

insensibility? or was it enthusiastic reverence for, and pious resignation to, the will of God? — I decided for the latter; for I saw her bend over her child with an expression of countenance rapturously affectionate. I knelt down, once more, to read its innocent features. — Yes, there was the charm: remorse, fear, and doubt, could not be traced there. All was innocence, and purity, and truth. — “Your child,” said I, “my good woman, is perhaps ere now, a cherubim in heaven.” “Senhor, you cannot be a heretic?” “No, I am a Christian of another sect.” “Ah, you must be a Christian; I thought so, but the priests said you English were all heretics.” So much for priests and peasants. The breach between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant church has certainly been rendered unnaturally, if not impassably wide, by the stubborn pride and designing policy of a crafty and intolerant priesthood. Though I am here speaking of the Roman Catholic clergy, I cannot but feel that the violence of the early Reformers, who, in detestation of the Romish church, abrogated many

things, defiled, perhaps, by abuse, but decent in themselves, and allowed in the primitive church, very greatly assisted to produce this evil. Do we not, I would ask, in essentials think alike? and is not the grand and blessed scheme of man's redemption, through the mediation of Christ, the first article of belief, and the resting-place of faith with us both? I certainly, in the course of my residence in Spain, had occasion often to reflect that my countrymen were too apt to confound the errors and abuses of the church government among the Roman Catholics, with the belief and practices of their religion.

But to return to my recollections. — In one of my rides, about two leagues from the cantonment, as I was stopping to water my mule in a mill-stream, I heard on the opposite bank the sound of voices, loud and cheerful as in song, and, at intervals, a note of the guitar. Riding forward through the trees, I soon came upon an open green, where I found about a hundred villagers, assembled near a small chapel to celebrate the festival of San Domingo. The mass

was over, and they were all seated on the ground, refreshing themselves with cakes and wine. They were in their holiday dresses, and those dresses were for the most part exceedingly picturesque. At my first appearance there was a dead silence; they looked as if they dreaded some news which might break up their happy meeting; or, at all events, as if they knew me for an Englishman, and disliked my intrusion; but when I dismounted, and throwing myself on the ground among them, asked to be allowed to share their mirth and happiness, no words can describe their delighted cordiality. I had so accustomed myself to converse with the peasantry, that we soon became familiar, and I passed with them six very pleasant hours. After their light repast, the best of which was spread before me and a Capuchin friar, they rose to dance; and though there was nothing graceful in their style of moving, still the total novelty of the picture, the dresses, the singing, the guitars, the cork-trees, and the chapel, produced a very pleasing effect; and could the curtain of Drury-lane rise

and discover such a scene and such a group, the applause would know no bounds. Amid this festive party there was one very pretty girl, with fair blue eyes and a blooming complexion, beauties very uncommon in Portugal, and these the conscious damsel had artfully contrived to set off, by a black hat, lined with pink silk, and a pretty well-fancied dress. Her mother, who seemed very proud of her, asked me, if she would really be considered a pretty girl among Englishwomen? and on my assuring her, that I had never yet seen the spot where she would not be considered very handsome, the old woman turning quickly, said, "Ah, Senhor, where shall I conceal her from shame and insult, when the French come again to ravage our country?" — "Let us hope," said I, "that God may enable us to defend your country." She made no reply, but shook her head mournfully: I repressed a sigh, and immediately turned the conversation; for why should idle anticipation of to-morrow's misery be suffered to cloud the innocent gaiety of to-day? They broke up at sunset, and all re-

turned peaceably to their homes, without noise, quarrelling, or intoxication. I am free to confess, that I very much admire the manners and customs of these happy peasants, nor have I ever subscribed to that prejudiced opinion, which affects to condemn or despise them as senseless and frivolous.

On the 30th of June, our regiment was called in from its advanced station, and joined its brigade in the town of Portalegre, and all appearances justified the belief, that the campaign was about to open. We remained for twelve days here; I was very fortunate in my billet. My host, a mild, well-informed, venerable old canon, gave me most excellent apartments, and a free access to a little cabinet, in which he had a pretty selection of French authors, and some very handsome editions of the classics. The windows of my chamber commanded a most enchanting prospect, and I had no want or wish unsatisfied, if I exceptt he natural anxiety I always felt to take the field, and gain the proud experience of a soldier.

