

and forage cap; but it was the fortune of war, and I soon forgot it all in a profound sleep. I do not know how long I slept; but when I awoke all my comrades had left the bomb-proof, away drinking, with the exception of one or two, who had been left as poor as myself.

I had received a wound in the leg, from a splinter of a shell during the action. At the time, I had paid little attention to it, but it had now become so inflamed, and swelled, that I could scarcely move it. My former excitement of mind, with the fatigue I had endured had now produced a proportionate debility, and my feelings were no way enviable. Nothing could be more lonely, desolate and heartless, than the state in which I felt myself the remaining part of that day.

## CHAPTER XIII.

JOIN THE REGIMENT IN CAMP—RECEPTION—  
PARTY ADDRESSED BY THE COMMANDING OFFI-  
CER—DUTY OF THE TROOPS—GENERAL STEW-  
ART—DONALD AND HIS COFFEE—BRITISH  
FORCE IN CADIZ—GO INTO HOSPITAL—VISIT  
FROM A TOWNSMAN—HIS SYSTEM OF RECRUIT-  
ING—OBSERVATIONS ON THE SPANISH CHAR-  
ACTER.

THE day following, we marched to join the regiment at Isla Camp. Our comrades turned out to receive us; and our hearts thrilled with exultation at the encomiums passed on our bravery. The poor fellows flew with alacrity to procure wine to treat us; amongst the rest, my comrade Dennis was not backward. He and I had been separated when I went to the fort, and he was now overjoyed to see me. He seized my hand, and shook it so long, and squeezed it so heartily, that I was ready to cry out with the pain; but



it was in the warmth of his heart that he did this; and, as such, I valued it. "Death and ounds, James," exclaimed he, "is it yourself that's in it; troth, I thought I'd never see you more, for, when I saw the shot and shell flying about ye like hailstones, I said to myself 'poor comrade it's all over with you:' but, thank God, here you are safe and sound." "Scarce-ly," said I. "What's the matter, my dear fellow; are you wounded?" "Slightly," said I; "but that is not the worst of it, I have all my kit on my back." "Och, if that's all, never fear, my honey—you'll never want while Dennis has a shirt in his knapsack, or a cross in his pocket." And his were not empty professions: my heart glows with grateful feeling to this moment at the remembrance of his disinterested kindness—in my chequered journey through life, I met few friends of his description.

After supplying me with things to change myself, he procured a canteen of wine; and, being joined by more of our comrades, who were willing to show their good will, and who had come equally well

provided, we sat down in the tent, and I soon forgot all that I had suffered.

When the wine warmed my head, I entered into a detail of our proceedings during the time we were in the fort, with a feeling of pride and exultation—“fought all the battles o’er again, and thrice I slew the slain.” My comrades, ranged around, greedily devoured the relation; and their exclamations and remarks served to heighten my enthusiasm. I can smile now at the warmth of my feeling, and the high ideas I had then of a warrior’s fame. Yet, I must say, that there is a feeling connected with military enterprize, which will scarcely fail to carry all before it, particularly in men of any imagination. Military glory or fame, calmly considered, certainly appears a mere bauble, a delusive *ignis fatuus*: but, show me the man, of any soul, who could take this view of it in the midst of battle; there the imagination soars unconfined beyond every trammel, and gets into the region of sublimity and enthusiasm.

Next day, we were called out. The regiment formed square, and the remains of our party was marched into it. We

were then addressed by our commanding officer in terms of the highest eulogy, and held out to the regiment as a pattern. The sergeant, who had so *gloriously* distinguished himself by staving the wine cask, was particularly addressed, and told that he would not be lost sight of. We were then dismissed; but, with the exception of this sergeant, I do not remember any of us who were thought of after the speech. For my own part, I know that I found difficulty enough in getting the sum of two pounds eight shillings—in lieu of all that I had lost!! The commandant, however, was soon raised to the rank of major, and not long after to that of lieutenant-colonel.

