

The life of Francis Duncan, C.B., R.A., M.P., late Director of the Ambulance Department of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem of England / with an introduction by the Lord Bishop of Chester.

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FRANCIS DUNCAN

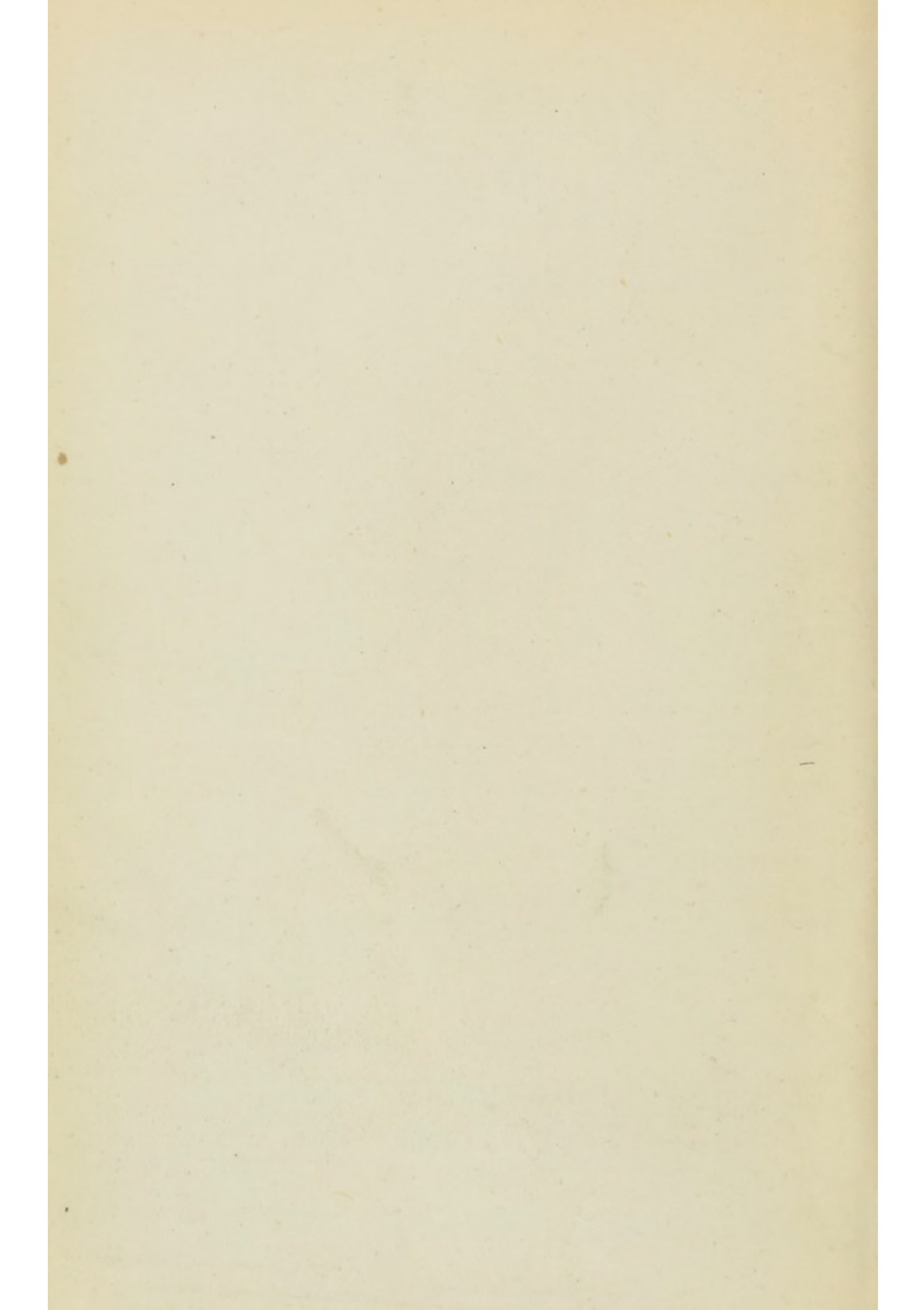
SOLDIER AND CITIZEN

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THE LIFE
OF
FRANCIS DUNCAN.



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THE LIFE
OF
FRANCIS DUNCAN

C.B., R.A., M.P.

LATE DIRECTOR OF THE AMBULANCE DEPARTMENT OF THE ORDER OF ST. JOHN
OF JERUSALEM IN ENGLAND.

BY
HENRY BIRDWOOD BLOGG, M.A.

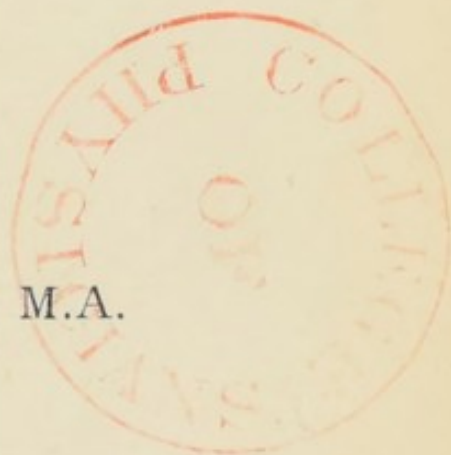
VICAR OF FRODSHAM, CHESHIRE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY
THE LORD BISHOP OF CHESTER

LONDON
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRÜBNER & CO., LTD.
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1892



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TO
MY FRIEND'S BEST FRIEND,
HIS WIFE,
I DEDICATE
THIS RECORD OF HIS WORK.



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INTRODUCTION.

“THERE are two kinds of biographies, and of each kind we have seen examples in our own time. One is as a golden chalice, held up by some wise hand, to gather the earthly memory ere it is spilt on the ground. The other kind is as a mill-stone, hung by partial, yet ill-judging friend, round the hero's neck, to plunge him as deep as possible in oblivion.”

It is hoped that the following Memoir will find a quiet place in the former of the two classes thus gracefully and faithfully described by the late Principal Shairp.¹ It has, at all events, the merit of brevity, and though the author—like the writer of this Preface—cherishes the memory of Colonel Duncan with devoted affection and admiration, he has endeavoured to avoid what is in effect the disservice of exaggerated and uncritical panegyric. But of the workmanship of the biography the reader

¹ “Studies in Poetry and Philosophy,” p. 315.

will naturally prefer to judge for himself. My office is simply to say why I think that, even in an age happily so fruitful as ours in generous, high-toned, and self-lavishing lives, the career of Colonel Duncan deserves to have its picture drawn and placed where men can see and try to copy it.

In the first place, we cannot have too much of really good biography. It means tonic and inspiration, and the jaded heart and brain often stand sorely in need of such refreshment. "If you cannot pray," a distinguished headmaster is reported to have said, "read a good biography." This witness I know to be profoundly true. The parable of the quickening power of Elisha's sepulchred remains is charged with present-day meaning, and palsied energies can hardly find a surer secret of revival than in contact with the wholesome and inspiring Dead as they lie embalmed in the living and fragrant sepulchre of biography.

Colonel Duncan was "Soldier and Citizen," and the combination in him of these two characters and enthusiasms claims record. He had, of course, no monopoly of this combination, but it certainly burned in him with singular intensity. It explained and redeemed the type of ambition by which he was strongly—in a

certain sense, too strongly—impelled. He was so enamoured of “one crowded hour of glorious life,” that prematurely he deprived himself, and very many besides, of its full tale of minutes.

Lockhart tells us that Sir Walter Scott’s “appetite for wealth was, after all, essentially a vivid yearning for the means of larger beneficence.” In somewhat the same way it may be said that Colonel Duncan’s eagerness for distinction and place—his insatiable appetite for labour—was essentially a vivid yearning for the power of serving his country at home or abroad, with pen, or voice, or sword. Open-handed to a fault, he cared nothing for money, except as enabling him to give others help or enjoyment. And, like the greatest of his brother-Scots—from the rich stores of whose unsurpassed biography I have just quoted—the steps of his ambition were so honourably and carefully planted as never to tread on the interests or feelings of his fellow-travellers, nor was he ever so bent upon his own progress as to fail in appreciation and comradeship towards those who pressed bravely or brilliantly along the same, or any other road. Hence he won general respect and friendship, not by playing for popularity, but because, while never forgetting what was due to himself, he regarded

with scrupulous consideration the rights, the needs, the aims, and even the prejudices of those with or against whom he was, in this or that cause, required to act.

He was thus well qualified to serve as a link between soldiers and civilians. His own heart was whole with both. He lived his two-fold life with an effortless and spontaneous intensity. And it needs no saying that the man who can interpret class to class, and profession to profession—who can deftly soften down hard frontier lines, and mellow the looks of mutual aloofness, is doing a high and patriotic service. Colonel Duncan's genial and many-sided influence undoubtedly left sword and gown, employers and employed, gentle and simple, better friends and colleagues than it found them, in the one great work for God and country. And his success in this way was largely due to his policy of *trustfulness*. To make men feel that you trust them is, Colonel Duncan strongly held, to make them trustworthy. This, we all know, was Dr. Arnold's plan with schoolboys. Colonel Duncan brought it to bear on the unpromising material of the Egyptian gunners, and I am told that even with them in due time it bore solid fruit.

I ought to mention that he never patronized or flattered. He treated his subordinates and the artisans with whom he was so often brought in contact, simply as he would have wished to be treated if in their place. He could not condescend to "cant" or "claptrap." He honoured all men too genuinely to bribe or cajole them.

It was my privilege to know Colonel Duncan intimately for more than twenty years in common work and worship, in frank discussion of social and religious problems, in his fatally-few hours of recreation, above all, in his home. But the best portion of the memories of the richest and deepest life must always be incommunicable. Humour and humour's near kinsman—sympathy, tenderness and loyalty and all those fireside charities and pieties which alike in fruition and remembrance form our "treasure of delight"—these are plants yielding a fruit which does not lightly lend itself to transference and exhibition. The most skilful and sympathetic biographer can only describe and give specimens; he cannot really reproduce the flavour and fragrance.

Still, the story of Colonel Duncan's life—even told, as it must be told, inadequately—is full of interest and high example; and, while mourning over the mystery of its early close,

we shall reverently rest ourselves upon the sure and certain hope that the devoted soldier, the public-spirited citizen, the unwearied philanthropist, the helpful Churchman, the staunch and generous friend, the husband and father, who

“Thought the home that love endears,
Worth all the world beside,”

is destined to a more beneficent and unalloyed service in the nearer presence of his and our fair Captain, Christ.

F. J. CESTR.

November, 1891.

FRANCIS DUNCAN.

CHAPTER I.

Parentage—Record of his father—Disruption of the Church of Scotland—Establishment of the Railway System — “The Scottish Railway King” — F. Duncan’s mother—Home—Childhood—The old Nurse—School—University—Takes his degree—Is articled to his father—Visit to London—Obtains a commission in the Royal Artillery.

FRANCIS DUNCAN was born in Aberdeen, April 4, 1836, the eldest son of Mr. John Duncan, an advocate of that city, and a man of considerable note in his day.

To his father Frank owed so much in every way that he deserves more than a passing reference.

After graduating with much distinction at the University, Mr. John Duncan settled in Aberdeen, where he soon became known as a person of strong character, and of more than ordinary culture. Besides being a good scholar, he is said to have excelled also as an artist and a

musician, and consequently the range of his friends and acquaintances was wider than it would otherwise have been. But though fond of society he happily found it necessary to devote the chief part of his time and abilities to his profession, in which he enjoyed for many years a great reputation.

With one case of special interest at that time his name is prominently associated—the famous Marnoch Intrusion case of 1841, in which he appeared as agent for the parishioners in opposing the nomination of a minister who was not acceptable to them.

The protest against the appointment which he delivered in the church made a profound impression, and the scene which followed, as the people gathered up their bibles from their pews, and silently left the sacred building, has been described as truly touching and impressive. Outside the church, too, though it was winter and the snow was deep, the crowd stood awhile to listen to another earnest address from Mr. Duncan on the righteousness of their cause, in which he nevertheless strongly urged that everything should be done with order, unity, and peace. This event is one of more than mere local or personal importance, for it led up directly to that ecclesiastical convulsion

known as the Disruption of the National Church of Scotland, and Mr. Duncan's words of wise counsel on the occasion initiated the movement which not only built within a year a church for the Marnoch seceders, but prepared all Scotland for the demands of two years later, when four hundred new churches had to be erected, besides schools, manses, colleges, etc.

But apart from matters connected with the Church, the elder Duncan distinguished himself greatly in secular affairs, and more particularly in those connected with the development of the railway system in Scotland.

It was a time of keen excitement not only in commercial circles, but among all ranks and classes. The application of the power of steam to the purpose of locomotion was a discovery which, like many others, had to work its way to popular favour before it was fully understood and appreciated. It is a matter of history—and somewhat ancient history now—how strong a feeling of scepticism prevailed in England with regard to this new enterprise, and how many objections were raised against it. But no sooner had the mind of the public satisfied itself of the enormous advantages it offered than a fever of speculation set in, and there arose a wild craving for railway shares.

And what happened in England was to a great extent repeated in Scotland, the only difference being that the period of caution and careful examination was probably longer in the latter country.

However that may have been, it was certainly a good time for the lawyers, for conveyancing of land could not be effected, and lines of railway could not be made, without their assistance, and so it came to pass that Mr. John Duncan soon found his time fully occupied with numerous schemes and plans, which had been entrusted to him.

His services, moreover, were repeatedly called for, not only in his legal capacity, but also that he might assist in regulating the finances of several of the new railway companies, which with great rapidity had come into existence, but which had met with so many difficulties that they were soon threatened with extinction.

In recognition of his powers as an administrator, Mr. Duncan was, in 1851, elected Chairman of the Caledonian Railway Company, and the position of it was, under his guidance, materially improved.

Soon after we find him occupying the same post in connection with the Deeside Railway Company, and during his term of office, which indeed continued uninterrupted to the time of his

death, the line was extended to Aboyne first and subsequently to Ballater.

In 1864 he was asked to join the Board of the great North of Scotland Railway Company as Deputy-Chairman, and this request was as high a compliment as could have been paid him, for he had during many years fought against this very company in his advocacy of a scheme for an extension of the Deeside and Alford Railway. He accepted the offer, and two years afterwards, when Sir James Elphinstone and four other members of the Board retired, Mr. Duncan was appointed Chairman. He at once inaugurated a policy of his own for the management of this railway, and the wisdom of it speedily became apparent.

A man with such a record of experience and success as Mr. Duncan had achieved, must have fully deserved the highest estimation of all who were concerned with railway affairs, and it is not surprising to learn that he was universally known as "The Scottish Railway King."

He gave proof too in 1865 of the large-minded views he entertained on the subject of railways, by publishing a pamphlet, entitled "Remarks on the Assumption of the British Railways by the British Government: by a Railway Director." It was, by permission, dedi-

cated to Mr. Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, "in the belief that at no distant day an inquiry must take place as to the expediency of the Government assuming the function of railway boards as a distinct national department."

Frank Duncan's mother was Helen Drysdale Douglass, a daughter of Andrew Douglass, of Berwick-on-Tweed, who was a scion of that good old border family whose name, we are told, was a terror to the English living anywhere near the haunts of the Douglasses.

Frank was the second of a large family, consisting of two daughters and seven sons, of whom the latter have all in their several ways, and in different parts of the world, distinguished themselves.

The old house in Aberdeen in which they used to live was, at that time, by far the largest and best in the Granite city; and even now, though the population has nearly doubled itself, and though many new mansions have been erected, there are few which can compare with it.

A home it was, endeared through all their lives to the Duncan family by the tenderest memories, and the brightest associations. It contained that childhood's happy hunting-ground—a large school-room; a misnomer,

indeed, for it echoed oftener to shouts of laughter and play than to the subdued sounds of study. There in that spacious, familiar room, Frank and his brothers, ever eager for trials of strength, welcomed any who would engage with them in boxing, fencing and gymnastics, and thus by manly exercises trained themselves for the hardships of after life. Added to this they took a deep interest in botany and in natural history, and strove diligently to collect specimens of the flora, and of the geological formation, of the district ; the result of their efforts being a valuable and comprehensive museum, and one vastly superior to the average run of amateur collections.

Like his brothers, Frank was endowed with buoyant spirits, and joined with them in all their sports, but at the same time he was more of a student than they, and from his earliest years showed promise of his intellectual powers.

Now an inclination to study, to do more than one is absolutely obliged, is often regarded by boys with contempt, and is even condemned by them as treachery, as a breach of the unwritten code of school-boy honour. It was natural, therefore, that Frank should have to endure a certain amount of obloquy from his playmates, and to be derided by them for his evident

desire to acquire knowledge for its own sake. He bore, however, their gibes and sallies with such impervious good humour, that they were entirely disarmed, and one and all were easily won over to respect and love him.

The summer holidays were usually spent on Deeside, either at the Mains of Abergeldie, now rented by the Prince of Wales, or at Birkhall, which also is now the property of His Royal Highness.

This last place, it may be observed, has good reason to remember Mr. John Duncan, and to be grateful to him for his generous patriotism. His son, Mr. Alfred Duncan, tells me that it was during his father's lease of Birkhall that an order was given to cut down the timber growing round the house and to sell it, but this evidently seemed like sacrilege to the true-hearted Scotch advocate, who loved every tree on the banks of the Dee ; so he bought up all the trees himself, and left them standing, that they might for many a day preserve the beauty of the scene. This love for Deeside, which amounted in Mr. Duncan to a passion, was fully shared by his children. Though they have travelled far, and seen many fair landscapes in foreign climes, they still maintain that there is no hill anywhere so lovely as the purple heather-sided Culblean, nor could

any stream in other countries ever flow so sparkingly to the ocean, as does the clear, laughing Dee.

But the briefest account of the Duncan family and their surroundings would be incomplete without mention of one estimable person connected closely with them—their old nurse, Isabella Davidson, generally known as “Bell,” who is still living and is in her ninety-first year.

This venerable dame retains her faculties to a wonderful degree, and being asked to furnish me with any reminiscences of Frank Duncan’s early years, she sends me, with a few other remarks, this message: “Well, tell him that Frank was, from a mere baby, the most truthful laddie I ever knew.” Verily, to her mind the highest praise. She might also have added to truthfulness grateful generosity, and have told how that the first money Frank Duncan earned he spent in buying his old nurse a shawl, which, according to her directions, is to be put into her coffin and go with her to the grave.

As a proof, too, of her own regard and affection for this same “most truthful laddie,” it might be told how in 1859, this brave, trusty old Scotchwoman, who must have been at that time nearly sixty years of age, and who

had never been out of Scotland in her life before, travelled all the way to Halifax in Nova Scotia, to nurse her laddie's wife through an illness.

I mention this, not only as an instance of a woman's fidelity, but also as a tribute to the power which Frank Duncan exercised throughout his whole life, of drawing to him the hearts of those who knew him best. His influence was of that attractive kind that it never failed to win all who came under it, and in the sunshine of that genial smile, that bright open-heartedness, who could resist feeling towards him even a deeper and a stronger sentiment! But I am anticipating what I trust these pages may both prove and illustrate.

Of the childhood of Frank Duncan there is little to be recorded beyond cherished memories of the loveableness of his nature, and of the extraordinary ease with which he overcame the difficulties of early learning. To many children this power of quick apprehension is a snare, for it tempts them to trust to it too much, and often makes them careless and superficial. But with Frank Duncan this was happily not the case, for he possessed, in addition to keen intelligence, that still more valuable mark of true genius, a capacity for taking

trouble ; he did his best with whatever he had to do. It would not perhaps be true to say of him that he observed always the golden rule of "non multa sed multum," for his latter days were sorely overcrowded with multifarious self-imposed duties, but it may at least be urged that to every one of the "multa" he brought the "multum ;" in other words, that to each and all of his several undertakings he gave his utmost of strength and ability.

As his father had taken a leading part in the Disruption, it followed that Frank and all the family were brought up in the strict ways of the Free Kirk of Scotland, and were subjected to the customary teaching of that body, under the guidance first of Dr. Foote, and then of his successor, the Rev. J. C. Macphail.

After being a few years at the West-End Academy in Aberdeen, a school for young children, Frank was sent in his tenth year to the larger and more important Grammar-school of his native city. There, even at that tender age, he gave proof of his latent powers, and the following account of him by one of his school-fellows reads like a forecast of his future.

"Duncan was the best known and the most highly appreciated boy of the whole school. Full of spirits, ready in repartee, enjoying fun,

and even a little mischief, he was universally beloved, and looked up to with admiration. He was a leader in the faction fights as well as in all games and sports. We all felt we could trust him. He insisted on the maintenance of fair play, and was always successful in his efforts to secure it. Sympathizing as he did with boys of all ages, recognizing that acts of pugnacity and uproar could not always be checked, he nevertheless was careful to draw the line at anything which approached the dishonourable, and his example in this respect was most beneficial to the school. He was ever the very soul of honour."

Popular with his schoolfellows, he was also, from his natural ability and intelligence, always high in the favour of his teachers. And yet for his success at both school and college, he never allowed credit to himself or to his own exertions. He always declared that he owed it chiefly to his good fortune in being under so able an instructor as Dr. James Melvin, then Rector of the Grammar-school, whose fame as a Latin scholar extended far beyond Aberdeen or even Scotland, while his enthusiasm for learning fired Frank Duncan, and many others, with a fervent desire for knowledge.

In the final examination in Latin of the

Grammar-school, October, 24th 1851, the name of James Stirling, now Mr. Justice Stirling, stands at the head of the list, that of Francis Duncan being next. Three days after—the latter proceeded to Marischal College and University, where he obtained a high bursary, and where he was a pupil of Professor Stuart Blackie, formerly of Edinburgh University.

In March, 1855, Frank Duncan, like his father before him, took the degree of M.A., his name appearing among those of other graduates as “honourably distinguished.”

It was Mr. Duncan's intention that his eldest son should adopt his own profession of the law, and with that object in view he was articled to him, serving his apprenticeship in the summer months even while he was at college, for the University session was only from October to April.

