

the Caya, and were placed in position at a spot called Torre-de-Moro, about two leagues from Elvas, and directly on the frontier. We remained here until the 21st of July, leading a regular, healthful, pleasing camp life. For one week, indeed, our regiment being on an advanced post, and distributed in three very pretty gardens; the foot of a large thick-spreading mulberry-tree, a fountain of clear water sparkling near it, was my happy and tranquil resting-place. Disposed of in Campo Mayor, or bivouacked in situations to admit of their being readily brought together, lay almost all the divisions of the allied army; and on the banks of the Caya, I imagine, we should certainly have fought, had the enemy attempted to pass that river. Their superiority of numbers, however, especially in cavalry, had rendered it impossible for us to hazard any thing on the plains of Spanish Estremadura.

On the 22d of June, Soult and Marmont made a strong reconnoissance; but their object in saving Badajos having been gained, they made no further demonstration. About

the middle of July, Marmont returned with his people to the north; and Lord Wellington, crossing the Tagus at Villa Velha, marched to Beira, leaving the troops under General Hill cantoned in Alentejo. From the 22d of July to the third of September, our division lay at Villa Viçosa, a handsome well-built town, about five leagues from Elvas. A hunting-palace; a fine large preserve, walled in, and filled with deer and game; wide streets, handsome houses, a royal chapel, and several churches and convents, attest the former rank of this town, which was once a favourite country retreat for the court of Portugal. Our billets here were very comfortable; the walks and rides in the park, which, from the inequalities of the ground, and the thickness of the under-wood, had all the character of a wilderness, were strikingly beautiful; the markets well supplied, and the vineyards of Borba, so celebrated for its wine, lay within two miles of us. One of my daily amusements was attendance at the royal chapel, where the music and singing were both very excellent. Often, indeed, would the organist introduce

into his voluntaries the most touching airs; and, sometimes, airs of too tender and voluptuous a character for the solemnity of a church. During my stay in this town, I was one day attracted by the sight of an unusual crowd at the chapel of a convent, and on entering it I found, that a lady, having completed her year as novice, was then taking the veil. I arrived so late, and was so distant from the altar, that I saw nothing of the ceremony; but I heard the faint sound of a soft pleasing voice; the utterance was tremulous and indistinct; the words were quite lost. A bystander told me that the unfortunate female had then pronounced her vow. The most breathless silence had prevailed while the novice had spoken; the deep voice of a priest replied, and seemed to confirm her vow by a short prayer. To this succeeded an anthem, sweetly sung by the sisters, and in parts of which, all the priests and many of the congregation devoutly joined. The notes of praise and thanksgiving sounded proud and joyous. The altars, shrines, and walls of the chapel were all decorated with flowers;

and, as the crowd came out, you might observe all the relations of the youthful victim dressed gaily, as on a festival. I felt quite oppressed with melancholy ; and the brilliant scene, and animated music, so ill according with a sacrifice at the altar, like that I had just witnessed, struck me to the very soul. In the grave we only deposit the lifeless and insensible body, but when we devote youth, affection, and reason to the cheerless cloister, we bury and entomb the heart. Such is the cruel perversion of monastic institutions ; in which, if they served only as the retreats of deserted age, disappointment, and sorrow, we should find little, perhaps nothing, to condemn.

From Villa Viçosa we moved to Portalegre, a favourite and often-visited quarter. About this time, some movements of a French division under the orders of General Girard, who had crossed the Guadiana at Merida, and was insulting and foraging the northern district of Estremadura, rendering it necessary for us to take the field, the division was assembled in bivouack, near the village of Codiceira, on the 22d of

October. The weather, I well remember, was on that night so severe, that three Portuguese soldiers died on the ground from the effect of the heavy and pouring rain. After some marches and manœuvres, which were well and quietly conducted, we arrived at dusk, on the evening of the 27th, at the village of Alcuéscar, distant only four miles from the small town of Arroyo de Molinos, where the division of Girard slept that night, in fearless but mistaken security. We lay upon our arms, without fires, about six hours; and at two in the morning of the 28th, we moved forward, in profound silence, by a narrow bad road, upon Arroyo de Molinos, near which town we halted, at half-past six, on ground highly favourable both to our formation and concealment. We were here divided into three columns. The first brigade was directed straight forwards on the town; our own, with one of Portuguese, made a rapid circuitous march to the right of it, and arrived, under cover of fog and rain, within a few yards of the road, by which alone the 'enemy could retire, and on which he was then forming,

preparatory to his march, in profound ignorance of our approach : our cavalry moved in the centre ready to act as occasion might require.

