

anxious to get the prisoners to do labouring work for them; but none accepted this employment without my permission. I gladly consented to their having such advantage, under one only restriction, the necessity of which was obvious; that they should not engage in any of the public works usually performed by French soldiers; lest having taken the place of these men, the soldiers might be sent to the army. To these conditions they invariably adhered, in spite of threats and coercion."

On the establishment of the *depôt* at Sarrelibre, Captain Brenton says, "I applied for permission to visit the prisoners who were confined there, but my request was refused. An evident feeling of jealousy began at this time to manifest itself, with regard to the influence the British officers exercised over their countrymen; and all communication was forbidden between them. In the course of the autumn I obtained permission to reside at Etain, a little village about twelve miles from Verdun. General Abercrombie was my companion, he was the son of Sir Ralph, and had been arrested at Calais, just as he was stepping into the packet for England, previous to the commencement of the war. We were enjoying with great relish this little change in our captivity, when a *detenu* of rank thought proper to make his escape; and having succeeded, he wrote to the French government, defending his conduct; and adding that no *detenu* considered his promise to be binding. In consequence of this conduct all the prisoners were instantly recalled to Verdun. The gates were shut, and all passports taken away;

nor could the prisoners under such circumstances justly complain of the severity exercised towards them. The officers taken in active service again remonstrated, but for a time without effect. The measures of restraint however were soon again relaxed, and they returned to their former state.

Relative to this period the journal supplies the following entry, as made from a paper left by Mrs. Brenton. July 3rd, 1804, she writes, "Grant O most merciful God, that my beloved husband may this day be reflecting with gratitude on his escape from the perils of this day year, and returning humble thanks to Thee for his preservation. Continue to protect him, O heavenly Father, and if it be according to Thy all wise decree, grant that he may soon return in health and safety." To this simple and touching prayer the husband has subjoined, "I earnestly hope that I did fulfil your beloved mother's most pious wishes in offering up on that day, my grateful recollection and praises to the Almighty, for the protection He had been pleased to vouchsafe me on the day of my capture." I have for many years endeavoured to retain the impression upon my mind, by making it a part of my daily prayer: "O Almighty God, father of all mercies," he adds, "from my earliest infancy Thou hast blessed and protected me. Thou didst bless my dearest parents, and make us their children, the instruments of their welfare. O Lord, in the hour of danger, and in the day of battle, on the bed of sickness, how constantly Thou hast protected me. O merciful Creator, Thou hast preserved unto me for a series

of years, the greatest of earthly blessings, a virtuous and affectionate wife. Thou hast supported her in the hour of trial, Thou hast enabled her to bear her afflictions. Thou hast softened the miseries of my captivity, by the protection of my wife and child." "Although (he continues) we had not at this time been united much more than two years, I considered that my wife had been preserved unto me, from the earliest period of my fixing my affections upon her, more than thirteen years previous to our marriage." On Sunday, 29th July, 1804, Mrs. Brenton writes again; "I have had the pleasure of conversing with Mr. Forbes and his family about my invaluable husband, and listened with delight to the praises bestowed upon him. Continue to preserve him, O merciful God, if it be according to Thy divine will, and Thy all wise decrees. Grant that he may soon return in health and safety : this I beg through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Captain Brenton remarks, "Mr. Forbes had been detained as a prisoner in France, with many more of his countrymen, whilst on his travels; but he was liberated at the instance of Sir Joseph Banks, to whom he was known. Buonaparte wishing to be considered the friend and patron of literary men, and this gentleman being known to have collected materials for a very considerable work upon India, which has since been published, he was glad to take the opportunity of evincing his respect for science by granting to Sir Joseph Banks, and in favour of a man of letters, what he would have yielded to no other application.

"Mr. Forbes was a worthy pious man, who took

much delight in relieving the sufferings of his poor countrymen, who were in captivity with him. Upon his liberation, we formed the most sanguine hopes that our own would speedily follow. He shewed great kindness in charging himself with letters and presents for our dear friends in England : and promised to deliver them in person ; a promise which he most punctually performed. It was indeed a great source of comfort to both of us, that this opportunity of corresponding was granted. Under any other circumstances, I should be guilty of unpardonable vanity, in transcribing the observations contained in the memoranda of this day ; but, you my beloved children will read them, as coming warm from the heart of your angelic mother ; dictated by that ardent affection, which was, if possible, increasing in both of us, during the whole of our union." "A considerable period," he adds, "elapses from this time, in which I can find no journal. It may have been lost, as in many other instances ; or probably was not written, from the state of suspense in which we were constantly kept on both sides respecting an exchange. Alternate hopes and fears were excited by the rumours of the day. I had carried on a correspondence upon the subject, with the Minister of Marine, M. Decrés, who expressed in his letter a wish for the establishment of a cartel, which seemed to be retarded, more from punctilio than from any real obstacle. Buonaparte himself appeared by this time to have considered the measure of making hostages of the travellers, in a much less advantageous light than it had presented itself to his mind at first.

“ Under these impressions I indulged the hope that were any considerable effort made in England, by persons in power, it might be attended with success. I therefore urged my beloved Isabella to write to the first Lord of the Admiralty in her own name, and her own words, and to urge a further official application. This she did, doubtful, and as it appears almost despairing of success, but anxious to leave nothing undone, which it was in her power to do, particularly when it had been suggested by me. But in this, as in every other act of her exemplary life, she recommended her cause to the power and protection of the Almighty, and with the most delightful resignation, placed all her hopes in him. The application was unavailing. Buonaparte tenaciously insisted upon the Hanoverians, and detenus being first exchanged, against the French prisoners taken in the beginning of the war. This sacrifice we could not expect our country to make, and the preservation of its dignity, even reconciled us to a further captivity. We felt, and appreciated the motive.”

Referring to the memoranda of October the 29th, 1804, Captain Brenton writes, “ The apprehensions of our kind friends made them too solicitous respecting the consequences, to allow them to excite any sanguine hopes on either side. They rather seemed to recommend resignation, and acquiescence in what seemed to be unavoidable; and my hopes by this time had entirely vanished. From the tenor of my last letter from the Minister of Marine, I had been convinced that all prospect of an exchange of prisoners, had now become more remote than ever; and I immediately turned my

thoughts towards making my captivity as light as possible, by associating with it what was dearest to me in the world. I determined to call for my beloved wife and child, and to take advantage of those blessings, which a most bountiful Providence had bestowed upon me; to enjoy them with gratitude; to resign myself to the Divine will; and to remain in peaceful expectation of the hour, when God might be pleased to liberate me. This plan had often suggested itself to me, but I deferred acting upon it, until I should be justified by having made every effort to procure my liberty. Having failed in these, M. Decrés, the Minister, had the kindness to forward my wishes to the utmost of his power, by sending me not only a passport for my family, but letters of recommendation for my beloved wife to wait her arrival at Rotterdam. Having once allowed such a prospect of happiness to present itself to my mind, I no longer gave captivity a moment's consideration; but counted the days to the return of spring, when I might recommend my darling Isabella to begin her journey. I had travelled sufficiently as a prisoner to know that there was neither risk nor difficulty in the undertaking; and I depended upon that benignant and merciful Power, who had so often supported us, to continue His gracious mercy and protection to my beloved wife and child.