But his father's wishes regarding his future could not have been very strong, seeing that Frank was allowed, in the same year he graduated, to go to London with four other lads of his own standing,¹ to compete at the first open examination for the Indian Civil Service. There were 200 candidates for thirty

¹ The late Col. W. Keith, R.A. was one of them.

appointments, and the result of the examination showed Frank Duncan's name as thirty-fifth on the list. This disappointment, so far from daunting him, seems only to have spurred him on to greater efforts, and he and his compatriots went in, as Colonel Keith tells me, "for fun," for an examination which was held immediately afterwards, for Direct Commissions in the Royal Engineers and the Royal Artillery, and while all four were successful, Frank Duncan was rewarded for his perseverance and pluck by being placed first of the seventeen who passed for the R.A. ; the two above him, now Sir Murdoch Smith, K.C.M.G., and Sir Charles Wilson, K.C.B., obtaining commissions in the R.E.

This, it must be observed, was the first occasion of there being an examination for *Direct* Commissions for the R.E. and R.A., and it is amusing to learn that there appears to have been some doubt as to the social status of those who would present themselves as candidates. In the public advertisement of the examination it was announced that an examination would be held on certain dates of *persons* desirous of enlisting in the R.E. and R.A. ; consequently the soubriquet of *a person* was ever after attached to those who belonged to this batch of gunners.

Again in 1856 and 1857 similar examinations

were held for Direct Commissions in the Scientific Corps, but after that time they appear to have ceased, and the military authorities, for some reason best known to themselves, reverted to the old order of things, and required a preliminary training at the Academy.

How undesirable such a system is, was ably shown by Frank Duncan himself some years later—*i.e.* in 1872—when in conjunction with a leading Oxford tutor he issued a pamphlet on the subject, entitled “The Universities and the Scientific Corps,” of which an account will be found in its place in this history.²

It appears that these Scotch lads kept the fact of their having been in for the Army examination a profound secret. Frank Duncan, at least returned home and said not a word about it to anybody, but one afternoon when he and a younger brother called at the post-office for letters, there was delivered to him a long blue, official-looking document which Frank eagerly tore open, and with a cry of delight announced to his astonished companion that he had passed for the Royal Artillery, and gained the highest place among the candidates for that distinguished corps.

² See ch. iii., p. 48.

This, of course, changed altogether his plans for the future, and it was with a sense of intense relief that he abandoned the civilian's for the soldier's life, for he felt that it offered him a wider field and greater opportunities for distinction than could be expected in the limited sphere of a lawyer's office. His father too, very wisely, did not for a moment attempt to thwart his son's wishes, or to place any obstacle in the way of them. Had he done so, had he urged him, as he might reasonably have urged his eldest son, to take up and carry on the professional business which he had made so widely known and respected, there is no doubt that Frank would at once have yielded and followed without a murmur the career of his father.

All the sons regarded their father not only with deep affection, but with an unbounded admiration. To them, as to many others, Mr. Duncan's word was law, and his judgment on any subject was prized above that of anyone. Frank, indeed, would even affirm that his father was the cleverest man he had ever known, and this opinion of him he fondly cherished after years of experience, and steadfastly maintained to the last.

CHAPTER II.

Serves in Nova Scotia—Life in Halifax—Marriage—
Sent to New Brunswick—The *Trent* affair—
Ordered to Woodstock—Incident at Grand Falls—
Loyalty of Canadians—Fortifications of Canada—At
St. Helen's—"Our miserable little island"—
Returns to England.

ON a gloomy, murky day in April, 1857, amid rain, and clouds of smoke from the Arsenal, four batteries of Artillery—two for Nova Scotia, and two for Canada—embarked at Woolwich in the s.s. *Lebanon*.

Among the officers was Francis Duncan, a subaltern in the 7th Brigade, who, having passed the first fifteen months of his military life at Dover, was now destined for Halifax.

The voyage was a stormy one, and he wrote afterwards this pathetic account of the miseries of it :—

"As a matter of course, we had the roughest passage on record, but as I have crossed the Atlantic four times now, and every time have heard the same remark from the nautical authorities, I do not attach much importance

to that fact. Through the dim vistas of memory I see my own sick and weary form clinging with affectionate tenacity to the vessel's bulwarks, as she ploughed through a chopping sea, with a gale of wind in our teeth. The cold, grey dawn is creeping under the friendly shroud of darkness, which had hid the agonies of the earlier part of my watch from public gaze. Yes, that unhappy figure is, by a preposterous and laughable idea, dignified in orders by the title of 'Officer of the Watch.' The only object for four long hours which I contemplated was the hateful sea by the ship's side, and the only exercise of which I seemed capable was a species of convulsive leap-frog, which, though always attempting, I could never wholly accomplish. The vessel might have been boarded, sunk, or set on fire, without the fact crossing my engrossed faculties."

The voyage was long as well as stormy, and for nearly two days the vessel was becalmed off the Banks of Newfoundland, but at last the gallant gunners were cheered by a sight of the noble harbour of Halifax, and, like the Trojans,¹ soon stood with eager joy once more on land.

For this period in Frank Duncan's life, I am glad to avail myself of a charming book which

¹ "Ac magno telluris amore
Egressi optata potiuntur Troes arena."

he wrote in 1863, and entitled "Our Garrisons in the West;" or, "Sketches in British North America."

It shows how he entered with spirit into the full round of activity and amusements which a garrison town like Halifax afforded, and describes the delights of skating, sleighing, and lobster-spearing, together with the hunting of the moose and the cariboo, which from time to time enlivened the routine of military duties.

But it would be doing him an injustice to suppose that his leisure hours were altogether devoted to pleasure and sport. Far from it, for the book contains also much valuable information regarding the products of Nova Scotia, its political condition, and its climate.

He predicted of Nova Scotia that her future will greatly outshine her past, and pointed out that this province, once called Arcadia, has, unlike other colonies, a history, of which traces are to be found in the escutcheons of many of our English baronets, and of not a few of our peers.

As to her constitution, too, he wrote much that is interesting, especially in these days when the question of granting self-government to our colonies is so prominently before us.

Towards Halifax, in particular, he adopted even a stronger prophetic strain. "What Hali-

fax may be none can tell. Nature has placed no limit to its future greatness ; it remains for man, under Providence, to make it a mighty and prosperous city. There was a prospect—I hope it may still exist—that this should be the eastern terminus of the great inter-colonial railroad. That line, which, winter or summer, whether the St. Lawrence should be open, or bound by the iron grasp of Canadian frost, should bring England within a few days of even the most westernly points of these—her loyal colonies. That line too, which, without much straining of fancy, one could see would be a high road to the east of Asia, over which the commerce of China, Japan, and India might journey with ease, and the dangers of Cape Horn become a tale that is told.”

These words, it must be remembered, were written some twenty years before the Canadian Pacific Railway was made, and before that chain of communication with the East, the importance of which Frank Duncan so plainly saw, had been established.

Again, with regard to his high appreciation of Halifax, it must also be borne in mind that it was in Halifax that he passed the halcyon days of his life, and that to Halifax he was indebted for what to him was dearest and best—his wife.

It was there that he married, on August 24th, 1858, Mary Kate, daughter of the Rev. William Cogswell, Rector of St. Paul's, Halifax, and grand-daughter of the Hon. Andrew Belcher, formerly a member of the Council of Nova Scotia.

No record of Frank Duncan's life can fail to acknowledge the large share she had in making him what he was. He himself could never find words to tell of all he owed to her. Her love was his strength, and her sympathy his support. And so, in very truth, they walked this world together,

‘Yoked in all exercise of noble end.’

From Halifax—Duncan was sent in command of a small detachment of Artillery to New Brunswick, which he describes as a larger, and, from an agricultural point of view, a finer province than Nova Scotia. The fortifications of St. John, one of the principal towns of New Brunswick, he found to be in an unsatisfactory state, but the barracks very good for their size, and as the result of his investigations here and elsewhere he suggested that it would be a great matter for our prestige, for the safety of our shipping, and the advantage of our colonists, if each of our chief colonial harbours contained a

permanent iron-clad block-ship moored across it as an offensive and defensive weapon against an enemy's fleet. These vessels would, in his opinion, be a powerful addition to the land-batteries, and a rallying spot for merchantmen.

Apart, however, from military considerations, the genial kindness and hospitality of the people of St. John made a considerable impression on him, and he declares that he never knew a town in whose society there were fewer cliques. Before, indeed, he even entered St. John he had, by a happy augury, cause to form a favourable impression of the town, for the first vessel he saw in port there was called the *John Duncan*, having been so named by one of his father's many admirers, a ship-owner in the north of Scotland.

But still in the province of New Brunswick, as in Nova Scotia, he laments the cruel evils resulting from its having in its then unfledged youth representative government and almost universal suffrage.

Events, however, soon occurred, which were of more concern to him than politics.

A little before Christmas, 1861, the relations between Great Britain and America had become so strained that war seemed imminent. The cause of this condition of things is generally

alluded to in vague terms as "the celebrated *Trent* affair," but after the lapse of thirty years it is perhaps as well in a biography to be a little more explicit, and to give an account of a matter which, at the time it occurred, created considerable commotion, but with which the present generation can hardly be expected to be familiar.

The facts then are these. While the great Civil War was raging in America, two Commissioners of the Confederate States to France and England, Messrs. Slidell and Mason, together with their secretaries, Messrs. Eustace and McFarland, had run the blockade at Charleston, and had reached Havannah. From that neutral port they embarked on Nov. 7th in the British mail steamer *Trent*, for St. Thomas, with the intention of proceeding to Europe. On the following day, however, just as the *Trent* was approaching a narrow passage in the Bahama Channel, she was intercepted by a large steamship of war, which showed no colours. The *Trent* hoisted the British ensign, but this had no effect on the strange ship until she had come within about two hundred yards of the *Trent*, and then she fired a shot across the *Trent's* bows, afterwards a shell to leeward of her, and displayed the United States flag. Captain Moir, the commander of the *Trent*, at

once brought his ship to, and she was soon after boarded by a boat's crew of two officers and ten men from the United States steamer. The officer in charge, Lieutenant Fairfax, demanded to inspect the passenger list of the *Trent*, on the plea that his commander, Captain Wilks of the United States steamship *San Jacinto*, had received information that two Confederate Commissioners and their secretaries (whom he named), were on board, and required that they should be given up to him. On the refusal of Captain Moir to comply with this demand, Lieutenant Fairfax made a signal to the Federal sloop, which immediately despatched several armed boats, containing about one hundred marines and seamen, who, cutlass in hand, boarded the *Trent*, arrested the Confederate Commissioners, and forced them into the boats. Such an act naturally evoked the loudest protests from the captain and officers of the *Trent*, as well as from the Confederate Commissioners, the latter of whom looked to the British Government for redress for the outrage committed upon them while they were under the protection of the British flag.

As soon as the affair was known in England, there was one universal feeling of indignation, and the case having been submitted to the law-

officers of the Crown for their opinion regarding it, they decided that the captain of the *San Jacinto* had committed a gross breach of international law. Accordingly a despatch was sent without delay by the British Government to Lord Lyons, who was at that time our Minister at Washington, instructing him to demand the restoration of the captured gentlemen to the protection from which they had been illegally taken, and a disavowal and apology on the part of the Federal Government for the act of their own officer.

While this matter was pending the excitement in Canada was naturally intense, for as a British possession on the frontier of the United States, she was open to the immediate invasion of the enemy.

In Nova Scotia, too, we can well imagine how great the feeling of anxiety must have been with regard to the measures England would take. General Doyle at that time commanded in the Lower Provinces, and as the St. Lawrence was frozen over, he ordered the 62nd Regiment, which had been inured by several years of American service to the cold of winter, to proceed by steamer to St. Andrew's, a harbour on the New Brunswick coast, and thence by rail to Woodstock, a village near the borders of the State of

Maine; his object being to open and hold the route to Canada for succeeding troops.

This regiment of infantry was to have been accompanied by Duncan, having under his command a detachment of forty gunners and two guns. But on the very eve of their departure news arrived that the firm action of Great Britain had prevailed, and that the United States had consented to surrender Messrs. Mason and Slidell.

There was consequently now no prospect of war, but, nevertheless, the destination of the force, to which Duncan was attached, remained the same, only the guns were left behind, and the gunners took merely their carbines.

Under the command of General Ingall, C.B., the 62nd Regiment, with this small body of Artillery, embarked on board the *Delta*, and arrived at St. Andrew's on New Year's Day, 1862.²

The various regiments which took part in the expedition were :—

Artillery. — 4th Brigade. Field Artillery.

² The history of their overland march to Canada is given by Duncan in detail in "Our Garrisons in the West" and may be read with profit, for in the event of any similar contingency, many of the author's observations would be of great value.

Several batteries, with Armstrong guns complete, but no horses ; these being afterwards purchased in Canada. 7th Brigade. Garrison Artillery. Two batteries (Nos. 5 and 6). 10th Brigade, about half the brigade, or rather more.

Infantry.—Grenadier Guards and Scots Fusilier Guards, one battalion each. 16th Regiment, one company. 62nd Regiment. 63rd Regiment. One battalion Rifle Brigade. 15th Regiment : as far as Fredericton.

Miscellaneous. — Royal Engineers. Military Train, two battalions. Army Hospital Corps. Commissariat Staff Corps. Cavalry-instructors for Militia and Volunteers.

Sir Fenwick Williams was Commander-in-Chief, the Lower Provinces being, as already stated, under General Doyle, while along the coast, we are told, there was a fleet which would have astonished Nelson.

The troops under Colonel Ingall proceeded by rail towards Woodstock, but unfortunately the line was blocked with snow, and both officers and men suffered much from lack of provisions, and from the intensity of the cold. All night long they were kept fast in the snow ; and it was not until noon the following day that the line was cleared, and their hunger was appeased. The journey from Woodstock to Florenceville

was made on sleighs, and by means of these they came to Tobique, which was a place of evil repute as the head-quarters of some Yankee agents, who endeavoured night after night to decoy the English soldiers from their allegiance by bribes of drink and money. In connection with this iniquitous attempt, Duncan tells a story against himself of a scheme which his brother officers and he devised for frustrating the designs of these scoundrels.

At one of their halting places, called Grand Falls, they resolved to take turns during the night of pacing up and down in a soldier's great coat and accoutrements, as if on sentry, with the object of attracting some of the Yankee agents. It fell to Duncan's lot to go on sentry first, and so, to the amusement of his confederates, he went out into the cold dark night, carbine in hand, and began parading solemnly up and down in what seemed a choice spot. After about half an hour the monotony of the proceeding was rather too much for him, and he therefore extended his beat along the road. No sooner had he done this than at a turn of the road he saw a sentry actually in close converse with a civilian. Immediately he went up to them, and without waiting for any explanation, he requested the latter to precede him to the hotel, enforcing the

request by bringing his carbine to the trail behind him, the muzzle within six inches of his back.

"The unhappy man," he says, "in a fit of violent trembling, obeyed. Who would not obey so practical an argument? and inwardly exulting I walked behind dreaming of glory awaiting me, for what reward could be too great for so distinguished an action? While in the seventh heaven of hope and ambition, I was brought hurriedly down by my prisoner remarking to me in a weak and quavering voice, yet as if in a conciliatory way too, that 'It was a fine night.' Good heavens! I was aghast. What right had a prisoner to tell his captor and escort that it was a fine night? This was infinitely worse than the plaintiff's counsel in *Pickwick* telling the defendant's that 'It was a fine morning.'

"But *I* wasn't going to be taken in by any of his miserable artifices! No! with a profound silence, I merely hurried my pace—and my prisoner all the faster, until we arrived at the hotel, where, steering him dexterously into the parlour among my brother officers, I stood in the glare of the lamp with the convicted one, awaiting congratulations for myself, and a magistrate for him. But, why that dead silence

as of amazement, and then those peals of ironical laughter? Oh, agony! take me away and hide me! My prisoner is no Yankee, but one of our own most harmless drivers! Need I say there was no more done in that line that night; and that in my bed I strove in vain to drown the remembrance of the captured one, and forget my wild dreams of merited preferment?"

From Grand Falls they journeyed on sleighs as far as Rivière du Loup, and then travelled on the Grand Trunk Railway to Quebec.

And here, in this part of his narrative, Duncan refers to a subject which must always be one of the deepest interest to our Empire and to the American continent.

The necessity of employing sleighs as a means of locomotion, besides being a pleasant experience in itself, had strongly impressed him and his companions with the steadfast loyalty of the French Canadian population. Grave doubts, it seems, had existed on this subject long before the "*Trent* affair;" but Duncan truly observed that if the Canadians ever wanted to show their supposed disloyalty, it would have been at a time when war seemed inevitable between the American Government and England. "So far, however," he declared, "was this from being the case, that, to the amazement of none so

much as the Americans, there was not even a hint thrown out as to this opportunity of rushing into the arms of a Grand Republic, nor a murmur uttered as to the losses which the Canadians would sustain by living in the scene of such a war as seemed only too probable."

And what was true regarding the loyalty of Canada to the mother-country in 1862, is, I venture to think, equally so to-day.

To the fortifications and other defences of the colony Duncan paid special attention, and he pointed out that as we never contemplate for Canada any other foe than the United States, the only means of defence which she need possess are those against the inroads of an enemy by land.

"The great point," he wrote, 'in a country which, like Canada, is sealed half the year, is the keeping up some means of communication between the main colony and the sea, through the harbours of the Lower Provinces, which are never closed for navigation.

"The expenditure on such places as Halifax and St. John would, in a long campaign, prove more useful to the cities of Canada than many a powerful fortress. For it is by these harbours that assistance would come in winter from

England ; by these that the troops would arrive which should attack the enemy in the rear, and raise the sieges of the Canadian cities. And still more important, perhaps, it is in these harbours that the fleets would muster which should act on the coast of New England and distract the Government of the invaders."

The last few months of Duncan's service in Canada were spent on the island of St. Helen's, opposite Montreal, where he passed such a wretched existence that he has devoted a whole chapter to a record of his woes, and given it the appropriate title of "our miserable little island." "Our island," he says, "was small, uncommonly small, so confoundedly small, that, including every stone and promontory in its whole circumference, we could accomplish its circuit in half-an-hour ; and our constitutional walks must have averaged generally ten or twenty per diem. We came to regard our island much as that unhappy polar bear in the Regent's Park Zoological Gardens must view the few wet slabs on which it walks up and down, sometimes forwards, sometimes backwards, now wagging his head solemnly, now bowing ridiculously, yet all the while affecting to think that it had the whole unlimited use of the Arctic regions, but failing

horribly in the attempt. To make matters worse, our island was in a river, not in stationary water—a river with a rapid current and mighty volume—no less a river than the great St. Lawrence. The wind blew this river into ugly waves at times, and cut us, with our little skiffs, off from the mainland ; and, even in calm weather, the weary current so prolonged the labour of crossing, that after achieving the feat one felt inclined never to re-attempt it.

“ It had a ludicrous idea that it was fortified, had our island. There was a decayed and trembling drawbridge, and in various parts of the island were the remnants of what may once have been formidable gates, but whose rheumatic bars, creaking and groaning, were swayed about by every summer breeze

“ There was a sally-port, meant for warriors, which we used for suspending mutton ; there were magazines, meant for deadly shell, which we made reservoirs for beer. . . . We had there two or three field batteries, with all the harness complete, on an island where not one gun could travel, and only one horse existed. It had a strange history, had that horse, or rather absence of history ; for, older than the oldest inhabitants, no tradition of its advent had been handed down. In winter it slept in the

ruins of what had once been a prison, and lived, or rather starved, upon what it could pick up; in summer it blew itself out with green food until the skeleton of the spring renewed its youth like the witch of old, and it turned out again in the autumn, sleek, placid, and comfortable.

“And our island had its ghost. In a dark, frog-haunted pool near our largest magazine, in a lonely part of the island, the solitary sentry has been known to see rise in the still watches of the night, a green lady, whose chief amusement was to scream—a hysterical ghost, whose fit never wore off. The only other inhabitants were a few old pensioners, encouraged to live there, no doubt, by an economical government, with the object of accelerating their end and of shortening their pensions. Inasmuch as we were wholly dependent on these individuals for the produce of the cow and the domestic fowl, we did not object to the arrangement.”

It is not to be wondered at, that, after a month or two spent in such a barbarous, desolate place, dyspepsia became very prevalent, or that by every expedient in their power, such as fishing, duck-shooting, gardening—and even a spasmodic attempt at painting in water-

colours—the poor gunners strove to make life endurable. Their efforts, however, were sadly short-lived, for the most melancholy feature in their imprisonment was a lack of energy and application.

Moreover, to add to their gloom and despondency, they had in their very midst a cemetery, which, from the rude wooden tombstones in it, had evidently been the burial-place of the victims to a plague which at one time had visited the island. What could be more dismal or more appalling !

But “hope springs eternal in the human breast,” and Duncan and his comrades were not the men to yield to despair. At last their patience was rewarded ; at last their captivity was ended, and we can well imagine the delight with which they greeted the steamer which on a bright September day carried them off from “our miserable little island,” and took them as far as Montreal *en route* to England.

Duncan shall describe their feelings in his own words.

“We were marched on board with hardly energy enough to cheer, and we babbled in an idiotic manner to one another. We could not realize that we were actually going, that the speck on the horizon, getting smaller and

smaller, was our island, fading from our sight for ever. And, in the wild nights at sea, its image rose before our minds in a strange and unearthly calm, such as one could fancy to a man awakened from a trance must the dim mysterious gap in his life appear. And then, months after, came the first letter I received from one of our successors on the island. It seemed so strange to hold that thin sheet of paper in my hand, and to think that the words had been written by the drowsy trees and scorching grass I knew so well. Instinctively, it all came before me like a dream—the grey barracks, the dark pool, the little yard of the silent, the hot air, the surging river. And like the forgiveness of injuries, when those who did them are dead, so did this, our island, seem more endurable now, when far away from its dreary paths, its melancholy shores.”

CHAPTER III.

At Gosport—Appointed Brigade Adjutant—Consults a friend as to study and work—Made Superintendent of R.A. Reg. Records—Writes a History of the Royal Artillery—Difficulty of the work—Reviews of the History by Cols. Brackenbury and Hime—"The Universities and the Scientific Corps."

