

this amusement—it was rather considered a cruel and disgusting one. I cannot understand how it is so much encouraged in Spain, unless it be to serve the same purpose that we pay boxers to murder each other, viz. to keep up the national courage.

I have known some of those *bruising* fellows in the army, indeed every regiment has its *bully*, but although they were always forward enough to abuse and tyrannise over their fellow-soldiers, who were not of the *fancy*, I never knew one of them that displayed even ordinary courage in the field; and it was invariably by fellows of this description that outrages, such as those perpetrated at Badajos, were committed.

While in Madrid, one of their state prisoners was executed for treason: I do not remember his rank or name, but the mode of execution was so singular, that it may be worth describing.

On the day appointed for his execution, a scaffold was raised in the *Plaza Real*, or Royal Square. In the centre of this platform there was fixed an appa-

ratus, resembling a chair, only in place of the usual back, there was an upright stake, to this there was fastened an iron collar, which, by means of a screw behind, could be tightened or relaxed at pleasure. A vast concourse of people had assembled to see the criminal suffer. He was led to the place of execution on an ass, having his arms pinioned, a crucifix in his hand, and surrounded by priests. On mounting the scaffold, he was placed on the seat already described, bound firmly down, and the priest took his place in front of him, with a crucifix in his hand, and from his violent gesticulations, seemed to be exhorting him very earnestly. This ceremony finished, the garotte or collar was placed about his neck, and his face covered. The executioner stood prepared, and on the signal being given, as far as I recollect, one wrench did the business, having completely flattened his neck. In this situation he remained a considerable time, when the body was removed, and the crowd dispersed.

About the 24th of October, we march-

ed from Madrid to Pinto, a distance of about three leagues; in consequence of the enemy advancing in great force in that direction. Here we remained until the 30th, when we were ordered to retreat upon Madrid, and passed our pontoons burning on the road side, having been set on fire to prevent them falling into the hands of the enemy.

We supposed at first that we would again occupy Madrid, but when we came in sight of it the Retiro was in flames, and we could hear the report of cannon, which proceeded from the brass guns in the fort being turned on each other for the purpose of rendering them useless to the enemy; the stores of provision and clothing which we had previously taken, were also burned, and every preparation made for evacuating the place. The staff officers were galloping about giving directions to the different divisions concerning their route, the inhabitants whom we met on the road, were in evident consternation, and every thing indicated an unexpected and hurried retreat; instead, therefore, of entering the



city, we passed to the left of it. The enemy's cavalry by this time being close on our rear, and before ours had evacuated the town on the one side, the French had entered it on the other. We marched about a league past Madrid, when we encamped for the night; but next morning we proceeded on our retreat, nor halted until we reached Salamanca, having the enemy encamped close on our rear every night.

The French having taken up nearly the same position they had occupied on the 22d of July; on the afternoon of the 15th November, we turned out of the town, and forming on nearly our old ground, expected an immediate engagement. We had been so much harassed in retreating from Madrid in the severe weather, that we felt much more inclination to fight than to go farther, but we were disappointed, and after performing some evolutions, we filed off on the road leading to Roderigo, and commenced retreating as night was setting in. I never saw the troops in such a bad humour.



Retreating before the enemy at any time was a grievous business, but in such weather it was doubly so; the rain now pouring down in torrents, drenched us to the skin, and the road, composed of a clay soil, stuck to our shoes so fast, that they were torn off our feet. The night was dismally dark, the cold wind blew in heavy gusts, and the roads became gradually worse. After marching in this state for several hours, we halted in a field on the road side, and having piled our arms, were allowed to dispose ourselves to rest as we best could. The moon was now up, and wading through the dense masses of clouds, she sometimes threw a momentary gleam on the miserable beings who were huddled together in every variety of posture, endeavouring to rest or screen themselves from the cold. Some were lying stretched on the wet ground rolled in still wetter blankets, more having placed their knapsack on a stone, or their wooden canteen, had seated themselves on it with their blankets wrapped about them, their head reclining on their knees, and their teeth

chattering with cold; while others more resolute and wise, were walking briskly about. Few words were spoken, and as if ashamed to complain of the hardships we suffered, execrating the retreat, and blaming lord Wellington for not having sufficient confidence in us to hazard a battle with the enemy, under any circumstances, were the only topics discussed.

