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1st American Edition



THE
FIELD OF WATERLOO;
A POEM.

THE

FIELD OF WASHINGTON

A NOVEL

THE

FIELD OF WATERLOO;

A POEM.

BY

WALTER SCOTT, ESQ.



Though Valois brav'd young Edward's gentle hand,
And Albret rush'd on Henry's way-worn band,
With Europe's chosen sons, in arms renown'd,
Yet not on Vere's hold archers long they look'd,
Nor Audley's squires, nor Mowbray's yeomen brook'd—
They saw their standard fall, and left their monarch bound.

AKENSIDE.



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.....
1815.

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TO
HER GRACE
THE
DUCHESS OF WELLINGTON,
PRINCESS OF WATERLOO,
&c. &c. &c.

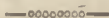
THE FOLLOWING VERSES
ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.



IT may be some apology for the imperfections of this Poem, that it was composed hastily, during a short tour upon the continent, when the Author's labours were liable to frequent interruption. But its best vindication is, that it was written for the purpose of assisting the Waterloo Subscription.

THE
FIELD OF WATERLOO.



FAIR Brussels, thou art far behind,
Though, lingering on the morning wind,
We yet may hear the hoar
Peal'd over orchard and canal,
With voice prolong'd and measur'd fall,
From proud Saint Michael's tower;
Thy wood, dark Soignies, holds us now,
Where the tall beeches' glossy bough
For many a league around,
With birch and darksome oak between,
Spreads deep and far a pathless screen,
Of tangled forest ground.

Stems planted close by stems defy
 Th' adventurous foot—the curious eye
 For access seeks in vain ;
 And the brown tapestry of leaves,
 Strew'd on the blighted ground, receives
 Nor sun, nor air, nor rain.
 No opening glade dawns on our way,
 No streamlet, glancing to the ray,
 Our woodland path has cross'd ;
 And the straight causeway which we tread,
 Prolongs a line of dull arcade,
 Unvarying through the unvaried shade
 Until in distance lost.

. II.

A brighter, livelier scene succeeds ;
 In groupes the scattering wood recedes,
 Hedge-rows, and huts, and sunny meads,
 And corn-fields glance between ;

The peasant, at his labour blithe,
Plies the hook'd staff and shorten'd sithe:—

But when these ears were green,
Placed close within destruction's scope,
Full little was that rustic's hope

Their ripening to have seen!

And, lo, a hamlet and its fane:—

Let not the gazer with disdain

Their architecture view;

For yonder rude ungraceful shrine,
And disproportion'd spire, are thine,
Immortal Waterloo!

III.

Fear not the heat, though full and high
The sun has scorch'd the autumn sky,
And scarce a forest straggler now
To shade us spreads a greenwood bough;
These fields have seen a hotter day
Than ere was fired by sunny ray.

Yet one mile on—yon shatter'd hedge
Crests the soft hill whose long smooth ridge

Looks on the field below,

And sinks so gently on the dale,

That not the folds of Beauty's veil

In easier curves can flow.

Brief space from thence, the ground again

Ascending slowly from the plain,

Forms an opposing screen,

Which, with its crest of upland ground,

Shuts th' horizon all around.

The soften'd vale between

Slopes smooth and fair for courser's tread ;

Not the most timid maid need dread

To give her snow-white palfrey head

On that wide stubble-ground ;

Nor wood, nor tree, nor bush are there,

Her course to intercept or scare,

Nor fosse nor fence are found,

Save where, from out her shatter'd bowers,

Rise Hougomont's dismantled towers.

IV.

Now, see'st thou aught in this lone scene
Can tell of that which late hath been?—

A stranger might reply,

“The bare extent of stubble-plain

Seems lately lighten'd of its grain;

And yonder sable tracks remain

Marks of the peasant's ponderous wain,

When harvest-home was nigh.

On these broad spots of trampled ground,

Perchance the rustics danced such round

As Teniers loved to draw;

And where the earth seems scorch'd by flame

To dress the homely feast they came,

And toil'd the kerchief'd village dame

Around her fire of straw.”—

V.

So deem'st thou—so each mortal deems,

Of that which is from that which seems:—

But other harvest here

Than that which peasant's sithe demands,
Was gather'd in by sterner hands,

With bayonet, blade, and spear.

No vulgar crop was theirs to reap,
No stinted harvest, thin and cheap!

Heroes before each fatal sweep

Full thick as ripen'd grain;

And ere the darkening of the day,
Piled high as autumn shocks, there lay

The ghastly harvest of the fray,

The corpses of the slain.