ON his return to Woolwich in October, 1862, Duncan found that there was a change in the command of his battery, for Major Brendon, who had gone out with him to Canada in 1857, but in another battery, had exchanged with the officer commanding No. 5 Battery, 7th Brigade, and consequently Duncan became one of his subalterns.

After being some months at Woolwich, the Brigade was ordered in April, 1863, to Gosport, and No. 5 Battery was quartered in Fort Brockhurst. Duncan continued to do duty with it until some time in 1864, when he was appointed Acting-Adjutant, and on his promotion to 2nd Captain in August of that year he was confirmed in the appointment.

Major-Gen. Brendon, as he is now, to whom

I am indebted for the above facts, tells me that Duncan's was the only instance in his experience of an officer being appointed a Brigade Adjutant at once on promotion, and he adds that it proved the high estimation in which he was held by the authorities. Until his promotion to Lieut.-Colonel in 1871, Major Brendon remained in the 7th Brigade, Duncan being Adjutant the whole time, and his commanding officer writes of him that he was one of the most generous, genial, and warm-hearted fellows he ever met. He testifies also of him as follows:—

“Though Duncan carried out his duties as Adjutant most conscientiously, he showed such tact as to be a general favourite, and I never heard of his having the slightest tiff with a soul—about the greatest praise you could give a man in his position.”

He was at this time beginning to regard life with greater seriousness, and to be anxious to know how he could best employ the gifts with which God had endowed him, and how he could be most generally useful.

In this state of uncertainty he wrote to a friend, and told him that he wished to apply himself to some definite line of study, asking him to make out a course of reading for him.

Three subjects, he said, most interested him—
theology, mathematics, and metaphysics.

His friend chose for him the first of these, and drew up for him a list of books, advising him, above all, for his spiritual good, to make a constant study of the Greek Testament. He also encouraged him in his desire for work, and more particularly for that kind of work which promotes the welfare of others.

To this wise counsel Francis Duncan used often in after years to look back, and to speak of it as the origin and stimulus of his subsequent labours; and in following it he naturally turned his attention, first of all, to those matters which more directly concerned the distinguished corps to which he belonged. With this fact before us, we can regard the course of events in his future as nothing but providential; for, not long after his returning to Woolwich in 1868, an opportunity offered itself which enabled him to render the Royal Artillery a signal and a lasting service.

In the beginning of 1871, he was appointed Superintendent of the Royal Artillery Regimental Records, in succession to Major R. Oldfield, R.A., and he tells us that the idea immediately occurred to him that, if ever a history of the Regiment were to be written—a

book greatly wanted, and yet becoming every day more difficult to write—here, in this office, could it most easily be done. But he was reluctant to set about it himself from the feeling that there was in the Regiment an officer, Colonel F. Miller, V.C., who was eminently qualified for writing such a history. Other duties, however, prevented that officer from undertaking a work which he had once contemplated; but Duncan acknowledges that, of the many documents and books which he used for this purpose, none had been more valuable than an exhaustive pamphlet published some years previously by Colonel Miller, for private circulation, and an edition of Kane's List of Artillery Officers, with a comprehensive appendix. What made the writing of this history so difficult was not so much the accumulation of records—ancient and modern—as the change in the organization of the Regiment, which, as Duncan says, sadly dislocated its history, although possibly improving its efficiency. This change he explains as follows:—

“In the year 1859 the old system which divided the Regiment into companies and battalions, with permanent battalion headquarters at Woolwich, was abolished; and companies serving in different parts of the Empire were

linked together in brigades, on grounds of geography instead of history. Companies of different battalions serving on the same station were christened batteries of the same brigade, and the old battalion staff at Woolwich became the staff, at various stations, of the brigades newly created. The old companies, in donning their new titles, lost their old history and began their life anew."

Two eminent officers of the Royal Artillery have kindly furnished me with their opinions regarding this History.

One¹ says: "The books and their style display at once that quality of warm faith and high aims which should appeal to youth, and the sobriety of expectation which marks the man who knows the world as it is. During all the early life of what is now the Royal Regiment of Artillery, it was under a different authority from the rest of the Army, and so lost all the benefit of close connection with what were then essentially the fighting forces. Trains of artillery were formed when an army was to take the field, but those in charge of them were not prepared to make the best of the ordnance. They were for the most part devoid of both scientific and military education, and were

¹ The late Col. C.B. Brackenbury, C.B.

regarded as occupying a position distinctly inferior to that of the cavalry or infantry. Hence arose bitter jealousies, increased by the fact that in peace the Artillery had special protectors in the Master-General and Board of Ordnance, who, however, blighted the plant, which they insisted on keeping from the open air. Colonel Duncan shows clearly how the progress of Artillery was delayed by these means, and, so far, showed distinctly progressive opinions ; but, at the time when the book was written, he was conservative in resisting a step in progress now much talked of and generally favoured, nothing less than a division of the one great corps into different component parts, perhaps many, perhaps only two—namely, Field and Garrison Artillery. This moderation in ideas of progress for the future is quite in tune with much that Colonel Duncan said of the past.

“One of the most interesting facts brought out in the first volume was the low position assigned to Artillery, the evidence of which Colonel Duncan set forth in much detail. Not only was the Artillery neglected in peace, but even during war it was denied the position of a fighting arm.

“As late as 1744, the principal officers of the ordnance were found pleading that the

military status of Artillery officers in the field should be acknowledged. . . . By showing how the Artillery had won its way step by step from very small beginnings, and gradually overcame prejudice after prejudice, Colonel Duncan was of great assistance in the further progress of the Regiment in his time. It is only within a very few years that Artillery officers have been regarded as eligible for the General Staff, and even now the commands of Home Districts are not assigned to the Artillery on the same footing as the other arms. They retain, indeed, the Woolwich command, which is now being merged in that of Chatham; but the slowness of the process, the beginning of which was so well described by Colonel Duncan, still leaves the regiment which he so loved in an inferior position compared with the cavalry and infantry. The relics of opinions, which were natural in the last century, survive in our own day, though in a moribund condition.

"The second volume brought the History down to the close of the Waterloo campaign, and created some stir in society by reviving the long-forgotten story of the Great Duke's injustice to the Artillery after his most famous battle. The Duke, in December, 1815, wrote a private letter to Lord Mulgrave, in which he gave as

his reasons for not recommending the Artillery for its full share of rewards, that the gunners did not obey orders by taking shelter in the squares when the French cavalry attacked, but withdrew from the field. The letter, though private, was published in the correspondence, fortunately while officers were alive who could definitely deny and disprove the charges contained in it. There was not a particle of truth in the accusation. No such charges were made at the time when honours were showered on the whole army after the battle, nor until the question of pensions came up six months later.

“In no case did the gunners or the limbers retire, and in all cases but one they did take shelter in the squares or under the muskets of the front ranks. The one case, that of Captain Mercer’s battery, in which the general instructions were not carried out, was simply an instance of an officer’s judging for himself under peculiar circumstances, as all officers are now bound to do.

“Captain Mercer’s battery was close to two squares formed by foreign troops, ‘whom,’ says Captain Mercer, ‘I had but yesterday seen throwing away their arms, and fleeing, panic-stricken, from the very sound of our horses’ feet. . . . Every moment I feared they would again throw down their arms and flee.

“‘To have sought refuge amongst men in such a state was madness; the very moment our men ran from their guns I was convinced would be the signal for their disbanding. We had better, then, fall at our posts than in such a situation.’ His men accordingly stood to their guns, and drove back the enemy’s cavalry with frightful loss when within a few feet of the muzzles. Next day, Sir Augustus Frazer, riding over the field, could plainly distinguish the position of C troop from the opposite height by the dark mass, which, even from that distance, formed a remarkable feature in the field. That dark mass was a heap of dead cut down by the close fire of Mercer’s guns.

“The Duke’s letter is inexplicable, except as an aberration of genius under the influence of some information as false as it was late in arriving. Captain Mercer, however, was not allowed by the Duke to receive the promotion he had so well deserved.

“All this story was told by Colonel Duncan with a simplicity and a marshalling of facts which carried conviction to all who studied them. He proved that the Artillery behaved magnificently at Waterloo, and, in so doing, laid his comrades under a deep obligation.”

The other officer,² to whom I am indebted

² Col. H. W. L. Hime, R.A.

for a criticism of the "History of the Royal Artillery," writes to me from India, and says that unfortunately he is in camp, in command of a siege train, with no books to refresh his memory, and that, consequently, he is in a very unfavourable condition for giving an opinion of the work.

But nevertheless, from his recollection of it, he writes :—

"Duncan's history is a bright, readable, and connected account of the Royal Artillery. Furthermore, it is the first attempt to give a general view of the progress of the Regiment from its first beginning to the present day."

Colonel Hime complains, however, of the want of references, especially in Vol. I., and takes exception somewhat to the author's style. "Macaulay," he says, "was evidently his model in writing, and, in my opinion, a very bad one. Duncan had Dr. Johnson's faculty of writing offhand what he wanted to say, without a single erasure, and he could write in the middle of his family. I once came upon him writing away at the 'English in Spain' in the drawing-room, with his family conversing round him. . . .

"Again, he wrote with great rapidity. I dare say he wrote the first volume in a year, and I don't suppose he ever rewrote a page in his life. . . .

"However, after all has been done and said, his history is the sole and only history of the Royal Artillery ; and such it will remain for many years, if not for ever. It requires correction, but that can be done at any moment. The corrections are merely matters of detail.

"Duncan's powers of work were gigantic. At one and the same time he was keeper of the Regimental Records, secretary to the Royal Artillery library, Woolwich, and was writing his history to boot. It was impossible for any man so employed to balance carefully the evidence for the facts to be recorded in his history. But he looked at the matter in a very light-hearted way. . . . I may say that I have no doubt but that the great mass of his facts are sound ; but this is a matter of faith entirely in the first volume."

As to Duncan's capacity for work, no one who knew him at all well could help being struck with it. He was always eager and hungry for work, and the more he had to do the happier he seemed to be. To the list of his numerous undertakings, which Colonel Hime has given us, may also be added a brochure, which, in conjunction with a leading Oxford tutor, he issued about the same time, *i.e.* in 1872, and entitled "The Universities and the

Scientific Corps.”³ In this pamphlet the writers pointed out that the Royal Engineers and the Royal Artillery, which as scientific corps would naturally derive the greatest benefit from a University course, are the only two branches of the whole Army which are excluded from it. They affirmed that the monopoly at present possessed by the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, for officering the scientific corps, operates mischievously in two ways :—its course of education, with many excellencies, is narrow in the total results, and its system of preliminary cramming is most pernicious ; while the age of the candidates for admission (16 to 18) necessarily limits the field of selection.

Instead of requiring two and a half years at the Academy, they proposed that any successful candidate at the first examination should, if he wished, be allowed to spend two years at one of the Universities, and the last half-year at Woolwich, in order to learn drill. They anticipated the obvious objection that there are, besides drill, other special and technical branches of military education—e.g. Military History, Fortification, and Artillery, with Technical Mathematics—by saying that the Universities could well of themselves make

³ See p. 15.

ample provision for the requisite instruction in these subjects.

The case is stated in these pages with remarkable care and accuracy, as being advisable in the interests both of the Universities and of the Army, and, therefore, *à fortiori* of the nation at large. (Much of it may be quoted here verbatim, for it is as apposite now as when it was first written.)

I. "In the interests of the Universities, for at least three reasons:—(*a*) The fundamental conception of them as centres of national life forbids that they should be compelled to stand aloof from those branches of the Army to which they are naturally most akin, and which are rapidly acquiring increased importance in modern warfare. (*b*) It is notorious that the lay professional openings at the command of the Universities fall far short of the demand. Towards meeting this deficiency, the Artillery and Engineers would offer an additional field of over 2000 appointments. The intrinsic importance of these appointments considerably outweighs their numerical value, inasmuch as employment on the Regimental Staff in those corps exceeds that available in the cavalry and infantry, every officer of the Artillery and very many officers of the Engineers enjoying a special duty with

suitable emoluments ; and though the proportion of *Army* staff appointments assigned to the scientific corps is not considered adequate, the force of public opinion will soon remedy the defect. (c) The great need of earnest and able men to fill the military chaplaincies would, by increase of inter-communication, be better realized than hitherto, and these appointments would become more inviting if their holders could oftener rely upon the sympathy which springs from common educational antecedents, and, perhaps, previous acquaintance."

II. With regard to the advantages accruing to the Army, we find here the familiar argument of the proof of the pudding being in the eating. In other words, these joint authors assert that in 1855, 1856 and 1857, many University men joined the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers *direct*, not through the Academy, and they add, with undeniable truth, that they bear favourable comparison with those who preceded or succeeded them. In fact, it appears that of the fourteen officers—(nineteen in all received commissions)—still serving who joined the scientific corps direct from the Universities in 1855—two in the Engineers and twelve in the Artillery—*thirteen* have been selected for special appointments.

If Francis Duncan had done nothing else, he would have deserved the gratitude of the two scientific corps for his share in putting forward so plainly and so forcibly the disadvantages under which they still labour, and for urging the claims they most certainly have, as Englishmen, to a more liberal and more comprehensive education. On the other hand, it might be urged by a defender of the present system that, in spite of these alleged disadvantages, the members of both the scientific corps compare favourably, in learning and in general information, with the graduates of any university. And this may readily be conceded; but it is by no means a conclusive argument, for, granting the premisses, it surely makes it still more a matter of regret, that men of such high mental calibre as the officers of the Royal Engineers and Royal Artillery undoubtedly are, should not enjoy the most liberal training of their intellectual powers.

But let us return to the subject of the History of the Royal Artillery, from which we have wandered.

In looking over the letters received by Colonel Duncan at the time of the publication of his history—which have been most kindly placed at my disposal by his family—I have

found several containing expressions of approval and praise of the work from other distinguished officers of the Royal Artillery.

For example, Sir Edward Sabine, F.R.S., in acknowledging the receipt of one volume, wrote to him,—

“I need scarcely say that it will be the most valued book in my little collection.”

General Lynedoch Gardiner ends a long letter with these words,—“All will, I think, agree that you have done your work splendidly; hitting exactly the ‘*juste milieu*’ between the details of the recorder, and the broad view of the historian.”

Generals Sir Collingwood Dickson, Sir E. C. Warde, Burke Cuppage, Smythe, Hamley and many others, are likewise unanimous in their eulogy.

It may probably seem somewhat unnecessary to collect such testimony to the worth of the History of the Royal Artillery, but my reason for doing so is that I feel it would be the greatest presumption for me, as a civilian, to put forward my own opinion regarding it. And yet, at the same time, a civilian is perhaps better able than an artilleryman to testify to the fact that this work, though dealing with a technical and professional subject, commands throughout the

attention of the lay mind, and is eminently—to use Colonel Hime's expression—"readable" and entertaining.⁴

⁴ To the late Emperor of the French also a copy of this work was sent, and Captain Duncan received from him the following letter :—

"Je vous remercie, Monsieur le Capitaine, du livre que vous m'avez envoyé : je le lirai avec intérêt, car l'histoire de l'Artillerie est l'histoire du progrès des sciences, et partant de la civilisation. Recevez, Capitaine, l'assurance de mes sentiments distingués.

"(Signed) NAPOLEON.

"Chislehurst, Nov. 22nd, 1872."

CHAPTER IV.

Sent to Jamaica—Appointed Instructor at R.M. Repository, Woolwich—Writes “The English in Spain, 1834-40” — Also “The Artillerist’s Manual” — Charles Kingsley and Military Education—Oxford Military College—Joins the Order of St. John of Jerusalem—Elected Director of the Ambulance Department—Origin and progress of the St. John Ambulance Association—A Sunday Bible Class.

WHILE still at the Record Office Captain Duncan obtained his majority, on February 4, 1874, and in consequence of his promotion he fully expected to have to go to India to join his brigade ; but happily he was retained at home, by being posted to the dépôt at Woolwich, where he remained for two years. At the end of that time he went in May, 1876, to Jamaica, to take command of Royal Artillery stationed there, and at the request of the Colonial Office he drew up a report on the Defensive Organization of that country, for the use of the Intelligence Branch of the War Office. He was assisted in this work by Captain W. P. Platt and Lieut. G. M. Lloyd, both of the Royal Artillery ; and Mr. A. H. Alexander, Agent-General of Immigration for Jamaica, also ac-

accompanied him in his tour of inspection. With the thoroughness and painstaking care which mark all his labours, he carried out this commission, and on his return to England, after an absence of five months, he received the thanks of the Government and of the Colonial Office, for a most exhaustive account of the condition of the Island.

Soon after he obtained an appointment under Colonel Waller, Royal Artillery, at the Royal Military Repository at Woolwich, where he had assigned to him the special work of instructing officers of Auxiliary Artillery. His zeal and ability were at once made manifest, and for four and a half years he devoted himself to his duties in such a way as to increase greatly both his reputation and the number of his friends.

In a letter to a brother-officer, Colonel Waller says of him :—"It is impossible for me to speak too highly of the unremitting attention he gave to these classes. I constantly received expressions of gratitude from officers of all ranks in the Artillery, Militia, and Volunteers, for the instruction that Major Duncan had given them, and for the kind manner in which it had been imparted." But the following passage from a letter of one ¹ of these Volunteer Artillery pupils

Col. Evans Lloyd, 1st Chesh. and Carnarv. Artil. Vols.

is perhaps a still more striking testimony to Duncan's value as a teacher :—

“A kinder, and at the same time more accomplished instructor it would have been impossible to have had ; the trouble he took with each of us was untold, ever patient and gentle, considerate of our ignorance as Volunteer officers, and descending into the minutest particulars of his subject, so that not one of us should have an excuse for not thoroughly knowing our work, or ultimately passing for our Proficiency certificate. He accompanied the class of officers to Shoeburyness for the last few days of the course, and there, as we all messed together, we had opportunities of appreciating and enjoying the Major's cheery, sociable character. He seemed to be not only the personal friend of each of us, but our affectionate commanding officer, and we all looked up to him as an accomplished gentleman and scholar, as well as the perfection of our humble ideas of a soldier.”

One would have thought that the labour of collecting materials, and writing such a history as that of the Royal Artillery, would have satisfied the literary appetite of any man for a life-time, but it was evidently not so with Duncan. No sooner had he finished the two bulky volumes of the “History of the Royal Artillery,” than he began to write an account

of the "English in Spain, or the Story of the War of Succession between 1834 and 1840," which he dedicated by permission to King Alfonso XII. If he had undertaken to record what the English did in Spain in the early years of the century, then, as has been truly remarked, he would have had an agreeable and a comparatively easy task. It is rather a hackneyed story perhaps, but still a glorious one, and certain to win the interest and sympathy of his readers. But to write about the English in Spain a quarter of a century later was quite a different matter, and required no little courage.

We none of us, as individuals, like to be reminded of our failures, and therefore it is not surprising that as a nation we should be glad to forget the disgraceful career of the English Legion. The British Government aided the Christinist party in Spain with a squadron of the fleet and with a detachment of artillery ; moreover, it allowed a band of volunteers to be raised in this country, and sent out under the command of General De Lacy Evans. This force, or Legion, as it was called, numbered originally nearly 10,000 men, but, in addition to losses in action, it suffered so severely from hunger, from mutiny, and desertion, that in less than two years it had dwindled down to a small company of 400 men !

In summing up the story of this expedition, Major Duncan charges the English Government with the chief responsibility for its disastrous end. He says:—

“The blunder lay with the English Government, which, with all the desire, had not the courage to take an official part in the Spanish contest by land. Like most blunders it carried its own retribution. An official share had ultimately, in a somewhat irregular manner, to be taken both by land and sea; and the collapse of the Legion was not the less injurious to England’s military reputation because it was a mercenary instead of a regular national force.”

Apart, however, from the lack of courage in the Government, it must be remembered that this War of Succession in Spain was regarded by English people as merely a conflict of parties, and that while the Government supported the Christinist side, there were many persons in England who subscribed large sums to enable Don Carlos to continue the struggle. The fact was that England had no real heart in the affair at all; consequently her efforts were doomed to failure from the outset, and a reviewer of this work has wisely observed that it would have been well for our country if she had taken in 1834 the course which she took in 1872, and

had let the Spaniards fight out their dynastic quarrels by themselves.

Major Duncan's object in writing an account of this period may not be at first very apparent, but those who knew him would understand his chivalrous desire not to permit any period in our military history, however unfortunate, to pass into oblivion. Moreover, there are even in this record some few bright pages, which show that Englishmen played a useful part in this war, and England may at least take credit to herself for the Eliot Convention, which to some extent put an end to the horrible cruelty hitherto so conspicuous on both sides.

Again, there is another point of view from which this history may be regarded. It may well furnish a warning to us, as a nation, never to interfere, unless obliged, in the affairs of our neighbours, and it teaches us that English soldiers, however excellent when fighting in defence of their own Empire, are ill-fitted to be mercenary troops—a fact which is surely to be received with satisfaction.

At the time that this book appeared, another was published from the pen of the same writer, entitled "*The Artillerist's Manual*," and as if the labour connected with these books was not sufficient, Duncan associated himself in 1876

with an undertaking which was destined to be a severe tax on even his indomitable energy.

It may be remembered that in Charles Kingsley's *Life* mention is made of the issuing of a Military Education Commission at the proposal of Lord Eustace Cecil, as early as 1868. It seems that the subject of military education had long been occupying the attention of the authorities, and Charles Kingsley's own view of it, though referring chiefly to Sandhurst, is, of course, valuable as that of so eminent a promoter of education.