A considerable time before day light we were again ordered to fall in, and proceeded on our retreat. The rain still continued to fall, and the roads were knee deep; many men got fatigued and unable to proceed. Some spring wag-gons were kept in rear to bring them up, but the number increased so fast that there was soon no conveyance for them; and as we formed the rear guard, they soon fell into the hands of the French cavalry, who hung on our rear during the whole retreat. When we came to our halting ground, the same accommodation awaited us as on the preceding evening. By some mismanagement the commissary stores had been sent on with

the rest of the baggage to Roderigo, and we were without food. The feeling of hunger was very severe; some beef that had remained with the division was served out to us, but our attempts to kindle fires with the wet wood was quite abortive. Sometimes indeed we managed to raise a smoke, and numbers gathered round, in the vain hope of getting themselves warmed, but the fire would extinguish in spite of all their efforts. Our situation was truly distressing, tormented by hunger, wet to the skin, and fatigued in the extreme, our reflections were bitter; the comfortable homes and firesides which we had left were now recalled to mind, and contrasted with our present miserable situation; and during that night many a tear of repentance and regret fell from eyes "unused to the melting mood."

About the same hour as on the preceding morning, we again fell in and marched off, but the effects of hunger and fatigue were now more visible. A savage sort of desperation had taken



possession of our minds, and those who had lived on the most friendly terms in happier times, now quarrelled with each other, using the most frightful imprecations on the slightest offence. All former feeling of friendship was stifled and a misanthropic spirit took possession of every bosom. The streams which fell from the hills were swelled into rivers which we had to wade, and vast numbers fell out, among whom were officers, who having been subject to the same privation were reduced to the most abject misery.

It was piteous to see some of the men, who had dragged their limbs after them with determined spirit until their strength failed, fall down amongst the mud, unable to proceed farther; and as they were sure of being taken prisoners if they escaped being trampled to death by the enemy's cavalry, the despairing farewell look that the poor fellows gave us when they saw us pass on, would have pierced our hearts at any other time; but our feelings were steeled, and so helpless had we become, that we had

no power to assist, even had we felt the inclination to do so. Among the rest, one instance was so distressing, that no one could behold it unmoved. The wife of a young man who endeavoured to be present with her husband on every occasion, if possible, having kept up with us amidst all our sufferings, from Salamanca, was at length so overcome by fatigue and want, that she could go no farther; for some distance, with the assistance of her husband's arm, she had managed to drag her weary limbs along, but at length she became so exhausted, that she stood still unable to move; her husband was allowed to fall out with her, for the purpose of getting her into one of the spring waggons, but when they came up, they were already loaded in such a manner that she could not be admitted, and numbers in the same predicament were left lying on the road side. The poor fellow was now in a dreadful dilemma, being necessitated either to leave her to the mercy of the French soldiers, or by remaining with her to be taken prisoner—and even then

perhaps be unable to protect her; the alternative either way was heart-rending, but there was no time to lose, the French cavalry were close upon them. In despairing accents she begged him not to leave her, and at one time he had taken the resolution to remain, but the fear of being considered as a deserter urged him to proceed, and with feelings easier imagined than described, he left her to her fate, and never saw her again; but many a time afterwards did he deprecate his conduct on that occasion, and the recollection of it embittered his life.

On this night the rain had somewhat abated, but the cold was excessive, and numbers who had resisted the effects of the hunger and fatigue with a hardy spirit, were now obliged to give way to its overpowering influence, and sunk to the ground praying for death to relieve them from their misery; and some prayed not in vain, for next morning before daylight, in passing from our halting ground to the road, we stumbled over several who had died during the night. Inadvertently I set my foot on one



of them, and stooped down to ascertain whether the individual was really dead, but I shall never forget the sickening thrill that went to my heart, when my hand came in contact with his cold and clammy face. On this day our hearts seemed to have wholly failed us, to speak was a burden, and the most helpless weakness pervaded every individual; we had now arrived at that pitch of misery which levels all distinction of rank, and I believe no order would have been obeyed unless that which was prompted by regard to the common safety.

Dennis, round whom there used to be gathered a host of his comrades, listening to his witticisms, or quaint remarks, and whose spirits I had never known to fail, was now completely crest-fallen, and dragged his limbs along with the greatest difficulty; nothing but death, however, could altogether keep down his buoyant spirits, for if we got a minute's halt during the march, he made such ludicrous remarks on the woe-begone countenances of himself or his companions, that, (although the effort

was distressing,) they were obliged to smile in spite of their misery.

This day we halted sooner than usual, and the weather being clearer, we got fires kindled;—still no rations—but we were encamped among oak trees, and greedily devoured the acorns which grew upon them, although nauseous in the extreme, the officer commanding the brigade and our colonel joining in the repast; in many respects the officers were in a worse situation than the men, not having any thing to change themselves, as their baggage had been sent on before us. If any thing could have given us comfort in our miserable situation, it was having a kind and sympathizing commanding officer; he made many of the weakly men throw away their knapsacks, and by every means in his power he endeavoured to infuse comfort and courage into their sinking hearts, braving every difficulty in common with the meanest individual, and even rejected the superior accommodation which his rank afforded, while he saw the men suffering. It was in

a situation like this where true greatness of mind could be displayed; and there must have been something innately great and noble in the mind which could thus rise superior even to nature, and, in my opinion, a much greater degree of real courage was necessary to brave the horrors of this retreat, than to face the fire of a battery.