VI.

Ay, look again—that line so black
And trampled, marks the bivouack,
Yon deep-graved ruts the artillery's track,

So often lost and won;

And close beside, the harden'd mud
Still shows where, fetlock-deep in blood,
The fierce dragoon, through battle's flood,
Dash'd the hot war-horse on.

These spots of excavation tell
The ravage of the bursting shell—
And feel'st thou not the tainted steam,
That reeks against the sultry beam,
From yonder trenched mound?
The pestilential fumes declare
That Carnage has replenish'd there
Her garner-house profound.

VII.

Far other harvest-home and feast,
Thou claims the boor from sithe releas'd,
On these scorch'd fields were known!
Death hover'd o'er the maddening rout,
And, in the thrilling battle shout,
Sent for the bloody banquet out
A summons of his own.
Through rolling smoke the Demon's eye
Could well each destined guest espy,
Well could his ear in ecstasy
Distinguish every tone

That fill'd the chorus of the fray—
From cannon-roar and trumpet-bray,
From charging squadrons' wild hurra,
From the wild clang that mark'd their way,—
 Down to the dying groan,
And the last sob of life's decay
 When breath was all but flown.

VIII.

Feast on, stern foe of mortal life,
Feast on !—but think not that a strife,
With such promiscuous carnage rife,
 Protracted space may last ;
The deadly tug of war at length
Must limits find in human strength,
 And cease when these are pass'd.
Vain hope !—that morn's o'erclouded sun
Heard the wild shout of fight begun
 Ere he attain'd his height,
And through the war-smoke volumed high,
Still peals that unremitted ery,
 Though now he stoops to night.

For ten long hours of doubt and dread,
Fresh succours from the extended head
Of either hill the contest fed ;

Still down the slope they drew,
The charge of columns paused not,
Nor ceased the storm of shell and shot ;

For all that war could do
Of skill and force was proved that day,
And turn'd not yet the doubtful fray
On bloody Waterloo.

IX.

Pale Brussels ! then what thoughts were thine,
When ceaseless from the distant line

Continued thunders came !

Each burgher held his breath, to hear

These forerunners of havoc near,

Of rapine and of flame.

What ghastly sights were thine to meet,

When, rolling through thy stately street,

The wounded show'd their mangled plight

In token of the unfinish'd fight,

And from each anguish-laden wain
 The blood-drops laid thy dust like rain !
 How often in the distant drum
 Heard'st thou the fell invader come,
 While Ruin, shouting to his band,
 Shook high her torch and gory brand !—
 Cheer thee, fair city ! From yon stand,
 Impatient, still his outstretch'd hand
 Points to his prey in vain,
 While maddening in his eager mood,
 And all unwont to be withstood,
 He fires the fight again.

X.

“On! On!” was still his stern exclaim;
 “Confront the battery's jaws of flame!
 “Rush on the levell'd gun!
 “My steel-clad cuirassiers, advance!
 “Each Hulan forward with his lance,
 “My Guard—my chosen—charge for France,
 “France and Napoleon!”

Loud answer'd their acclaiming shout,
Greeting the mandate which sent out
Their bravest and their best to dare
The fate their leader shunn'd to share.
But He, his country's sword and shield,
Still in the battle-front reveal'd,
Where danger fiercest swept the field,
Came like a beam of light,
In action prompt, in sentence brief—
“Soldiers, stand firm,” exclaim'd the Chief,
“England shall tell the fight !”

XI.

On came the whirlwind—like the last
But fiercest sweep of tempest blast—
On came the whirlwind—steel-gleams broke
Like lightning through the rolling smoke,
The war was waked anew,
Three hundred cannon-mouths roar'd loud,
And from their throats, with flash and cloud,
Their showers of iron threw.

Beneath their fire, in full career,
Rush'd on the ponderous cuirassier,
The lancer couch'd his ruthless spear,
And hurrying as to havoc near,

The Cohorts' eagles flew.

In one dark torrent, broad and strong,
The advancing onset roll'd along,
Forth harbinger'd by fierce acclaim,
That from the shroud of smoke and flame,
Peal'd wildly the imperial name.

XII.

But on the British heart were lost
The terrors of the charging host ;
For not an eye the storm that view'd
Changed its proud glance of fortitude,
Nor was one forward footstep staid,
As dropp'd the dying and the dead.
Fast as their ranks the thunders tear,
Fast they renew'd each serried square ;

And on the wounded and the slain
Closed their diminish'd files again,
Till from their line searee spears' lengths three,
Emerging from the smoke they see
Helmet, and plume, and panoply—

Then wak'd their fire at once !

