



***WILLIAM
GRATTAN***

***ADVENTURES WITH
THE CONNAUGHT
RANGERS, 1809-1814***

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PREFACE

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While engaged during the last ten years in the task of mastering the original authorities of the history of the Napoleonic wars, I have had to peruse many scores of diaries, autobiographies, and reminiscences of the British military and naval officers who were engaged in the great struggle. They vary, of course, in interest and importance, in literary value, and in the power of vivid presentation of events. But they have this in common, that they are almost all very difficult to procure. Very few of them have been reprinted; indeed, I believe that the books of Lord Dundonald, Sir John Kincaid, Gleig, John Shipp, and Colonel Mercer are wellnigh the only ones which have passed through a second edition. Yet there are many others which contain matter of the highest interest, not only for the historical student but for every intelligent reader. From these I have made a selection of ten or a dozen which seem to me well worth republishing.

Among these is the present volume—the reminiscences of a subaltern of the Connaught Rangers, the old 88th. William Grattan was one of the well-known Dublin family of that name—a first-cousin of Thomas Colley Grattan the novelist, and a distant kinsman of Henry Grattan the statesman; he joined the regiment as ensign on July 6, 1809. He went out to the 1st Battalion, and reached it on the Caya late in 1809; he served with it till the spring of 1813, when he went home on leave, having obtained his lieutenancy on April 12, 1812. Thus he was for more than

four years continuously with the colours, and saw Busaco, Fuentes d'Oñoro, El Bodon, the storms of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, Salamanca, and the disastrous retreat from Burgos. He was only off duty for a few weeks in 1812, in consequence of a wound received at Badajoz. In the ranks of the 3rd Division—the “Fighting Division” as he is proud to call it—he saw a greater portion of the war than most of his contemporaries, though he missed Vittoria and the invasion of France which followed.

Grattan as an author had two great merits. He had a very considerable talent for describing battles--indeed some of his chapters would not have disgraced the pen of William Napier. Of the many memoirs which I have read, I think that his is on the whole the most graphic and picturesque in giving the details of actual conflict. His accounts of Fuentes D'Oñoro, Salamanca, and above all of the storm and sack of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, are admirable. The reader will find in them precisely the touches that make the picture live. His second virtue is a lively sense of humour. The Connaught Rangers were the most Irish of all Irish regiments, and the “boys that took the world *aisy*,” as Grattan calls them, were as strange a set to manage as ever tried an officer's temper. “I cannot bring myself to think them, as many did, a parcel of devils,” writes Grattan; “neither will I by any manner of means try to pass them off for so many saints” (pp. 128–129); but whether good or bad, they were always amusing. For the exploits of Ody Brophy and Dan Carsons, of Darby Rooney and Barney Mackguekin, I must refer the reader to the book itself. Their doings, as recorded by the much-tried commander of their company,

explain clearly enough Sir Thomas Picton's addiction to drum-head court-martials, and Lord Wellington's occasional bursts of plain and drastic language.^[1] But no one with any sense of the ludicrous can profess any very lasting feeling of indignation against these merry if unscrupulous rascals.

1. See, for example, his remarks on the 88th to Sir James M'Grigor, on page 259 of the latter's autobiography.

It is clearly from the domestic annals of the 88th that Charles Lever drew the greater part of the good stories which made the fortune of *Charles O'Malley*. The reader will find many of the characters of that excellent romance appearing as actual historical personages in Grattan, notably the eccentric surgeon Maurice Quill, whose fame was so great throughout the British army that the novelist did not even take the trouble to change his name. His colleague Dr. O'Reily was almost as great an original. Many of the humours of Mickey Free seem to be drawn directly from the doings of Grattan's servant Dan Carsons. Comparing the "real thing" with the work of fiction, one is driven to conclude that much of what was regarded as rollicking invention on Lever's part, was only a photographic reproduction of anecdotes that he had heard from old soldiers of the Connaught Rangers.

Military diaries are often disappointing from one of two causes. Either the author slips into second-hand and second-rate narratives of parts of the campaign which he did not himself witness—things which he had better have left to the professed historian—or he fails to give us those

small traits of the daily life of the regiment which are needed to make us realise the actualities of war. Grattan sometimes falls into the first-named fault, but never into the latter. He seems to have had an instinctive knowledge of what future generations would want to know concerning the old Peninsular army—its trials in the matter of pay, food, and clothing, its shifts and devices, its views of life and death. If any one wishes to know why Sir Thomas Picton was unpopular, or what the private and the subaltern thought about Lord Wellington, they will find what they seek in these pages. Nowhere else have I seen the psychology of the stormers of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz dealt with in such a convincing fashion; let the reader note in particular pages 144-5 and 193-4.