During the night our situation was worse than in the day, for there was then nothing to divert our attention from our wretched state, and although we despaired of ever seeing it, we felt that indescribable longing after home, which every one must have felt in the same situation. It will be needless to detail our next day's sufferings, they were of the same nature as the preceding, only more aggravated. We were now drawing near Roderigo, where our baggage had been ordered: each day our hopes had been kept alive, in the expectation that we would find provision at our halting place, but we were still deceived. Now, however, these expectations were more likely to be realized. About dusk



we took up our ground on the face of a hill near Roderigo, and the weather changing to a severe frost, was intensely cold. We had not been long halted, when the well known summons of "turn out for biscuit," rung in our ears. The whole camp was soon in a bustle, and some of the strongest having gone for it, they received two days rations for each man. It was customary to divide it, but on this night it was dispensed with, and each eagerly seizing on what he could get, endeavoured to allay the dreadful gnawing which had tormented us, during four days of unexampled cold and fatigue. In a short time, two rations more were delivered, and the inordinate eating that ensued, threatened to do more mischief than the former want. We went into quarters next day, and many who had borne up during the retreat, now fell sick, and were sent to the hospital.

From this place we removed in a few days some way into Portugal, where we took up our winter quarters in a small village, called Fonte Arcada.

## CHAPTER VI.

FORTE ARCADEA—COLONEL LLOYD—INHABITANTS

—STORY OF HENRY G \* \* \*

FORTE ARCADEA, in which our regiment was quartered, (the remainder of the division being distributed in the surrounding villages) was situated on the face of a hill, which formed one of an extensive range; at its foot ran one of the tributary streams of the Duero, meandering through a fertile and tolerably well cultivated valley. The village itself was built on a bare and rugged mass of rock, and the frowning ledge that hung over the town, gave it a wild and romantic air. The place had not escaped the ravages of war, but being more out of the common route, it had suffered little in comparison to others. The houses had rather a mean appearance, with the exception of three or four belonging to fidalgos, who resided in



the village: but the situation was healthy. And, after we had cleaned it, (which we had to do with every Portuguese village before we could inhabit them) we felt ourselves very comfortable, and soon forgot all our former fatigue, which we did the readier, that we had now a commanding officer who interested himself warmly in our welfare.

Lieutenant colonel Lloyd had joined us from the 43d regiment. I have already had occasion to mention him, in describing the retreat from Salamanca. No eulogium, however, of mine, can convey an idea of his merits, as a man and a soldier; but it is deeply engraven on the hearts of those who served under him.

So harmoniously did he blend the qualities of a brave, active, intelligent officer, with those of the gentleman and the scholar, that the combination fascinated all ranks. His exterior corresponded with his mind—he was somewhat above the middle size—and to a face and head, cast in the true Roman mould, was joined an elegant and manly body.



His system of discipline was not coercive, he endeavoured to encourage, not to terrify—if there was a single spark of pride or honour in the bosom, he would fan it to a flame. His aim was to prevent crime, rather than to punish it, and he rarely resorted to corporal punishment. When he did so, it was only in the case of hardened ill-doers, with whom no lenient measures would succeed; even then, he never punished to the tenth part of the sentence awarded: and if the culprit sued for pardon, promising not to be guilty again, he would say, “I take you at your word, and forgive you; but remember your promise.”

The men's interests formed his chief study, and the complaint of the meanest individual was heard and investigated with the strictest impartiality, without respect to persons. By the measures he took, he made every individual interested in his own honour, and that of the regiment; and I believe that every man in it loved and honoured him. So successful was his efforts, that he brought the regiment into a state of

order, cleanliness and discipline, which could never have been attained by any other means. He was always the first in danger, and the last out of it; and in camp, he went later to rest, and was sooner up than the meanest individual composing his corps.

He was a native of Ireland, (Limerick, I believe) and a striking corroboration of the general remark, that where an Irishman is *really* a gentleman, he is one in the most extensive meaning of the word; unfettered by cold calculating selfishness, his noble heart and soul is seen in every thing he does—such was colonel Lloyd.