Each musketeer's revolving knell,
As fast, as regularly fell,
As when they practise to display
Their discipline on festal day.

Then down went helm and lancee,

Down were the eagle banners sent,
Down reeling steeds and riders went,
Corslets were pierced, and pennons rent ;

And to augment the fray,

Wheel'd full against their staggering flanks,
The English horsemen's foaming ranks

Forced their resistless way.

Then to the musket-knell succeeds

The clash of swords—the neigh of steeds—



As plies the smith his clanging trade,
 Against the cuirass rang the blade ;
 And while amid their close array,
 The well-served cannon rent their way,
 And while amid their scatter'd band
 Rag'd the fierce rider's bloody brand,
 Recoil'd in common rout and fear,
 Laneeer, and guard, and cuirassier,
 Horsemen, and foot—a mingled host,
 Their leaders fall'n, their standards lost.

XIII.

Then, WELLINGTON ! thy piercing eye
 This crisis caught of destiny—

The British host had stood
 That morn 'gainst charge of sword and lance
 As their own ocean-rocks hold stance,
 But when thy voice had said, “ Advance !”

They were their ocean's flood.—
 O Thou, whose inauspicious aim
 Hath wrought thy host this hour of shame,

Think'st thou thy broken bands will bide
The terrors of yon rushing tide?
Or will thy Chosen brook to feel
The British shock of level'd steel?
Or dost thou turn thine eye
Where coming squadrons gleam afar,
And fresher thunders wake the war,
And other standards fly?—
Think not that in yon columns, file
Thy conquering troops from distant Dyle—
Is Blucher yet unknown?
Or dwells not in thy memory still,
Heard frequent in thine hour of ill,
What notes of hate and vengeance thrill
In Prussia's trumpet tone?
What yet remains?—shall it be thine
To head the reliques of thy line
In one dread effort more?—
The Roman lore thy leisure loved,
And thou can'st tell what fortune proved
That Chieftain, who, of yore,

Ambition's dizzy paths essay'd,

And with the gladiators' aid

For empire enterprised—

He stood the east his rashness play'd,

Left not the victims he had made,

Dug his red grave with his own blade,

And on the field he lost was laid,

Abhorr'd—but not despised.

XIV.

But if revolves thy fainter thought

On safety—howsoever bought,

Then turn thy fearful rein and ride,

Though twice ten thousand men have died

On this eventful day,

To gild the military fame

Which thou, for life, in traffick tame,

Wilt barter thus away.

Shall future ages tell this tale

Of inconsistence faint and frail?

And art thou He of Lodi's bridge,
 Marengo's field, and Wagram's ridge !
 Or is thy soul like mountain-tide,
 That, swell'd by winter storm and shower,
 Rolls down in turbulence of power
 A torrent fierce and wide ;
 'Reft of these aids, a rill obscure,
 Shrinking unnotic'd, mean, and poor,
 Whose channel shows display'd
 The wrecks of its impetuous course,
 But not one symptom of the force
 By which these wrecks were made !

XV.

Spur on thy way !—since now thine ear
 Has brook'd thy veterans' wish to hear,
 Who, as thy flight they ey'd,
 Exclaim'd—while tears of anguish came,
 Wrung forth by pride, and rage, and shame—
 “ Oh that he had but died !”

But yet, to sum this hour of ill,
 Look, ere thou leav'st the fatal hill,
 Back on yon broken ranks—
 Upon whose wild confusion gleams
 The moon, as on the troubled streams
 When rivers break their banks,
 And, to the ruin'd peasant's eye,
 Objects half seen roll swiftly by,
 Down the dread current hurl'd—
 So mingle banner, wain, and gun,
 Where the tumultuous flight rolls on
 Of warriors, who, when morn begun,
 Defi'd a banded world.

XVI.

List—frequent to the hurrying rout
 The stern pursuers' vengeful shout
 Tells, that upon their broken rear
 Rages the Prussian's bloody spear,
 So fell a shriek was none,
 When Beresina's icy flood
 Redden'd and thaw'd with flame and blood,

And, pressing on thy desperate way,
 Rais'd oft and long their wild hurra,
 The children of the Don.