Writing to a friend from Eversley, June 12th, 1868, he says, "You will not mend Sandhurst till you mend the education given at schools. A Sandhurst lad's time is taken up there in learning what he ought to have learnt at school." He refused to give evidence before the Military Education Committee, partly for fear lest he should seem to justify the press in raising an outcry for putting Sandhurst, and military education in general, under the control of the House of Commons. "That body," he wrote in a subsequent letter of July 15th of the same year, "has a great deal too much to do already; and the worst management possible for Sandhurst under military men would be better and more practical, than management by a House of Commons, who would make the

subject a party question. It is the duty of every soldier to preserve the Army for the Queen, and not to let it be pulled about hither and thither by a body the majority of which will more and more dislike, and long to abolish, the Army as an organ of authority and central order." ²

For several years this matter of military education was under consideration, and a series of papers on it was read at the Royal United Service Institution. In 1873 an article was printed in Colburne's *United Service Magazine*, which contained a *résumé* of these discussions. It pointed out the unsatisfactory state of the existing system of military education, and urged the necessity of supplying candidates for the Army with such an elementary training as should fit them for their future career.

No doubt there was a widespread feeling, especially among military men, in favour of some such proposition, and it was in order to give it expression in a practical form that the Oxford Military College was established. A Committee of Management at the same time was appointed, consisting of the late General Eardley-Wilmot, R.A., F.R.S., chairman, General Edward Wray, C.B., R.A., General Salusbury,

C.B., Colonel Loyd-Lindsay (now Lord Wantage), V.C., M.P., Major F. Duncan, R.A., LL.D., the Rev. G. W. Kitchen (now Dean of Winchester), M.A., Censor of Unattached Students, Oxford, Captain Marshall Hall, and many others.

Few of them probably understood or realized the difficulties of the task which they had undertaken. The proposed institution was in many respects unique, and consequently there was no model to work from, and there were no funds or endowment to work with. However, the Committee persevered, and in the face of all obstacles they opened the College in September, 1876, having framed a constitution for it which, with some modifications, has always been maintained.

And this is a very noteworthy point, for many other institutions of a similar nature have from time to time appeared, but, by the force of circumstances, they have had invariably to alter their character, and to succumb to the difficulty of attempting to reconcile the military with the academical department.

In this case the Tutors being composed almost entirely of Oxford men, were jealous for the honour of the classics, and could not tolerate so much prominence being given to mathematics, modern languages, and science. They looked,

too, with suspicion upon the technical instruction, which was the very *raison d'être* of the College, and resented the idea of the discipline being maintained on military lines. It therefore followed that in the early days of the Oxford Military College there were frequent changes in the teaching staff, which considerably impeded its progress, and damaged its reputation.

On the death of General Eardley-Wilmot on September 30th, 1877, Major Duncan, at the unanimous request of his colleagues, succeeded him in the Chairmanship of the Committee of Management, and no one who is not thoroughly conversant with the career of the College can imagine how great and manifold were the troubles with which for the next ten years it was constantly beset.

And yet it had much in its favour. H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge consented to be its Patron, and on the Council we find names distinguished in both military and civil life: *e.g.* those of the Archbishop of Dublin, the Marquis of Lorne, Lord Napier of Magdala, the Bishop of Oxford, Lord Waveney, General Probyn, and others. In addition, however, to the difficulties connected with the internal management of the College, it really seemed at times as if there must be evil spirits abroad specially

commissioned to create a popular prejudice against it, and to defame it. Rumours of the most mischievous kind were freely circulated. The students were supposed to be of the worst character, and it was generally believed that discipline and order were altogether ignored by them. Naturally, in such a state of things, the confidence of parents was shaken, the number of students increased, if at all, but slowly, and the pecuniary outlook was most gloomy.

"Longa est injuria, longæ ambages :" it would require, indeed, a volume, and a large one, to record in full the vicissitudes of this College in its early youth, and to relate how, more than once, its very existence was jeopardized. But were that history ever written it would plainly show that it was mainly due to the heroic courage and determination of one man—Francis Duncan—that the College successfully weathered all its storms, and entered, as it has, on a calm and prosperous course. Never can Duncan's friends forget how unceasingly he toiled for its good ; how he hunted far and near for pupils ; how carefully he made himself master of all that concerned it ; how he identified himself with its daily life, and regarded its anxieties and hopes, its sorrows and joys, as his own.

He had, it is true, excellent associates on the Board of Management, viz., General Wray, General Cameron, General Lowry, Colonel Loyd-Lindsay, Colonel Moncrieff, and Mr. Woolacott, but all of them would willingly acknowledge that Duncan bore the chief burden on his shoulders. Any worries or troubles in the College were referred at once to him, and his was the counsel first sought, and most readily given. In fact, there was not a single matter of any importance relating to the College of which he was ignorant; hardly a student who had not been brought to it by his influence, directly or indirectly, and, in its darkest days, when its financial position was so critical, he, with the loyalty and devotion which illumined his whole life, only laboured all the harder for the College, and rescued it from its peril. Up to the very last it occupied a large part of his thoughts, and nothing would have afforded him more sincere pleasure than to know that now, under the generous fostering care of Lord Wantage and other friends, its future seems to be secured, and that it has the fairest prospect of fulfilling to the utmost its most useful purpose.

Again and again, as we follow Duncan's career, we have cause to marvel at his insatiable greed of work. Here, for instance, at the very

time he was instructing Volunteer Artillerymen, superintending so strenuously and anxiously the affairs of the Oxford Military College, and writing his "History of the English in Spain," we find him also actively engaged in propagating throughout the country the doctrines and practices of the St. John Ambulance Association.

In 1875 he was admitted, at the instance of the late Sir Edward Perrott, into the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, and on the departure of Surgeon-Major Manley, V.C., for India, he took the place of that officer as Director of the Ambulance Department. At first his functions were limited to selling the St. John—otherwise the Neuss-Manley—litter, but he was not a man to be content with merely that duty. He believed in the grand possibilities of the Order, in its power to establish and develop a system of practical philanthropy, which would benefit the whole community. For this reason he threw himself heartily into the scheme of reviving the Hospitaller work of the Order on a more extended scale, and of training up, in time of peace, a national corps of men and women who shall be able to render efficient help to the wounded and suffering in time of war.

The need of such a band or society had been

long and keenly felt by General H. Brackenbury, Mr. John Furley and others, from what they had seen on the battle-field during the Franco-German war, in which they had served on the Staff of the National Aid Society. The testimony of General Brackenbury is particularly interesting. "Speaking," he says, "from experience attained through practically the whole Franco-German war, I may say that our greatest difficulty in helping the sick and wounded arose from a want of organization, previous to the outbreak of the war. In the first place we were acting with a staff of whom we knew previously little or nothing, and amongst those men it was natural there should be some who were not quite what we wanted. There were many practically untrained for work, and our greatest difficulty was experienced in finding competent trained men and women for the service, and excluding incompetent ones."

He tells us, moreover, that he had hoped that the National Aid Society would have established such an organization as was required, but that, finding it could not do so, both Mr. Furley and he urged the Order of St. John to undertake it in connection with the Ambulance Department.

Their original idea had reference solely to the exigencies of war, but the more it was thought out and discussed, the more plainly they saw how infinite its advantages might be at all times and seasons, and thus with true foresight the Chapter of the Order founded in 1877 that St. John Ambulance Association, which has long been esteemed one of the most beneficent institutions in the land.

The first centre opened was in Woolwich in 1878, and almost simultaneously classes were formed at Chelsea Barracks and Seven-oaks. Henceforward the Association increased its operations with amazing rapidity, and at the end of ten years from its birth it had enrolled some 300 centres at home, in India, and the Colonies, having 150,000 certificated pupils, and reckoning the number of persons who had attended its lectures at nearly 500,000. For so magnificent a success the gratitude of the Association, and indeed of all England, is, to a great extent, due to the Medical Profession. Instead of regarding the new movement as encroaching on its province, or interfering with its rights, it has, with a public spirit and a generosity beyond all praise, cordially welcomed it, and promoted its efforts with the most valuable help. In most

of the towns and districts where centres have been established, the members of this noble profession have readily offered their services, and that gratuitously, in instructing classes how to render first aid to the injured ; indeed, without the co-operation of the doctors, one can hardly imagine how the work would have progressed at all.

In addition to this necessary assistance, there was much to do in making known the principles of the St. John Ambulance Association. Here again Duncan came to the front. While several members of the Order laboured diligently for the same purpose, no one of them was so indefatigable or so enthusiastic as he. Notwithstanding other labours and other engagements, already enumerated, his was the voice most frequently heard in all parts of the country, explaining and exhorting ; his the eloquence which most effectually aroused a general interest in the cause.

After many a heavy day of military and literary work, with a correspondence equal to that of a modern Bishop, he would take a long railway journey to some far-off city or town to address a meeting, or open a centre of his beloved Ambulance Association, and then travel the greater part of the night, so as to be at his

post of duty in Woolwich early the next morning.

One who knew Francis Duncan well, and was officially associated with him in the work of the Order of St. John, says of him, "For the enlightened views which prevail on the subject of giving first aid to the injured, the world is mainly indebted to this Christian soldier. His large heart was open to aid every project to relieve the distressed, to protect the tempted, and to assist all who desired to advance in the path of honest industry."

This testimony is most true ; for certainly to Francis Duncan belonged in a high degree the title of a Christian soldier, and he manifested his principles by that intense anxiety to labour in the service of God and man, to which he eventually sacrificed his life. It was also very noticeable in him that he had in abundance that particular kind of Christian charity which thinketh no evil. His knowledge of human nature, acquired in different parts of the world, was of course considerable, and his dealings with men were so many and so varied that he was necessarily brought at times into contact with some who were not as noble-minded as himself, but still the tendency of his generous nature was always to discount the bad

in any character, and to insist on finding in it some element of good.

And this was one of the secrets of his exceeding popularity, and of his power of attaching people to him. He made them think better of themselves, and he encouraged them by the charm of his own cheery hopefulness to make their lives useful, and to strive earnestly, as he did; for the welfare of others. He showed his faith, if ever a man did, by his works, but at the same time he valued doctrine as well as practice, and though, as we have seen, he was often overburdened by his many undertakings, he nevertheless managed for several years to devote part of each Sunday to teaching a class of senior boys in the Garrison Sunday-school at Woolwich.

I am indebted to one of the members of this class for kindly sending me his recollections of it.

"It was," he says, "about 1870, that Colonel Duncan undertook the instruction of the class which consisted of some twenty or twenty-five boys, and although there were a few changes, mostly caused by removal from the town, the constitution of the class remained pretty much the same for about ten years.

"There was only one break in its continuity,

when Colonel Duncan was ordered to Jamaica, and had to take leave of his class, between whom and himself there had been developed a feeling of deep affection. The boys had been photographed in a group, and presented the portrait to him on the Sunday afternoon, when, with tears which the manly soldier could not restrain, he bade them farewell. To the delight of the class, Colonel Duncan was not detained so long in Jamaica as he had expected, and when he returned and expressed his desire to teach them again, they gladly responded to the invitation.

“Most of the boys were now verging on man’s estate, and Colonel Duncan, perceiving that there would be some incongruity in continuing the instruction at a Sunday-school, invited them to meet him every Sunday afternoon at his house, 29, The Common. So the class went on for several years longer, until a short time before Colonel Duncan went to Egypt. The members assembled once again, but it was a sorrowful meeting, when at short notice a dozen of them met at the graveside in Charlton Cemetery, to pay the last tribute of respect to the teacher whom they loved so well.

“The books which Colonel Duncan read to

his class with scholarly and interesting explanation and comment, were :—Dean Stanley's 'History of the Jewish Church,' and his work on the 'Epistles to the Corinthians,' Dr. Pusey's Minor Prophets,' Archdeacon Farrar's 'Life of Christ,' and his 'Life and Work of St. Paul,' and Dean Howson's 'Life and Travels of St. Paul.'

"The attractiveness and value of his teaching, and the enduring influence which he exercised over his pupils, were forcibly demonstrated by the fact that those who joined the class as boys of thirteen or fourteen were glad to have the opportunity of attending it when they became young men of twenty-two or twenty-three. They recognized in their teacher one who showed by the evidence of his own life that the religion of Christ is a thing beautiful, manly, unselfish, real.

"Colonel Duncan's method in the instruction of his 'boys'—as he always continued to call them—was first to implant in their minds a firm conviction of the truth of revelation, and secondly to impress upon them the nobility of a Christian life. He never avoided any difficulties in Scripture subjects, and he gave his class such a thorough grounding in the evidences of Christianity as to place them beyond the reach of agnosticism, or any other form of un-

belief. The reading of Farrar's 'Life of Christ' enabled him to root in their minds that Christ was not only their Redeemer, but a Master of whom they should never be ashamed—the very perfection and example of all to be admired in man.

"One further fact in connection with this class must not be omitted. All these boys had to be the architects of their own fortunes, and there is not one of them who is now anywhere near the bottom of the ladder in his particular calling. Two have distinguished themselves at the Universities, and one of these, whose zeal in the Master's cause may be traced to the teaching of Colonel Duncan, is working as a missionary of the Church of England in India. Eight at least have passed for the Civil Service, taking for the most part high places at the examination, including a first and a second."

But it is for far more than worldly success that these young men owe an infinite debt of gratitude to the warm-hearted Christian soldier, who taught them by prayer and purity to fight the good fight of faith, and led them to see that difficulties exist in life's course only to be overcome. He equipped them, not merely for time, but for eternity. His work indeed is done, but in the story of this Sunday class we

have learnt that its fruit remains, is permanent.
And surely the same may be said of much else
that he achieved so bravely, so earnestly. For
how true it is, that

“ Good deeds immortal are—they cannot die :
Unscathed by envious blight or withering frost
They live, and bud and bloom ; and men partake
Still of their freshness, and are strong thereby.”²

Aytoun.

CHAPTER V.

Lecture on "Is Life Worth Living?"—If selfish, certainly not—Carlyle on society—Why life was given—Different kinds of philanthropy—Effects of re-creating self-esteem—Work and labour—Our duties to one another—Courage needed—Advantage of difficulties and troubles—Work for the individual and for the race—The future state—Our time short—An unselfish life worth living.

SOON after Colonel Duncan joined the St. John Ambulance Association he delivered a lecture on the subject "Is Life Worth Living?" which I am glad to be able to give in full, as it reveals to us most clearly something of the motive principle of his indomitable zeal and activity.

It deals, moreover, with a question which is always more or less in the minds of men, and its purpose evidently is to controvert that withering philosophy of despair, which, unchecked, would sap all the charm and sweetness of our being.

"IS LIFE WORTH LIVING?"

"The question has been recently discussed by many able, many cynical, some weary and

miserable, and not a few disappointed men. As a rule it has been discussed from a purely personal point of view, and hence the too frequently negative answer.

"A life which is only to be regarded as affecting the progress, comfort, and happiness of the liver, is, I do not hesitate to say, not worth living. You can kill the body by covering it over with enamel, so that the pores cannot act ; you can kill the divine in a man's nature by stifling the sympathies which are the pores and the senses of a man's soul.

"The key-note of my few words to-night will therefore be that a life is not worth living which is a sluggish or a selfish one.

"Carlyle said, 'Society is the genial element wherein a man's nature lives and grows. The solitary man were but a small portion of himself, and must for ever continue folded in, stunted and only half alive.' Of such a man, blossoming with no good works or genial sympathies, the fiat might well go forth, 'Cut it down ; why cumbereth it the ground ?'

"Life was not given us for the sake of living, but for a higher aim. We were not supposed to hide it in a napkin of luxurious isolation, free from exposure alike to the bleak winds of suffering, and the radiance of affection and

gratitude. The friction of troubles and difficulties will only make the metal shine more brilliantly, and reflect more clearly the image and superscription of the Creator.

“And the advance of perfect civilization, which is the advance of Christianity, shows that the duties of a man to his fellows are assuming, year by year, increased attention and importance. The second table of the law is more closely studied, and the question ‘Who is my neighbour?’ is asked in a longing desire to find a new subject for sympathy and relief. It is a grand development, wanting yet greater widening and more workers, but still an earnest of the life which beyond, as here, will be found worth living.

“The existence of much sham charity and philanthropy, or much misdirected and demoralizing zeal and kindness, must not have a deterrent effect. There is a boastful and commercial charity, an advertisement by a degraded man for a mean purpose; there is a lazy philanthropy—meant to get rid of importunate beggars, or to stifle pangs still lingering in a conscience suffering somewhat from fatty degeneration; these are the base coin in the world’s treasury, the utterers of which are more truly selfish than the timid creature who shrinks

within four narrowing walls to escape the troubles and temptations of the world. And there is a mechanical charity, attended by much trumpeting and organization, which gives a man's alms by contract, through channels full of method, and honesty, and skill, but too often without the heart and the affection which double the value of the gift, and make lifelong the gratitude to the giver. Not that I attach overmuch value to mere gratitude. It is good, encouraging, and humanizing, but it is not enough. To my mind, the doing of a kind act is especially valuable, if done in such a way as to awaken the dormant self-respect in the recipient. *Largesse*, flung recklessly, demoralizes. Assistance, given with shrewdness and sympathy, reclaims. The most degraded creature, on being treated with kind words and sympathetic allusions to a possible future, instead of a wicked past, asks himself whether for himself there is not yet hope. His self-respect returns, and by judicious kindness you have replaced him on the pedestal of humanity. To put the poor in the lap of luxury is a questionable boon, but to recreate the self-esteem, which is God's barometer of a man's morals, is a sure way of making the dry and useless and decaying bones live.

"And the opportunities of doing this are in-

cessant. Half the energy which might make life worth living is spent in beating the air with empty resolutions, and making it echo with empty vows. Innumerable efforts consume themselves in empty eddies ; whole multitudes in painful unreason spend and are spent on what can never profit.

“ Work means more than labour ; it means recuperative labour. Labour which shows no result is enervating and unnatural ; we are expected to be patient, but we are ordered to be confident. Uncertainty as to the result of our work is up to a certain point useful ; it makes us modest, anxious, and watchful. But if there is no hope of a harvest, we sow with listless hand, and a hardening heart.

“ Now, as in the natural world, labour, hope, and confidence will convert the wilderness into a garden, so in the moral and social world the same agents will convert a life, which at first sight terrifies, into one eminently worth living. I put on one side the purely religious ground, and speak of our labourers’ duties simply from the standpoint we occupy as citizens and brethren. We are placed in a world where these duties are not light, but in which they become heavier by neglect. If we decline the responsibility of becoming our brother’s keeper, our punishment

will meet us as surely as if we defied any sanitary or dietetic laws. And as we would flee—terror-stricken if not plague-stricken—from any place where precautions against fever and accident were neglected and defied, so from a life in which there was no sympathetic union, no mutual relief, no work save for personal aggrandizement or selfish comfort, we should find it necessary to flee as from one not worth living.

“ But who are we that we should reclaim the world ? As well might the soldier say, ‘ Who am I that I should win the battle ? ’ If every man is faint-hearted, there can be no victory ; but if every man is determined and confident, the victory is almost won already. It is the nature of difficulties to vanish when faced with courage : desperation itself ceases to be desperate when we deliberately lay siege to it. And although in the aggregate the misery, and crime, and suffering in the world make a man of even self-conceit almost hopeless, in the particular he will find *some* trouble, the removal of which is not beyond his calibre ; *some* criminal or sufferer yet able to submit to guidance, or to accept relief. It is like reaping a long rank growth of vegetation, so high that there is no horizon ; and yet every movement of the scythe brings one nearer the edge, and, ere long, over—it may be—much

steaming morass, and unwholesome pools, and unexpected rocks, the horizon comes, and all that is to be seen behind is conquered difficulties and prostrate weeds. The stretching peaceful horizon is all the more beautiful for the labour that is past.

“Indeed it may be said that if taken in the right spirit the difficulties and troubles of life intensify the pleasure of living. The pleasures of the day gain by the alternation of the night ; so do the satisfactions attending the performance of honest and useful work, the earning of genuine and loyal gratitude, atone for the sweat and burden of tasks, unpalatable and irksome. Nothing is a prize which requires no-winning. Nor is the nature of a man raised by lotus-eating, and brooding. Work is the best tonic and the best schoolmaster. The very prospect of work is as exhilarating to a man in good moral and physical health, as to the same man the prospect of a vegetable existence is a subject of dread.

“A life of inaction, in a land where the rivers ran with wine, and the trees were bowed down with baked meats, would produce but flabby specimens of humanity, and would not be worth living. In the time of much social trouble in England, now happily gone by, a powerful

writer said : " Men may have sumptuous garnitures for their lives, and yet have forgotten to *live* in the middle of them. Are they better, beautifuller, stronger, braver ? Are they even what they call happier ? Do they look with satisfaction on more things and human faces, in this God's earth ? Do more things and human faces look with satisfaction on them ? "

" And it was the same writer who said in the same pages to men who were clinging to the lotus-eating because the task of working seemed so utterly beyond their means and their powers, ' We pray you, let the word *impossible* disappear from your vocabulary. It is of awful omen ; to all of us, and to yourselves first of all. '

The work to be done by us for our *individual* fellows should take the form of relief, sympathy and education. The work done for them as a *race*, should take the form of contributions to science and literature. And a failure on either one of these heads or another seems to me to be a neglect of our life's aim.

" A very plaintive and painful series of articles appeared lately in an important magazine on the question of a future state. Many eminent men took a pessimist view, and assumed that death was obliteration. But one of these replied to the argument, that the absence of

another existence removed motive for exertion in this, by words which were noble and might well influence those who, like ourselves, believe in a world which shall set this one right.

“ ‘ Even if obliteration of my personality follows,’ he wrote, ‘ my ideas may have eternal life.’ It is my duty to add to the sum of human knowledge, and to the general advancement of the race. If I have done so, I shall still live, although as an individual of the race, I may have ceased to have any being.

“ If, my friends, a man without our precious hope can feel so high a sense of duty to the race, how much more should *we* feel? The hours given us for work are at the most but few ; — they should be very precious. Those of you who have reached middle age will know how precious these remaining hours. Youth is like a brimming purse whose contents seem endless. As the golden coins get fewer, they seem to disappear more rapidly, and for the first time their true value is appreciated. The change into which our life’s coins can best be turned, if we would make each hour of it worth living, is that of good works. Let no man suffer whom we can relieve : no man be sad whom we can gladden.