The regiments of the brigade in camp were busily employed at this time working at the batteries, which were building on the island, for which they received ninepence per day, in addition to their pay. They had also extra rations, such as coffee and sugar for breakfast, and a pint of porter daily; but the labour was very hard, and the exposure to the sun brought on sickness amongst them.

Still we had little reason to complain;

for we were under the command of a general who did not think it below him to look into the men's rights and interest, and anticipate their wants. It was not an uncommon thing, in a very wet morning, to find him up at our camp, ordering an extra ration of rum to be served out to the brigade. There were also double tents provided for us; as, in consequence of the heavy rains, the single ones were found insufficient; and on every occasion he paid the most indefatigable attention to our comfort. In him was found a rare combination of the rigid disciplinarian and the *soldier's friend*. He discharged his own duty faithfully and well; and he expected every one under him to do the same, and would admit of no excuse for the non-performance of it from either officer or soldier. To those who served under his command, in that place, it will be unnecessary to say that the officer to whom I allude was, Lieutenant-General William Stewart. His name will be associated in their minds with the character of a gallant and able general, and a steady friend to the soldier.

We generally turned out for the working party, at five o'clock in the morning; and our breakfast, which was coffee with bread, was always ready at that hour. I remember, the first time we had it, each man came forward with his mess-tin for his allowance, which was measured out by the cook. We had a Highlandman in the company, who had enlisted raw from his native hills, and who, I believe, had never seen any thing of the kind before. When he came for his allowance of the coffee, which was now nearly done, the cook was skimming it off the top very carefully, to avoid stirring up the grounds. Donald, who thought this a scheme to keep all the good part to himself, exclaimed, "Tam your plood! will you'll no gie some o' the sik as well as the sin?" Oh, certainly," said the cook (who was a bit of a wag); and, stirring the grounds well up, he gave him a double proportion. Donald came in, chuckling with satisfaction at having detected the knavery of the cook, saying, "If she'll socht to to sheat a highlandman, she'll be far mistook." And, seeing the rest of his com-

rades breaking bread in their coffee, he did the same: by this time the eye of every one in the tent was on him, scarcely able to refrain from laughing. Donald began to sup it with his spoon; but, after taking two or three spoonfuls, grinding the coffee grounds between his teeth, and making wry faces, he threw the tin, contents and all, out of the tent door, exclaiming, "Tam their coffee! you might as weel chow heather, and drink pog water as that teevil's stuff. Gi'e Donal a cog o' brochan before ony o' your tea or coffees either."

The French had once or twice made a powerful attack on our picquets, but were repulsed with loss; and the skirmishing at our outposts, and firing from the batteries, were now carried on almost without intermission. We expected them to make an attack on us with their whole force; and scarcely a night passed without being turned out, in consequence of movements making on their side; notice of which was communicated to the troops by different coloured rockets, thrown up at our outposts.



At this time we had a strong force of British here. Besides artillery and engineers, we had a battalion of guards and nine or ten regiments of the line. There was also a strong fleet of British vessels in the bay: at one time we had three first-rate men-of-war, viz. the Caledonia, Hibernia, and Ville de Paris, besides seventy-four gun ships, frigates, and a great number of smaller vessels and gun boats; batteries were built on every commanding situation: one of which we used to call the Friars' battery, having been built by these gentry, and certainly among the best deeds they had done in that part of the country. It was on a very commanding situation, extending completely across the isthmus at its narrowest part, with a wide trench, which could be filled with water from the sea on either side.