At this time the corps of Junot and Ney, under the orders of Massena, occupied positions on or near the Agueda; the troops of Ney, indeed, were carrying on the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo. Regnier, with the second corps of the French army, lay cantoned in Spanish Estremadura, in a state of the most active preparation, appearing to menace and watch us in Alemtejo.

On the 13th of July, we marched to a camp near Alpalhão, where we halted five days, waiting until Regnier, who was then drawing near the Tagus, should cross that river, in order that we might make an immediate and corresponding movement. We were here all reviewed, and I had the satisfaction of seeing, for the first time, a large division of Portuguese under arms. The men were remarkably fine, and, considering the short time that had elapsed since their organization, in very high order. Twenty-four regiments of the line, six of light infantry, ten of cavalry, together with a due proportion of excellent artillery, then composed the native army of Portugal: their effective strength might be about thirty-five thousand; of this number, however, many

regiments were not yet in a sufficient state of forwardness to take the field, and remained therefore in garrisons. The total force of British and Portuguese in the field, including Hill's corps, could not have exceeded fifty-eight thousand; of these twenty-five thousand were Portuguese. About eight thousand British, and six thousand Portuguese, composed the command of General Hill. All the other divisions of the army were under the immediate orders of Lord Wellington, and lay most ably distributed, opposite the main French force commanded by Massena. My object, however, is not to give a professional sketch of the campaigns, but to present to the reader as faithfully as I can the varieties and pleasures of a life on active service, as they deeply impressed me, though more perhaps as a traveller, and a man of feeling, than as a scientific soldier. Not that I was indifferent to the interest which every intelligent mind must take in extensive military operations, and in seeing war carried on on a grand scale, throughout a series of brilliant campaigns; but although I was provided with good maps, although

eager in my inquiries, intimate with some clever and communicative staff officers, and, from a long habit of military reading, often just, or rather fortunate in my conclusions, still I felt and feel, that, after all, the best information of a regimental officer of humble rank must be very imperfect. It is a great misfortune for the British army which served in the Peninsula, and for the Duke of Wellington himself, that no man, possessed of the necessary information, and the ability to work upon his materials, has been found to give a correct and valuable history of their campaigns. It is quite idle to send the official documents and papers required for such a work to the most able writer, and acknowledged historian of the day. Such a man, however great his talents, however nervous and rich his language, is, and must be, ill-qualified to write a military work, if he be a civilian, unacquainted with armies, and has never served; he may indeed succeed in painting the noble struggles of a patriotic population, he may describe in a glowing strain of manly eloquence such a defence as that of Sara-

gossa, or the courageous exploits of Mountain-Guerillas ; but he can never impart to an account of the operations of regular armies, that charm and interest it is certainly capable of receiving ; he will find writing on the subject at all, a laborious and painful task, and will, after all, perhaps, produce a book, the dry perusal of which disappoints himself, and satisfies no one. — No. — A man must, like a Xenophon, or a Polybius, march with an army before he ventures to become the historian of its exploits. Would that some division general with the pen of a Burgoyne, or a Hutchinson, had marched and fought with the British troops in the Peninsula !

But to return to our camp. On July 18th, we again broke up, and marching by Niza, towards the Tagus, crossed that river at Villa Velha, and pursued our route through Sarnadas, and Castello Branco, to Atalaya, a considerable village situated at the very foot of that magnificent range of mountains called the Sierra de Estrella, to the north of which lay our main force under the orders of Wellington. Instructed by

