

went to sea without encountering a storm; he never in the wildest hurricane exhibited the smallest token of alarm. At the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway,—an experiment, as was believed, full of peril,—he put himself with child-like docility into the hands of the engineers, and kept his seat, as they requested him to do, till the accident to Mr Huskisson stopped the train. He was the first to reach the wounded man, and to speak words of comfort to him. Indeed he would have put a stop to the pageant, had it not been explained to him that great public inconvenience would have been the consequence. We have seen how he bore himself when threatened with assassination on the King's highway, and mobbed and assaulted in the streets of London, and as he was then, so he invariably appeared amid the bitterest struggles and perplexities of political life.

The Duke's wit was sometimes caustic enough, but never ill-natured. A gentleman, not remarkable for always saying the right thing at the right moment, happened to dine in his company one day, and during a pause in the conversation, asked abruptly, "Duke, weren't you surprised at Waterloo?" "No," was the answer, delivered with a smile, "but I am now." When Sir De Lacy Evans' operations were going on near St Sebastian, the question was put, "What will all this produce?" "Probably, replied the Duke, "two volumes in octavo." In 1815, the Commissioners for the provisional Government in France announced to him gravely that the Empire was at an end. "I knew that a year ago." A Colonial Bishop having remonstrated with the Secretary of State because military guards were not turned out and instructed to salute him, the minister sent the letter to the Duke, who returned it with this remark upon the margin: "The only attention which soldiers are to pay to the Bishop must be to his sermons." Sometimes the Duke's mots hit harder than he intended them to do. The late Sir William Allen used to tell with great glee, that being sent for to receive the price of his picture of the Battle of Waterloo, he found the Duke counting over whole piles of bank notes. Sir William, anxious to save the Duke's time, ventured to observe that a cheque upon his Grace's banker would serve

the purpose quite as well as notes. Whereupon the Duke, not over and above delighted with the interruption, looked up and said, "Do you think I am going to let Coutts' people know what a d—d fool I've been?" A cavalry regiment being suddenly ordered to the Cape, one of the officers, not remarkable for zeal in the performance of his duties, applied for leave to exchange. The memorandum was this: "He must sail or sell."

Of his kindly disposition, the following are manifestations. An old gentleman of the name of Robertson desired one day particularly to see him. He was admitted to an audience, and stated that he did not expect to live long, but could not die in peace without seeing the Duke, and that he had travelled from Scotland for that single purpose. Touched with the old man's manner, the Duke not only expressed his own gratification, but begged Mr Robertson to stay and dine with him. "Many thanks," replied the old Scot, "I can't do that. I have seen your Grace, and have now nothing more in this world to wish for:" and so withdrew.

He was walking one day in the streets of a manufacturing town, when an operative accosted, and desired permission to shake hands with, him. "Certainly," replied the Duke; "I am always happy to shake hands with an honest man."

He never met, in his rides and walks among the lanes near Walmer or Strathfieldsaye, any poor man who claimed to have served under him without giving him a sovereign. He used to laugh at himself for doing so, and acknowledged that it was ten to one against the object of his bounty deserving it; but nothing would induce him to omit the practice.

But perhaps the most touching testimony to his gentleness is that which Mr Richard Oastler, the great and honest mob orator, has placed on record. Describing an interview to which the Duke admitted him, and his own embarrassment when he found himself closeted with the hero of the age, Mr Oastler continues: "On that space" (a space free from papers on the sofa), "at the bidding of the Duke, I sat. His Grace standing before me said, 'Well, Mr Oastler, what is it you wish to say to me?' I observed, 'It is very

strange that I should sit while the Duke of Wellington stands, and in Apsley House too.' 'Oh,' said his Grace, 'if you think so, and if it will please you better, I'll sit.' So saying, he took a seat on an easy-chair, between the sofa and the fire-place. I was then desired to proceed. Being strangely affected with a reception so very different from that anticipated, I expressed my surprise, and craved the Duke's indulgence. Placing his right hand on my right shoulder, his Grace said, 'We shall never get on if you are embarrassed. Forget that you are here; fancy yourself talking with one of your neighbours at Fixby, and proceed.'

It is not worth while to transcribe more of what passed between them; but the result must be given in Mr Oastler's words. "In a short time I returned to Huddersfield, met thousands of people at an out-door assembly, and told them all that the Duke of Wellington had told me. Oh how they cheered!"

The Duke's wisdom, like that of other wise men, was shown more in his life than in his conversation; yet certain sayings of his have passed into aphorisms, and will never be forgotten while the English language exists. Here are a few of them:—

"A great country ought never to make little wars.

"Be discreet in all things, and so render it unnecessary to be mysterious about any.

"The history of a battle is like the history of a ball.

"Animosity among nations ought to cease when hostilities come to an end.

"He is most to blame who breaks the law, no matter what the provocation may be under which he acts.

"One country has no right to interfere in the internal affairs of another. Non-intervention is the law, intervention is only the exception."