That this meeting between the husband and the wife who came to share his captivity, was happily effected, is recorded in the note, affixed to the memoranda of New Year's Day, 1806. "We were permitted to meet early in this year; and to pass it, I may almost say, in perfect happiness. Such at least it appears, although we

had great trials in consequence of the ill health of our darling child, as well as from my own indisposition. I was attacked, in the course of the summer with a complaint upon the lungs, which to me wore a most threatening aspect. I however concealed from my dear suffering and anxious companion the most serious symptom, which was spitting of blood; and I believe she never knew it for many years afterwards, nor until I had regained perfect health, and till her's, still more valuable to me, was menaced by the same alarming indication. I then gladly told my secret, as well to comfort my beloved invalide, as to excite my own hopes. Our dear boy also was attacked, whilst travelling with us towards Tours, with a dropsical complaint, which for some time threatened his life. How little did I think that I should have lived to weep over them both. In one short month they were both taken from me."

Captain Brenton has left some details of his wife's journey, which as being made through an enemy's country, under such very peculiar circumstances, are not without interest. He says, "The vigour and energy of mind displayed by my angelic wife, were the theme of praise to all who knew her. Naturally timid and fond of retirement, her habits of life were but ill adapted to the exertion and resolution, which this journey, performed under such formidable circumstances, required. But prompted by her affection for me, and by a sense of duty, she placed herself under the care of her Divine Protector, and was immovably fixed in her purpose, incapable of being deterred by any consideration of personal risk or

suffering. Even in her anxiety for her beloved child, she was supported by the same sense of piety, and confidence in the blessing of God upon her virtuous efforts; and the blessing of God attended her through life in all she did.

“My brother was at this time commanding the Amarantha, and most providentially lying at the Nore. He had been alarmingly ill, and was still in a state of great weakness; but he was all activity for the comfort and assistance of my beloved Isabella; who with her boy, and your dear aunt Mary, had embarked in a small Prussian vessel, which was hired to take them to Rotterdam. There they were most kindly received by the respectable persons to whom letters of credit and introduction had been sent, and they there also received assurances of my welfare. In your dear Aunt Mary your beloved mother had a most affectionate and active companion, as her knowledge of the French language, and the energy of her mind rendered her peculiarly well qualified for such a journey. The fears that had been excited in England, at the necessity of travelling through hostile armies, vanished entirely as the ladies proceeded; and they found the road even better protected in consequence of the vicinity of the great French army, and of the number of gens d’armes patrolling in every direction to prevent desertion. Let this part of your beloved mother’s character, which stimulated her to so much exertion, in what she considered the cause of affection and duty, be treasured up, my darling children, for your imitation. Pay a due

regard to the advice of your friends, but at the same time bring your own judgment into exercise. Compare the probabilities which may threaten you, with the nature of the duty you have to perform. Pray ardently to God that He would be pleased to direct you in your decision ; and then, should the object you have in view appear to be sanctioned by duty, let no circumstance arising from other considerations shake your resolution. "Reflect, ponder, and resolve." Let this be your motto, and be inflexible in every good purpose. How much happiness should we mutually have lost, had my beloved companion been deviated from her purpose, by an apprehension of danger, which she afterwards found did not exist, or had she possessed less confidence in her Heavenly Protector. In reviewing the different events of our lives, we shall always find cause to regret having allowed the consideration of present convenience and comfort to preponderate, against what conscience had placed before us, as a duty. The same principle of resolution which your exemplary mother evinced, in the exercise of her affection for me, would on greater occasions lead to the most heroic, or the most splendid actions. These always, and only originate in right motives, inflexibly acted upon, to the utter exclusion of all minor considerations. But at the same time, you must never forget, that the object thus unremittingly pursued, should be paramount to all others, and be sanctioned by religious, as well as moral obligations."

I regret that the only memoranda I have found of

this interesting journey, are merely the names of the places, with the period of arriving at each. They are as follows :—

“ Thursday, April 16th, sailed from England for Holland.

18th, arrived at Rotterdam after a passage of fifty-two hours.

20th, left Rotterdam, took a carriage from thence to Antwerp, crossed to Williamstadt, slept at Breda.

21st, arrived at Antwerp.

22nd, arrived at Brussels.

23rd, left Brussels for Namur.

24th, arrived at Namur.

25th, left Dinant, passed through Givet, and the forest of Ardennes, and arrived at Mezieres. Friday, April 26th, hired another carriage to take us to Sedan, or to Verdun, in case of not meeting my beloved Brenton; but heaven allowed me to enjoy that supreme happiness, and I thought no more of the fatigues of the journey. Grant, O most merciful God, that I may never cease to feel a proper sense of Thy goodness, however impossible it must be for me to express half the gratitude I feel for Thy continued proofs of mercy, and favour, to myself and all dear to me.

Saturday, the 27th, slept at Stenay, and arrived at Verdun on Sunday the 28th.”

These memoranda may appear unimportant, and irrelevant to the subject of our present biography; but yet they seem to justify Captain Brenton in having planned a journey, which, by those less deeply interested, might have been condemned as being too full of

peril, and involving too much hardship to the object of his affection. His wife's example may also serve to animate some drooping spirits placed under similar circumstances ; and if it be true, as no member of the Church of England will deny, that matrimony was ordained for the mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity ; we cannot but feel that the purposes of this merciful ordinance were singularly realised in the case before us. His own grateful reflections on the subject, are thus further expressed. " Our meeting was indeed one of pure, and unmixed felicity. My beloved wife forgot in a moment all her fatigue, and anxieties ; and the recollection of captivity itself was instantly banished from my thoughts, or if I remembered it at all, it was as a blessing which brought me the happiness I enjoyed. I had been long impatiently expecting this joyful event, and the evening before had received a letter from my beloved wife, informing me of her arrival at Rotterdam. I was then living in the little village of Clermont, a few miles distant from Verdun. On this notice reaching me, I requested permission of the General to go as far as Sedan, to meet my family, which was kindly granted. On my road I was most anxiously examining every carriage as it approached. At sunset I had got within three miles of Sedan, and had begun to give up all hopes of seeing the object of my wishes ; when I espied a travelling carriage, I felt a presentiment that it contained all I held most dear in the world, and was soon convinced of it.

“ We only stopped one day at Verdun, and then removed to Clermont, where we passed some days in perfect happiness. The distance however from Clermont to Verdun was too great for convenience, as the village afforded but few requisites for a family, and I was also frequently called upon in behalf of the prisoners. I therefore procured a lodging at Charni, a little village on the Meuse, about two miles from Verdun, in a most commodious house, with a very respectable family.” Of the events of the following year, which was passed in captivity, we can only find any account by referring to the memoranda and notes, out of which the following extracts have been taken.