At this time the wound on my leg, which I had paid little attention to, became so ill that I was obliged to go into the hospital; and I, in a great measure, lost sight of what was going on amongst the troops. I had now nothing to relieve the monotony of an hospital life, unless a

visit from Dennis now and then, when he could gain time from working or duty; and one visit from a sergeant (a townsman), who joined the regiment at that time, and had brought a letter from my parents. He had been long on the recruiting service, and was considered a first-rate hand at it. After some inquiries respecting my friends and native place, I happened to remark how successful he had been in getting recruits, and expressed my surprise that he should have been so much more so than others who had been on the same service. He replied, "No wonder at it—no wonder at all. I knew Glasgow well. It was my own place—knew the minds of the young fellows better than they did themselves—for I had been a weaver myself, and a lazy one too. I knew how I used to feel. In winter it was too cold, and in summer too warm to work. When it was good trade, I could not resist the temptation of drinking and going idle two or three days in the week; and, when it was bad, I had no time to work for trying to find out the cause, and setting the government

to rights. The truth is, you could scarcely ever catch a weaver contented. They are always complaining. Therefore, you would never have much trouble enticing them to enlist, if you knew how to go about it, or much in going after them; for whenever they got lazy, they came up, and lounged about the Cross. You could not manage them however the same as a bumpkin. They were too knowing for that. The best way was to make up to the individual you had in your eye, and, after bidding him the time of the day, ask him what sort of web he had in. You might be sure it was a bad one; for when a weaver turns lazy his web is always bad; ask him how a clever handsome-looking fellow like him could waste his time hanging see-saw between heaven and hell, in a damp unwholesome shop, no better than one of the dripping vaults in St. Mungo's church, when he could breathe the pure air of heaven, and have little or nothing to do, if he enlisted for a soldier; that the weaving was going to ruin, and he had better get into some birth, or he might soon be starved. This was, generally,

enough for a weaver; but the ploughboys had to be hooked in a different way. When you got into conversation with them, tell how many recruits had been made sergeants—when they inlisted—how many were now officers. If you saw an officer pass while you were speaking, no matter whether you knew him or not, tell him that he was only a recruit a year ago; but now he's so proud he wont speak to you; but you hope he wont be so when he gets a commission. If this wont do, don't give up chase—keep to him—tell him that in the place where your *gallant honourable* regiment is lying, every thing may be had almost for nothing—that the pigs and fowls are lying in the streets ready roasted, with knives and forks in them, for the soldiers to eat, whenever they please. As you find him have stomach, strengthen the dose, and he must be overcome at last. But you must then proceed quickly to work, before his high notions evaporate. You must keep him drinking—don't let him go to the door, without one of your party with him, until he is passed the doctor and attested."

“But,” said I, “you would not find every one so easily duped.” “To be sure,” said he; “some of your sentimental chaps might despise all this; but they were the easiest caught after all. You had only to get into heroics, and spout a great deal about glory, honour, laurels, drums, trumpets, applauding world, deathless fame, immortality, and all that, and you had him as safe as a mouse in a trap.

“But, if all these methods failed, and the fellow remained obstinately determined against parting with liberty, the next resource was to pretend you had been joking him, that you had no wish to enlist any man against his will, that you had advised many a one not to enlist. Ask him in to take a friendly glass, ply him briskly, send one of your party out to put on plain clothes, let another of your men bring him in as a young man wishing to enlist, set him down next to the man you have in your eye. After allowing them some conversation, put the question to them, if they were talking about enlisting. ‘Yes, I’ll enlist,’ would be the reply of your man, ‘if this young

man will go also.' Perhaps he might; but, if not, your last resource was to get him drunk, and then slip a shilling in his pocket, get him home to your billet, and next morning, swear he inlisted, bring all your party to prove it, get him persuaded to pass the doctor, as it will save the *smart* should he be rejected. If he passes, you must try every means in your power to get him to drink, blow him up with a fine story, get him inveigled to the magistrate in some shape or other, and get him attested; but by no means let him out of your hands."

"At this rate," said I, "men are taken into the service by as unfair means as they are pressed on board a man-of-war. Were you not afraid of complaints being made to your officers; and did the magistrates not scruple to attest men who were drunk?"