“ What shall I say to cheer those of us who have so many troubles of their own that the bearing of another’s burdens may seem a reck-

less tempting of Providence? The sympathy of the poor with the poor is so proverbial that I may seem impertinent in suggesting the possibility of any stimulus being required. But there are, amongst the poor as among the rich, men who think their own burden as much if not more than they can carry. Do not be low in courage. Brooding over one's troubles, as much as nursing one's own riches and hopes, makes a man's sympathies shrivel up and his own burden none the lighter. '*E pluribus unum*' is a good motto for a man as well as a nation. A man is not *whole* in moral health, while not sharing in the regeneration of the other *parts* of the human race. It is dark and distasteful work, but it is a grand education. It is in a dark cage that the singing-bird is taught to sing the desired notes. It may be that it is only in the darkness of a troubled but temporary life we are able to learn by approximation the notes, which in full vigour and harmony we shall utter when troubles are no more. '*Pro gloria Dei*' is the natural outcome of '*pro utilitate hominum*.' A life lived with a high and unselfish aim is done for the latter; it will be found worth living here, and when the last milestone between us and the river is past, we shall be on the eve of learning that a sympathetic, active, and unselfish life is still before us."

CHAPTER VI.

Called to Egypt to train native artillery—Assists Lady Strangford in establishing Victoria Hospital—Military sports in Egypt—Letters from Cairo—Cholera—Heat—Two months' leave—Returns to Egypt—At Assouan—Sends home refugees from General Gordon—Threatening letters from the Mahdi—Proceeds to Korosko.

AT the end of 1882 a sudden and unexpected change took place in this busy life.

After the overthrow of Arabi at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir on Wednesday, September 13th of that year, the English Government, not only reinstated the Khedive¹ in his authority, but also undertook to re-organize and train the native Egyptian Army. Hence it came about that on December 28th Sir Evelyn Wood telegraphed to Major Duncan, asking him to join him at once in Egypt and to take command of the Egyptian Artillery.

He accepted the invitation cheerfully, partly because he regarded it as a compliment from so distinguished an officer, and partly because he felt that it would give him the opportunity of

¹ The late Mahomed Tewfik Pasha.

gaining an experience which would always be valuable to him. His Amulance work, too, had already aroused in him a deep interest in Egyptian affairs, for only a few months before he had been directed by the Order of St. John to assist Viscountess Strangford in the establishment of her well-known hospital in Cairo.

This hospital was originally intended for the refugees in Alexandria, but before Lady Strangford could reach that city the war was virtually over, and all the refugees had left it, and had been conveyed to Malta, Trieste, Cyprus, and other places. On her arrival at Alexandria, she tells us, the Khedive received her with welcome, and said to her most earnestly : " There are no refugees here, will you go and nurse my poor soldiers ? "

She assented, and under the charge of H.E. Salem Pasha proceeded to Cairo, where with the aid of Mr. Herbert Sieveking, an English surgeon, and a staff of English nurses, she immediately began her work in a house which had been recently occupied by the rebel Arabi. To her surprise she found that, in addition to the crowds of Arab soldiers whom she had promised to nurse, the hotels in Cairo were being rapidly filled with English officers, sick and wounded. These she ordered to be moved to her hospital, so that they might be

tended by her own nurses ; and in doing this she acted, not merely from a sentiment of patriotism, but also in accordance with the wish of the Director-General of the Army Medical Department, who had instructed her that, in the event of assistance being required, she should hold her staff, and all else, at the disposal of the Surgeon-General-in-charge in the field.

After the hospital had been put into thoroughly working order, and while it was discharging its humane office, H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught visited it on October 24th, and was so much pleased with all that he saw that, as Lady Strangford observes, "With the appreciative sympathy for which our Royal Family are so remarkable, he said : ' But this good work must not come to an end ! I do hope you will make it permanent ; you *must* make it permanent.' "

Now there was a serious impediment in the way of such a design. The Order of St. John had up to this time been responsible for the funds necessary for the maintenance of the hospital, and Major Duncan had exerted himself to the utmost to obtain them ; indeed his anxiety on this account was excessive, and there seemed a great probability of the hospital being closed.

This disaster, however, was fortunately averted by a friend, Mr. Ralph Lopes, who, in gratitude for the care and skill bestowed at the

hospital on his son—Captain Henry Lopes, Highland Light Infantry—and wishing to secure the same for others, sent Lady Strangford a large sum which he had collected. Besides this, before the end of the year, the Egyptian Government, on the recommendation of Sir Auckland Colvin, made a grant to the hospital of 2000*l.*, which it was to continue to receive so long as it proved itself useful.

The permanence of the hospital was now secured, but hitherto it had had no title. “It was suggested,” Lady Strangford says, “to call it ‘The St. John’s Hospital,’ in allusion to the Refugee Relief Fund, which had brought us to Egypt, and which was initiated by the St. John Ambulance Association ; while we ourselves wished it to be called ‘The Connaught,’ after the first friend who had expressed a hope of its permanent success. But when these names were mentioned to the Khedive, His Highness promptly replied,—

“ ‘My people do not yet have that sound in their ears ; but there is not a *fellah* now who does not know the name of the Queen of England, and the meaning of it. I wish it to be called ‘The Victoria Hospital,’ and I will be its Patron.’ Of course we gladly obeyed, and the name was at once painted on the four sides of the house, both in English and Arabic.”

Her Majesty also was graciously pleased to be a Patron of the Hospital, and thus another work closely identified with Major Duncan was established, and he had the satisfaction when he went to Egypt at the beginning of 1883 of serving on the Committee, and of seeing himself the beneficial result of what his own untiring labours had to a large extent effected.

No sooner had Duncan landed in Egypt than he set himself with characteristic zeal to the task assigned him by Sir Evelyn Wood. His frank and genial bearing soon won the confidence of the native troops, and the improvement he wrought in them was as thorough as it was rapid.

Happily I am able to reproduce in his own words something of his experience in Egypt, from letters addressed by him to a friend in England, copies of which have been kindly placed at my disposal.

Writing from Cairo, February 11th, 1883, he gives an account of some sports held near that city, for the purpose, as it seems, of exciting friendly rivalry among the troops.

"The sports went off yesterday, and were most successful from *every* point of view. The Khedive was nervous lest the English should

laugh at the first attempt of the Egyptians, but Sir Evelyn Wood reassured him, and told him that he was confident that my arrangements would be all right. We got two magnificent satin-lined pavilions on loan from the Khedive, which we placed facing towards the Palace Gardens, and with the Pyramids of Ghizeh as a background. We flanked the tents with our guns, and had an Egyptian Guard-of-honour and an Egyptian band to receive the Princes and Sir Evelyn Wood. I got Lady Wood and the Minister of War to distribute the prizes. The Premier, Cherif Pasha, took to the idea at once, and attended in State with all the Cabinet ! So did Lord and Lady Dufferin, Sir E. Malet, the Dukes of Sutherland and Hamilton, Lord Caithness, Sir S. Baker, Sir A. Horsford, Sir A. Alison, and all the English officers, and hundreds upon hundreds of the English and Arab population.

“Everyone pronounced the day a most successful one, and the cavalry and the infantry of the new army will follow our example at once. My hope that the games would stir up a healthy emulation between the men was fully realized. Their excitement over the tug-of-war and the steeple-chase was intense, and extended far beyond the actual competitors.

"There were some very amusing things. When the three first in the sack-race came up to get their prizes, they hopped up in their sacks. We commenced to unloose the sacks at the neck, that they might get their hands out, but hastily closed them on finding that they had *stripped completely* before getting into the sacks !"

"Cairo, Egypt, April 6th, 1883.

"You ask why I speak *Turkish*. It is a curious thing, but we instruct the men in *Arabic*, and give the words of command in *Turkish*. The latter is as strange a language to our men as to ourselves ; but it is retained in the army."

"Cairo, Egypt, June 4th, 1883.

"The heat is great now. Strong as I am, I feel it, and would feel it more were I not so incessantly at work. When I turn in at night I am so dead beat that I sleep without moving until called again next morning. The country is in a very unsettled state. The Internationalists have introduced themselves, and are making use of the unemployed Arabist officers, and the officers dismissed by Sir Evelyn Wood for inefficiency, and meetings are being held, and threatening letters written. The Khedive, Sir

E. Malet, and Sir E. Wood, have all been threatened ; and massacres are spoken of as soon as the English troops go. I believe they are good enough to name us English officers of the Egyptian Army as the first to be killed. The police are very inefficient as yet, or they would not allow matters to go as far as they have. I don't anticipate any trouble with our own Egyptian officers and men, but assassination from outside is a difficult thing to guard against. I hope everything will be quiet before September, as, of course, one could not quit one's post with all this in the air."

"Cairo, Egypt, July 6th, 1883.

"There is a good deal of excitement here owing to the appearance of cholera, and there is quite an exodus of Europeans, except military. If the disease does not reach Cairo before the 18th, Sir Evelyn Wood is going home for two months, General Grenfell will do his work, and I shall remain General of his Brigade, as well as in command of the Artillery. . . .

"The annual inspection of my Artillery came off on Monday, and in addition to Sir E. Wood there was General Stephenson, who commands the Army of Occupation, and many English officers. Six months ago my men were in

blankets in their native villages. On Monday they were driving the guns at a gallop over rough ground ; firing them, and manœuvring as steadily as old troops. Sir Evelyn Wood told me yesterday that he has sent a report on it to the Khedive, and a duplicate to the Duke of Cambridge, in which he said that the performance amazed him, and he did not know whether to admire most the steadiness of the gunners, or the wonderful riding and driving of the drivers. He wrote in glowing terms of my English officers and myself.

“ It is very amusing to see all the little Arab boys in the streets drawing themselves up to attention, and giving a military salute when they see an English officer, and their delight when we return it.

“ If we stay long enough we shall make a wonderful change in the people. It is unfortunate that the cholera has appeared at the commencement of the Fast of the Ramadan. It lasts a month, and is strictly kept ; it is very weakening, and must predispose people to disease. We are scheming all sorts of amusements for the men, to keep them cheerful.”

“ Cholera Camp, six miles out of Cairo,

“ July 29th, 1883.

“ Although I have never a day without new

cases among my men, the number of deaths is on the wane, and the disease seems less virulent. We shift our camp every day, and the work and heat are both severe. . . . I was in excellent health until the day before yesterday, when I got a touch of the sun, followed by fever. . . . To-day I am all right, although very weak."

"Cholera Camp, Koubeh, near Cairo,
"August 6th, 1883.

"We have only had one case in our camp in five days ; so I am getting quite cheerful. But the heat is quite awful, and nearly bowled me out on Saturday. I had to ride twelve miles across the desert at a smart gallop at midday, on very urgent duty, and was so tired and hot at the end that I placed myself outside two bottles of ginger ale, and a glass of brandy as a pick-me-up. Soon afterwards I as nearly as possible had heat apoplexy, and only escaped it by applications of ice to my head for hours. . . . (Our discomfort) culminated in my finding a scorpion last night at the foot of my bed."

"Cairo, Egypt, August 10th, 1883.

"No fresh cases of cholera having occurred in the Egyptian Army for some days, Sir Evelyn Wood—who has been suffering greatly from neuralgia in the head—goes home to-

morrow, on leave. As the Surveyor-General has also broken down with over-work . . . Sir Evelyn has asked me to be Surveyor-General while he is away, in addition to my other work. . . . I would not have agreed to leave the camp if any of my men were ill. Happily I think the disease is stamped out with us."

"Cairo, August 17th, 1883.

"The heat here is getting very oppressive, and I am getting quite thin ! I am very much out of sorts, cannot eat, and the sand-flies won't let me sleep. If I get worse I shall start for England early next month ; but if I can hold out to the end I will, as I should like to see the last of the cholera before leaving my post. . . . The Khedive has sent us his very warm thanks ; and a strong despatch—in which I figured beyond my deserts—has been sent by Sir Evelyn Wood to the Queen, the Duke, and Lord Granville."

"Cairo, September 27th, 1883.

"If all goes well my steamer—the *Australia*—leaves Port Said on the 10th October, and, as we do not call anywhere, I hope to be in England on the 22nd. I am busy with experiments with gatlings and rockets for the Soudan, but I hope to finish them all in time."

“Cairo, October 7th, 1883.

“We start in three days, and I sorely need it (*i.e.* the change). I said ‘Good-bye’ to the Khedive this morning. He said I had done the work of two men, and that he could not thank me enough. He said that he saw how much I needed a change, and that he hoped I would return again strong and well.”

After an absence of two months, on leave, the letters to the same friend are continued.

“Cairo, December 20th, 1883.

“I reached Alexandria yesterday, and Cairo to-day. Sir Evelyn and all my officers, except two who are very ill, met me at the station, and seemed glad to have me back.”

“Cairo, Egypt, January 7th, 1884.

“Things are in a very unsettled state here, and if—as is too probable—Khartoum falls, we shall go to Assouan. I am very busy organizing additional batteries, and training recruits. It is horribly cold this winter, and the houses are not suited to such weather.”

“Cairo, February 29th, 1884.

“I am just starting for Assouan. In addition to the command of the troops there, I am selected to assist the refugees whom Gordon is to send

down, and send them to their homes ; also to pay and discharge various garrisons whose evacuation from the Soudan Gordon is having arranged. In all about 18,000 men, women, and children, will pass through my hands during the next three weeks. The work ought to be very interesting." . . .

"Assouan, Egypt, March 21st, 1884.

"The weather here is very charming just now, especially in the morning and evening. My work here is manifold, but very interesting, and my power in Upper Egypt is as absolute as Gordon's at Khartoum.

"Since my arrival I have been sleeping on board a steamer above the cataract, close to the Island of Philæ. There is there the ruin—in excellent preservation—of a Roman Temple, which by moonlight looks marvellously beautiful. There is also an inscription to the effect that in 1799, 'the seventh year of the Republic,' a division of General Bonaparte's army reached this—the boundary of Egypt—in pursuit of the Mamelukes. The Greeks were also here : and now the Anglo-Egyptian army.

"I came on in advance of my Brigade, and until the day before yesterday I was the only Englishman within some days' journey. But by

looking as if the place belonged to me, and by being perfectly just to the natives, I have had no trouble whatever, and have gone about everywhere alone and unarmed.

"My Brigade has now arrived, and I have encamped them on the hills on the east bank of the Nile, about 300 feet above the river. I move into camp to-morrow myself. A good many of the people from Khartoum have arrived, and have been sent by me to their homes . . . I have quite a fleet of steamers and sailing ships under my orders, to do as I like with, until the evacuation of the Soudan is complete.

"I am intrenching several positions against any invasion from the south, and when they are ready I hope the Mahdi will give us something to do. In the meanwhile, I have enough work to make night come round before I can believe it. I hope to finish the Soudan work, and the dismantling of the Wadi Halfa Railway by May, and then shall go to Cairo for a bit to escape the hottest part of the weather here, and to organize Turkish batteries for the Red Sea."

"Assouan, Upper Egypt,

"April 16th, 1884.

"The men are behaving very well ; and I have

intrenched and strengthened our position, so that they ought to fight. I *think* they will. They have had fifteen months' training, and are very different from the raw levies of Baker's, which made so sorry a show."

"Assouan, Upper Egypt,

"April 25th, 1884.

"The heat is truly awful, but dry; and my work does not give me much time to think. My fortifications are finished, and the men are behaving very well. I am carrying on the evacuation of the Soudan—a great mistake—very quickly, and also the dismantling of the Soudan Railway. . . .

"We had a new sensation yesterday. I got an anonymous letter in Arabic, in the name of the Mahdi, informing me that if I and my English officers do not clear out of Egypt at once, we are to be murdered. We have not taken our passages, however, and I look on the letter as a healthy sign of alarm. It will be an interesting trophy to frame, after I am out of the house of bondage."²

"On the way to Korosko, Upper Egypt,

"June 4th, 1884.

"How I shall enjoy a good dinner again after

² See pp. 102-3 for Arabic letter and translation.

the miserable and monotonous fare we have here ! I am on my way with 150 men to Korosko, about two days' steaming, a place from which we have had disquieting news.

"As they continue reinforcing me at Assouan, I am going to place a whole battalion and some guns at Korosko, and the same at Wady Halfa. That will still leave me three battalions at Assouan, besides cavalry and artillery.

"My Egyptians continue to behave very well, and their powers of work and endurance are remarkable."

"On board a Transport between Assouan

"and Korosko, July 24th, 1884.

"I have completed the defences of Assouan, and am now moving south to take the command of the troops at the front—at Wady Halfa and Korosko. It has been very satisfactory to me before leaving Assouan, that I received the thanks of the Khedive and Sir Evelyn Wood and an address from the inhabitants. I shall have a good deal of hard work again now ; but the hottest weather is over, and I continue to enjoy excellent health. If there is to be any fighting, it must be within the next three months, and in five months my term of service expires, and I return to civilization."

[See p. 100.]

من قبایل وادی الكنوز الاشراف

الى الافرنج الزاعمين انهم رؤساجيوش باصوان

علموا اننا اشراف مناذريه نجم الدين والخليفه محمد احمد وزير المهدي ما هو الامن قبائلنا من ذريه نجم الدين وما من قبيله بالسودان شرقا وغربا من دنقله وصاعد الامنها قبيله تدد عليها بالكنوز وغيرها من البلاد التي نجستوها وقد وردت لنا اوامر الشريف محمد احمد بطردكم وتبعيدكم من اماكن الطاهرين ما صواب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فالان وجب علينا من طبتكم اولا بتبعيدكم عن اماكن الطاهوه مقابر اسياذكم الاشراف وكلو عكم من قطر مصر محالا تباعدوا والافقد وجب علينا قتلكم يا اهل الكفر ومن يتبعكم من المسلمين والكلاب اهل الشلال وحرونالكم هذا سرا بغير اسما لاجل منم الخطابات بيننا وبينكم فبادروا بالهروب الي بلادكم انتم وكل كافر الانصارة بلادنا حماية العرب من قديم الزمان واعلموا ان قوت العرب زايدهم وبطشهم شديد ولخبه تحت ظل السيوف فلانبرم عنكم يا هل الكفر حتي نهلككم واحد ولا تفركم علام عزدون الميعين ولا نلاوه حن المخادعين لكم ظاهرا الضامرنب على هلا حكم امرنا الوزير معلو الي بلادكم وارفعو ايديكم عن الهند لعلك اسر الاسلام من ايدي الكفر وباعد وبن الله قربنا الفواتم بعدم طلوع سر ولو عملتوا بصد حبن بعد دنا كما امرت سلالة الاشراف ممهد الارض باليقين وكل من رضى بالكفر من المسلمين وجب قتاله وعلي الله غداية يوم الوعيد ولو كان سلطان عبد الحميد ادخلو الله لابادي فيكم والميصاد قريب

بجال شرق عزب *

[See p. 100.]

[Translation.]

FROM THE TRIBE OF WADY EL KENORS.

*To the Europeans who consider themselves the Chiefs of
the Army at Assouan.*

You must bear in mind that we are honourable fellows and descendants of the Prophet Mohamed Ahmad, who is from our tribe. You should also know that our tribe is the most renowned amongst all tribes, from Dongola and upwards.

We have received orders from the Prophet Mohamed Ahmad to drive you away and to clear the holy place from you. This is a warning to you so that you may leave the holy places destined for your masters the believers in the prophet. You should also clear away from Egypt, and if you do not comply with our orders you may be sure that you will all be destroyed, you infidels, with the inhabitants of the Shallal, the dogs, who have joined you.

We send this unanimous letter to you without seals, so that you may not be encouraged to answer it ; we do not want to keep any communications with you, and you had better leave the place without delay, unless you all will be destroyed by our swords.

It is also the desire of our prophet that you should go back to your country and evacuate India, so that the Islams may be emancipated from the hands of the infidels.

CHAPTER VII.

The representation of Finsbury—Appointed Station-Commandant at Korosko—Lord Wolseley—Success of Canadians in athletic sports—At Wady Halfa—Murder of General Gordon—Lecture on the Nile Expedition—Arbitrates at Assouan—Cuzzi—Long line of communications—Devotion of Medical Staff—Effects of Nile Expedition—Excellent conduct and courage of English troops.

ONE of Colonel Duncan's letters from Egypt at this time contains a reference of some importance in view of his future parliamentary career.

"You sent me a newspaper with a marked passage about my candidature for Finsbury.

"What has occurred is this. I wrote resigning on the ground of my absence here, and suggesting another candidate. They answered, saying, that they would not ask me to run if an election occurred in my absence, but that they would not have another candidate if I were at home, and that they had arranged for all my expenses. So I have not written again on the subject. It will be time enough when I get home, for it is clear that there will be no general election for a long time."

“Korosko, Upper Egypt,
“August 13th, 1884.

“Head winds have kept back our ration and store boats ; and if they do not come soon, we shall have to allowance ourselves.

“I think our demonstration and the fortifying of our several points on the frontier have had the effect of checking the Mahdi's advance ; but a forward movement on our part will be necessary soon, if Gordon is to be got out.”

“Wady Halfa, Upper Egypt,
“October 29th, 1884.

“I have been, and am, so busy since I was made the Station Commandant at this the most important point on the line of communications, that my private correspondence has dwindled away terribly.

“But the arrival of the Canadians here the day before yesterday, and the generous supply of newspapers from you, and Boardman's ¹ presence here, all remind me that I ought to write to you, however tired and however busy . . .

“I am sorry that there are no Nova Scotians nor New Brunswickers among the Canadians, although they are a fine-looking set of men altogether. They affect or feel the greatest con-

¹ Captain Boardman, R.N.

tempt for the Nile Cataracts, and are always asking when they are going to begin !

“ I must say of Lord Wolseley that he has one great talent as a general. He certainly inspires confidence, and he is *very* cheery about our business now.

“ The Egyptian army is doing splendid work, and is having justice done to it at last ; and the Artillery is admired most of all. We are moving them all to the front, and I have every confidence in them.”

“ Wady Halfa, Upper Egypt,

“ December 27th, 1884.

“ Things are going on rather slowly, but very surely, and every one is doing his level best. I have no doubt as to the result, but am very doubtful as to the time of our finishing it. I hope the policy which I have always advocated—holding on to Khartoum—will be followed after all ; it would simplify matters very much.