In reference to Charni, Captain Brenton says, “ Our retreat here was a most delightful one, in a spacious mansion belonging to Monsieur de Beaumont, who was of an ancient and noble family. We had an excellent suite of apartments, and the use of an extensive garden. The season of the year was particularly delightful; and every thing for some time conspired to make us enjoy as much felicity as human nature is capable of doing. If I had not entirely forgotten that I was a prisoner, I ceased to feel the pressure of captivity, and was resigned to my lot. An anxious thought of being deprived of the active exercise of my profession would now and then intrude, but it was soon dispelled in the recollection of the happiness I enjoyed. This however received some interruption a short time afterwards, from my health being seriously attacked. I had caught a cold, which in the month of June brought on spitting of blood. I hope the precaution I took of concealing

this alarming symptom from my beloved companion, rendered her apprehensions less dreadful to her; but I allowed my own mind to be extremely depressed. I considered a rapid decline to be the inevitable consequence; and the thoughts of my dear and helpless family, left unprovided for, and unprotected, in a foreign land, and in an enemy's country, preyed upon my spirits with a force that I cannot describe. It is unknown to all but myself, how many hours of dreadful anxiety I suffered on this account, and indeed on my own; for these very feelings prove that I was not prepared for death; that I was but a nominal christian. So blind, and worldly minded I was, that I derived no comfort from the assurances given in every part of scripture, of the mercy and goodness of God. I could not then comfort myself by resigning all I held dear into the hands of that Bountiful Creator, who gave them to me. I felt as though their happiness depended upon my sole exertions; and that without me they must be destitute. It is this way of thinking, this practical want of faith, disguise it as we may, which is the cause of all our anxiety, and even of all the misery we meet with. It could not exist, were we as sensible, as we persuade ourselves we are, of the Omnipotence, and the Omnipresence, and the merciful goodness of God. Often have I tried to reason myself into this firm trust and confidence in the Divine mercy, but the sick bed, the dear disconsolate widow, and the unprotected infant were objects, which with all my efforts, I could not look beyond; and yet, I should have thought the greatest injustice had been done me, if any one at the

time had called in question the sincerity of my religious profession. I felt as though I were living in a general, if not a constant practice of its duties. How little do we know ourselves, till the day of trial comes. I could read treatises upon patience and resignation with the most cordial concurrence in every argument ; and even wonder that they were not universally efficacious ; but when called upon to practice what they prescribed, I found I was indeed living without God in the world. I did not dare to impart these wretched feelings to my beloved and inestimable wife, in the apprehension of affecting her, and thus I lost the balm of her affectionate counsels.

“ The attack which I experienced, would, I am now convinced, have been of little importance, but for the effect I allowed it to have upon my mind. This aggravated its force, and it soon assumed so serious an appearance as threatened to realize all my apprehensions. What a lesson is this for you, my dear children, to teach you the folly as well as the wickedness of worldly anxiety. How often do the evils we dread never reach us ; whilst the blow which humbles us comes from a quarter where we least expected it. Even the events, which seem to menace us with some serious calamity, frequently become instruments of good to us. Nearly thirteen years have now elapsed since this period ; and instead of the evil I foreboded, my health has probably been strengthened and preserved, by the care and precaution which that illness rendered necessary. It was the cause of my removing from Verdun to the interior of France, to the most delightful climate, where I soon

nearly recovered. All my apprehensions were groundless. I was mercifully preserved to those so justly dear to me, and preserved by a gracious Providence to be the humble instrument of their future welfare.

“It was impossible to enjoy greater advantages than we possessed, in the retired village of Charni, during the summer months ; and I avoided the bustle and constant interruption, which I met with at Verdun from various quarters. We had some excellent and valuable friends, in whose society we found much gratification ; their habits were similar to our own ; with them we lived on terms of the kindest intimacy, and avoided, by having this residence, the necessity of keeping up an intercourse with others who found enjoyment only in society of a very different description. As the autumn however approached, we thought it necessary to remove into Verdun, as Charni was too low for a winter residence. We continued to live in retirement, as my health was too weak to admit of my entering into evening parties, and it was with great difficulty that I could prevail upon my beloved and excellent companion to leave me only for a few hours. Even the change from Charni to Verdun was beneficial to me. The progress I made towards recovery was very apparent, and my mind being consequently relieved, I was in a great measure restored to happiness. The mercy and goodness of God has visited me through life, in a very remarkable manner ; and this ought to excite the warmest gratitude, and the most entire resignation to all He should in future require of me.

“One other circumstance at this period occurred most

providentially, which relieved me from much anxiety. My pecuniary circumstances had always been far from affluent. The loss of my ship just fitted out ; the necessity of keeping two houses ; and the other unavoidable expences of my situation, had exhausted the little which I had made in the late war. At this time I received two sums most opportunely, namely £468, prize money from Genoa, of which I had given up all hopes ; and nearly £400 as a remuneration from the Admiralty for the charge I had taken of the prisoners. This materially increased our comforts ; but the circumstance derived its chief value in the estimation of my angelic wife, from the effect it produced in tranquillizing my mind. To please and obey her God ; to share in, or contribute to the happiness of those dear to her, was the great and invariable object of her life. She thus gave additional charms to prosperity itself, by the delight she took in the joy of all around her : but how often have I felt her sweet influence of still greater value in cheering me under the pressure of adversity.

“ In order to re-establish my health entirely, I was anxious to remove into a milder climate ; I was also very desirous of procuring a residence for my family, at a distance from the general depôt, where much of the society was very exceptionable, and where we were constantly unsettled, by the multitude of reports daily in circulation, suggested without any foundation by the hopes and fears of our fellow prisoners, or from mere idleness. With this view I solicited permission to pass the winter at Tours. The Minister of Marine, M.

Decrés again stood my friend, and after some delay, in consequence of Buonaparte being at Berlin, he at length succeeded, and informed me in the kindest manner of my request being granted. We made our preparations with almost as much pleasure, as though it had been for a journey to England. I employed myself during the remainder of our stay at Verdun, in concluding all my affairs relative to the prisoners at that depôt. The French government had recently forbidden any further supplies being given to the British prisoners, by their own country; declaring that each nation should support its own prisoners. The fact was, that whilst the Englishmen were so liberally provided for by their own government, there was no hope of inducing them to desert; and all intrigues carried on by the French to seduce them from their allegiance proved fruitless. In consequence of this new arrangement, my presence was no longer necessary at Verdun. I settled all my affairs relative to the prisoners, and this was rendered less complicated by an order recently issued by the French Government, that all supplies sent from England to her people should cease, and each nation support their own prisoners. I had nothing therefore now to do, but to close my accounts previous to my departure. The situation of the prisoners of inferior rank, became in consequence wretched in the extreme. They were now deprived of the comforts to which they had been accustomed; they neither saw nor heard of their officers; they knew nothing of the continued solicitude of their truly paternal government, and of the efforts it had made in their behalf. All

hopes of exchange had died away, and complete despair seemed to have taken possession of the sufferers. Numbers attempted to make their escape, and some few succeeded ; but many were intercepted and cruelly treated ; whilst additional measures of severity were adopted to prevent further attempts at desertion. All who were taken at this time, were sent off, as close prisoners to the fortress of Bitche, and confined in the dark and gloomy souterrain. It was at this time that Mr. Wolfe, finding that the principal objects of his solicitude, the children, were all removed to the distant depôts, and that none would be permitted to reside at Verdun, came forward in a manner most creditable to himself, as a volunteer to reside at Givet, a depôt in which there were twelve hundred prisoners, but no officers. He was aware that he must deprive his family of all the advantages they possessed of comfort and society at Verdun, and subject them to many privations ; but this excellent man did not hesitate, whatever sufferings or inconveniences might await him, to put in execution a resolution which was made in the hope of being instrumental to the temporal and eternal welfare of his suffering countrymen."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE REV. MR. WOLFE, ONE OF THE DETENUS—HEARS OF THE STATE OF THE PRISONERS AT GIVET, AND RESOLVES ON GOING TO RESIDE AMONG THEM—EXTRACTS FROM HIS WORK ENTITLED THE "BRITISH PRISONERS IN FRANCE."