"Not at all, man," was the reply. "It was war times. The officers knew it all—encouraged it all—called us clever fellows—they would not be fit for recruiting if they didn't. As for the magistrates, we knew who to go to on these

occasions. You know, it was all for the good of the service."

"But had you no honour or conscience of your own?" said I. "Honour or conscience!" said he, laughing. "Pretty words in the mouth of a private soldier. You must do your duty, you know. A good soldier does what he is ordered, right or wrong." "But I am afraid," said I, "that you did more than you were ordered." "Perhaps we were not ordered to do all that we did; but we were blackguarded if we didn't get men, and that was the same thing; and what's the use of a man if he can't take a hint?"\*

"You must have made a good deal of money in this way." "Money," said he, "no no. Did you ever hear of men making money in the recruiting service? They must have come from the north if they did. No, our money didn't do much good—it all went in raking and drinking. 'It melted awa' like snaw aff a dyke,' as the old women at home would

\* I do not know whether the sergeant exaggerated or not; but, in justice to the service, I must remark that such stratagems are neither authorised nor resorted to at present.

say, and we left Glasgow with bad kitts, and worse constitutions." "Well," said I, "you may be glad you have left it, for more reasons than one; and I hope you will never return to it." The conversation was dropped, and he soon left me; but I could not help thinking how many poor fellows were thus inveigled into a profession they did not like, and rendered miserable the remainder of their lives.

While here I was near losing my life in a very simple manner. There was a garden behind the hospital, which had formerly been a gentleman's house, kept by a Spanish gardener, who raised vegetables for the Isla market. In it there was a cistern, from which the water ran when required to water the garden; and this was supplied by a contrivance very unlike anything I have seen in Britain, although common enough on the Continent. It was raised from a deep well, by means of pitchers attached to the circumference of a large wheel, which, revolving by the power of a horse and gin, were successively filled and emptied into the cistern.



To this cistern, the men who were able brought their things to wash; but the gardener, who either thought that the soap used spoiled his vegetables, or from sheer crossness, tried every means in his power to prevent them.

One day, while here dabbling my linen, he came to the cistern in a rage, and seizing my shirts he threw them into a dung-hill close by. I did not feel well pleased at having my labour lost, and I applied my fist to his ear, in a very unceremonious manner. This he returned, as is the usual custom with Spaniards, by drawing his knife, and, making a stab at me. I saw there was no safety unless in closing with him, to get it out of his hand; but, as I got in upon him, he made a lunge at me, and drove it through my coat and shirt, grazing my ribs. I felt the sharp edge of the knife cut me, and I seized the hand which held it with both of mine, and tripped up his heels. We both came to the ground. He was now foaming at the mouth. I could not disengage his hand; and it would have been a doubtful thing who would have pre-

vailed had not some of my comrades come into the garden at that moment. They freed his hand from the knife, which they withdrew from my clothes, where it had been thrust, and threw it into the cistern. They then left me to manage the Spaniard as I best could, which I found no difficulty in doing, as he could not use his fists when his knife was gone. He however, managed to bite me several times, before I had done with him!!

I was obliged to be extremely cautious after this, as long as I was in the hospital; for I often saw him lurking about, eyeing me like a tiger watching his prey, and no doubt, if he could have got an opportunity he would have dispatched me.

We had little opportunity of knowing much about the Spaniards here; but what we did know gave us no great idea of them; particularly the lower class. They seemed to be a jealous-minded, vindictive and cowardly race, grossly ignorant and superstitious. Their soldiers are complete scare-crows (I speak of them as I found them in every part of Spain), badly clothed, ill paid, badly fed, and worse

officered. There could not be imagined a more barbarous-looking grotesque assemblage of men in the world than a Spanish regular regiment. No two men are dressed alike—one wants shoes, another a coat, another has a slip of blanket, with a hole cut in the middle, and his head thrust through it, a lapell hanging before and another behind, some with uniform caps, others with *monteras*. It is a rare thing to find one of them with his accoutrements complete; and their arms are kept in such order that, if brought into action, the half of them would be useless. On the march they have no regularity—just like a flock of sheep; and such chattering, and *caraco demonio-ing* amongst them, that you would take it for the confusion of tongues at Babel!