The cheers of the first brigade, which entered the town charging, and bayoneted, drove, or captured his rear-guard, first announced to the enemy his imminent and unexpected danger. He would have rapidly retired : in vain ; our cavalry galloped forwards, dispersed, sabred, and made prisoners his few horse, who, after attempting some formation on the left of the infantry, which stood for a moment in a posture of defence, fled in great confusion. About two hundred yards behind the spot, where the enemy's columns were formed on the plain, rose the rocky and precipitous Sierra de Montanches, and to this, on seeing our brigade advancing rapidly upon them, they ran with unresisting panic. We followed them closely, and scrambling among the rocks, quite mixed with them, and made prisoners at every step ; until the number of pursuers being diminished by exhaustion and fatigue ; and being encumbered with arms, ammunition,

and knapsacks, all which, such of the enemy as escaped, threw from them, we desisted from the pursuit. A general of cavalry, the Prince d'Aremberg, (a colonel of chasseurs, and a connection of Napoleon's,) a chief of the staff, two lieutenant-colonels, thirty officers, and about twelve hundred privates, taken prisoners, together with the capture of a half brigade of artillery, and all their baggage, rewarded our fatigues and privations, and we returned in high spirits to Arroyo. The French sustained some loss from the fire of the first brigade, and some from the guns, which accompanied that column; but our share of the business, among the rocks, was a scene of laughter and diversion, rather than of bloodshed and peril; for though some of the enemy's grenadiers discharged their muskets at us before they broke them, still our loss was very trifling, and the danger too inconsiderable to be thought or spoken of. We had here a most amusing specimen of French character: in the French column one of the regiments was numbered thirty-four; in the British column also the thirty-fourth regi-

ment led the pursuit, and got quite mixed with the enemy. Several of the French officers, as they tendered their swords, embraced the officers of the English thirty-fourth, saying, — “ Ah, Messieurs, nous sommes des frères, nous sommes du trente-quatrième régiment tous deux.” — “ Vous êtes des braves.” — “ Les Anglois se battent toujours avec loyauté, et traitent bien leurs prisonniers.” — “ Ah, Messieurs, la fortune de la guerre est bien capricieuse.” — Under any circumstances, however unfortunate, this people will find some method of disarming wrath, courting favour, and softening their fate : — they have spirits, too, wonderfully elastic ; and have the readiest ingenuity in framing excuses for any disaster, or disgrace, which may befall them. I was on duty over the prisoners, a few days after the affair ; at the close of the day’s march a chapel was allotted to them for the night, and to have seen them take possession of it, one really would have thought that they were still marching free, and in arms ; they entered it, singing, “ Grenadiers, ici ; grenadiers, ici ” — “ Voltigeurs, là, là ;



voltigeurs, là, là” — and ran tumultuously, the grenadiers to the altar, and the voltigeurs to the gallery. In ten minutes all were at home — some playing cards, some singing, some dancing — here a man was performing Punch, behind a great coat, with infinite drollery — there again, quieter men were occupied in repairing their clothes or shoes, while in one part of the chapel a self-elected orator was addressing a groupe on their late capture, in such terms, as, “ Messieurs, vous n’êtes pas déshonorés” — “ On nous a trompé ; cet espion, cet Espagnol, nous a vendu.” — “ Et comment ! qui vous a dit cela ?” said a rough voice. — “ Monsieur,” replied my orator, “ vous me permettrez de savoir. Je suis de Paris même, et je connois la guerre.” — This speech was highly approved ; for several vociferated — “ Ah ! oui, il a raison ; nous avons été vendus par ce vilain espion.” “ Nous aurions battu les Anglois dans une affaire rangée, mais certainement,” said my little Parisian ; and just then, the rations making their appearance, they all hurried to the door, and singing some song,

the chorus of which was "Bonne soupe, bonne soupe," they eagerly took their meat, and set about preparing it.