THE name of Mr. Wolfe having been thus introduced, I feel it due to the memory of that faithful and devoted man, to leave for a moment the subject of the present memoir, in order to turn to the labours in which he was associated, and to a work which he voluntarily undertook, in conjunction with his friend, Captain Brenton. Mr. Wolfe, as has been stated, was arrested at Fontainebleau, where he was making a short stay in a tour subsequent to his marriage : and from thence was consigned with the other detenus to the dépôt at Verdun. His situation there admitted many alleviations in the captivity to which he was doomed. He found several valuable and agreeable men, the associates of his confinement. He had, as we have seen, opportunities for exercising his ministry ; and he must have felt, that though the situation was not one which he would have chosen, it was still one in which he perhaps

had less to regret, than the greater part of those around him. But while he was thus residing at Verdun, the reports which he continually received of the state of the British seamen who were confined at Givet, awoke such feelings of pity in Mr. Wolfe's mind, that he determined in a spirit of self-devotion, as rare as it is admirable, to move with his family to Givet, to take up his residence among them, and to try to forward the means of their improvement by personal exertions. This sacrifice can hardly be appreciated as it ought to be, by those who are ignorant of the condition to which the men were reduced, through their own vices, and the oppression to which they were at the time subjected. Mr. Wolfe's friends remonstrated with him seriously on the danger to which he was exposing himself, and the partner of his exile, by taking up his permanent abode among men, whom despair and suffering had rendered almost ferocious; and whose sole relief seemed to be, making others more wretched than themselves. But he had seen the need to which they were reduced. He had counted the cost, and he decided on a step, which if it involved great personal privation, and some personal danger, was followed by such an amount of blessing as few have been permitted to witness.

On first removing to Givet, he found his countrymen sunk in every kind of abomination, half starved by the dishonesty of the French Commissaries, destitute of every comfort, and in a state of mind which aggravated all their external sufferings. The cruel, and unfeeling policy of the French government at the

time, led them to make the condition of the prisoners as wretched as possible, that they might be the more easily tempted, by the agents employed to seduce them from their allegiance ; and the evils of captivity were studiously aggravated by the want of necessary food and covering, that the seamen might be induced to enlist in the French service. This species of treatment falling on minds ill prepared to resist it, had led to a degree of frightful demoralization. . Some few were drawn away by the offers made to them, and justified their desertion by the cold and hunger they had suffered. The rest seeing no prospect of release, without employment, and without resource, sought for momentary forgetfulness in intoxication, when liquor could be procured ; and then sunk into despondency, and sullen discontent. A more fearful exhibition of human nature it is hardly possible to conceive ; and yet into this scene Mr. Wolfe resolved to throw himself ; and among men, such as these, he asked, and with some difficulty obtained permission to reside. The result of this noble enterprise of Christian benevolence, of this work and labour of love, should only be given in his own words, and having asked, and obtained the kind permission of her who was his partner in this act of self-devotion, to make this use of his publication, I do not hesitate at borrowing from the work which Mr. Wolfe published in 1830, entitled the "British Prisoners in France," the narrative of the experiment he made, and which from that moment connected him, while life lasted, in affectionate regard with the subject of the present memoir.

“On my arrival at Givet,” writes Mr. Wolfe, “I soon discovered that I had undertaken a task of much more difficulty and danger than I had at all been willing to believe. I found the depôt in the most deplorable state. Both in a moral and physical point of view, it would be difficult to conceive anything more degraded and miserable. And as regards religion, every appearance of it was confined to some twenty methodists, who were the objects of the most painful persecution, and often the innocent cause of the most dreadful blasphemies. For, not content with abusing, and sometimes ill-treating them, the drunken and vicious, more effectually to distress and grieve them, would blaspheme that sacred name by which we are called, and utter their contempt in the most extravagant, and offensive mockery. The bodily privations of the prisoners, and their want of the comforts, and common necessaries of life was equally distressing. The barracks were situated in a narrow pass, between the perpendicular rock of the fortress of Charlemont on the one side, and the river Meuse on the other; and all the space the men had for exercise, was between the building itself and the river, along the side of which was a wall. This slip of ground, not more than ten paces in width, and exposed to the southern sun, was in the heat of summer a complete oven. Yet here they were obliged to walk, except they should stay in a hot room, with sixteen persons crowded into it all the day. In the hospital, the sick were mixed with those of the prisoners of other nations, and were in a shocking state of neglect, and covered with vermin. Not a

single prisoner was allowed to go out into the town ; and even the interpreter was accompanied by a *gens d'armes*. It was almost impossible for any of them to get any thing from their friends, for there was no one to receive it for them ; and the little that did come, was subjected to a deduction of five per cent by the *marchal des logis*. And so great was their distress at that moment, that unable to satisfy the cravings of hunger, they were seen to pick up the potato peelings that were thrown out into the court, and devour them.

“It appears to be the natural tendency of misery and want, to foster vice, and encourage the worst feelings of the human heart ; and that effect, in its fullest sense, was produced on this occasion. The little money that was received by the prisoners, instead of being applied to the relief of their wants, and to make them more comfortable in food and clothing, was spent in riot and excess. On these occasions, sailors are, of all other men, most ready to communicate, and never think of to-morrow. And, left, as they were, entirely to themselves, no one caring for their souls, no one having the desire, or the power to restrain them, either by force or by persuasion, in the midst of the real distress which they experienced, the *depôt* of Givet was, perhaps, at that moment, the most reprobate spot that can be imagined.

“In addition to these discouragements, connected with the field of labour which I had undertaken ; I now found, that there were difficulties in my own situation, which would probably involve me in personal danger,

of a very serious nature ; or at least, cause me to be sent away to the dungeons of Bitche.

“The Commandant, and those that were under his orders, from the time I arrived at the depôt, viewed me with a very evil eye. They had all a share in the spoil of the poor prisoners ; and my interference on their behalf, and the opportunities which I had of detecting their extortions, enraged them exceedingly against me. Whenever I made an attempt, as I frequently did, to put a stop to the exactions upon the money which was sent in to the men ; or when any complaint was made of the meat, or the bread, these officers were loud in their threats of denunciations, and of sending me off to Bitche. And for the first two years of my stay in that place, I never went to bed, without the impression upon my mind, that, ere the morning, I might probably be thus suddenly marched off.

“Before I left Verdun, I had been cautioned not to pay any money to the prisoners, which might be remitted to me, either from their friends in England, or from the charitable fund at Verdun, without express permission from the Commandant, a caution which proved most salutary. For, even though I obtained this permission, the marechal des logis came to me the next morning, in a great rage, reproached me with taking away his honest gains, and required me in future to send in the money through him. I complained to the Commandant, who inveighed against

the avarice of this man ; but I found that he was either unwilling, or afraid to redress this shameful abuse. And, although I subsequently made many attempts to pay the men their money without this abominable drawback, it was always without effect, and at the risk of being denounced, and sent away from the depôt.

“The exertions which were made, during the long-continued detention of the English prisoners in France, for the relief of such among them as were in want, are known to every one. The sums so raised were contributed by benevolent individuals in London ; to whom the collections made throughout the country, for the same charitable purpose, were also forwarded ; and by them committed to the care of some of the most respectable persons in the depôt of Verdun, who had formed themselves into a committee for that effect. These gentlemen, who were themselves liberal contributors, dispensed to the necessitous, and sent to the different depôts such relief, as the exigencies of each required. And sometimes, in the hope of more effectually relieving the sufferings of those confined in distant places, individuals from this chief depôt, went to visit them, and even took up their temporary or permanent abode among them.