I have to confess that in various parts of this reprint I have used the Editor's license to delete a certain amount of the author's original manuscript. Grattan had two besetting sins considered as a literary man. The first was one to which I have already made allusion. Not unfrequently he quitted his autobiographical narrative, and inserted long paragraphs concerning parts of the war of which he had no personal knowledge, *e.g.* about the movements of Hill's corps in Estremadura, or of the Spaniards in remote corners of the Peninsula. These, as is natural, are often full of inaccuracies: sometimes (and this is a worse fault) they turn out to be taken almost *verbatim* from formal histories, such as those of Colonel Jones and Lord Londonderry. In one place I found thirty lines which were practically identical with a passage in Napier. In all cases these relate to parts of the war which did

not come under Grattan's own eyes: I have therefore ventured to omit them.

Grattan's other weakness was a tendency to fly off at a tangent in the middle of a piece of interesting narrative, in order to controvert the statements of writers with whom he disagreed. He had one special foe—Robinson, the biographer of Sir Thomas Picton, on whom he wasted many an objurgatory paragraph. These small controversial points, on which he turns aside, break the thread of his discourse in the most hopeless fashion, and are now of little interest. I have often, though not always, thought it well to leave out such divagations. At the end of the work, in a similar fashion, a long criticism on a certain speech of the Duke of Wellington in the House of Lords has been omitted. It deals with the story of the long-delayed issue of the war-medal for the Peninsula. The whole point of Grattan's remarks (caustic but well justified in most respects) was removed when the medal was at last actually distributed, a few months after he had made his complaint.

The present volume stops short at the end of the Peninsular war. Grattan's pen travelled farther. Encouraged by the success of his first book, he issued two supplementary volumes: these are of very inferior interest, being mainly concerned with the doings of the 88th in their early campaigns, before the author had joined them. There is much about Buenos Ayres, the Low Countries, and Talavera. The rest is composed of amusing but very rambling reminiscences of garrison life in Canada in 1814, and in France in 1815–1816, and of character sketches of some of Grattan's contemporaries, such as the unfortunate

Simon Fairfield, concerning whom the reader will find certain information on pages 130-1 and 324 of this reprint. The whole of these two volumes consists of mere *dissecta membra*, much inferior in interest to the first two which the author had produced.

Grattan's military service, which had begun in 1808, ended in 1817, in consequence of the enormous reductions in the effective of the army which were carried out after the evacuation of France began. His name last appears among combatant officers in the army list for March 1817, the month in which the 88th was reduced from two battalions to one, and many of its officers placed upon half pay. But he lived for thirty years longer, frequently descending into print in the *United Service Journal*, to controvert those who seemed to him to undervalue the services of the 88th or the old 3rd Division. In 1836 we find him residing at New Abbey, Kilcullen, and issuing a *Vindication of the Connaught Rangers*, which seemed so convincing to the officers of his old regiment, that they presented him with a present of plate to the value of 200 guineas "as a mark of their personal esteem and regard, and also in token of their warm admiration of his triumphant vindication of his gallant regiment from the attacks of the biographer [Robinson] of the late Sir Thomas Picton." In 1847 he published the two volumes from which the present reprint is taken. In the following year he received his long-deserved Peninsular Medal. His last appearance in print was the publication of the two supplementary volumes of *Anecdotes and Reminiscences*, mentioned above, in the spring of 1853.

C. OMAN.

Oxford, November 1902.

THE OFFICERS OF THE 88TH

1809-14

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Grattan's Memoirs cannot be fully understood without a list of the comrades whom he is perpetually mentioning in the narrative. I therefore append the names of the officers of the 88th from the Army List of 1809-10. I have added to each of those who were killed or wounded during the war a note specifying the casualty. No less than 49 of the 103 names bear this addition!

Colonel

William Carr Beresford, Major-General, wounded at Salamanca, 22.7.12.

Lieutenant-Colonels

Alexander Wallace. John Taylor.