“ The Canadians are beginning to find the work very hard ; the river is so low ; but they are giving every satisfaction.” . . .

“ Wady Halfa, Upper Egypt,

“ January 26th, 1885.

“ This is the first day of our athletic sports, and I have brought out an evening paper, of which I enclose you a copy. A little nonsense

oils the wheels of life. Three hundred Canadians are here, and have entered their names for a good many events. Everyone tells me that the Indians did best on the cataracts." . . .

"Wady Halfa, January 27th, 1885.

"The sports are over ; and I confess that I am almost sorry that the Canadians walked away with everything.

"At the tug-of-war they produced simply a gigantic team, which pulled regiment after regiment, and sailors also, across the line like so many children. They also won the steeple-chase, the wide jump, and the half-mile. In the last named they had both the first and second places. They were ungainly to look at, badly dressed, without any manners to speak of, but with a certain amount of natural chivalry. The team which troubled them most was from the 19th Hussars, and they cheered it tremendously ; and, uncouth in one way as they were—with torn clothes after their heavy work—they received the prizes from a hospital sister with much quiet grace."

"Wady Halfa, Upper Egypt,

"February 7th, 1885.

"The bad news from Khartoum has already produced such a crop of telegrams for me, in-

volving increased work, if possible. It is very disheartening, that just as success seemed imminent, and Gordon free, the cup should have been dashed from our lips.

"I do not imagine we can be home before autumn, and the hot season will try the men very much. I imagine reinforcements will come out, and that it will end in our holding the Soudan.

"I have seen an eventful picture up here. Beginning with being the only Englishman south of Assouan, except Gordon and his small party, and now seeing the whole strength of the British Empire put forth on the same field."

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In addition to these letters, Colonel Duncan, after his return from Egypt, delivered a lecture at the Royal Artillery Institution, Woolwich, Wednesday, October 6th, 1886, on the subject of the Nile Expedition of 1885, in which there is some further information regarding that most interesting undertaking.

After first explaining why the English were in Egypt at all, and referring to the disastrous defeats of General Hicks and Baker Pasha, the lecturer relates how General Gordon volunteered to go up to Khartoum, and to endeavour by his personal influence to effect the withdrawal of the officials—both civil and military—to Egypt

proper, leaving the Soudan to the Soudanese. For this purpose it was necessary to send an officer up to Assouan to receive the convoys of refugees as they came in, and to distribute them to their old homes ; and Duncan himself, as we have already seen, was the officer entrusted with that duty. His orders also were to fortify Assouan to some extent.

“Assouan,” he says, “is a very ancient city. It is mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel as the city Syene ; it is surrounded by basaltic hills, and has given the name to the stone called ‘syenite.’ It is a very unhealthy town, and the place I selected for the troops was on the high ground to the south of Assouan. A good deal of sensation was excited in the town by the arrival of the troops, and of an English Pasha, as I was called, and it took a very amusing form. One man came to me on almost the first day, and said that he had a lawsuit with another man, which had been going on for years, and that unless he paid more money he could not obtain a decision, and he begged me to decide it. I said, ‘If you will go to the other litigant, and can agree with him to accept my decision, whatever it may be, I will hear what you have to say, but unless you first both make that promise I have not time to consider it.’ He went away, and presently they both came

to me, contented to accept my decision. Both of them told their stories. I gave my decision, and to their amazement asked no money for it. That night I was lying on the ground outside my tent, and I was awakened by a noise, and saw a number of people streaming into the camp, and sitting down in rings smoking cigarettes in true Arab fashion. I told my servants to ask what this meant, and the people told them they had heard in the villages around that an English Pasha had come who gave his decisions for nothing, and they hoped to get him to decide their cases. They kept me awake all night with their talking, and I began to suspect that in the Arab heart there was the same sort of feeling that underlies the western legal maxim, '*vigilantibus, non dormientibus jura subservient.*' As a matter of fact, they thought it wise, I suppose, to be *vigilantes* that night."

As the refugees came down in the boats Colonel Duncan was careful not to let them go near his young troops, because, in the first place, most of the old soldiers were frightful sights to look at from age, and wounds, and sickness, enough to appal young soldiers ; and in the next place, he thought they might terrify his men by exaggerated descriptions of the Mahdi's power.

"They, the refugees, arrived," he says, "first

to my care at Korosko. General Gordon himself, with Colonel Stewart, started them off from Khartoum, with all the papers he could give them, and with a certain amount of money advanced. On reaching Berber there was a man there, called Cuzzi,² an Austro-Italian merchant, who had been appointed as Acting Vice-Consul for England by General Gordon on his way up to Khartoum ; and this man was told to undertake a further advance of money, and to telegraph to me every day the number despatched to Korosko.

“At Abou-Hamed we had a sheikh who supplied the camels and sent the refugees across the desert, a hundred at a time. It was five or six days' march, and there was water at only one place, but so admirable were the arrangements insisted upon by General Gordon that I never found that there was any distress from want of water, and they had always enough of the simple food which suffices for the Egyptians.

“But to go back to poor Cuzzi ; his story is rather dramatic. Later on, when the wire from Khartoum was cut, he telegraphed to me that he was rather uneasy, and that he would like to get away and go into Egypt with his family. I

² This man is mentioned several times in “The Journals of General Gordon,” edited by Mr. Egmont Hake, Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1885.

reasoned with him, but he was very pertinacious, and I telegraphed to Cairo for instructions. The answer I got was that Cuzzi might come away. . . . His was the last convoy that started, and he was captured. Poor Cuzzi was offered his choice of death or becoming a Mussulman. I do not think Cuzzi was a man of very strong moral fibre, for he preferred to become a Mussulman. He was at once circumcised and sent back to Khartoum, with a letter to General Gordon, urging him to surrender, because the whole country was in the power of the Mahdi. When, however, his name went into General Gordon, a message came back that the General would not see a man who cared more for his miserable life than for his God. Cuzzi was then sent on to El Obeid, and nothing more was heard of him."

No less than 2600 refugees reached Assouan, and were distributed by Colonel Duncan to their new homes.

"I am not aware," he says, "of more than a single death having occurred on the whole of that long, weary march, and this speaks highly for the admirable arrangements made by General Gordon. I always think it is well that we should bear in mind when we think of that life, which seems to have been sacrificed for nothing,

that had it not been for him those 2600 other lives might have been sacrificed too."

The Expedition for the relief of General Gordon began its work, according to Colonel Duncan, in August, 1884, and he thus describes it:—

"It was, I suppose, 'the most extraordinary polyglot expedition that has ever been seen, for its size. We had Scotch, English, and Irish regiments; we had Canadian *voyageurs*, French, English, and Indian; we had Hindoos from India to work upon the railway; Kroomen from the west coast of Africa for the boats, and we had Egyptians, Turks, and Soudanese—together the most motley army, and, I suppose, the most admirably conducted expedition in history. . . .

"The getting up of the boats was a work of great labour, because the river was continually falling, and in fact, towards the end, we had to send many of the boats round the cataract on the train. There was a sort of small dockyard for these Nile boats at a place called Gemai, a little south of Wady Halfa, where they were all finally looked to before starting on their voyage to the south. The Second Cataract there became quite impassable before the whole of the expedition had gone on. . . .

“When the Expedition got to Dongola, it was then advanced to Korti, which became the headquarters of the army. When you get a line of communications of that length—1500 miles long—you can imagine how great the risk is of having a weak line somewhere. Let us analyze, for example, how the medical wants were attended to. I do not believe the sick were ever better attended to in any campaign, or that any body of men could have worked with greater devotion and energy than did the officers of the medical staff.

“The Expedition was ultimately divided into two parts, and the great crisis occurred after that. General Earle’s force, which consisted of the Royal Highlanders, the Gordon Highlanders, the Duke of Cornwall’s Light Infantry, the Stafford Regiment, and some Egyptian Camel Corps and Egyptian Artillery, went towards Abou-Hamed. At Korosko a large number of camels had been concentrated to carry stores to Abou-Hamed for General Earle’s force. . . . The column had been carefully watched, so to speak, through the telegraph and special messengers as it advanced; the camels were actually laden, ready to start, but the news of Gordon’s death arrived before the column reached Abou-Hamed, and the column was recalled. . . .

"The other column, which was to cross to Khartoum, was to go to a place called Metemneh, and then, availing themselves of the steamers which Gordon had sent down, Sir Charles Wilson and his escort were to go to Khartoum with, I fancy, sealed instructions; but before they reached Khartoum, or just within sight of it, there was news (which was confirmed) that Gordon had been killed and the place had fallen.

"For many weeks, almost for months, doubts were thrown upon the fact of Gordon having been killed. It was said that he had been taken away a prisoner, that he was living in a convent, that he was in the castle; but when the subsequent evacuation took place, many people came down, who knew perfectly well about his death; amongst others, three Egyptian officers who had been prisoners in Khartoum, and who told me separately, without any collusion, that their hands were tied behind their back, and that they were led out, and saw Gordon lying on his face, dead, in front of the house where he used to live. As they looked, this was said to them, 'There is your Pasha, what do you think of him now?' There seems, therefore, not to be the slightest doubt as to his death.

"You can imagine what the shock to us was, when the news came of his death. It was a blow that was felt by everyone. The look on every private soldier's face was as if he had lost a dear friend, . . . A little hope was given us afterwards of the expedition being resumed later in the year, and that to a certain extent cheered the men ; but it soon vanished, and orders came that a withdrawal was to take place, not merely of the English troops, but also of the inhabitants of Dongola."

The lecture ends with the following reflections, which will be read with pleasure by all who take an interest in our Army, and by all who really desire the welfare of Egypt.

"The Expedition came down ; the last regiment, the West Kent, was stationed at Wady Halfa, my duties were over, and I was able to come home. Eighteen months was a long time to have been up there, away from anything like the civilization of towns. I cannot describe the sensation of hearing wheels again on getting down to Cairo ; we had heard no wheels up the country—there were no roads up there for wheeled traffic. But, the longer I remained at Cairo, I was able to realize a good deal which was reassuring to anyone who had been interested, as I had been, in Egypt

and its people. I saw that undoubtedly reforms had been effected, and that much greater justice had been the result of the presence of the English in Egypt. The mists of intrigue were still, as ever, over Cairo, but I saw pleasanter relations growing up between the natives and ourselves, and I believe that the Nile expedition did a good deal to encourage this kind of feeling, for never did soldiers in another country than their own behave better than our soldiers did towards the natives. There were 13,000 men, women, and children, sent down from Dongola when it was evacuated, to be distributed all through Egypt. . . . I never once, to the best of my recollection, during the whole time of these 13,000 people passing through my hands, received a complaint against an English soldier from a refugee. That is something for us, who belong to the English Army, to reflect upon with pride. There are temptations to which young soldiers are exposed, to which they often fall victims; they did not do so in this Nile Expedition. Their conduct was admirable, although they were called upon to perform very singular duties. Often when the boats in going up the Nile got separated, a captain would find himself having to perform the

duties of a private, or the private would have thrust upon him the responsibilities of a captain ; and yet they never failed. Everything that I witnessed in connection with the English army in the Nile Expedition gave me greater pride than I had even had before in that profession to which I have for thirty years belonged. I think there is a more reasoning discipline among the men, which is doubtless born of better education. . . . The old iron and unbending discipline will not do now ; we must have a discipline which appeals to the reasoning powers of the men. Once secure that form of discipline, and then officers and men work hand-in-hand. That discipline was greatly present in this Expedition, and looking upon the men who passed through my hands, I feel that any other expedition might go anywhere with perfect confidence, with such officers and men as we had in the Nile Expedition.

“Whatever may be the future of Egypt, I believe the kindly relations established by the good conduct and justice of Englishmen will remain. The problem is a very difficult one ; the future history of Egypt is a tangled skein ; but there will always be in it a golden thread, telling traditions of English honour, of English justice, and of English courage.”

CHAPTER VIII.

M P. for Finsbury—Created C.B.—Maiden speech in the House—Mr. Gladstone's commendation—Speeches on compulsory retirement of officers—On Egypt—Supports Mr. Sexton—Returned again for Finsbury in 1886—Speaks on behalf of A.M.D.—Defends Egyptian policy of the Government—Coast fortifications—Army Paymasters and Quartermasters—Seconds the Address, February 9th, 1888—Mr. Gladstone's eulogy—Ill—Goes to Nova Scotia—Return—Death—H.R.H. Duke of Cambridge's tribute—Review of life.

IN the preceding chapter it will be remembered that Colonel Duncan referred to the generous conduct of the inhabitants of Finsbury with regard to his being the parliamentary candidate for their borough at the next election—an event which occurred sooner than was anticipated. He was already well versed in the mysteries of electioneering, for in 1874 he opposed Mr. Burt at Morpeth, but received only 585 votes. He next, without avail, contested Durham City, and after that he was chosen Conservative candidate for Sunderland, but the constituents in that town magnanimously allowed him to withdraw his candidature and to contest Finsbury. There, again, he was unsuccessful, but nevertheless, un-

daunted by his former defeats, he stood for the Holborn division of Finsbury on his return from Egypt, and was returned by a majority of 1574 on November 26th, 1885.

As a reward, moreover, for his distinguished services in Egypt, he was made a C.B., and was appointed to command the Royal Artillery of the Southern division at Portsmouth, a post which he retained until the end of January, 1886, when he was transferred to the command of the Garrison Artillery at Woolwich.

During the time that he had held these appointments, he not only added to his military duties the same strenuous efforts, as before, on behalf of Ambulance work, but he also combined with them a regular attendance at the House of Commons. It was not long before his presence was felt in the House, and he arrested the attention of the members by his maiden speech on March 1st, 1886. The occasion was that of a discussion on the vote for Sir Henry Drummond-Wolff's expenses at Constantinople and Cairo. Mr. Bradlaugh moved to reduce the amount from 25,000*l.* to 12,500*l.*, and found several Liberals to support him. It was defended by Lord Charles Beresford, Mr. Hanbury, and Colonel Duncan, all of whom had the great advantage

over their opponents of having been in Egypt, and of knowing something of their subject.

Colonel Duncan said :—"As a new member, I must ask the pardon of the Committee for intruding myself in the debate, but an official despatch of my own has just been laid on the table, and my experience of Egypt leads me to differ very much from what has fallen from some honourable members.

"I would like the Committee to understand that my experience has not been gained from gossips or *quasi* diplomats in Cairo or Alexandria, but from having lived much in the towns and villages of the country, from having mixed with the people and commanded them, and from having helped in carrying on their civil administration in Upper Egypt. I have mixed with all classes, men, women, and children, from Khartoum and Dongola ; and having acquired a little knowledge of Arabic I have been able to form my own opinion of the people themselves. From all the conversations one hears in this country, and in much that one reads, it would be supposed that the last people to be thought about were the Egyptians themselves. Practically we have ruled Egypt for the last three years as a crown colony. Egypt has no representative in this House, and that is all the more reason why we should manifest great

justice and generosity towards that unhappy people. I have no wish to speak with any party spirit on this subject. I have recognized from the first the generous views of Her Majesty's Government when they went to Egypt first of all, and I entered heart and soul into the noble reforms which they initiated after the battle of Tel-el-Kebir.

“But the reason why I would urge the Committee to support the vote for Sir H. Drummond-Wolff's mission is that I consider that that mission is taking up the threads of the action of Her Majesty's Government when at their very best, namely, the time the Earl of Dufferin left Egypt. The mission of Sir H. Drummond-Wolff seems to be a distinct continuance of the Earl of Dufferin's policy. All the nightmare of suffering, blunders, and bloodshed, has taken place since the Earl of Dufferin left, and there is a great similarity between the two missions. What I ask is that we should do justice to Egypt through the Egyptians themselves. The honourable member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) who spoke on the other side, made an allusion which it is impossible for me to pass by—namely, that it is not at all likely the Egyptians will ever be able to build up an army in Egypt sufficient for its own wants. Now, I take issue at once with the honourable

member there. I have lived in Egypt, I have commanded thousands of Egyptian soldiers, and I can speak with perfect confidence of the ability and courage of those men when properly treated. . . . I do not believe in nations of slaves. I certainly believe that ill-treatment will weaken the manhood of any man ; but there is nothing so elastic as courage and manhood, and, under kindly treatment, they will revive as surely as the sunflower turns to the sun. . . .

“There may be a talk of our co-operating permanently with the Egyptians, but I maintain that there is no necessity for such co-operation. The time was when the annexation or permanent protectorate of Egypt might be discussed, but it has passed away. Let the dead past bury its dead. We have pledged our honour to leave the Egyptians to themselves as soon as possible, and we should meanwhile do all we can to encourage by this mission the carrying out of reforms which will free the Egyptians from our presence, and make them a nation again. . . . Let our policy be ‘Egypt for the Egyptians.’

“The religious question has been much misunderstood at home, and most of our blunders between the time of the Earl of Dufferin leaving Egypt and the time of the expedition up the

Nile can be traced to it. The question of the Mahdi has been thoroughly misunderstood in this country. This was not the first Mahdi that Mussulman nations had known, nor is it only in Mussulman nations that a Mahdi, under some other name, is known. It seems to be thought that the Mahdi creates a crisis in the national history, whereas it is a crisis in the national history that produces the Mahdi. . . .

“The whole of the Soudan, after General Gordon ceased to be Governor-General, was tyrannized over by men of the most cruel and despotic disposition. . . . They called upon the Mahdi to place himself at their head. The position was forced upon him ; and if, instead of announcing that we were going to compel the Egyptians to withdraw from the Soudan, and to send General Gordon to assist in withdrawing them, the Government had sent General Gordon to introduce justice to the Soudanese—where his name was associated with justice—and if it had been made known that behind him stood the power of England, I believe that Gordon and Stewart alone could have taken the Soudan in hand, and turned it into a contented population. A further mistake we made was in the evacuation of Dongola. I would not send a single English

soldier there ; but I think with the assistance of an Egyptian force alone, Dongola may be occupied again. Looking to the future I would say, 'Let us withdraw to Assouan, and garrison that place with Egyptian troops. We might then gradually retire to Cairo, and then to Alexandria. Thus we might leave the country with honour to ourselves, and with the friendship of the Egyptian people, instead of producing a sense of irritation. I have spoken at some length and with some warmth on this subject ; but, Sir, I have lived among these people till I have learnt to love them, and I have desired that the first words I should offer in this House should be offered on behalf of the Egyptians, who possess many unsuspected virtues, who are entitled to our respect, and who, at all events, have a right to be constituted into a nation.'

Lord Charles Beresford followed Colonel Duncan, and, referring to the Suez canal, declared that the occupation or even the possession of Egypt would not suffice to keep open the canal, which could be blocked at any moment by sinking a single ship. Like Colonel Duncan, he supported the proposition that Egypt should be evacuated, but with the all-important qualification that she must first be in

a state in which England could leave her with satisfaction and pride.

Then Mr. Gladstone rose, and said,—

“It has been a great advantage and a great pleasure to listen to the speeches of the noble lord, who has just sat down, and of the honourable and gallant member for the Holborn Division of Finsbury. They have made us aware of opinions entitled to the greatest respect and weight in consequence of the abilities that the respective speakers have developed in a practical form in the service of their Queen and country in Egypt itself. I have listened with particular satisfaction to the speech of the noble lord, who said much that we should do well to take to heart. His speech, like that of the honourable and gallant member who spoke near the bar, has tended to raise the Egyptian question out of the region of the controversies of party, and to direct the minds of honourable members to it with something, as I hope, of a common object.”

Mr. Gladstone's commendation of his first speech in the House was, of course, very gratifying to Colonel Duncan, and it was strongly endorsed by the whole press. One paper, *The Daily Review*, described the speech as a remarkable performance, and as of a very high order of elo-

quence. "Every eye in the House was fixed upon him. Mr. Gladstone in particular listened to his utterances with the closest attention. A speech more entirely creditable to a British soldier has not been delivered in the House of Commons for a very long while. At its close, members who had been attracted from the lobbies by the cheers with which its glowing periods were accentuated, went off to discuss its merits with their chops, but not before flocking about Colonel Duncan, and warmly congratulating him upon the most successful maiden speech of the Session."

A little more than three weeks after his first speech, *i.e.* on March 23rd, he again addressed the House, and denounced in forcible terms the extravagant system under which military officers are compulsorily retired. He pointed out how costly it was for the country, and how great a hardship it involved for officers, that they should be obliged to retire at a time when they were able to render the most efficient service.

On March 26th he had another opportunity of expressing his views on our occupation of Egypt, and said,—

"The question why we ever got into Egypt is one of those puzzles which, like the origin of

evil, I have long given up trying to solve. But the way in which we are to get out of Egypt is not by fixing the time of our leaving at so many months hence, but by telling the people of Egypt that if they would throw themselves thoroughly into the reforms which we feel necessary, the moment we have established a permanent government in the country we shall retire. . . . The want of a steady continuity of policy has made the people lose all confidence in us, and has done more to keep us in Egypt than anything else. The right policy is to leave Egypt when it is ready to be left, and not on a certain day or month. . . .

“We went to Egypt when we had no business to go ; we have made government there almost impossible ; and now we have to pay for it. We can get out of Egypt honourably as soon as we have placed her people in the position they occupied before we went there. The first thing to be done is to subsidize someone whom we can trust, of the same religion as the Egyptians, in the province of Dongola, to make that a buffer between Egypt proper and the wilds of the Soudan, and the next thing is to place Egyptians in the garrisons along the Nile and at Suakin.”

Towards the end of the Session a bill was

presented, providing for the main drainage of Belfast. Mr. Sexton moved a clause for insertion in it to the effect that the municipal franchise in Belfast should be the same as in Dublin, and the cities and towns of England and Scotland. He drew attention to the fact that the municipal voters of Belfast were only about 6000 out of a population of about 220,000; whereas, in England, in a city of equal population, the municipal voters would be 30,000.

To the surprise of everyone, Colonel Duncan rose, and said that although a Tory member, he seconded the motion of the honourable member for Sligo. He did so, he declared, on the principle that the truest Conservatism lay in eliminating a sore, rather than in concealing, denying, or retaining it.