“At the time these charitable contributions were received at Givet, and the payment to each prisoner was small, though the whole amount was considerable, I went to the commandant, and represented to him the charitable object of the money that was to be distributed ; and said, I hoped he would not allow any

deduction to be made from trifling sums, arising from such a source. He said, it would be altogether shameful, willingly gave me the permission to pay it, and granted my further request, that a certain number of the prisoners should be permitted to come into the town once a week, to lay out the money more advantageously, in necessaries for themselves and their fellow prisoners. This was very joyful to the poor men ; but, unfortunately, they could not contain their triumph, and boasted, in not very measured terms, that they had at length overcome the *marechal des logis*. This was sufficient ; the Commandant took this excuse for withdrawing the permission ; and, before the next weekly pay-day arrived, I received a message from him, that he had a particular reason for desiring that I would not again pay the money myself. I said, that in that case, I would not pay it at all. And for a considerable time I resisted. But surrounded as I was with spies, I could not explain what I was doing to the men. And even if I had, the Commandant knew well, they were too impatient to receive their money, not to submit to the sacrifice, even of the half, if it were required, rather than wait.

“He, also, had his hired friends, not only among the *gens d’armes*, but among the men themselves, who insinuated to them that it was all my fault that it was not paid.* They sent in a specific message to the

* “I think it was on this occasion, that, one morning, as I was going in, as usual, to early prayers, one of the men who had liberty to come into the town, came to me, and advised me not to go into the prison ; for the men were ready to make an attempt upon my life, except I would

Commandant, that they were willing to pay the deduction as usual ; and after resisting for, I think, two pay-days, I at length felt that it was wrong any longer to deprive the poor men of a charitable relief so necessary for them, and again submitted to this iniquitous tax.

“The great difficulty of my situation arose from hence. I knew that if I were found, directly or indirectly, opposing, or interfering with the business of the dépôt, otherwise than with the consent of the Commandant, and as I was able to work upon his moral feeling, or regard to his character, I should be immediately sent away. I was permitted to go there only as chaplain ; and it was evident, from every one else, who could have done anything for the prisoners, having been sent away, that I should not be allowed to stay in any other capacity. Traps were constantly laid for me,* and

promise to send in the money, which he knew I would not do. I, however, went in. The men crowded in a very tumultuous manner, in my way. There was a great buzz and murmur, but no one spoke ; and I passed through them, and found my people as devout, and totally unaffected, with the storm that was going forward around them, as if they had been in another atmosphere. As I returned through the passage, still crowded with the perturbators, a man came up to me, and I then made up my mind, that the scene was going to begin. He was, however, only come, as was usual every time I went in, to ask me to do something for him ; and I then passed through the crowd more dense and tumultuous than before, without however being accosted by any one. This sort of ebullition, fomented by the Commandant and his people, while I durst not explain myself even to those in whom I had the greatest confidence, occurred two or three times, during my residence at Givet.”

* “ One evening, when some French persons in the town, were sitting with me, some one desired to speak with me. I went out to him in the

I knew, by examples before my eyes, that if they could find any such interfering to allege against me, they would say to me, as they always did, that the thing I complained of was a shameful abuse. But they would have denounced me, as one of the Commandants afterwards did, as having done something, which they knew the minister of war, without any inquiry would punish by sending me away from the depôt. And as they would be very angry, and their accusation be of a kind which he would consider serious, an order would come down, be put in execution, perhaps in the middle of the night; and without any explanation, or, probably, any one knowing it, till the following morning, I should have been marched from brigade to brigade, to the fortress of Bitche, subject to join company with deserters and criminals, and tied, it might

ante-room, and he began to state to me, in a voice which must be audible in the room were they were sitting, the ingratitude of the French government towards him, and to request me to communicate to the British Admiralty, a plan which he had discovered, of destroying a whole fleet of ships of war. I simply told him, that I was there as a minister of religion, and could not enter into anything of a military, or political nature.

“At another time, the Count de L, a Flemish nobleman, introduced himself to me, in what way, it does not now occur to me. I had not the least suspicion of him; and even when my French friends cautioned me, I thought they were only angry with him, because he spoke so much against that people and government. Even this circumstance gave me no distrust, because it was common with the Flemings. However, he was so ultra in his remarks, saying that they had scarcely a human countenance, and things equally absurd, that I inclined to the opposite side of the question, and never said anything that could be laid hold of, not from suspicion, but from a cautiousness, which had become habitual.”

be, hand to hand with them.* This might have been risked ; but in what state would the poor fellows have been left ? They would have been reduced to the same miserable condition in which I found them, with the additional oppression which would arise from the angry feeling left upon the minds of the officers who had charge of them. And thus, sound policy, and a conscientious regard to the object for which I was permitted to be at the depôt, the religious instruction and consolation of the prisoners, perfectly coincided. Under any circumstances, I could not have thought a disingenuous conduct right, and must have given up any advantage, or even usefulness, rather than resort to it. But I found that a plain and straightforward course enabled me to be more serviceable to the prisoners. And though, sometimes, I could not help making strong representations to the Commandant, I never worked indirectly, or endeavoured to set the men's minds against him. My general resource was persuasion, and a direct appeal to his conscience, and his *amour propre*, which was particularly his weak side. And with the aid of a very kind and influential French officer in the Engineers, who was always ready to assist me, and favour the prisoners, I was enabled to

* "Dr. Lawmont, the surgeon of the ship commanded by the unfortunate Captain Wright, and who afterwards practised as Physician at Glasgow, obtained permission, about two years after my removal to Givet, to go and reside at that depôt, in the exercise of his profession. He was making the journey on foot, when a party of gens d'armes, who were conducting some felons, overtook him ; and in spite of his passport, which he produced, he was strung to them by the hand, and marched to the next brigade. What then would such persons do, under a condemnatory order from the Minister of War."

accomplish more, by this open conduct, than I could have done by means of a more indirect and inimical nature. But it will readily be conceived, that circumstanced as I was, this would often subject me to misrepresentation, and render extreme circumspection necessary.

“In the impossibility of knowing who were in the interest of the Commandant, even among the men themselves, I had but one resource, I suspected nobody, and I trusted nobody. I never explained my views or intentions to any one, and said nothing that required the least secrecy. At one time, therefore, the men, when they could not have what they wished, suspected all was not right; at another when they complained of tyranny and knavery, the agents and subalterns of the Commandant declared, that I was at the bottom of it, and they would soon have me at the dungeons of Bitche; and, at a third, the Commandant himself would be influenced by his people, and suspect me of underhand dealing.*

* Mr. Lee and Mr. Maude visited me at Givet, and went into the hospital with me. I stayed behind to speak to the men, when one of them took the opportunity to go out to them, and say, that he had not received his share of some money which I had obtained for them from Captain Brenton, and which from dishonesty on the part of a person he employed, had not been paid to them. At that moment I came up, and to the great surprise, I suppose, of the man, confirmed all that he had said. I informed them that when the money had been paid, this man was not in the dépôt, and did not get his share; and if they would get it for him, I should be very thankful; but having engaged the Captain to pay the money a second time, out of his own pocket, I had not the heart to apply to him a third. This they declined, and each of us gave the man something.”

“In the end, however, what was done spoke for itself. The men saw that every means in the power of prisoners, like themselves, were used to prevent them from being oppressed. The Commandant felt that my being there was a great check upon the rapacity and avarice of his people ; and they, and often he himself, were excessively enraged. But the moral and religious feeling which was manifested among the men, rendered them so much more peaceful and sober, more satisfied, and even cheerful in their conduct, and so much more faithful to their word and engagements, that I really think he felt it a sort of personal security to himself, and upon the whole, an advantage.