Majors

- Richard Vandeleur, died at Campo Mayor, 5.11.09.
- Daniel Colquhoun.

- John Silver, killed at Busaco, 27.9.10.
- R. Barclay M'Pherson.

Captains

- Robert B. M'Gregor.
- Campbell Callendar.
- John Dunne.
- William C. Seton.
- Barnaby Murphy, wounded at Badajoz, killed at Salamanca, 22.7.12.

- Charles John Peshall, wounded at Badajoz, 6.4.12.
 - James P. Oates, wounded at Badajoz, 6.4.12.
 - William Adair M'Dougall.
 - William Hogan, killed at Salamanca, 22.7.12.
 - Charles Tryon.
 - John Groffer.
 - Christopher Irwine, killed at Fuentes d'Oñoro, 5.5.11.
-
- Joseph Thomson, killed at Badajoz, 6.4.12.
 - Richard R. Browne, wounded at Busaco, died at Pinhel, 1810.
 - Peter Lindsay, killed at Badajoz, 6.4.12.
 - H.G. Buller.
 - Walter W. Adair, wounded at Salamanca, 22.7.12.
 - Robert N. Nickle, wounded at Toulouse, 10.5.14.
 - Henry M'Dermott, wounded at Vittoria, 21.6.13; killed at Orthez, 27.2.14.
 - George Henry Dansey, wounded at Busaco, 27.9.10.
 - J. Macdonald.
 - Robert Christie.

Lieutenants

- Duncan Robertson, Adj.
- George Bury.
- John Bower Lewis.
- Richard Bunworth.
- William Flack, wounded at Ciudad Rodrigo, 19.1.12.
- William Mackie.
- James Flood, wounded at Vittoria, 21.6.13.

- Richard Fitzpatrick, wounded at Vittoria 21.6.13; wounded at Orthez, 27.2.14.
- Nathan Gregg.
- Henry Johnson, killed at Busaco, 27.9.10.
- John Smith, died at Salamanca, 1812.
- Thomas North, killed at Badajoz, 6.4.12.
- John D. Hopwood.
- Alexander Graham.
- John Armstrong, wounded at Rodrigo, 19.1.12; wounded at Badajoz, 6.4.12.
- John Stewart, wounded at Fuentes, wounded at Badajoz.
- Robert Hackett, wounded at Fuentes, 5.5.11; died on return voyage.
- George F. Faris.
- Bartholomew Mahon.
- Timothy Richard James.
- William Nickle, wounded at Salamanca, 22.7.12.
- Isaac Walker.
- John Davern, wounded at Badajoz; wounded at Orthez, 27.2.14.
- David Weir.
- Ralph Mansfield, killed at Badajoz, 6.4.12.
- Pat. Heron Cockburn.
- Leigh Heppenstal, killed at Foz d'Aronce, 15.3.11.
- Edward Cotton, killed at Badajoz, 6.4.12.
- Frederick Meade, wounded at Salamanca, 22.7.12.
- Hercules Ellis.
- Samuel M'Alpine, wounded at Fuentes, 5.5.11; killed at Badajoz, 6.4.12.

- George Johnson, wounded at Rodrigo, 19.1.12.
- William Hodder.
- William Whitelaw, wounded at Busaco, 27.9.10; killed at Badajoz, 6.4.12.
- Peter Pegus.
- Thomas J. Lloyd.
- Jason Hassard.
- Geoffrey K. Power.

Ensigns

- Christian Hilliard.
 - John Graham.
 - Maurice O'Connor.
 - Thomas Leonard, killed at Busaco, 27.9.10.
 - William Rutherford.
 - Simon Fairfield.
 - Parr Kingsmill, wounded at Salamanca, 22.7.12.
 - William Kingsmill, wounded at Rodrigo, 19.1.12.
 - Maurice Mahon.
-
- William Devereux Jackson.
 - Joseph Owgan, wounded at Fuentes, 5.5.11.
 - John Fairfield.
 - William Grattan, wounded at Badajoz, 6.4.12; wounded at Salamanca, 22.7.12.
 - John Christian.
 - John M'Gregor, died on landing at Portsmouth, invalided 1812.
 - George Hill.

The following additional officers joined the regiment, either as ensigns or by exchange as lieutenants and captains from other corps, between 1810 and 1814.