He was followed by Mr. John Morley, who, amid general applause and laughter, congratulated him upon having made a most eloquent exposition of sound Radical doctrines, and who added, with a touch of satire, that when the honourable and gallant member came to make a speech upon another bill before the House—(meaning that for Home Rule in Ireland)—as they all hoped he would, he trusted that the spirit of the remarks he had just uttered would animate that speech.

At this sally Colonel Duncan shook his head, but no doubt the independent line which he took on this occasion delighted the Irish members, while it considerably disconcerted those on his own side of the House. It was, however, simply on the ground of justice that he had supported the motion, and, where justice was concerned, he was too generous and too noble-minded to recognize any distinction of party.

At the General Election in July, 1886, when the Conservatives returned to power, Colonel Duncan increased his majority over the same opponent to 1700, and the first time he spoke in the new Parliament was on September 7th as the champion of the Medical Department of the Army.

He urged that, under the existing system, Army Medical Officers had to serve far too long on foreign service. He recommended that more encouragement should be given them, that they should be allowed one or two months' leave every six or seven years, for the purpose of attending hospitals, so as to qualify themselves to pass their examinations, and that field hospital work should receive more attention in their ordinary training.

On February 5th, 1887, a discussion again

arose on the well-worn subject of our occupation of Egypt, and Colonel Duncan contributed to it an able defence of the action of the Government, and showed how greatly the condition of the Egyptians had improved within even the last twelve months. He stated that the number of British troops in Egypt had been much reduced, and suggested that a further withdrawal of 1000 men might be made with advantage, that 2000 men should be stationed at Assiout, and 2000 at Alexandria, while Cairo should be left to the troops of the Khedive.

"I have confidence," he said, "in the loyalty of the Egyptian Army, and until foreign soldiers cease to be seen in Cairo, there will not be a real native Government. . . .

"No party in this House desires that our occupation should be a permanent one, and our only method is to give the country a national Government, with a free hand to a certain extent. And not to insult that Government in the eyes of the people, but to use our soldiers for military purposes only."

Then he proceeds with warmth to vindicate the fame of the British forces in Egypt against some aspersions which seem to have been cast upon them. His words are:—

"When the evacuation of Egypt does take

place, there will be no memories brighter to the Egyptians than those connected with the soldiers who have lived among them for so many years, and whose conduct has been beyond all praise. From General Stephenson, who has endeared himself to the people of all nations in Cairo, down to the youngest private soldier—all realized that they were bearing not their own reputation only, but the reputation of their country.

“I can speak of one sad experience of my own. It has been my lot to carry out the evacuation of Dongola, and to conduct 13,000 homeless people through English camps, near which, and in which, they sometimes rested, and I never heard of a single complaint against an English soldier, of assault or insult.”

March 14th, 1887.—On the motion to go into committee of supply on the Army Estimates,

Colonel Duncan called attention to the heavy expenditure caused by neglecting to employ the protected barbette, or disappearing system in coast fortifications, and moved that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the best way of utilizing the protected barbette or disappearing system in coast defences and coaling stations.

In pleading for the adoption of this system,

he reminded the House that we cannot feed our people without importing food from abroad, and that, consequently, there must be a naval force to protect the goods-bringing ships. But such a fleet, he pointed out, would have but an ephemeral value if it had not a protected base.

As the best means, then, of guarding our fleet he recommended the Moncrieff barbette system, by which, he said, the country would save the money which was spent upon the maintenance of old fortifications, and to some extent that which was expended upon garrisons.

The motion was not pressed to a division, for the Surveyor-General of the Ordnance gave an assurance that the Government had already adopted the system at several important stations, and that it thoroughly appreciated its advantages.

May 17th, 1887.—He took up the cudgels on behalf of Army Paymasters, who, he declared, in respect of their retiring allowances, were placed at a great disadvantage as compared with all other officers in the Army, for they had ten per cent. struck off their *maximum* retiring allowance of 200*l.* per annum for each year they were short of their full term of service.

Moreover, he complained of the position of Quartermasters, and said they were treated on a different footing from any other officers in the Army who had been promoted from the ranks.

In thus advocating the cause of Paymasters and Quartermasters, Colonel Duncan acted on the principle that he represented in Parliament, not merely a particular division of London, but also to some extent the service to which he belonged. It mattered not to him what rank of the Army was concerned, for to all ranks he was ever willing to render any help he could, and their interests were safe in his hands.

As a true soldier he loved his profession, and nothing was more congenial to him than to prove the sympathy he felt with any officers or men who had cause to complain of grievances and hardships. And this he did in private as well as in public. Appeals were made to him almost daily for assistance of every kind—some for money, some for recommendations for a vacant post, or whatever else might be wanted. And at once the applicant would receive from his own pen a courteous reply, showing his largeness of heart, and his desire to act the part of a friend.

To all sorts and conditions of men he extended

the same consideration for their necessities and wrongs, and was ever ready to be their champion. He deplored especially the sufferings and privations of the very poor, and gave expression to his deep pity for them on a memorable occasion.

At the re-opening of Parliament on February 9th, 1888, he was paid the compliment of being selected to second the Address to the Throne in the House of Commons.

He began by referring in eulogistic terms to the successful foreign policy of Lord Salisbury, and then, after insisting on the importance of protecting our coaling stations, and of giving every possible encouragement to the Volunteer Forces of the country, he continued; "With regard to another subject, it is terrible to think that sometimes, from the day children open their eyes on this world to the day they close them, they see nothing but misery and pain. Is this our boasted civilization? Is it not our duty to make the world a little brighter and happier than it is now? Words cannot express the misery which is in our midst. Far better than words would it be if we could see at the bar the little faces of hungry children.

"Now, when we are going to have, as I hope, more prosperity in our trade, is the time when

we should remember that, unless we raise our eyes higher and higher to the Second Table of the Law—our duty to our neighbour—we shall fail miserably as citizens and legislators. But to succeed requires more than law, more than legislation,—it requires sympathy. And it must be sympathy that blossoms into useful actions.”

Mr. Gladstone followed, and, referring to Colonel Duncan’s speech, said,—

“I venture to say that, spoken from his point of view, as a member of the Tory, or the Conservative party, it was at once one of the shortest and one of the very best speeches that I have ever heard delivered in seconding an Address.

“I thought the hon. gentleman did himself, in a manner perfectly unostentatious, great and various credit as a man when he referred to our duties towards our fellow-men, and when he warned us not so to delight, not so to rejoice, in the improving prospects of trade as to forget the misery that still exists among us, and our duty individually, as well as collectively, to keep the thought of that misery near our hearts.

“He did himself, I thought, equal credit as a professional man and as a soldier, in the warmth

with which he referred to the voluntary efforts of the country with a view to its defence in the hour of danger.

“Finally as a politician, when referring to the foreign policy of the country, he expressed a desire in which I, for one, join fervently, that not only to some extent, but to the greatest possible extent, that foreign policy may, both at this time and in the years that are to come, be kept free from the dangerous and difficult associations that attach to it under the influence of the action of political parties.”

Thus for the second time, and in still stronger terms, did Mr. Gladstone specially eulogize him, and his friends had good reason to believe that he had before him an honourable and distinguished career in Parliament.

One who was present says,—

“I never remember such a favourable impression in the House during the past twenty-five years as the gallant Colonel created. Mr. Gladstone’s compliment was as emphatic as it was unique, and all around congratulations showered apace on the rising member for Finsbury.”

But alas, for human hopes and expectations ! He spoke but two or three times more in the House, and then his voice was never again to be

heard in that, or in any other earthly assembly. For some months it was evident that the strain of his manifold duties had become too much for him, but in spite of many a warning he persisted in working on without cessation or rest.

At last, however, in the autumn of this year, 1888, his friends managed to persuade him, on the plea of looking after some property, to go with his wife for a short tour to Halifax, Nova Scotia—a place endeared to them both by the associations of their early life. It was fondly hoped that the sea-voyage and freedom from letters and countless engagements would restore him to health, and certainly for a time the plan was successful, and he seemed better. But like so many men who have been all their lives strong and robust, the difficulty was to make him recognize that there was anything wrong with him, and no sooner was he in England again than he began to crave once more for work.

He refused for some time to see a doctor, fearing lest he should be forbidden to do any work, and when at length he consented, it was found that he was suffering from cirrhosis of the liver, which he had probably first contracted in Egypt, and that the disease was too far advanced for even the best medical skill to be of any avail.

So, after a long, painful, and wearisome struggle, on Friday morning, November 16th, 1888, he died, and found in death that rest which he had so long denied himself in life. "Better" he was often wont to say, "to wear out than to rust out," and he indeed had worn himself out in a noble self-devotion to the service of others.

"It must be borne in mind," writes a friend, "that to those who knew him best, the leading feature of his life was a keen desire, a feverish anxiety to help others, and to relieve pain and distress wherever he found them. One of the last letters noticed on the table by his bedside was part of a correspondence to endeavour to secure an appointment for a constituent, and that, too, for a man who could hardly be considered a supporter. But he could not resist a cry for help."

The news of his death came with a shock to everyone, for it was but little known that he had been ill. On both sides of the House of Commons he enjoyed a wide popularity, and Conservatives, Unionists, and Radicals, all lamented his loss. His constituents, too, and the country at large felt it to be a great calamity, and it was declared that since the murder of the hero of Khartoum there had not

passed away a soldier more sincerely and more universally mourned than Colonel Duncan.

"He was a man," said H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge a few months after Colonel Duncan's death, at the laying of a memorial stone of a new cottage hospital at Shooter's Hill, near Woolwich, "much loved in Woolwich, in the Army, and by myself," and all who knew him would have said the same. An optimist by nature and disposition, there was a warm-hearted, generous frankness about him which never failed to attract, and an appreciation and enjoyment of humour which made him the most delightful of companions. Above all he endeared himself to his friends by his loyalty and by an affection which they felt to be as disinterested as it was strong and true. It is moreover remarkable that these characteristics were patent to those who had only a slight acquaintance with him, for one of them in describing him uses this happy illustration:—

"They have a saying in India, when they want to confer special praise upon any particular individual, that 'he is the sort of man to go tiger-hunting with.' In tiger-hunting, more perhaps than in any other human pursuit or pastime, it is essential to be sure of your partner, to have implicit confidence in the fidelity and nerve of your companion. Well, Colonel Duncan is

exactly the sort of man to go tiger-hunting with, and higher praise can hardly be accorded to any man."

In looking back over the pages of this biography it may be objected that the picture is deficient in colouring, all light and no shade; the virtues are emphasized, the faults ignored. Perhaps this is so, but, nevertheless, the writer would plead that after an intimate knowledge of Colonel Duncan for the last thirteen years of his life, the impression he received of him is exactly that which he has attempted to portray.

To some it may appear that he was too ambitious, too desirous of fame. But surely ambition is no ground for reproach, and when a man devotes himself so entirely as he did to promoting the welfare of others, he has a right to be credited with singleness of purpose, and with the highest of all aims. And as for fame,—

"The wish for Fame is faith in holy things
That soothe the life, and shall outlive the tomb,
A reverent listening for some angel wings
That cower above the gloom."¹

Seldom indeed is bestowed on any man such a versatility of mind as Francis Duncan possessed, such powers of engaging in varied work, and always with unwearied zeal. Many men seem

¹ Lord Lytton.

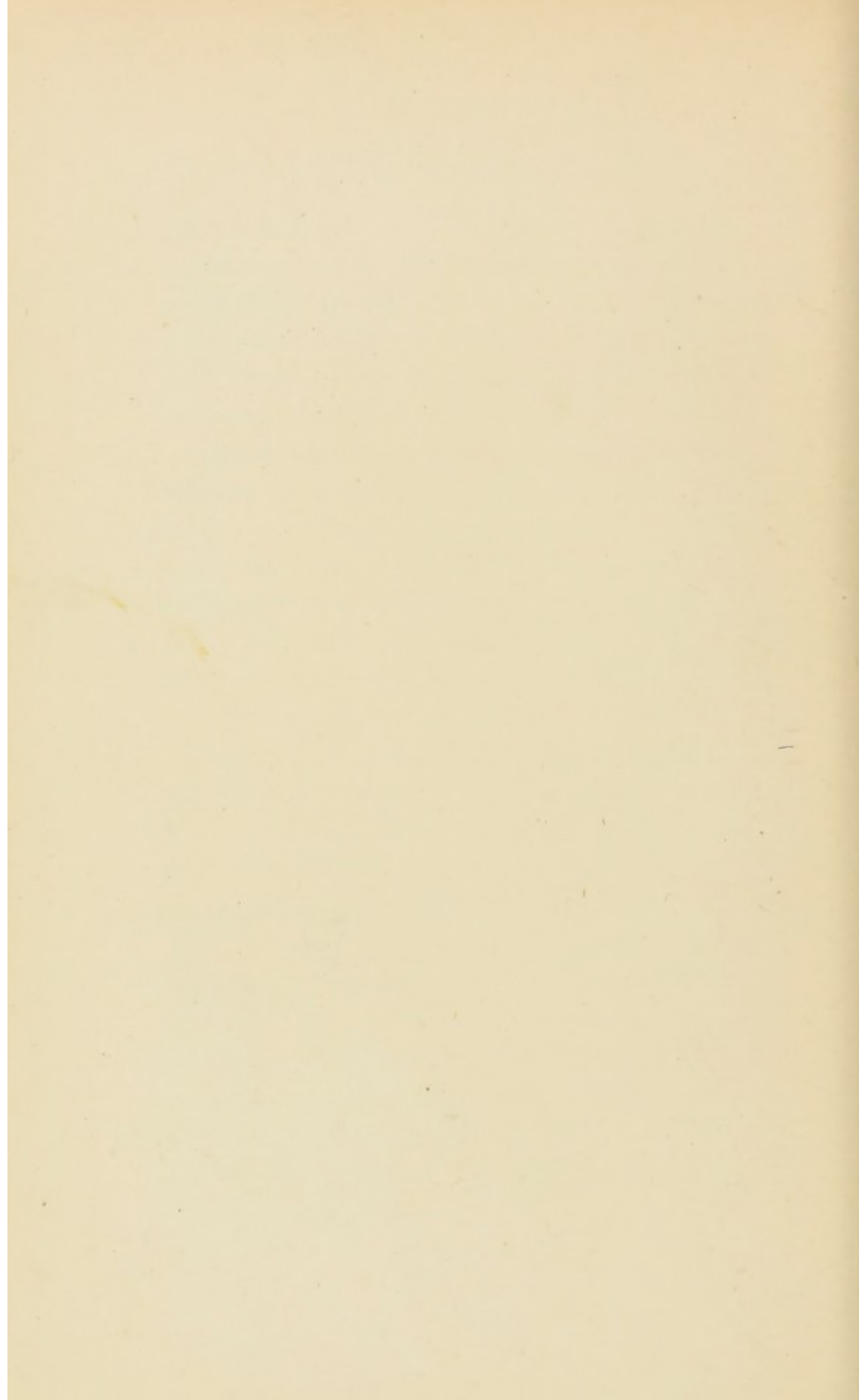
as though the horizon of their ideas and aspirations were entirely bounded by their profession, nor can they bring themselves to think or take part in anything external to it. Even when away from their duties, their profession is with them and about them everywhere—in their club, in the papers they read, in all their talk it is eternally one and the same topic. But Francis Duncan was not of this class. Though a soldier to the core, with all a soldier's high estimate of duty, and devoted to his profession, he was free from the bonds of mere professionalism, and rarely have a man's interests been greater or wider.

As a citizen too he was ever ready with voice and pen to forward any well-considered scheme of social reform, but, in particular, as we have seen, he delighted in Ambulance work as a means of alleviating human suffering.

So he lived, and so he died—Soldier and Citizen—and to us who remain he has bequeathed the example of a bright and genial spirit, of a trusty and loyal knight who warred valiantly against the powers of evil, and of whom it may emphatically be said that whatsoever his hand found to do—for God or man—he did it with his might.

An earnest writer² of our day has asked, "Who is there that has drawn from an ennobling friendship all the blessing which he might have won?" And has answered, "For those who thus lament there is a stern consolation. Let them draw near by faith; what they missed in presence let them recover by contemplation; what is wanting to memory let them reserve for hope."

² F. W. H. Myers. *Modern Essays*, p. 275. Macmillan & Co., 1883.



APPENDIX.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON, AND THE ARTILLERY AT WATERLOO.¹

IT now becomes the painful, and yet necessary, task of the chronicler of the services of the Royal Artillery, to remove a very injurious and unmerited censure cast upon the Regiment, in a private letter written by the Duke of Wellington, with reference to its conduct at the battle of Waterloo. Of this letter's existence the world was ignorant until the year 1872, when it made its appearance in a volume of "Supplementary Letters and Despatches of the Duke of Wellington," published by his son. The sensation which it was certain to produce was foretold by one of the reviews, and was anticipated by the noble Editor. As, however, his object was to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, the Duke's son did not feel justified in withholding from publication any letter which was found among his father's papers, merely because it might wound the feelings of its readers, or give a new interpretation of historical events. And although the indiscriminate publication of a man's private correspondence is a doubtful tribute to his memory, and a severe test of his reputation, it is, on the whole, fortunate for the Royal Artillery that this letter made its appearance while officers were yet alive who had taken a part in the battle referred to in its pages, and clearly remembered its details.

The original letter was written by the Duke of Wellington to Lord Mulgrave, then Master-General of the Ordnance, on the 21st December, 1815. The published letter was from a copy, or draft, of the original which was found among the Duke's papers. The hope that perhaps

¹ *Note to p. 45.* See "History of the Royal Artillery," by Major Duncan, R.A., vol. ii., pp. 445-64. London, John Murray, 1874. Extracted by permission.

there may have been modifications in the original which did not exist in the draft or copy, disappears before the fact that Lord Mulgrave's answer was also found among the Duke's papers, expressing his amazement at the letter he had just received. The harsh statements in the published draft or copy were doubtless, therefore, left in the original when forwarded. The circumstances under which the letter was written were as follows. The field officers of the Royal Artillery, who had been present at Waterloo, applied to the Master-General of the Ordnance for the same pensions for service as had been given after Vittoria. The indignation with which the Duke of Wellington had heard of the Vittoria pensions was well known in the Regiment: nor can one avoid sympathizing with him. Discipline must suffer if the power of rewarding, or recommending for rewards, be independent of the commander of the forces as a channel. The special interference of the Ordnance on behalf of the Corps, which was their *protégé*, was not merely a breach of discipline. to which a man like the Duke of Wellington was not likely tamely to submit, but must have had an irritating effect on the rest of the army. When, therefore, the field officers of Artillery present at Waterloo resolved to apply for the same reward as had been given after Vittoria, they had the alternative before them of making their request through the Duke, basing it upon a precedent which was detestable in his eyes, or of availing themselves of the dual government under which they served, by making a direct application to the Ordnance. Of these alternatives, the former would have been the more soldier-like, but was not likely to succeed: the latter, therefore, was unfortunately adopted.

The application was not couched in a very official form, nor was it officially pressed by Sir George Wood. The only reference to it which can be traced in that officer's correspondence is in a letter announcing Major Lloyd's death, in which he writes:—"Should Lord Mulgrave, in his goodness, be inclined to grant pensions to field officers and captains commanding brigades, similar to the battle of Vittoria, I hope and trust that the late Major Lloyd's family may receive the benefit his service deserved." The precedent of Vittoria was not quite a parallel case to that of Waterloo: in the former every brigade with the army had been in action; while, in the latter, some had

been detached. It seems to have been on this distinction, mainly, that Lord Mulgrave based his refusal to grant the reward. To justify himself, he referred the matter to the Duke of Wellington, who approved of the refusal, as might have been expected, but did so in terms which reveal an inaccuracy and a hastiness unparalleled in his Grace's correspondence. He wrote as follows :—

“TO THE EARL OF MULGRAVE.

“Paris, 21st December, 1815.

“MY DEAR LORD,—I received yesterday your Lordship's letter of the 10th, regarding the claim of the field officers of the Artillery present in the battle of Waterloo, to the same measure of favour granted to those in the battle of Vittoria.

“In my opinion you have done quite right to refuse to grant this favour, and that you have founded your refusal on the best grounds. I cannot recommend that you should depart from the ground you have taken. To tell you the truth, I was not very well pleased with the Artillery in the battle of Waterloo.

“The army was formed in squares immediately on the slope of the rising ground, on the summit of which the Artillery was placed, with orders not to engage with artillery, but to fire only when bodies of troops came under their fire. It was very difficult to get them to obey this order. The French cavalry charged, and were formed on the same ground with our Artillery in general, within a few yards of our guns. In some instances they were in actual possession of our guns. We could not expect the artillerymen to remain at their guns in such a case ; but I had a right to expect that the officers and men of the Artillery would do as I did, and as all the staff did, that is, to take shelter in the squares of the Infantry till the French cavalry should be driven off the ground, either by our Cavalry or Infantry. But they did no such thing ; they ran off the field entirely, taking with them limbers, ammunition, and everything : and when, in a few minutes, we had driven off the French cavalry, and had regained our ground and our guns, and could have made good use of our artillery, we had no Artillerymen to fire them ; and, in point of fact, I should have had no Artillery during the whole of the latter part of the action if I had not kept a reserve in the commencement.

“Mind, my dear Lord, I do not mean to complain ; but what I have above mentioned is a fact known to many ; and it would not do to reward a corps under such circumstances. The Artillery, like others, behaved most gallantly ; but when a misfortune of this kind has occurred, a corps must not be rewarded. It is on account of these little stories, which must come out, that I object to all the propositions to write what is called a history of the battle of Waterloo.

“If it is to be a history, it must be the truth, and the whole truth, or it will do more harm than good, and will give as many false notions of what a battle is, as other romances of the same description have. But if a true history is written, what will become of the reputation of half of those who have acquired reputation, and who deserve it for their gallantry, but who, if their mistakes and casual misconduct were made public, would not be so well thought of ? I am certain that if I were to enter into a critical discussion of everything that occurred from the 14th to the 19th June, I could show ample reasons for not entering deeply into these subjects.

