belonged. We resolved on giving them some sort of burial, as the last kind office we could perform. We gathered them into a temporary hut, which had been built of mud, and throwing it down over them. "Sleep there, brave comrades," said we, "far distant, and ignorant of your fate, is the wife or mother who would have composed your mangled limbs." Hurried and rude was their burial, and a heartfelt sigh all their requiem; but it was a thousand times more valuable than all the ostentatious trappings of affected woe.

We then hurried down to the boats; they were all gone but one; and, after entering, I learned from my comrades that two men of the party that had come to reinforce us had got themselves so beastly drunk that they could not stir, and that they had been left behind

We were not a great distance from the fort when it blew up, but only partially. The French were still firing, and one of their shells falling into a boat, which preceded us, burst and killed three men, besides wounding others. We were taken

by the boats on board of the Invincible seventy-four, where we were very kindly treated: from that, we were conveyed to Cadiz.

The regiment I belonged to had removed to Isla Camp; but we were marched up to our old barracks in the bomb-proof; and a motley-looking group we were. Half naked and blackened with the smoke of the gunpowder, we looked more like chimney sweepers, than soldiers. We were received very coolly by the Spaniards. They did not seem to feel any commiseration for us, on account of what we had suffered. I imagined their looks expressed vexation rather, at any of us escaping alive.

When we reached the barrack, exhausted with fatigue and want of sleep, I threw myself on the stone floor. My mind was a chaos. The events of the preceding thirty hours were all jumbled together in my brain. Previous to that I had a good assortment of necessaries, with a hundred and fifty dollars, and some pieces of silk. I was now left with a pair of canvass trowsers, my shirt, shoes