Thine ear no yell of horror cleft
 So ominous, when, all bereft
 Of aid, the valiant Polack left—
 Ay, left by thee—found soldier's grave
 In Leipsic's corpse-encumber'd wave.
 Fate, in these various perils past,
 Reserv'd thee still some future cast;—
 On the dread die thou now hast thrown,
 Hangs not a single field alone,
 Nor one campaign—thy martial fame,
 Thy empire, dynasty, and name,
 Have felt the final stroke;
 And now, o'er thy devoted head
 The last stern vial's wrath is shed,
 The last dread seal is broke.

XVII.

Since live thou wilt—refuse not now
 Before these demagogues to bow,

Late objects of thy scorn and hate,
 Who shall thy once imperial fate
 Make wordy theme of vain debate.—
 Or shall we say, thou stoop'st less low
 In seeking refuge from the foe,
 Against whose heart, in prosperous life,
 Thine hand hath ever held the knife?—

Such homage hath been paid
 By Roman and by Grecian voice,
 And there were honour in the choice,
 If it were freely made.

Then safely come—in one so low,
 So lost—we cannot own a foe;
 Though dear experience bid us end,
 In thee we ne'er can hail a friend.—
 Come, howsoe'er—but do not hide
 Close in thy heart that germ of pride,
 Erewhile by gifted bard espied,

That “yet imperial hope;”
 Think not that for a fresh rebound,
 To raise ambition from the ground,
 We yield thee means or scope.

In safety come—but ne'er again
 Hold type of independent reign;
 No islet calls thee lord,
 We leave thee no confederate band,
 No symbol of thy lost command,
 To be a dagger in the hand
 From which we wrench'd the sword.

XVIII.

Yet, e'en in yon sequester'd spot,
 May worthier conquest be thy lot
 Than yet thy life has known;
 Conquest, unbought by blood or harm,
 That needs nor foreign aid nor arm,
 A triumph all thine own,
 Such waits thee when thou shalt control
 Those passions wild, that stubborn soul,
 That marr'd thy prosperous scene:
 Hear this—from no unmoved heart,
 Which sighs, comparing what thou art
 With what thou might'st have been!

XIX.

Thou, too, whose deeds of fame renew'd
 Bankrupt a nation's gratitude,
 To thine own noble heart must owe
 More than the meed she can bestow.
 For not a people's just acclaim,
 Not the full hail of Europe's fame,
 Thy prince's smiles, thy state's decree,
 The ducal rank, the garter'd knee,
 Not these such pure delight afford
 As that, when, hanging up thy sword,
 Well may'st thou think, "This honest steel
 Was ever drawn for public weal;
 And, such was rightful Heaven's decree,
 Ne'er sheathed unless with victory!"

XX.

Look forth, once more, with soften'd heart,
 Ere from the field of fame we part;

Triumph and Sorrow border near,
And joy oft melts into a tear.
Alas! what links of love that morn
Has War's rude hand asunder torn!
For ne'er was field so sternly fought,
And ne'er was conquest dearer bought.
Here, pil'd in common slaughter, sleep
Those whom affection long shall weep;
Here rests the sire, that ne'er shall strain
His orphans to his heart again;
The son, whom, on his native shore,
The parent's voice shall bless no more;
The bridegroom, who has hardly press'd
His blushing consort to his breast;
The husband, whom, through many a year,
Long love and mutual faith endear.
Thou canst not name one tender tie
But here, dissolv'd, its reliques lie!
O when thou see'st some mourner's veil,
Shroud her thin form and visage pale,

Or mark'st the Matron's bursting tears
 Stream when the stricken drum she hears
 Or see'st how manlier grief, suppress'd,
 Is labouring in a father's breast,—
 With no inquiry vain pursue
 The cause, but think on Waterloo!

XXI.

Period of honour as of woes,
 What bright careers 'twas thine to close!—
 Mark'd on thy roll of blood what names,
 To Britain's memory, and to Fame's,
 Laid there their last immortal claims!
 Thou saw'st in seas of gore expire
 Redoubted Picton's soul of fire—
 Saw'st in the mingled carnage lie
 All that of Ponsonby could die—
 De Lancy change Love's bridal wreath
 For laurels from the hand of death—
 Saw'st gallant Miller's failing eye
 Still bent where Albion's banners fly.

And Cameron, in the shock of steel,
Die like the offspring of Lochiel ;
And generous Gordon, 'mid the strife,
Fall while he watch'd his leader's life.—
Ah ! though her guardian angel's shield
Fenc'd Britain's hero through the field,
Fate not the less her power made known,
Through his friends' hearts to pierce his own !

XXII.