They rarely ever succeeded at anything unless Guerilla fighting, and then only when they could take their victims by surprise, or when they were double or triple the number of their enemy.

Those of the higher classes, who were well informed, seemed to have something elevated and noble in their character.

This was only however where they had shook off the trammels of superstition; for high rank had no effect on the others, unless to render them more despicable, by contrasting their splendid exterior with the dreary void within.

But, in thus pourtraying their character, I do not mean to say that they are worse than we would be under a similar government and religion. I am sorry I cannot give them a better character for their own sakes, and the glorious cause they have lately embarked in; but I must not deviate from the truth. There are certainly many brave and noble souls amongst them, whose hearts beat high in the cause of liberty and truth, and who have evinced it by their gallant enthusiasm; but unfortunately, they are but a small number in comparison to the millions who are sunk in slavish ignorance and superstition.

I am afraid the friends of liberty expect too much from such people. More than experience warrants, a change of mind must be brought about in the mass of the nation, before the new institutions can be lasting; and the bulk of the Spanish people are still too much

under the dominion of their spiritual masters. They may be induced to turn with the liberal party for a time; but the priests have them too well trained to the cage, not to return to it on the slightest adverse fortune; and those who cry "Viva the Constitution" to-day, may very readily be induced to cry "Viva the King and the Priests" to-morrow: added to this, the Cortes have proceeded too hastily in sweeping away institutions that have existed for so many centuries. A nation's prejudices cannot so suddenly be wrenched away without danger. Innovations require to be slow and gradual, and keep pace with the "march of mind." Yet though the friends of freedom may be disappointed in their too sanguine expectations, let them not despair. The Spanish national character is fast regenerating; and I hope the time is not far distant, when the glorious superstructure of freedom will be established on a surer foundation, than what it seems to have at present,\* and Spain yet acquire a noble station as a free government in Europe.

\* These remarks were written some months previous to the late change in Spain.—*Editor.*

## CHAPTER XIV.

EMBARK AGAIN FOR LISBON—LISBON—VILLA FRANCA—CONVENT OF ALCANTARA—RIO MAYOR—CAVALLOS—THE WOUNDED RETREATING AFTER THE ACTION OF BUSACO—CROSS THE COUNTRY TO ALCOBAÇO—CONVENT OF ALCOBAÇO—JOIN THE THIRD DIVISION OF THE ARMY—CAMP NEAR TORRES VEDRAS—CADACIERA—RETURN TO TORRES VEDRAS.

To return to my narrative:—We had been about seven months in Cadiz, when the regiment, to which I belonged, was again embarked; and, after a passage of eleven days, landed at Lisbon. We remained there two or three days, making preparation for our advance; and were then conveyed in boats up the Tagus to Villa Franca, on our way to join the grand army under the command of Lord Wellington. From Villa Franca we marched to the convent of Alcantara, situated in a bleak moor; it had been wholly deserted

by the monks, and the interior of it completely destroyed. From that we moved to Rio Mayor; where we were, for the first time, quartered on the inhabitants: they seemed comparatively settled and happy to those of other places, where the troops had more frequently passed. The site of this village was beautiful—the river, from which it took its name, glided past it in silent majesty, skirted with rows of large trees; between which could be seen the sloping fields of maize, interspersed with vineyards, where the bunches of large purple-coloured grapes were peeping forth, half hid by the green foliage with which they were surrounded, tempting, as it were, the passenger to try how deliciously they tasted; and some of our men could not resist the temptation, although they were forbidden fruit. There was something about this village so calm and serene, combined with the simple scenery around, which forcibly brought back to my imagination the Sabbath in a country village on the banks of the Clyde. I almost considered myself at home; and, when I left it a day after I felt grieved,