- T. Moriarty, killed at Orthez, 27.2.14.
 - John D'Arcy.
 - L. Beresford, killed at Ciudad Rodrigo, 19.1.12.
 - Walter C. Poole, wounded at Orthez, 27.2.14.
 - T. Rutledge, died at Lisan, 12.9.13.
 - Richard Holland, wounded at Orthez, 27.2.14.
 - James Mitchell, wounded at Orthez, 27.2.14.
 - Charles G. Stewart, wounded at Orthez, 27.2.14.
-
- D. M'Intosh, wounded at Orthez, 27.2.14.
 - ——— Gardiner.
 - Thomas Taylor.
 - Charles Crawford Peshall.
 - Samuel Fisher.
 - Oliver Mills.
 - Barnard Reynolds, killed at Orthez, 27.2.14.
 - John Atkin.
 - Albert W. Sanders, killed at Vittoria, 21.6.13.
 - James M'Clintock.
 - George Bunbury.
 - William Smith.
 - James Wright.

CHAPTER I

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The Author leaves the depot at Chelmsford, and proceeds to join his regiment in Portugal—The *Samaritan*—Arrival at Lisbon—Measures adopted by General Junot—A night's rest—Portuguese barbers—Priest Fernando and Major Murphy—March to Aldea Gallega—First sight of the Connaught Rangers.

On the 10th day of October 1809 I left the depot at Chelmsford, and proceeded to Portsmouth for the purpose of joining the first battalion of my regiment (the 88th) in Portugal.

The newspapers announced that a fleet of transport vessels would sail in a few days from Portsmouth for Lisbon, and although I belonged to the second battalion, at that period stationed at Gibraltar, I waived all ceremony, and without asking or obtaining leave from the general in command at Chelmsford (General Colburn), I took the first coach for London, where I arrived that evening, and the next day reached Portsmouth.

I waited upon Colonel Barlow, who commanded at Hilsea, and from him received an order to be admitted on board a transport ship named the *Samaritan*. No questions were asked as to my qualification for this request, as it was much easier in those days to get out to Portugal than return from it. I then requested of the Colonel that he would give me an order for “embarkation money,” which I told him I understood was allowed to officers on going to Portugal. He

laughed at the demand, and treated me with so little courtesy that I was glad to be rid of him.

I have said the name of the ship in which I was to make my first voyage was the *Samaritan*. So it was. But it most certainly could not be fairly called the *Good Samaritan*, for a more crazy old demirep of a ship never floated on the water. She was one of those vessels sent out, with many others at this period, to be ready to convey our army to England in the event of any disaster occurring to it. On board of her were ten or a dozen officers, who, like myself, had seen little of the world. We had no soldiers on board, and an inadequate ship's crew; but those deficiencies were amply made up for by the abundance of rats which infested the vessel, and which not only devoured a great portion of our small supply of provisions, but nearly ourselves into the bargain. One officer, ill from sea-sickness, was well-nigh losing half of his nose, and another had the best part of his great toe eaten away. Providence, however, at length decreed that we should soon be rid of these torments, and on the 29th day of October the Rock of Lisbon presented itself to our view.

It is difficult to convey to the eye, much less to the imagination of those who have not seen it, a more imposing or beautiful sight than Lisbon presents when seen from the deck of a vessel entering the Tagus; its northern bank, upon which the city stands, sweeping with a gentle curve along the extent of the city, shows to great advantage the vast pile of buildings, including palaces, convents, and private dwellings, standing like a huge amphitheatre before the view of the spectator; the splendid gardens and orange

groves, the former abounding with every species of botanical plant, while the latter, furnishing the eye with a moving mass of gold, presents a *coup d'œil* which may be felt or conceived, but which cannot be described.

Our vessel had scarcely reached the river when a pilot boat came alongside of us, and for the first time I had an opportunity of looking at the natives of Portugal. I confess I was inexpressibly disgusted; the squalid appearance of those half-amphibious animals, their complexion, their famished looks, and their voracious entreaties for salt pork, gave me but a so-so opinion of the patriots I had heard of and read of with so much delight and enthusiasm. Their bare throats, not even with muscle to recommend them, their dark eyes portraying more of the assassin than the patriot, and their teeth, white no doubt in comparison with their dark hides, was sufficient to stamp them in my eyes as the most ill-looking set of cut-throats I had ever beheld. Their costume, too, is anything but striking, except strikingly ugly. Short *demi* petticoat trousers of white linen, a red sash, and their arms and legs naked, give them the appearance of a race of bad bred North American Indians.