Forgive, brave Dead, th' imperfect lay !
Who may your names, your numbers, say ?
What high-strung harp, what lofty line,
To each the dear-earn'd praise assign,
From high-born chiefs of martial fame
To the poor soldier's lowlier name ?
Lightly ye rose, that dawning day,
From your cold couch of swamp and clay,
To fill, before the sun was low,
The bed that morning cannot know.—

Oft may the tear the green sod steep,
 And sacred be the heroes' sleep,
 Till Time shall cease to run ;
 And ne'er beside their noble grave
 May Briton pass, and fail to crave
 A blessing on the fallen brave
 Who fought with Wellington !

XXIII.

Farewell, sad Field ! whose blighted face
 Wears desolation's withering trace ;
 Long shall my memory retain
 Thy shatter'd huts and trampled grain,
 With every mark of martial wrong,
 That scathe thy towers, fair Hougomont !
 Yet though thy garden's green arcade
 The marksman's fatal post was made,
 Though on thy shatter'd beeches fell
 The blended rage of shot and shell,
 Though from thy blacken'd portals torn
 Their fall thy blighted fruit-trees mourn,

Has not such havoc bought a name

Immortal in the rolls of fame ?

Yes—Agincourt may be forgot,

And Cressy be an unknown spot,

And Blenheim's name be new ;

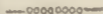
But still in story and in song,

For many an age remember'd long,

Shall live the towers of Hougomont,

And fields of Waterloo.

CONCLUSION.



Stern tide of human Time! that know'st not
rest,

But, sweeping from the cradle to the tomb,
Bear'st ever downward on thy dusky breast
Successive generations to their doom :

While thy capacious stream has equal room

For the gay bark where Pleasure's stream-
ers sport,

And for the prison-ship of guilt and gloom, .

The fisher-skiff, and barge that bears a
court,

Still wafting onward all to one dark silent port.

Stern tide of Time ! through what mysterious
change

Of hope and fear have our frail barks been
driven !

For ne'er, before, vicissitude so strange

Was to one race of Adam's offspring given.

And sure such varied change of sea and heaven,

Such unexpected bursts of joy and wo,

Such fearful strife as that where we have
striven,

Succeeding ages ne'er again shall know,

Until the awful term when Thou shalt cease
to flow.

Well hast thou stood, my Country!--the
brave fight

Hast well maintain'd through good report
and ill ;

In thy just cause, and in thy native might,

And in Heaven's grace and justice constant
still.

Whether the banded prowess, strength, and
skill

Of half the world against thee stood array'd,
Or when, with better views and freer will,
Beside thee Europe's noblest drew the
blade,

Each emulous in arms the Ocean Queen to aid.

Well art thou now repaid—though slowly
rose,

And struggled long with mists thy blaze of
fame,

While like the dawn that in the orient glows

On the broad wave its earlier lustre came ;

Then eastern Egypt saw the growing flame,

And Maida's myrtles gleam'd beneath its
ray,

Where first the soldier, stung with generous
shame,

Rivall'd the heroes of the wat'ry way,
And wash'd in foemen's gore unjust reproach
away.

Now, Island Empress, wave thy crest on high,
And bid the banner of thy Patron flow,
Gallant Saint George, the flower of Chivalry!
For thou hast fac'd, like him, a dragon foe,
And rescu'd innocence from overthrow,
And trampled down, like him, tyrannic
might,
And to the gazing world may'st proudly show
The chosen emblem of thy sainted Knight,
Who quell'd devouring pride, and vindicated
right.

Yet 'mid the confidence of just renown,
Renown dear bought, but dearest thus ac-
quir'd,
While, Britain, write the moral lesson down;
'Tis not alone the heart with valour fir'd,

The discipline so dreaded and admired,
In many a field of bloody conquest known;
—Such may by fame be lured, by gold be
hired—

'Tis constancy in the good cause alone,
Best justifies the meed thy valiant sons have
won.

NOTES.



NOTES.

Note I.

*The peasant, at his labour blithe,
Plies the hook'd staff and shorten'd sithe.*

P. 11.

The reaper in Flanders carries in his left hand a stick with an iron hook, with which he collects as much grain as he can cut at one sweep with a short sithe, which he holds in his right hand. They carry on this double process with great spirit and dexterity.

Note II.

*Pale Brussels! then what thoughts were
thine.—P. 17.*

It was affirmed by the prisoners of war, that Bonaparte had promised his army, in case of victory, twenty-four hours' plunder of the city of Brussels.

Note III.

“Confront the battery's jaws of flame!