I should lose sight, however, of the French military character, if I omitted to notice, that several of the serjeants and old soldiers who were decorated and wore the chevrons of service, appeared exceedingly sulky, and vented their anger in a sort of muttering smothered swearing. Those who have seen a ferocious Frenchman utter from between his closed teeth his favourite oath of "Sacré Dieu!" will agree that there are few things more savage and offensive. The troops taken at Arroyo were all remarkably fine men, selected for the service on which they had been employed. Girard escaped himself with the small remains of a brigade; and, most fortunately for him, the first brigade of his division had marched at five in the morning under General Remond, or it would probably have shared the same fate as that under his immediate command. Soult placed Girard in arrest when he rejoined the army of the south, and made a most severe report of his neglect and mis-

conduct to the emperor ; but Girard was a favourite with Buonaparte, and got through this affair without the loss of head or commission. Napoleon understood the character of his officers, and knew when and whom to pardon, foreseeing whose gratitude and services would be valuable.

At the battle of Lutzen, in the year 1813, General Girard displayed great ability, and gave a bright example of his zeal, devotion, and courage ; for, although severely wounded and covered with blood, he refused to be taken from the field, declaring aloud, that the moment was then arrived, when every true Frenchman should conquer or die on the ground on which he fought. One thing in our success at Arroyo de Molinos gratified our division highly ; it was a triumph for our general, a triumph *all his own*. He gained great credit for this well-conducted enterprize, and he gained what, to one of his mild, kind, and humane character, was still more valuable, a solid and a bloodless victory ; for it is certainly the truest maxim in war, “ that conquest is

twice achieved, where the achiever brings home full numbers."

After these operations, our division returned to Portalegre, and, towards the close of November, an order from England to proceed to India, called me, for a time, from a corps, a service, and a country, to all of which I felt a very strong attachment. With spirits much depressed, myself and a brother officer, destined also to join the first battalion, set out on our sorrowful journey to Lisbon, on the morning of the 27th of November. If I except the adventures of one evening, our route to Lisbon presented no occurrence of sufficient interest to impress my memory.

In attempting to ride a nearer road from Garfete to Abrantes, than that which led by Gaviao, we lost our way, and were obliged to put up for the night in a poor goat-herd's hut. We here, however, witnessed a scene of domestic happiness and patriarchal manners, which gave us reason to rejoice that we had slept under such a roof. The family consisted of a venerable old peasant, his

daughter, a woman of about four-and-thirty, and her five children: the eldest, a most beautiful girl of fifteen; and the youngest, a fine black-eyed boy of eight. The husband of this woman was absent on a journey; the old peasant was not within; and when we first entered, the mother and her children were at supper: they pressed us to partake of it; we declined, but procured from them some fine rich goat's milk; and boiling it up with bread of Indian corn, made an excellent meal. It was late when the old man came in from his labour; he expressed great delight at our having rested in his cot, as, he said, there was no house within two leagues of that spot, the night dark and stormy, and the road bad and dangerous. A small wooden bowl of vegetable soup was brought him for his supper; he crossed himself and said a short grace; but my astonishment was not a little excited, by observing, that during the whole time he was eating his frugal meal, the family all stood up; and with their hands closed and lifted up, and their eyes raised towards the crucifix, prayed; not with extravagant fer-

your, nor as if it were a tame unmeaning form, but with much natural feeling, and seemed to invoke blessings on the head of this, the respected elder of their cottage.

The old man, too, however habitual it might be, appeared deeply impressed with the ceremony, and took his food with a sort of quiet, solemn thankfulness. The expression of the granddaughter's countenance, who seemed much attached to him, was really seraphic; and I thought the whole scene quite a subject for a painting. In general, the beauty of people, in a common class of life, carries with it a stamp of vulgarity, for which it is difficult to account, but which checks admiration. Here it was far otherwise. An expressive eye of the deepest blue, an elegant contour of countenance, dark clustering ringlets, and a perfect form, would have made this cottage girl remarkable any where; and she would have been gazed on with interest as well as pleasure, amid the most brilliant assemblies of a capital or a court. When we lay down for the night, all the children knelt at the feet of their grandfather and received his

blessing, sealed by him with a kiss upon their young foreheads. I slept with a sort of sweet and superstitious confidence under this happy roof; so much, and so pleasingly, had I been effected by the simplicity of manners, among its poor contented inmates.