“Thus exposed to many difficulties and personal dangers, as to the temporal wants of the poor men ; in their spiritual concerns, and those immediately connected with them, I had abundant cause of thankfulness. On my first application for a place of worship, the Commandant expressed his readiness to do every thing in his power. But he had no place at his disposal larger than the ordinary sized room, which would not hold more than two hundred persons. This I obtained for the moment. But the Colonel-director of engineers was then with the army in Germany ; and the grenier, the only place sufficiently large for the purpose, could only be obtained by a direct application to him. For the present, therefore, a room perhaps a little larger than the others, where was an oven for the purpose of baking bread for the barracks, was converted into a chapel. A small plain desk was made by one of the men, which served also for a pulpit ; and

the clerk made use of a common table and stool. What was wanting however in accommodation, was abundantly made up by the spirit which soon was manifested among the prisoners ; and the Lord wrought powerfully among them. The place was crowded to excess, and the oven, which reached so near the top of the room, that the men could not sit upright upon it, was always covered with them, lying in a most painful position from want of room.

“The Schools were also immediately established ; and though the funds for all these objects were, at that early period of our captivity, but scantily, and with great difficulty obtained, we were yet able to carry on a system of education, which, for extent, usefulness, and the rapid progress made by those that were instructed, has perhaps seldom been equalled. It is indeed wonderful, at how small an expence, a number of persons, generally amounting to between four and five hundred, were taught to read, write, go through the highest rules in arithmetic, navigation in all its most difficult branches, construct charts and maps, and work at the practical part of their profession, as far as it can be learned from the form of a vessel, which had been admirably rigged for that purpose. Yet the small sums given to those among them, who were capable of instructing their fellow prisoners, as masters or assistants, were very useful.

“The immediate results arising from this employment of their time, were beneficial, in a degree, at least equal to the professional advantages, which they might hope to experience in their future prospects. While

they were thus receiving instruction and edification, their thoughts were diverted from dwelling upon those misfortunes, which had the most pernicious effect and influence upon their minds, not only in a moral and religious point of view, but, often as it regarded their health and spirits. And thus the fear of God, and the influence of moral duty and instruction, even in those who were not decidedly religious, reciprocally acted upon their minds ; preserved them from that mental debasement, and those habits of depravity and vice, which are ever contracted and induced by ignorance and want of employment.

“And in the midst of these useful occupations, the Lord opened the hearts of many, to receive that heavenly wisdom, the merchandize of which is better than silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold ; without which, all our attainments are nothing worth, and with which all the things we can desire, are not to be compared. The number of boys was comparatively small ; the greater number were men grown ; and some of those that were advanced in years, were anxious not to lose this opportunity of learning to read, at least, their bibles ; to be able to study for themselves those oracles of eternal truth, which are ‘able to make men wise unto salvation, through faith that is in Christ Jesus.’

“The hospital was another object of my immediate attention. It is remarkable that this abode of sickness and misery, was also the most abandoned portion of the depôt. In this respect, the remark which I have before made is completely borne out. And here,

where it might have been hoped that the afflicting hand of God, and the constant view of death, would have brought the most wicked to tremble at the thought of judgment, hardened impenitence kept pace with outward misery. And even after their wants were supplied, and every comfort was promised for them, which affliction is susceptible of, the hospital continued to be, with some exceptions, much less under the influence of religious improvement, than any other part of the depôt.

“My first object was to obtain for my countrymen a ward to themselves, separate from the prisoners of other nations. One of the prisoners had already been employed in the joint capacity of interpreter and nurse. He was by birth a Portuguese, but had been many years in the English navy, and spoke English nearly as well as a native. He was however a person in whom I had not the least confidence, was hardened in all the callous and profligate practices of the French nurses, and was evidently in the pay of the Commandant. For the same reason, however, I knew it would be impossible for me to displace him. And, after a vain attempt to do so, I endeavoured to make him as useful as possible; and contented myself with employing another person, and a third, as they were wanted, whom I found best suited to attend the sick, and administer to their comforts.

“It was my anxious wish to find a pious person, who was fit for this affair, and was willing to take the charge, in which there were so many opportunities of usefulness. And at length I succeeded in obtaining

the appointment of one, who would at all times be ready to speak a word in season, to those who might be induced to hear. From this time the poor men were as comfortable as in an English hospital. Extreme cleanliness succeeded to the state of filth in which I had found them ; and as wine, and many other things of a cordial, or a nutritious nature, were there abundant, and very reasonable, they had even greater comforts than would have been provided for them at home. And the consequence was, that we had a smaller proportion of deaths, compared with the number of persons present, than is scarcely ever known.

“ A better spirit also began to be manifested among the men. The absence of the French nurses, hackneyed in every vice, and hardened amidst the most appalling scenes of sickness, misery, and death, contributed to prevent, in some measure, the abandoned carelessness and unconcern which had been shewn, when those who perhaps had less reason to expect it than themselves, were called before them, to give an account of the things done in the body. At least, they whose sufferings God had sanctified, were not interrupted, as they had been, by the riot and blasphemy of the wicked and impenitent.

“ In the mean time, a great sensation was created in the prison ; and, as in old time, some mocked, while others, for the first time, saw before them an invisible and eternal world, compared with which all the things they could desire were less than nothing and vanity. There were many among them already, whose hearts the Lord opened, to attend to the things which have

been declared by prophets, and apostles, and confirmed by God, manifest in the flesh. Many were enquiring into the things which accompany salvation; and in many the word of truth took deep root, and they continued seeking the grace of Christ. Nor have I the least reason to doubt, that the Lord fulfilled to many his gracious promise, 'Seek and ye shall find,' and that even now, some have entered into the rest that remaineth for the people of God; and others are still so running that they may obtain.

"The methodist congregation were regular attendants on the service of the Church, and had their meetings night and morning.* They were very useful in the work of God; and now their numbers increased. And soon after my arrival another meeting was formed, of those who from time to time were under the influence of conviction, arising out of, and more immediately connected with the congregation of the Church. As my own views, at the period of my arrival at Givet, were by no means clear, it will readily be understood, that these persons did not see at once all the riches of the grace of God. Still their hearts were opened, and they 'followed on to know the Lord.'

"There were, as might be expected, discussions and disputes between the two classes, and among each other. These I endeavoured to allay, and encourage among them a single eye to Christ. The work of God proceeded more rapidly than my most sanguine hopes

* They were not all Wesleyans; but of that persuasion, jointly with those that hold the Calvinistic tenets.

could have anticipated. And one or other of the men were frequently receiving letters from their fellow-prisoners in other depôts, saying, that they heard the Lord was among them, and expressing a hope that the influence might be felt amongst themselves. The change was also soon visible in the lives and moral conduct of the men ; and was recognized, as I have observed, by the Commandant and all who had to do with them. Formerly they could only be restrained by force, and bolts and bars were the only means of keeping them safely ; and they constantly broke through them ; but now, bolts and bars were unnecessary. The Commandant was persuaded, and acted entirely upon that persuasion, that the only thing that could bind them, was the moral obligation of their word ; which, whether given or implied, they never broke, in any instance that came to my knowledge.

“ Nor was this confined to them that feared God. The moral influence of Christianity spread through the whole body, and the most striking instances of faithfulness to their word, and a sense of the obligation of it, were given by the prisoners. And it was not officers or people of education who thus distinguished themselves ; but common sailors, and youngsters, who might have been expected to view the breach of their parole only as a joke. So that it was considered as a national feeling, and raised the character of the English in that country extremely.*

* “ General Monleau, who would willingly have ordered the death of half a dozen English in the mere hope of gratifying the Emperor, was complaining in a large party one evening, of the total impossibility of

“ This conduct had also the happiest effect upon the comfort of the men. Previous to my arrival they had by degrees been all confined to the prison ; those who had been permitted to come out, having conducted themselves ill, or run away. And at length, not one prisoner, without excepting even the interpreter, was permitted to come out without a guard, under any pretext.