On landing at Lisbon, your foot once upon *terra firma*—
The cloud-cap'd towers,
The gorgeous palaces—

and the fine gardens all vanish, not into *thin* air, but into the most infernal pestiferous atmosphere that ever unfortunate traveller was compelled to inhale. Here is a hideous change from what the first view led you to expect. It is, indeed, "love at first sight."

You are scarcely established in the first street, when you behold a group of wretches occupied in picking vermin from

each other; while, sitting beside them, cross-legged, holding a distaff and spindle in her left hand, and fanning her *fogareiro* with her right, is a woman who sells chestnuts to any one whose stomach is strong enough to commence the process of mastication in so filthy a neighbourhood.

The appearance of everything in Lisbon is so novel to an Englishman, that he is at a loss what most to fix his attention upon. But the number of beggars and the packs of half-famished dogs which infest the streets are in themselves sufficient to afford food for the mind, if not for either the beggars or the dogs. The latter crowd the streets after nightfall and voraciously devour the filth which is indiscriminately thrown from the different windows, and it is a dangerous service to encounter a pack of those famished creatures.

In every country there are customs known,
Which they preserve exclusively their own;
The Portuguese, by some odd whim infected,
Have Cloacina's temple quite rejected.

The French general, Junot, whatever his other faults might be, did a good thing in ridding Lisbon of this nuisance. On the fourth day after his arrival he ordered all dogs found in the streets after nightfall to be shot; and the proprietor of every door before which was found any dirt, after a certain hour in the morning, he caused to pay a fine according to the quantity found in front of his premises. But Junot had been too long driven from Lisbon to have his orders respected at the period I write of, and we were in consequence subjected to the annoyance of being poisoned by the accumulated filth, or to the danger of being devoured

by the herds of dogs who seemed to consider these windfalls as their particular perquisite.

The beggars, offensive as they were, were less so than the dogs, because in Portugal, as in most countries professing the Roman Catholic religion, the giving of alms is considered an imperative duty; and according to their means, all persons supply the wants of the poor. From the gates of the convents, and from the kitchens of the higher classes, food is daily distributed to a vast number of mendicants, and those persons actually conceive they have a right to such donations; long habit has in fact sanctioned this right, and secure of the means to support their existence, they flock daily to their respective stations, awaiting the summons which calls them to the portal to receive the pittance intended for them. Thus it is that strangers suffer less inconvenience from this description of persons than they otherwise would, for the laziness of these wretches is so great, that although they will not hesitate to beg alms from a passing stranger, they will barely move from their recumbent posture to receive it, much less offer thanks for it.

Satisfied with my first evening's excursion, I returned to the hotel where we had bespoken our dinner and beds. The former was excellent; good fish, for which Lisbon is proverbial, *ragoûts*, and game, all well served up, gave us a *goût* for our wine. We discussed the merits of divers bottles, and it was late ere we retired to our chamber,—I was going to say place of rest—but never was word more misplaced, had I made use of it. Since the hour of my recollection, up to the moment that I write these lines, I never passed such a

night. From the time I lay down, in hopes of rest, until the dawning of morning, I never, for five minutes at a time, closed my eyes. Bugs and fleas attacked me with a relentless fury, and when I arose in the fair daylight, to consult my looking-glass, I had scarcely a feature recognisable. I was not, however, singular, for all my companions had shared the same fate. But it was absolutely necessary, before we attempted to perambulate the streets, that something should be done to render our appearance less horrible. We accordingly summoned the landlord with the view of ascertaining the name of some medical person who could administer to our wants; but he laughed at the idea of calling in surgical aid for so trifling a matter, which he said, and I believe him, was an everyday occurrence at his hotel. He recommended to us a man, as he was pleased to say, "well skilled in such cases," and one who had made a comfortable competency by his close residence to the hotel we occupied. The person who could have doubted the latter part of our host's harangue must have indeed been casuistical, because the number of patients which, to our own ears, not our sight, for sight we had none, fell to him in one night, was a sufficient guarantee that his yearly practice must be something out of the common.