The inhabitants here were similar to those we had met with in other villages in Portugal—sunk in ignorance, dirt and superstition; and although some of the fidalgos boasted that the blood of the house of Braganza flowed in their veins, they did not seem to be a whit more refined, or better informed than the plebeians. They were rigid attendants on all the religious ceremonies of their church, but religion with them

appeared to be from mere habit, religion with them played on the surface, but did not reach the heart. When the bell rang at stated periods for prayers, each rosary was put in requisition; but this did not interrupt the conversation, they managed to pray and converse at the same time. As bigotry is always the attendant of ignorance, they were no way liberal in their opinions concerning us; and so contaminated did they consider us by heresy, that they would not drink out of the same vessel. But to tell the truth, I believe they did not understand the principles of the religion they professed, and the "Padre Cura" of the village, (a gross and most unspiritual looking piece of furniture,) did not seem much qualified to inform them.

We remained here nearly six months, during which vigorous preparations were made for the ensuing campaign, but little occurred interesting or worth recording while quartered in the village, with the exception of a love affair, in which my friend Henry was engaged, and which is so tinged with romance,



that I could scarcely expect credence to the detail, was it not that all who were then present with the regiment can vouch for its truth. Henry, whose warm heart and romantic imagination often produced him remarkable adventures, here fell deeply in love. In fact, his head was so stuffed with the machinery and plots of novels and romances, that his heart, as Burns expresses it, "was like a piece of tinder ready to burst forth into a flame, from the first casual spark that might fall upon it." Fortune, however, had as yet guarded it from any such accident, and reserved for winter quarters and quieter times the shaft which was to destroy his peace.

He had by dint of application to the principles of the language, and a talent for acquiring it, gained a very tolerable knowledge of the Portuguese, and at this time he held a situation, which exempted him in a degree from military duty, and left him time to associate with some of the inhabitants who were fond of his conversation, and felt friendly towards him. It was by this means he be-

came acquainted with the female whose charms had captivated him. She was niece to one of the principal inhabitants, and about 15 or 16 years of age. In her he imagined he had found the long-cherished ideal mistress of his soul, on whom he had lavished more accomplishments and perfections than would have made an angel in our degenerate days. I was, of course, his confidant, and certainly of all I had ever heard or read of love's extravagance, I witnessed it in him; he could neither eat nor sleep, every spare moment that he had was spent on a small eminence opposite the house where she lived, gazing at the windows, in hopes to catch a glance of her; here he would sit luxuriating in all the wild uncertainty of hope, anticipation and despair, which lovers commonly indulge in, and although his familiarity with the family might have gained him access to her company any time he pleased, he grew diffident of visiting them, and even shrunk from the idea of speaking to herself on the subject; he poured all his doubts and hopes in my

ear, and he could not have found one to whom they were more interesting; of the same romantic temperament, I shared in all his sensations. Seeing the state of mind in which he was placed by his violent attachment, I recommended him strongly that he should endeavour to gain an interview, and speak to her on the subject; but he considered this impracticable, as the sight of her never failed to agitate him in such a manner, that robbed him of all power of utterance. Thus situated, and willing to render my friend a service, through my interest with a family whom she was in the habit of visiting, I brought about an interview between the parties, and here, for the first time, I saw Maria. She was certainly a very pretty good-humoured lively girl, but in my opinion, very far indeed from the paragon of perfection which Henry was inclined to think her; but I felt not the magic influence of that power, which, like the philosopher's stone, can transmute the baser metals into gold; little satisfaction accrued to Henry from this meeting,



but it subsequently led to others in which the parties came to a mutual explanation, and he had reason to hope that he was not regarded by her with indifference. From this time their interviews were more frequent and less guarded, and visiting her aunt frequently, although he could not converse freely with Maria, still their eyes which "looked unutterable things," were not sufficiently restrained, and the old lady began to suspect the truth; the tattle of the village confirmed her suspicions, and she forbade Henry the house. They had a few stolen meetings at her friend's in the village, but this also was discovered, and Maria was prohibited from leaving the house unattended.

I am almost persuaded that had affairs gone on smoothly, Henry would have come to his senses, and the attachment would have died a natural death. But these obstacles only served to increase his ardour and perseverance; for so well was Maria now guarded, that there was no possibility of seeing her. In this dilemma, he determined on applying to

Donna Anna, the girl's aunt; from this application he had but little to hope, yet still he could lose nothing. Having thus resolved, he went boldly into the house, and without speaking to any one, lest they might frustrate his purpose, he traversed the passages, until he perceived Donna Anna in one of the apartments alone, employed at her distaff. He entered, his heart fluttering with suspense: and after apologizing for his rudeness, in thus intruding upon her, he proceeded to declare his love for Maria, and to beg her acquiescence to their union. The old lady seemed thunderstruck at his presumption, yet still Henry had so qualified his address to her, that she had no good reason to be angry, and after taking a few minutes to recollect herself, she replied, "that Maria was already betrothed to a very deserving young man, a cousin of her own; but independent of this engagement, she could not give her consent. What had Maria to expect if she married a soldier of a foreign regiment. In the midst of war the soldiers themselves suffered much,