“ I began by getting one out, and then a second, and a third person, for my own service, and as interpreter ; then some others in whom I had most confidence. The good behaviour of these men, encouraged the Commandant to give liberty to others. The number of those who had permission to reside in the town, or to work and walk out of the prison, increased daily ; and at length, so complete was his confidence in them, that he allowed many of them to walk out into the country ; and there were often as many as two hundred out of the prison at a time.

“ And now, the director of engineers, who had also the fortifications under his direction, returned from the German campaign. I made immediate application to him for what was wanted for the comfort and accommodation of the depôt ; and on this occasion, as on all others, he willingly listened to our wishes, and did more than we asked.

keeping the English midshipmen ; and saying, that he had put them in the strongest dungeons in vain. ‘ Je vous indiquerai, general,’ said a lady in company distinguished for her talents, ‘ un moyen sur.’ The general was all ears. ‘ Mettez les sur leur parole, les Anglois sont esclaves de leur parole d’honneur ’”

“There was a part of the court which surrounded the barracks, about the size of that which lay between the building and the river. This was on the north side of the prison, and was comparatively cool, from the shade afforded by the building ; when, on the other side, the heat from the southern sun, and the reflection from the walls, was almost intolerable. But there was no palisade, on the side of the road to prevent the escape of the prisoners. There was a sufficient number of these for the purpose, among the stores belonging to the fortification ; and I offered, out of the funds sent me by the committee at Verdun, having previously consulted them, to defray an expence so essential to the health and comfort of the men, which was estimated at fifteen pounds.

“This proposal the director immediately forwarded to the Bureau de la guerre, and received an immediate permission to grant us this accommodation ; which he lost no time in completing. But when I came to pay the expence, I was agreeably surprised to find, that he had represented to the minister the inconsistency that there would be in allowing this expence to be borne by individuals ; and he would not hear of my paying a farthing. I then applied to him for a large grenier, which was the only place sufficiently capacious for the purpose of divine worship. This again required some expense, and was attended with some difficulties. The colonel, however, made none. He gave immediate orders to the person who supplied bread for the barracks, to whom he had given this place as a storehouse, to empty it of the stores which he had laid up in it,

and give up the key. And now the only fault that we had to find, was the reverse of that which we had before complained of. The place would have held several thousand persons ; and being very low and unceiled, the heat in the summer was excessive, and the winter's cold was not less severe. The men, however, did not complain ; they were seeking the glory that shall be revealed, to which the light afflictions of the present, which are but for a moment, are not to be compared.

“ We were now enabled to meet together in as large numbers as would ; and as many as were so inclined, had full power of seeking, in the ordinances of God, and the hearing of the word, the grace which bringeth salvation. And they were not backward in availing themselves of the means which were thus offered to them. I was very anxious that they should not come there under any feeling of constraint, or for filthy lucre's sake ; that they should understand that it would be no advantage to them, as to the loaves and fishes. Yet the congregation increased ; and there were few instances of those that had begun to run well, looking back, or returning into the way of carelessness and sin.

“ Some of those who had never been received by baptism into the church of Christ, were anxious to receive this pledge of their profession. It was an affecting sight, to see the jetty natives of the East desiring, like the Ethiopian convert of old, to profess their faith in a crucified Saviour ; and while they manifested already in their lives the grace that sanctifieth, receiving with desire of heart, the outward sign and

pledge of the faith that was in them. But the Lord's Supper was a still more joyful proof and evidence of the work which He was carrying on amongst these people. I shall never forget the first sacrament, which I administered in the barracks. The number of communicants was about fourteen, most of them old men. The greater part had never before attended at the holy table. Some, perhaps, had never been in a place of worship in their lives, until my arrival at the depôt. They could not contain their feelings, and most of them were in tears the whole of the time. It was a godly sorrow, working repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of.

“But the number of communicants did not long continue so small. It increased daily, as a sense of religion prevailed, and the seed of grace took root in their hearts. The spirit of enquiry was general, and hundreds were seeking. The table of the Lord was more numerously attended every month; and I was enabled there to attend to the instructions of the rubric in a way that is scarcely practicable in a large parish at home. In cases of baptism the sponsors were persons of decided piety.

“The persons who attended the Lord's table, in the latter part of my stay at the depôt, amounted to above two hundred; and it cannot but be supposed, that amongst so many, there were some who, to say the least of it, must be considered very weak christians. But they were all professing to be serious; and there were none among them, as I believed, of that formal description so common among the communicants in

England, who attend this sacrament because they think it decent, or that they are doing some good thing, that they may have everlasting life.

“Still there are, no doubt, those who have flying convictions, even of a very lively description, for a moment; many of whom, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness, and when temptation or affliction cometh, are as immediately offended, and have no part nor lot with them that shall be saved. I therefore required them to give in their names beforehand, that I might enquire into the consistency of their lives, if there were any whom I did not know; and exhort those whom I had any doubt of, or refuse them, if I thought them altogether unfit.

“There was but a single instance of one coming, who had not given this previous notice. I observed the man amongst the rest, and was surprised. I had seen him very constant at church, but I had had no direct intimation of his seriousness, and was in 'doubt of him: I therefore went up to him, to ascertain, at least, whether he was prepared to receive the sacrament with consciousness, of the body and blood of Christ. He was a man of extreme simplicity of mind and manners; but answered in such a way, as immediately to convince me, that he was not only desirous of shewing the Lord's death until he come, but instantly serving God day and night. And from that time, I know not that he was ever absent from any of the appointed means of grace, whether on the Lord's day or any other; and in life, as in profession, was a decided and consistent Christian.

“Such was the state of this Christian community, and so changed in a few short months was this numerous depôt, in which there were, sometimes, as many as 1500 prisoners. Formerly there was not a room, out of a number, sometimes exceeding ninety, where a man could have gone down on his knees to prayer. The consequences to him of such an attempt would have been profane abuse, or even serious personal violence. Now there was not one room, in which there were not pious men; and quiet and peace prevailed towards them, even on the part of those who did not themselves profess the truth.

“I remember an observation from Mr. Lee, when he went with me through the barracks, and into all or most of the rooms. ‘This,’ said he, ‘is a most extraordinary thing. I have been through a depôt of 1500 sailors, and not seen one drunken man!’ And the influence of their example was felt more or less, in a religious point of view, throughout all the depôts, in all which one or other of them had friends, with whom they were in habits of correspondence.

“But it may well be supposed that Satan did not view these things with indifference. The tares were soon sown among the wheat, and in time they grew up together. The first instrument in the hand of the enemy, was a defection among the men, by going over to the French; in which, however, those that professed religion distinguished themselves in a very honourable manner. I had found, that on two or three occasions, an Irish officer, who was in the French service, (whose name I do not mention, in the hope that he may have

repented of a course so disgraceful, and that it may have been overlooked by a generous country,) had been in the prison ; and by bribery, and by giving them liquor, had each time induced some of the men to go with him into the French service. To have interfered personally in this matter, it may well be supposed, would have been a sure way of my being removed from the depôt. I, however, spoke to the Commandant on the subject of the youngsters ; and, appealing to him as a father, requested that he would not allow any of them to take a step which would be their ruin ; however much they might wish it, in order to recover their liberty. And this he readily promised, and shewed indeed a desire to do.