“Rush on the levell'd gun!”—P. 18.

The characteristic obstinacy of Napoleon was never more fully displayed than in what

we may be permitted to hope will prove the last of his fields. He would listen to no advice, and allow of no obstacles. An eye-witness has given the following account of his demeanour towards the end of the action:—

“It was near seven o’clock; Bonaparte, who, till then, had remained upon the ridge of the hill whence he could best behold what passed, contemplated, with a stern countenance, the scene of this horrible slaughter. The more that obstacles seemed to multiply, the more his obstinacy seemed to increase. He became indignant at these unforeseen difficulties; and, far from fearing to push to extremities an army whose confidence in him was boundless, he ceased not to pour down fresh troops, and to give orders to march forward—to charge with the bayonet—to carry by storm. He was repeatedly informed, from different points, that the day went against him, and that the troops seemed to be disordered; to which he only replied—*En avant! en avant!*”

“One general sent to inform the Emperor that he was in a position which he could not maintain, because it was commanded by a battery, and requested to know, at the same time,

in what way he should protect his division from the murderous fire of the English artillery. 'Let him storm the battery,' replied Bonaparte, and turned his back on the aid-de-camp who brought the message."—*Relation de la Bataille de Mont-Saint-Jean. Par un Témoin Occulaire.* Paris. 1815. 8vo. p. 51.

Note IV.

The fate their leader shunn'd to share—P. 19.

It has been reported that Bonaparte charged at the head of his guards at the last period of this dreadful conflict. This, however, is not accurate. He came down, indeed, to a hollow part of the high road leading to Charleroi, within less than a quarter of a mile of the farm of La Haye Sainte, one of the points most fiercely disputed. Here he harangued the guards, and informed them that his preceding operations had destroyed the British infantry and cavalry, and that they had only to support the fire of the artillery, which they were to attack with the bayonet. This exhortation was received with shouts of *Vive l'Empereur*, which were heard over all our line, and led to an idea that Napoleon was charging in person. But the guards were led on by

Ney; nor did Bonaparte approach nearer the scene of action than the spot already mentioned, which the rising banks on each side rendered secure from all such balls as did not come in a straight line. He witnessed the earlier part of the battle from places yet more remote, particularly from an observatory which had been placed there by the king of the Netherlands, some weeks before, for the purpose of surveying the country.* It is not meant to infer from these particulars that Napoleon showed, on that memorable occasion, the least deficiency in personal courage; on the contrary, he evinced the greatest composure and presence of mind during the whole action. But it is no less true that report has erred in ascribing to him any desperate efforts of valour for the recovery of the battle; and it is remarkable, that during the whole carnage, none of his suite were either killed or wounded, whereas scarcely one of the Duke of Wellington's personal attendants escaped unhurt.

* The mistakes concerning this observatory have been mutual. The English supposed it was erected for the use of Bonaparte; and a French writer affirms it was constructed by the Duke of Wellington.

Note V.

England shall tell the fight.—P. 19.

In riding up to a regiment which was hard pressed, the Duke called to the men, "Soldiers, we must never be beat—what will they say in England?" It is needless to say how this appeal was answered.

Note VI.

*As ples the smith his clanging trade,
Against the cuirass rang the blade.—P. 22.*

A private soldier of the 95th regiment compared the sound which took place immediately upon the British cavalry mingling with those of the enemy, to "a thousand tinkers at work mending pots and kettles."

Note VII.

*Or will thy Chosen brook to feel
The British shock of levell'd steel.—P. 23.*

No persuasion or authority could prevail upon the French troops to stand the shock of the bayonet. The imperial guards, in particular, hardly stood till the British were within

thirty yards of them, although the French author, already quoted, has put into their mouths the magnanimous sentiment, "The guards never yield—they die." The same author has covered the plateau, or eminence, of St. Jean, which formed the British position, with redoubts and entrenchments which never had an existence. As the narrative, which is in many respects curious, was written by an eye-witness, he was probably deceived by the appearance of a road and ditch which runs along part of the hill. It may be also mentioned, in criticising this work, that the writer states the Chateau of Hougoumont to have been carried by the French, although it was resolutely and successfully defended during the whole action. The enemy, indeed, possessed themselves of the wood by which it is surrounded, and at length set fire to the house itself; but the British (a detachment of the guards, under the command of Colonel Macdonnell, and afterwards of Colonel Home) made good the garden, and thus preserved by their desperate resistance, the post which covered the return of the Duke of Wellington's right flank.

THE END.









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