In the morning, after literally forcing on them a small present, we set forward highly gratified, and took a very pleasant bridle-path to Abrantes, where we embarked for Lisbon. Here we were detained a considerable time waiting for a passage, a circumstance most vexatious and provoking; for with the prospect before us of a long banishment and a remote service, we were naturally eager to avail ourselves of every spare moment we might enjoy in England, prior to the sailing of the fleet for India.

Our detention at Lisbon, though during the greater part of December, gave us an opportunity of being present at the gay and splendid festival of Christmas eve. At the dark and gloomy hour of midnight, on the 24th of December, the whole population of that crowded city is alert and in motion. Tapers blaze in every hand, and, dressed in

their gayest attire, all persons hasten to the churches, which are open, fancifully decorated with superb hangings, and brilliantly illuminated. Here, the natal day of our Saviour is ushered in with all the peculiarities and pomp of Catholic worship. The music, the incense, the innumerable lights, the delighted devotion of the kneeling multitudes, and the loud and swelling hymns, which close the ceremony of this midnight mass, produce an effect, which acts too powerfully on the senses. The more I see of the Roman Catholic religion, the less am I surprised that the people of southern Europe, who are certainly both impassioned and imaginative, should attach themselves to a church, the forms and ceremonies of which, addressing both the senses and the fancy, make, to them, the attendance on public worship a business of pleasure, as well as of duty. The scenic representations of Gospel history, which, on high fasts and festivals, are to be met with in almost all the churches of the Peninsula, however ridiculous they may appear, are not without their use ; for to them



(most inadequate, I admit, to their purpose) the poorer classes are, nevertheless, indebted for much of the instruction they receive, concerning the life and miracles of the divine Founder of our blessed faith.

It was on the 29th day of December, 1811, that I sailed from the Tagus for England, and it was early in the month of August, 1812, that, having escaped my banishment to India, by a fortunate and well-timed promotion, I landed once more on the Quay of Lisbon. The glorious news of the victory of Salamanca greeted me on my arrival. The joy of the Portuguese at this signal triumph, so honourable to their troops, as well as our own, knew no bounds. Masses, processions, illuminations, and new overtures and marches in honour of it, performed night after night, in crowded theatres, bespoke their patriotic pleasure. The consummate skill displayed by Wellington in this memorable engagement, was, to a soldier again about to enter camps under his command, a proud and flattering augury of success; and, in spite of all the croaking I had been compelled to listen to in Eng-

land, made me look forward with a confident hope, to an honourable and glorious conclusion of this interesting war. Nor, as an ardent admirer of the Spanish character, was my opinion of their courage and constancy at all shaken. It is true their armies and their garrisons had met with great, but not surprising misfortunes ; I say not surprising, because the military man of professional experience could not have expected that the half-organized and ill-commanded armies of Spain would successfully oppose the victorious and veteran legions of a renowned military power in the open field, or in the more difficult operations of regular warfare. Their armies were beaten in almost every engagement, and their fortresses, though often bravely defended, fell one after the other into the hands of the invaders. Want of skill in some of their leaders, and treachery in others, to whose reputed talents they had blindly and helplessly yielded up the task of directing their courage, led to these fatal misfortunes ; but Spain, that is, the country, the people, still resisted. The inhabitants of towns and cities occupied by

the French, secretly contributed money for this purpose, and were ever ready to convey useful information to their brethren in arms. The brave peasants inhabiting all their mountainous districts, disbanded soldiers, and spirited volunteers, from every part of Spain, rallied around chieftains, whose hearty and valiant efforts in the cause were daily crowned with partial, but highly useful successes. In Catalonia, Navarre, Arragon, and Biscay, Eroles, Lacy, and Mina commanded large bodies of Guerillas, equally formidable from their surprising activity, and their undaunted courage. In the very heart of Spain, Empecinado, at the head of a bold and loyal peasantry, spread terror to the very gates of Madrid; while Don Julian Sanchez led his enterprising horse into Old Castile, and, though surrounded by their principal establishments, daily captured their convoys and supplies, and kept their cantonments in a constant state of anxiety and alarm. No: — the efforts of the Spaniards to deliver themselves from the yoke of France must never be forgotten; and no man of gene-