our last year's wants, our officers now took the field very comfortably provided; many of us were mounted, most of us carried tents, and experience having shewn us what would be really useful, we had, at our leisure, procured and planned many little camp conveniences. Myself and my companion had our tent, camp-table, and stools, paillasses, canteen, &c., and, after our servants got accustomed to the life, provided the weather was fair, and no especial order of march, or readiness, interfered, our meals were prepared and served in bivouacks, the most rude and unfrequented, altogether remote from towns or cities, with the greatest regularity, cleanliness, and comfort. A quarter of an hour after the halt of the column, our tent was pitched, kettle boiled, breakfast-cloth spread, and tea-things laid out under some shady tree, the goats milked, and we were seated in comfort at our cheerful meal. The dinner, too, no great variety in the cookery to be sure, for there are *but two dishes* seen in a camp, namely, soup and bouilli, or an Irish stew, but these with rice, pumpkin, tomatis, and a bottle of good country wine,

left a moderate man little to wish for, and *nothing to grumble at*. At the bivouack, near Villa Velha, we took up our ground within a mile of a Spanish division under the orders of General Carrera, which was marching to Badajos. This was a remarkably fine body of men, though completely disorganized by defeat, and almost disheartened by the absence of that hope and encouragement which success can, alone, effectually inspire. They had been present at the fatal affair of Alba de Tormes, and had now just witnessed the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo. Upon us they appeared to look with a contempt, which their ignorance as soldiers, and their zeal as Spaniards, made in some measure, excuseable. They knew little, if any thing, about the regular practice of war; they only knew that we had not fired a shot by their side, since the battle of Talavera; that our companions in arms under Sir John Moore had fled through the strong country of Gallicia, without fighting, two years before, and their angry and contemptuous looks told us plainly, that they expected we should retire through

Portugal on the advance of Massena, with similar precipitation. I was vexed to observe all this, but made great allowances for the natural irritation of their feelings, under so much national distress and danger, and found it in my heart to forgive them. Carrera, the General who commanded them, sat under some trees with a party of their superior officers, smoking a cigar: his head was uncovered, and he had on a light undress waistcoat: he was a strikingly handsome man; as our well-appointed troops filed past this spot towards their ground, he regarded them with the most silent and provoking haughtiness. He was not a man of any talent, but he was a young, ardent, intrepid soldier, and a true friend to his country. In the year 1811 or 1812, he fell in the streets of Murcia, covered with sabre wounds, having maintained for a short time a most unequal struggle with five French dragoons. I mention the meeting with this Spanish division with a view to show how they were often led, and how little system and method there was in the march, and movements of men, who, I should have said,

were scattered through their bivouack, without any regularity of formation, or any appearance of discipline and control, and subjected to the orders of generals, perhaps impelled in most cases by patriotism, but seldom governed, or even enlightened, by judgment.

In the town of Castello Branco there is little remarkable. Its citadel and walls are in a state of ruin and decay. Although not fortified, it is still very important, as a military station, for the country round it, especially on the grand road which passes by Sobreira Formosa towards the Zezere, and abounds in strong and defensible positions: it has been also formerly a Roman station; and wherever we can trace the awful vestiges of those all-conquering soldiers, the Roman legions, we feel, I think, a very exalted and indefinable satisfaction. From our camp near Atalaya, the eye ranged over the southern face of the proud Sierra d'Estrella, rising many thousand feet above the level of the sea, traversed by good roads, formed with infinite labour over clefts of rocks, and gemmed with several white towns

and villages, which lie nestling and sparkling on its ample bosom. We remained here eight days, three of which it rained incessantly, and with great violence. A bivouack in heavy weather does not, I allow, present a very comfortable appearance. The officers sit shivering in their wet tents, idle and angry till dinner time, after which they generally contrive to kill the evening with mulled wine, round a camp-kettle lid filled with hot wood-ashes, by way of a fire. The men with their forage caps drawn over their ears, huddle together under banks or walls, or crowd round cheerless, smoky fires, cursing their commissaries, the rain, and the French. When, however, the clouds rolled away, and the sun shone forth again in all its splendor, again was spread before us the grand prospect of the Estrella, ever the same, yet ever varying; for who shall paint the bright and changing hues, which, at the rise and set of sun, visit scenes like these?