The person thus described, and almost as soon introduced, was no other than the far-famed Jozé Almeida Alcantaro de Castreballos, half-brother to the celebrated Louiranna well known in Lisbon. A man, who as he himself jocosely said, had taken many a British officer by the nose. He was, in fact, neither more nor less than a common

barber, who gained a livelihood by shaving, bleeding, and physicking his customers.

The Portuguese barbers are like those of other countries, great retailers of scandal, and amply stocked with a fund of amusing conversation. They know everything, or seem to know everything, which, to nine-tenths of those they meet, is the same thing! This fellow told us all the news of the day, and added to it a thousand inventions, which his own fertile imagination supplied. He described the retreat of Wellington from Talavera as one caused by the want of the Portuguese army to co-operate with him: and if his account was to be given credit to, the whole world put together did not contain such an army as that of Portugal. He said that General Peacock, who commanded in Lisbon, invented stories every day, and that no intelligence from the army ought to be considered sterling, except what emanated from his (the barber's) shop. But then, said he, shrugging up his shoulders, and in broken English. "It is not one very uncommon ting, to see one Peacock spreading a tail!" He laughed at his pun, and so did we; but I have since heard that the merit of it did not belong to him.

"But, gentlemen," resumed the barber, "I come here as a professional man, not as a wit, though for that matter I am as much one as the other—but to the point, gentlemen! you seem to have suffered, and I am the man, able, ready, and willing to serve you. Look here," said he, holding up a white jar, having a superscription on the outside to the following effect: "*bixas boas*" (good leeches): "I am none of your quacks, that come *unprepared*! I do not want to write a prescription that will cost my customers a mint of money!

Well did I know what you stood in need of when you sent for your humble servant. Within the last ten days, that is to say, since the arrival of the fleet of transports from Portsmouth, I have given employment to one thousand leeches in this very house. This hotel has made my fortune, and now, with the blessing of God and the Virgin Mary, I'll add to the number, already made use of, one hundred more, on the faces of those to whom I have the honour of addressing myself."

There was so much truth and sound sense in what the barber said, that we all submitted to the operation of leeching, which was of material service to us. Old Wright of the 28th, already, from a wound, blind of one eye, now began to peep a little with the other, and it was amusing enough to those who could see it, to witness the coquetting between him and the barber. Indeed it would be difficult to say which of them was most pleased—he who received his sight, or he who was the means of restoring it. Quantities of cloths, steeped in warm water, were applied to our faces, and the crimson hue with which every basin was tintured showed but too plainly that the "*bixas boas*" of the barber Jozé, were of the right sort. We kept our rooms the entire day, ate a moderate and light dinner, and at an early hour retired to our chambers, not without some misgivings of another night-attack. But the barber assured us there was no danger; and whether it was that the vermin, which nearly devoured us on the preceding night, had gorged themselves, or that the applications which Jozé Almeida had administered to our wounded faces was of that nature to give them a nausea towards us, I know not, but, be this as it

may, we enjoyed, unmolested, a comfortable night's repose, and in the morning our features had resumed their original shape and appearance.

We were seated at breakfast when the barber again made his appearance. He congratulated us upon our recovery, received his fee, which was extremely moderate, and took his leave. I have not since seen him, or is it likely I ever shall. In 1809 he was approximating to his sixtieth year; now thirty-seven years added to sixty would make him rather an elderly person. However, should he be still alive, and able to fulfil the functions of his calling as well as he did when I met with him, I recommend him to all those who may visit Lisbon and require his aid; on the other hand, should he be no longer in the land of the living, I have paid his memory a just tribute—but not more than he deserved.

At twelve o'clock I took a calash and reported myself to Major Murphy of the 88th, who commanded at Belem. By him I was received with great kindness, and asked to dine with him at six o'clock. I returned to our hotel, where I found my companions awaiting my arrival. Although not perfectly restored to their good looks, they agreed to accompany me in a stroll through the town, which was a different quarter from that we had before explored. It was more obscure, and overstocked with beggars of every grade.

At six o'clock I arrived at Major Murphy's quarters at Belem, where were several officers of the dépôt. Just as we were about to enter the dining-room a note was handed to Murphy from the celebrated priest Fernando: he was an intimate friend of Murphy, and called the 88th his own regiment, because when that corps landed in Lisbon it was

quartered in the convent of which Fernando was the head. Nothing could exceed his kindness and hospitality, and, being the principal of the Inquisition, he was a man of great authority. His note was in these words:—

“Priest Fernando will cum dis day in boat to dine with Mr. Major Murphy.”