“The fact is that the army that gained the battle of Waterloo was an entirely new one, with the exception of some of the old Spanish troops. Their inexperience occasioned the mistakes they committed, the rumours they circulated that all was destroyed, because they themselves ran away, and the mischief which ensued ; but they behaved gallantly, and I am convinced, if the thing was to be done again, they would show what it was to have the experience of even one battle.

“Believe me, &c.,

(Signed)

“WELLINGTON.

“P.S.—I am very well pleased with the field officers for not liking to have their application referred to me. They know the reason I have not to recommend them for a favour.”

In discussing this letter, it is proposed to examine what may be termed the internal and external evidences of its inaccuracy, commencing with the former.

In his despatch of the 19th June, 1815, announcing the victory, the Duke wrote : “The Artillery and Engineer departments were conducted *much to my satisfaction* by Colonel Sir George Wood and Colonel Smyth.” Evi-

dently, then, the fact "known to many" of the Artillerymen running off the ground had not been known to him when he wrote his despatch, or he could hardly have described the Artillery department as having been conducted much to his satisfaction. Nor does the fact, even when made known to him, seem to have produced the effect upon his Grace's mind which misconduct among the troops under his command, in the face of an enemy, would at any other time have instantly created. Were not the genuineness of the letter beyond all question, some of the contradictions and inconsistencies in it would have justified the reader in pronouncing it a forgery, invented to throw discredit on the reputation of England's greatest General. Was it the Duke of Wellington who, after writing the words, "They ran off the field entirely, taking with them limbers, ammunition, and everything," proceeded to say, "The Artillery, like others, behaved most gallantly"? Was it the Iron Duke who, after saying, "In point of fact, I should have had no Artillery during the whole of the latter part of the action if I had not kept a reserve in the commencement," went on, with the resignation of a martyr, to say, "Mind, my dear Lord, I do not mean to complain"? The inconsistency with his known character is astounding.

After describing the disappearance of his Artillerymen, and the straits to which he was consequently reduced, he proceeds in this letter to say: "It would not do to reward a corps under such circumstances." If he were correctly informed as to these circumstances, there would not have been a single individual in the whole of his army who would have differed from him as to his conclusion. But, unfortunately for him, he endeavoured to prove too much. Not content with giving, as a reason for withholding rewards, an assertion which, if accurate, would have more than justified him, he must needs strengthen an already overwhelming case by a mysterious insinuation in the postscript of the letter, respecting some other unexpressed ground of his displeasure, with which the field officers must be familiar as a cause of his refusing to recommend them for reward. Was there not, in this piling of Pelion upon Ossa, some consciousness of the necessity of self-justification?

But these are merely striking self-contradictions and inconsistencies in style. It is when the truth of the

statements made by the Duke in his letter is inquired into that one stands astounded at the inaccuracy of his informants, and the hasty assumptions of the writer himself. The letter is so involved,—so confusing in its mixed references to the Artillery and the army generally,—so laden with marvellous didactic sentences as to the propriety of writing a history of the battle of Waterloo,—that it is not always easy to ascertain the connection between argument and conclusion. So slovenly, indeed, is the style at the end of the letter, that it reads as if the whole army ran away ! Let two sentences be reproduced : “ The fact is, that the army that gained the battle of Waterloo was an entirely new one, with the exception of some of the old Spanish troops. Their inexperience occasioned the mistakes they committed, the rumours they circulated that all was destroyed, because they themselves ran away, and the mischiefs which ensued ; but they behaved gallantly.” One rises from a perusal of these words with a bewildered feeling that gallant behaviour among troops, is identical with running away ;—and that the whole army, with the exception of some of the old Spanish troops, exhibited their gallantry in this singular manner. But, as the statement that the army was entirely a new one is used apparently in the first instance to account for the Artillery running off the field, it may be interesting to glance at the troops and brigades whose inexperience seemed—in the Duke’s mind as he wrote—to have made their flight almost natural.

Of the eight troops of Horse Artillery present at the battle of Waterloo, five were the old tried troops of the Peninsula, whose gallant services had been recorded year after year by the Duke’s own hand : Sir Hew Ross’s, Sir Robert Gardiner’s, Colonel Webber Smith’s, Major Beane’s and Major Bull’s. A sixth, Captain Whinyates’s, was the famous Rocket Troop of Leipsic ; and of the other two, one had fought at Buenos Ayres, and the other in Walcheren. . . It is evident that the Artillery element in the Duke’s army at Waterloo was veteran rather than new.

But the next inaccuracy is more unpardonable ; and the informants of the Duke on the subject were guilty of errors for which there was no excuse. “ In point of fact,” wrote the Duke, “ I should have had no Artillery during

the whole of the latter part of the action if I had not kept a reserve at the commencement." Fortunately for the exposure of this grave inaccuracy, there is no point on which there is more full and official information both in Sir George Wood's and other despatches, and more detailed notice in private correspondence, than on the subject of the Artillery reserves at Waterloo. As stated in the last chapter of this volume, it was composed of Sir Hew Ross's and Major Beane's troops of Horse Artillery, and Captain Sinclair's Field Brigade. So far was this force from being kept in reserve, and being brought forward providentially at the end of the action to replace the runaways, that it was actually in action—every gun—almost at the *commencement of the day*, and suffered the heaviest losses before half-past one. By a happy coincidence, the Artillery which must have been represented to the Duke as his reserve, is mentioned by Sir Augustus Frazer: "Some time before this—*i.e.*, the massing of the second line *during the cavalry attacks*—the Duke ordered me to bring up all the reserve Horse Artillery, which at that moment were *Mercer's* and *Bull's troops*." But, instead of these troops being a reserve kept, as the Duke's letter says, "from the commencement," they also had both been in action from the beginning of the day, and Bull's troop had actually been sent to the centre of the second line "to refit and repair disabled carriages"!

The importance of this inaccuracy in the letter cannot be overrated. If the Artillery, which the Duke admits having had at the end of the day, was not the reserve which he had kept in hand,—and it certainly was not,—what was it? The asserted flight of the gunners with their limbers and ammunition hangs upon the truth, or otherwise, of there having been reserves in hand to replace them. But the fact of these reserves having been in action from the beginning of the day is incontestable; and is proved by the correspondence of Sir Hew Ross, who commanded one of the reserve troops, as well as by the official and semi-official correspondence of others. It is possible that the arrival of Sir Robert Gardiner's troop, with Vivian's and Vandeleur's brigades, from the left of the line, at the end of the day, may have deceived the Duke's informant, and led him to imagine that it was fresh Artillery from the reserve. That it was not so,

however, but merely moved with the division to which it was attached, is a matter of fact ; and at no time in the day was this troop ever in reserve. Therefore, in a vital point, the Duke's letter is unquestionably inaccurate.

The next statement in the letter which demands scrutiny is the following : " The Artillery was placed with orders not to engage with artillery, but to fire only when bodies of troops came under their fire. It was very difficult to get them to obey this order." Sir John Bloomfield, who was on Sir George Wood's staff, carried this order to all the troops and brigades, and is confident that, with one exception, it was rigidly obeyed. He remembers that the Duke saw a French gun struck by a shot from one of the English batteries,—and, under the impression that it came from Captain Sandham's brigade, he sent orders to have that officer placed in arrest. This was not done, some satisfactory explanation having been given,—relieving Captain Sandham of the disobedience. Singularly enough, the offender was never discovered, until, in 1870, with the publication of General Mercer's Diary, came the confession of the crime. " About this time, being impatient of standing idle, and annoyed by the batteries on the Nivelles road, I ventured to commit a folly for which I should have paid dearly had our Duke chanced to be in our part of the field. I ventured to disobey orders, and open a slow, deliberate fire at the battery, thinking, with my nine-pounders, soon to silence his four-pounders." As Captain Mercer's troop was placed near Sandham's brigade at this time, it is evident that this occurrence, and that mentioned by Sir John Bloomfield, are identical. Sir John, whose duties carried him to all parts of the field, and whose recollection of the day is as clear as possible, asserts positively, that in no other instance was the order disobeyed ; and it will be seen from accounts, both French and English, to be quoted hereafter, that the order to fire upon bodies of troops approaching was literally obeyed with the most marked results. Was it, then, quite worthy of the Duke of Wellington to reason from the particular to the general, and to visit the disobedience of one officer upon a whole corps ? As has been well said by the son of one of the bravest Artillery officers on the field, Sir Robert Gardiner : " If a Regiment of Infantry had run away, and all the others had behaved splendidly,—would

the whole arm have been similarly condemned? Would it not have been more just to reward those who deserved it?"

The mention of reward suggests the next amazing inconsistency in the Duke's letter,—and makes it almost certain that it was written on receiving some subsequent information from another source,—not from his personal observation. In this letter, dated six months after the battle, he wrote: "It would not do to reward a corps under such circumstances;" and again: "The field officers know the reason I have not to recommend them for a favour." How are these sentences to be reconciled with the following extract from the "London Gazette," which immediately followed the battle, and was issued while all its details must have been fresh in the Duke's recollection?

"His Royal Highness the Prince Regent has further been pleased to nominate and appoint the undermentioned officers to be Companions of the said Most Honourable Military Order of the Bath, *upon the recommendation of Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington, for their services in the battles fought upon the 16th and 18th of June last:*

Lieut.-Colonel S. G. Adye, Royal Artillery.

Lieut.-Colonel R. Bull, "

Lieut.-Colonel C. Gold, "

Lieut.-Colonel A. Macdonald, "

Lieut.-Colonel J. Parker, "

Major T. Rogers, "

Lieut.-Colonel J. W. Smith, "

Lieut.-Colonel J. S. Williamson, "

Colonel Sir G. A. Wood, Kt., "

This list includes the very field officers of whom the Duke wrote afterwards, "They know the reason I have not to recommend them for a favour." Was it no favour to be recommended for the Order of the Bath?

Again: "It would not do," wrote the Duke in December, 1815, "to reward a corps under such circumstances." Let the reader glance at the following picture of an unrewarded corps.

Out of thirteen troops and brigades, with the requisite staff, fourteen officers obtained rewards, in addition to the nine appointments to the Order of the Bath quoted above. . . .

It is unnecessary to add that the boon service granted

for the battle of Waterloo, and the Waterloo medals, were given to the Artillery present, without exception. It would, therefore, appear that for a corps which did not deserve to be rewarded, it did not fare badly; and that its merits were only called in question when pensions based on an unpopular precedent were asked for. It is also impossible that the Duke could have been so generous in his original recommendations had he known, of his own personal observation, that which he stated in his letter of the 21st December, and which must now receive grave consideration—the asserted flight from the field of battle of many of the Artillerymen with their limbers, &c.

In ascertaining the unmistakable inaccuracy of this cruel and hasty assertion, which must have been made by the Duke of Wellington on the most worthless evidence, the advantage of the late publication of the letter has become apparent. Much of the evidence which will be adduced to rebut it, was not written with the view of meeting such an accusation, but is merely extracted from the simple narrative of a battle, in which the facts are stated without any idea of their being questioned. Had the Duke's letter been published while the writers of many of the letters to be quoted were alive, their answers would not have had half the historical value they now possess, for they would have been regarded as the pleadings of interested defendants. The statements of the disinterested historians will conclude this brief argument.

When the celebrated charges of the French cavalry at Waterloo took place, the English guns lined the crest of the position, and the Infantry was formed in squares in their rear. The order given by the Duke was that the Artillerymen should stand to their guns as long as possible, and then take refuge in the Infantry squares; and that *the limbers should be sent behind the squares*. This order was carried to the various batteries by Sir John Bloomfield, and was obeyed to the letter. "The idea of six limbers," writes Colonel Gardiner, "with six horses in each limber, going into a square of Infantry, was of course an impossibility, and never contemplated." The gunners had cartouche-bags slung round them, containing ammunition, and invariably, with the exception of those of Captain Mercer's troop, took refuge in the adjacent squares, or under the bayonets of the kneeling ranks.

When the cavalry retired, on each occasion the gunners ran out, and, as a rule, the guns were in action against the retreating cavalry before they had gone sixty yards. The delay of a few moments occurred once or twice, while shot were being brought from the limbers ; and Sir John Bloomfield remembers an expression of impatience escaping the Duke on one of these occasions. Nor was it unnatural. "To lose," writes Colonel Gardiner, "an opportunity of inflicting destruction on the French cavalry, directly they turned their backs, and before they could get out of the range of canister, must have been very tantalizing." But that the delay ever exceeded a few moments, or that a single limber ever left the ground, Sir John Bloomfield is confident is an utter delusion. Such an occurrence as is described in the Duke's letter could not have happened without being well known. The Duke himself said, "It is known to many ;" and yet Sir John lived for three years with the head-quarter staff in Paris, and never heard even an insinuation on the subject. Another Waterloo survivor writes on this point : "I never did hear, nor anyone else, of the artillery misbehaving at Waterloo. Sir Alexander Dickson took me with him into Brussels after the battle. We saw every officer who came in, and the action was in every part the constant theme of conversation, both in our private, as well as more general moments. Had anything bearing such a term taken place, it would certainly have been canvassed. I was in daily conversation with our wounded in the town. Surely I may say, but that the Duke of Wellington says it, it is as cruel as it is unjust."

If known to many, it could hardly have escaped the commanding officer of the corps most interested. The fact that Sir George Wood did not write his despatches to the Ordnance until the 24th June,—that during the six days' interval since the battle he had been constantly with the Duke,—and yet that he could write as follows, proves most clearly that the Duke himself cannot then have been aware of what he afterwards wrote to Lord Mulgrave, and that his letter must have been based on subsequent malicious and worthless testimony. The wording of Sir George Wood's letters has an almost providential bearing on the point at issue ; and could not have been used, had there been even a doubt as to the conduct of the Corps.

"I beg leave," he wrote, "to call the attention of His Lordship the Master-General to the skill and intrepidity so eminently displayed by the British and German Artillery. The accompanying return of their loss will show how much they participated in the action, and I can assure His Lordship the Master-General, that, notwithstanding their being outnumbered by the Artillery of the enemy, *their merits never shone more conspicuous* than on this occasion. It now remains for me to express with much pleasure and satisfaction that *every officer and man in the field of battle did their duty.*"

With his despatch, Sir George wrote a private letter to General Macleod, in which the following passage occurs: "I do assure you, I have not words to express the extreme good conduct of the Corps. All exerted themselves, both officers and men, and such a conflict of guns never was in the memory of man. . . ."

References to the services of other brigades, and of the Horse Artillery, by the officers of the Corps under whom they served, have already been quoted; and in every case commendation of the warmest description was passed upon them. The following quotation from Sir Augustus Frazer's correspondence is interesting here, as asserting what was denied by the Duke in his letter to Lord Mulgrave, that the men took shelter in the squares. "The repeated charges of the enemy's noble cavalry were similar to the first: each was fruitless. Not an infantry soldier moved; and, on each charge, abandoning their guns, our men sheltered themselves between the flanks of the squares. Twice, however, the enemy tried to charge in front; these attempts were entirely frustrated by the fire of the guns, wisely reserved till the hostile squadrons were within twenty yards of the muzzles. In this, the cool and quiet steadiness of the troops of Horse Artillery was very creditable." This was written two days after the battle; and no man had better opportunity of seeing the conduct of his Corps than the writer. Every historian of the battle endorses this version: and the testimony of an impartial historian always represents the carefully sifted testimony of many. Sir Edward Cust, the laborious military annalist, writes thus: "Suddenly some bugles were heard to sound, and all the Artillerymen, abandoning their guns and tumbrils, ran back into the infantry squares. . . . In a moment, the

Artillery gunners quitted the protection of the squares, and running up their guns, which were most of them ready loaded, opened heavily with grape and with every species of projectile. . . . The cavaliers again mounted the plateau ; again the gunners abandoned their guns, and took refuge within the squares." Creasy writes : "As the French receded from each attack, the British Artillerymen rushed forward from the centre of the squares, where they had taken refuge, and plied their guns on the retiring horsemen." The same is the account given by every historian of the battle. Were they all dreaming? or were they in some conspiracy to conceal the truth? And if so, did the Duke himself join it? In the thirty-seven years of his life after Waterloo, he never contradicted the numerous accounts of the battle, all of which agreed in their statement of the eminent services of the Artillery. . . .

But it has been admitted that Captain Mercer's troop was an exception to the others ; that his men did not take shelter within the Infantry squares. Let him tell his own story. "Sir Augustus, pointing out our position between two squares of Brunswick Infantry, left us with injunctions to remember the Duke's orders (to retire within the squares) and to economize our ammunition. The Brunswickers were falling fast. . . . these were the very boys whom I had but yesterday seen throwing away their arms and fleeing, panic-stricken, from the very sound of our horses' feet. . . . Every moment I feared they would again throw down their arms and flee. . . . To have sought refuge amongst men in such a state were madness ; the very moment our men ran from their guns, I was convinced, would be the signal for their disbanding. We had better, then, fall at our posts than in such a situation." He accordingly made his men stand to the guns, until the cavalry were within a few feet of them, and on each occasion the havoc he wrought among them—as he drove them back—was frightful. The immense heap of dead, lying in front of Mercer's guns, was such that Sir Augustus Frazer said that, in riding over the field next day, he "could plainly distinguish the position of G Troop from the opposite height by the dark mass which, even from that distance, formed a remarkable feature in the field."

Captain Mercer's men, therefore, were those who did

not obey the Duke's order. It was a fortunate act of disobedience, and it saved the Brunswickers ; but Captain Mercer was severely punished for it. He was not recommended for brevet rank ; and, on his appointment by Lord Mulgrave to a vacant troop, he was deprived of it by the Duke of Wellington, who got it summarily reduced in 1816. Did, however, the limbers of Captain Mercer's battery ever leave the ground ? That they did not, can be shown most clearly. In his Diary, he describes the state of his troop after a heavy fire, to which it was exposed *after* the charges of the French cavalry. In the description, he says : "The guns came together in a confused heap, the trails crossing each other, and the whole *dangerously near the limbers* and ammunition wag-gons." The same description also proves that the frightful losses suffered by the troop took place during the very time when, according to the Duke's letter, the men and limbers would have been off the field. In going to take up the position, they moved at a gallop, and in so compact a body, that the Duke cried out : "Ah ! that's the way I like to see Horse Artillery move !" In a short time, such was the havoc committed among men and horses, that Captain Mercer wrote : "I sighed for my poor troop ; it was already a wreck."

With regard to the insinuation as to the lack of Artillery at the end of the battle, it is shown clearly by Siborne, in his model of the battle as it was at a quarter before 8 p.m., that thirteen troops and brigades of the Royal Artillery were in action, when the final attack took place ; *this being the entire number with the army*. Of these, some were so crippled by losses—as Mercer's was—that they were unable to join in the pursuit ; and possibly some recollection of this fact may have been in the Duke's mind when he wrote. That the artillery fire, however, at the end of the day was slack from the cause stated in the Duke's letter is an utter mistake ; nor do the French seem to have found it very slack, as will presently be seen. . .

In the earliest and most detailed account of the battle of Waterloo, the tenth edition of which was published in 1817, and which is called "The Battle of Waterloo, also of Ligny, and Quatre Bras, described by the series of accounts published by authority, by a near observer" ;

edited by Captain G. Jones, the following passage occurs :
 “ No account yet published of the battle, seen by the Editor, has mentioned in adequate terms the effect of our artillery at Waterloo—no *English* account at least. *The enemy felt it*, and in their manner of expressing themselves have passed the greatest compliments. A French account, given in our preceding pages, says : ‘ The English artillery made *dreadful* havoc in our ranks. . . . The Imperial Guard made several charges, but was constantly repulsed, *crushed by a terrible artillery, that each minute seemed to multiply.*’² These invincible grenadiers *beheld the grapeshot make day through their ranks*; they closed promptly and coolly their shattered ranks. . . . In proportion as they ranged up the eminence, and darted forward on the squares, which occupied its summit, *the Artillery vomited death upon them, and killed them in masses.* . . . In an account given by an officer of the *Northumberland*, of Napoleon’s conversation on board that ship, he says : ‘ Bonaparte gives great credit to our Infantry and Artillery.’”
 Again : “ The artillery on both sides was well served, but Bonaparte had upwards of 250 pieces in the field. Notwithstanding our inferiority in this arm, which was still more apparent from the size of the enemy’s guns (being 12 pounders, ours only 9 and 6), than from their numbers, ours were so well fought, that I believe it is allowed by all they did equal execution. . . . See also the account of Captain Bolton and Napier’s Brigade of Foot Artillery, from which it appears the Artillery had turned the enemy, previous to the advance of the Guards. The French displayed the greatest rage and fury ; they cursed the English while they were fighting, and cursed the precision with which the English grapeshot was fired, which ‘ was neither too high nor too low, but struck right in the middle.’”

From the many writers who have done credit to the exertions and courage of the Artillery at Waterloo, three more extracts will be made.

In proof of the activity of the Corps at the end of the day, the following quotation, from an author already men-

² At this time, according to the Duke’s letter, he had nothing but his reserve Artillery, the rest having quitted the field !

tioned, is given. In describing the reception given to the French Imperial Guard, he says: "The English gunners once more plied their trade. It was positively frightful to witness the havoc that was occasioned in that mass." Sir James Shaw Kennedy also describes the strength of the British artillery fire at the end of the day.

In a Paper on "The Campaign of Waterloo," which appeared in the *United Service Journal*, in 1834, the following passage occurs: "If we admit that, during this arduous and terrible day, the British Infantry acted up to the right standard of soldiership, which their long career of victory had established, it must be added that *the Artillery actually surpassed all expectation*, high as, from their previous conduct, that expectation naturally was. In point of zeal and courage, the officers and men of the three arms were of course fully upon a par; but the circumstances of the battle were favourable to the Artillery; and certainly the skill, spirit, gallantry, and indefatigable exertion which they displayed, almost surpasses belief."

Only one more witness will be called from the ranks of historians. Hooper, in his work on Waterloo, to which he devoted eight years, and in the compilation of which he used every known authority on both sides, made use of words which appropriately close this argument: "The Artillery, so devoted and effective, gathered another branch from the tree of honour."