The Duke dined one day in Paris with M. Cambacères, one of the most renowned *gourmets* of France. The host having pressed a *recherché* dish upon the Duke, asked eagerly, when the plate was cleared, how he had liked it. "It

was excellent," replied the Duke; "but to tell you the truth, I don't care much what I eat." "Good heavens!" exclaimed Cambacères, "don't care what you eat! Why then did you come here?"

It is a remarkable fact in this great man's history, that though always ready, often too ready, to expose himself in action, he never received a wound which left a scar behind. At Seringapatam, as his Indian correspondence shows, a bullet tore the cloth of his over-alls and grazed his knee. Again at Orthes, a spent ball struck him so sharply as to unhorse him. On this latter occasion, he was watching the progress of the battle,—General Alava sitting on horseback near him,—when a musket-ball struck the Spaniard severely on that part of the person, any injury done to which is the occasion more frequently of mirth than of commiseration. The Duke, as was to be expected, laughed at Alava, but had not long enjoyed his joke, when another ball, after hitting the guard of his own sword glanced off, and gave him such a blow as caused him to spring from his saddle and fall to the ground. He got up, rubbed the part, laughed again, but rather more faintly, remounted, and went through the action; but for several days afterwards he was unable to ride, and suffered great pain.

It is almost more singular that he who carried on war in so many parts of the world should never have lost a gun to the enemy. "Returning with him one day from the hunting-field," says Lord Ellesmere, "I asked him whether he could form any calculation of the number of guns he had taken in the course of his career." "No," he replied, "not with any accuracy; somewhere about 3000, I should guess. At Oporto, after the passage of the Douro, I took the entire siege-train of the enemy; at Vittoria and Waterloo I took every gun they had in the field. What, however, is more extraordinary is, I don't think I ever lost a gun in my life. After the battle of Salamanca," he went on to explain, "three of my guns attached to some Portuguese cavalry were captured in a trifling affair near Madrid, but they were recovered the next day. In the Pyrenees, Lord Hill

found himself obliged to throw eight or nine guns over a precipice; but those also were recovered, and never fell into the enemy's hands at all."

Though pretending to no eminence either in scholarship or science, the Duke entertained the greatest respect for both. On two separate occasions he expressed a desire to be elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. At first his meaning appears scarcely to have been understood, but the wish being repeated, the Royal Society at once, and with peculiar satisfaction, received him among its Fellows. He was proposed by the late Marquis of Northampton, and seconded by Sir Robert Harry Inglis; and he seems to have been better pleased with this distinction, than with many others conferred upon him by the Sovereigns and peoples whom he had served. Again we find him brought into contrast with Napoleon, in a matter where, at first sight, it might appear that there was only parallelism. "I knew what I was about," said the French Emperor, "when I caused myself to be elected member of the Institute. Our soldiers follow me, not because I am brave, but because they believe me to be a man of genius and well read."

The Duke's eye for a country was, as may be imagined, singularly accurate. He could take in at a glance all the features of any landscape through which he rode. And which was, perhaps, more remarkable, he seemed intuitively to divine the lie of a district beyond the limits to which his gaze extended. This was shown upon one occasion in rather a curious way.

He was going to visit a friend in Rutlandshire, and finding that Mr Croker had received an invitation to the same house, he offered him a seat in his carriage. The offer was accepted, and the two travellers, after exhausting other topics, began to amuse themselves by guessing at the nature of the country which lay on the farther side of various ranges of hill and down, as they approached them. The Duke's guesses proved on all occasions to be so correct, that Mr Croker at last demanded the reason. "The reason?" replied the Duke. "Why what have I been doing for the greater part of my life, except that which we are doing now,—

trying to make out from what I saw the shape of the country which I could not see ?”

Strange to say, however, the same man, whose faculties enabled him thus to draw inferences almost always correct in regard to great matters, was remarkable for his blunders in small matters of the same sort. The Duke was noted for losing his way not only when riding back after reconnoissances before the enemy, but when returning home from the hunting-field near Strathfieldsaye.

Of the great tenacity of the Duke's memory notice has been taken elsewhere. It never forsook him to the last. In 1843, when the terror of the Seikh invasion was at its height, he was requested by the Government of the day to draw up a plan for the defence of India. This paper or memorandum he read “with great emphasis” to Lord Ellesmere, who says, “It embraced all three Presidencies, and was full of geographical details. It had been written, as he told me, without reference either to a map or a gazetteer.”

It was soon after this, that when called upon to name three officers, one of whom might be selected to go out as Lord Gough's successor in command of the army, he wrote, “Sir Charles Napier, Sir Charles Napier, Sir Charles Napier.”

I must bring these anecdotes to an end. Hundreds more, equally characteristic, are doubtless in circulation, every one of which deserves its own place here; but already the limits at my command are passed, the subject remaining still unexhausted. If told in detail, they could scarcely add to the measure of admiration in which, by all who know how to value real greatness, the memory of the Duke of Wellington is held. He was the grandest, because the truest man, whom modern times have produced. He was the wisest and most loyal subject that ever served and supported the English throne.

THE END.





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