He was as good as his word, for the note had been scarcely read aloud by Murphy when Fernando made his appearance. He was a remarkably handsome man, about forty years of age; full of gaiety and spirits, a great talker, a prodigious feeder, and a tremendous drinker. So soon as I was introduced to him he took out a book from his pocket which he opened and handed to me, requesting that I would write down my name in it. This book contained the name of every officer in the first battalion, and according as any died, or were either killed or wounded in action, it was regularly noted after his name. His conduct was of the most disinterested kind, and one of his first questions invariably was—“Did we want money?” It was late before we broke up, and next day an order was issued, directing us to be in readiness to march to join the army on the day but one following.

It did not require many hours' preparation to complete our arrangements, as there were several experienced officers to accompany the detachment, and they not only brought their own animals and provisions, but aided us by their advice in the purchase of ours. At the appointed hour all was in readiness, and the detachment, consisting of fifteen officers and two hundred and twenty men, composed of different regiments, marched from Belem, and embarked

on the quay in boats which were prepared to carry us to Aldea Gallega. A short sail soon brought us across the Tagus, and towards evening we disembarked and took up our quarters at Aldea for the night. Our route, which was made by easy marches, was uninterrupted by any circumstance worthy of notice. We passed through the different towns of the Alemtejo, in each of which we were hospitably received by the inhabitants; not so on our arrival at Badajoz, the headquarters of Lord Wellington. Nothing could exceed the dogged rudeness of the Spaniards; and it was with difficulty we could obtain anything even for money. Civility was not to be purchased on any terms, and one of the detachment was killed in a fracas with some drunken muleteers. Next morning we left this inhospitable town, and each party took their respective routes, with the view of rejoining their regiments. Mine, the 88th, was stationed at Monforte, distant one march from Badajoz, and here, for the first time, I saw the "Connaught Rangers."

CHAPTER II

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Headquarters of the 88th Regiment—Its losses from sickness—Unhealthy state of the country—The British army leaves the Alemtejo—General Picton takes the command of the 3rd Division—Remarks on the general's conduct—His apology to Colonel Wallace—The Connaught Boy and the goat.

The 88th at this period, although one of the strongest and most effective regiments in the army, did not count more than five hundred bayonets. The fatigues of the late campaign, and the unhealthiness and debility of many of the soldiers in consequence, caused a material diminution in our ranks; added to this, the country in the neighbourhood of the Guadiana was swampy and damp, and what between ague, dysentery, and fever, the hospitals were in a few weeks overstocked. Not less than ten thousand were on the sick list, or about one-third of the entire force, as borne on the muster-rolls; and there was a great paucity of medical officers; many of those had been left at Talavera with the wounded, that were of necessity obliged to be abandoned, and others, either catching the contagion that raged throughout the country, or infected by their close attendance in the hospitals, were lost to us. The consequence was that the men and officers died daily by tens and fifteens, and this mortality was not confined to the old soldiers alone, for the young militia men, who now joined the army from England, suffered equally with those who were half starved on the retreat from Talavera, and

during the occupation of the bridge of Arzobispo. For several days the rations of those soldiers consisted of half a pound of wheat, *in the grain*, a few ounces of flour twice in the week, and a quarter of a pound of goat's flesh; and regiments which a few weeks before were capable of exertions that were never equalled during the remainder of the Peninsular contest, were now unable to go through an ordinary march.

It was not to be wondered at that men who had so suffered should be now attacked with disease when all excitement was over, and a reaction of the system was the natural consequence; but the young men who joined from England at this period could not be so classed, and as it was manifest that the air of the country was unwholesome, Lord Wellington decided upon marching his army to the north-eastern frontier; yet before quitting the Alemtejo it was necessary that the safety of Seville should be guaranteed by a sufficient Spanish force.

Early in December the army left the Alemtejo, and by the first week in January the 3rd Division was distributed in the different villages in the neighbourhood of Trancoso. The villages of Alverca and Frayadas, distant about two miles from each other, were allotted for the 88th Regiment. Midway between the two was a plain of considerable extent, and upon this plain the regiment exercised every day for several hours.

At the end of six weeks Colonel Wallace had his battalion in the most perfect state of discipline that it is possible to conceive; the men left in hospital were speedily joining the ranks, and the stragglers which were from necessity left