On the thirtieth we marched from Atalaya, carrying with us, I remember, a good supply of the delicious wine of Alpedrinha,

a mountain village about a league from our camp. We halted for the night at Tenelhas, and the following day marched for Sazedas, a small town, with a fine position near it for a camp. As we did not get our orders to march from the bivouack at Tenelhas until late in the afternoon, we did not expect to reach our ground before night-fall; for large bodies of troops, encumbered with artillery and baggage, of necessity move slow, but, as not unfrequently happened, the troops were halted for the night, right and left of the road, in the formation of march: no baggage, no cloaks, no supper; but an uncomfortable, fitful, broken dog-sleep, in a heavy dew. I give both sides of the picture; because the pleasures and joys of any life, as they exist only by comparison, so they can arise only out of its varieties. We halted until the seventeenth of August at Sazedas, where the division was regularly and comfortably huttred.

Whenever we remained a week or a fortnight stationary, the sutlers who followed the army overtook and opened their temporary shops in the towns near us, or in our

very camps ; and thus we were often well, though dearly, supplied with many comforts, such as tea, sugar, brandies, wines, segars, &c. In these sort of camps, we felt two serious wants, I allow ; books, and the society of women. It is true that in the Peninsula we never enjoyed either the one or the other in perfection ; yet in quarters we could often procure a few odd volumes of Latin or French, which served to beguile, and often usefully to occupy our time ; and for female society you frequently met with agreeable and interesting girls in your billet. Indeed I remember at Portalegre we used to frequent the grates of two nunneries, and all the sisters seemed flattered by our attentions. A military band was often brought down to the outer court of their sacred prisons, for their amusement, and some of the officers would sit for hours in the convent parlours, talking with the nuns, whom a double row of thick gratings, so contrived that you could only shake hands in the space between the two rows, separated from their gay inamoratas. Some of these unfortunates were young and engaging : one,

a very pretty interesting girl, in the convent of Santa Clara, died before we left the city. She was passionately in love with a British officer, who was himself at the time much affected by her loss. I considered her death a mercy; for she must have either lived a life of hopeless misery, or dared to rend asunder the sacred tie which bound her to her country, her family, and her convent, and have survived, perhaps, after all, the very flame to which she had so innocently given birth.

In another convent in that city, I remember a sister, neither young nor beautiful, but so interesting as to rivet attention and to awaken all one's sympathy. She was not always herself; and when in the fit of her strange melancholy, she would come to the grate and sing; sweetly indeed, but with a wildness, that filled the eyes of those who heard her with tears. She never wept herself; but smiled often, and most mournfully. She had been disappointed in love early in life, and sent into the convent; at least we heard so. I should like to have known her history; but on this she never

spoke, and I respected her sorrow too much to pain her by an unguarded question. She was very fond of the English officers: in whose countenances, at least in many, she might have observed an expression of manly pity, which soothed perhaps her wounded heart.

But, if such opportunities of occupying the mind and indulging the feelings were not to be met with in a camp, still it had its peculiar pleasures. You rose with the sun daily, and you had a fine martial scene constantly before your eyes; you walked and rode through a beautiful country, planning schemes of future happiness, or cherishing natural (it matters not how vain) hopes of future distinction: nor is the precious "*Far niente*" to be forgotten; for it is not necessary to have the genius, or the passion of Rousseau, to appreciate this enjoyment. All persons who have feeling and fancy, know how delightful are the unconnected and confused reveries of solitude, and the idle exercise of thought. The romantic scenery of the Peninsula assists and promotes such feelings. Often too, in our

camps, we received papers and letters from dear old England, and our eager politicians assembled round the appointed tent or tree, allotted as our news-room. Often would we dine together, in small convivial parties, to talk over past scenes, and future prospects. At times, as the sun set, and the shades of evening fell around us, walking on some upland near the camp, you might catch the mellowed and softened tones of a distant band, breathing forth some sweet and touching air, with which you had been from boyhood acquainted.

Oh, memory! how pure, how exquisite, are thy pleasures! To thee, and to thy sister Hope, the bright handmaids who support us through the rude path of existence, how deeply are all men indebted!

On the seventeenth of August, our battalion and another were moved to a camp at San Domingo, about five miles in advance of Sazedas, as a support to some light infantry and cavalry, which lay detached in front of us again, occupying Castello Branco and the adjacent villages. Our bivouack here was a very delightful one: the trees