“ Some time after this, I was preparing to go into the neighbourhood of Sedan, where Colonel D'Ivory, who commanded the engineers in the English army in Portugal, was then residing. I was very desirous of visiting a congregation of French Protestants in that town ; and accepted an invitation from the Colonel to stay a few days with him. Before I set off I found that the Franco Irish officer had again appeared at the depôt, and prevailed upon two or three of the men to go with him. I, therefore, went to the Commandant and said, that I waited upon him again, before I set off, to remind him of his promise respecting the youngsters. He assured me that none of them should go ; and said, that there was not much to be apprehended, for the men took his liquor and laughed at him.

“ My journey was not satisfactory, except as regarded the extreme hospitality and kindness of my host, and the pious and almost protestant conversation

of Madame D'Ivory. Her health was exceedingly delicate, and she was unequal to exertion. And she spent her time in religious exercises and prayer; while she administered to the wants, and her maid even dressed the wounds of the poor around her. I could not but exclaim, 'O si sic omnia!' and lament the errors of her faith, and the almost ridiculous, if they had not been destructive, superstitions of persons about her.*

How different was the case where I hoped to find religion in its purest simplicity! At the protestant temple I found the scriptures being read to literally empty benches; there was not one person present. At length the congregation began to come in, and the clergyman arrived. He preached a moral discourse; and seeing I was a stranger, and a minister, he very kindly asked me to dinner. I accepted, in hope of hearing something better in the evening. But the work of God was ended. I waited impatiently for

* One day at dinner we were speaking of the final condemnation of sinners. The brother of Colonel D'Ivory who had been in the army, and was certainly a clever and intelligent man, said, 'he did not understand how it could be possible for a priest to go out of the world in a state of condemnation.' 'Sir,' said I, 'did I understand you right? suppose he were a wicked man?' 'Mais oui, Monsieur, á tel moment que ce soit, il pent se confesser!'

At another time, I was laughing with a very sensible officer, who had been in the English army, at ignorant persons, who thought that any thing which had touched a certain image in that neighbourhood, was a preservative against the bite of a mad dog; when he took a silver ring from his finger, and said, 'how then do you think I have been preserved from being bit all these years, but by this ring, which has been rubbed against the image?'

evening service, but at length I found, that that rich and rather numerous congregation, was left to spend the rest of the Lord's day in eating, drinking, and being merry. And I returned much disappointed and grieved.

“ My kind host indeed had spoken slightly of this minister, and as the day was extremely bad, and the rain incessant, earnestly dissuaded me from riding four miles through very bad roads to Church. But I had attributed this partly to prejudice, and was determined at least to judge for myself. He however made particular enquiry, and afterwards wrote me word, that he thought it necessary to caution me against this minister, as he had had positive information, that he was deeply implicated in the revolution. I am indeed compelled to confess, that more than one of the protestant ministers whom I had met with, were not without some imputation, from the part they acted during that unhappy period. And a very general spirit of Socinianism, to say the least of it, prevailed at that time among the protestants of France. I have heard with much pleasure, that a great revival of religion has since taken place amongst them ; and have been rejoiced to hear the decided sentiments which have been expressed by some of their ministers, at public meetings in this country.

“ Returning to Givet, I was very much astonished to meet on the way, two or three considerable parties of our men. They passed me with downcast looks, and shame was strongly painted in their countenances ; and I dared not speak to them, not doubting of the

fact, and knowing that the consequence could only have been evil, without the least hope of good. When I arrived, I found that the men were so bent upon going into the French service, that it seemed as if a sort of infatuation had taken possession of them. And although I was persuaded that the object of the greater part of them was, to run away, and get home; yet they were in the mean time becoming traitors to their country, and exposing themselves, if they were taken, to capital punishment.

“In every point of view, therefore, it was most earnestly to be desired that this might be put a stop to. But how it was to be done was a far more difficult question. There were many reasons, both of right and policy, which engaged me to look on, as if I were totally indifferent; and the consequence of my not doing so, would probably have been, my being sent away; as a clergyman had already been, from one of the depôts, for only speaking to the men on the subject. I however thought that this was a case in which every thing was to be risked. This officer, I found, had taken lodgings in the town, had got many men every day, and had declared, that Christmas was coming on, and he should then have half the barracks. I went up, therefore, the next morning, to church as usual; and after the service I spoke to the people on the subject. It was a remarkable thing, that not one of those who professed religion had thought of going, with the exception of one man; who, when I spoke to him, said, ‘that he was not an Englishman but an American;’ and though he would not do any thing inconsistent with his

profession, he could not think that he was bound to remain in prison, for a cause which was not that of his country.

“I told them, therefore, that I had not the least apprehension of any of them entering into the service of the enemy ; but that they were called to use their influence with their fellow prisoners, and it was their duty to employ every possible means to prevent others from doing a thing so wicked, and disgraceful to them as Englishmen. They said, that they had not only used persuasion, but force ; but that the madness was so great, that whilst a party of them were standing at the gate to prevent desertion, one at a time would take the opportunity, when any one was coming in, and run past them, before they could stop them. They all, however, set to work in earnest ; and from this time there were not more than one a day, for the two or three days before Christmas ; and I believe two or three of the loose ones on Christmas day ; and immediately after this the officer went away.*

* “One day, previous to his departure, I was sitting in my room writing, when a gentleman was shewn in, dressed in the most elegant French uniform I had, perhaps, ever seen. Not having the least idea who it was, I bowed to him, and spoke to him in French. To my great astonishment, he answered in English, that, ‘understanding there would, probably, come some money for some of the men who were gone into the French service, he should be much obliged to me if I would forward it.’ I answered, I fear rather too angrily, ‘that I should certainly send the money back.’ ‘Then, sir,’ said he, ‘I have done my duty, and you will do yours.’ ‘I do not know, sir,’ I answered ‘what your notions of duty may be ; but certainly, I shall not fail to do mine.’ He bowed, with extreme confusion marked in his face, and hastily went away.”

“On this occasion, I ought to make honourable mention of the midshipmen who were at the depôt. A number of them were sent thither some time previous to this circumstance ; and they shewed an extraordinary zeal to prevent the men from betraying their country. Mr. B. then a youngster, about seventeen, full of zeal for the service in which he was engaged, copied, and put up in the prison, in spite of gens d’armes and spies, a dialogue which I wrote out, shewing them in their own quaint expressions, what they might expect from the enemy, into whose service they were enlisting ; and the rest were very active and useful in preventing this defection. Of these young gentlemen I can say nothing in a religious point of view ; except it be of Mr. T., who was very peculiar in his manner ; but, I trusted, and yet believe, was decidedly serious. But their conduct, as regarded their service and profession, was so distinguished, and reflected so much credit upon them, that it ought not to pass unnoticed.

“They were so anxious to get home, and so ingenious and bold in facing every danger and difficulty, which stood in their way, that every expedient to prevent them was in vain. It was for this cause that some of them were sent from Verdun to Givet ; and the Commandant took every precaution that he could think of, to inform himself of their plans, so as to prevent their escape. Amongst other things, he opened all their letters before he allowed them to be sent into the prison, where they were closely confined ; while numbers of the common men had the liberty of the town.

After eight of them had escaped, and been retaken ; and at the moment when he was most alarmed, and on the *qui vive* ; a letter arrived for Mr. B. from his mother. The Commandant had no doubt, from the natural affection of a mother, that it was to urge him to get home ; and perhaps to point out and furnish him with the means, for himself at least, if not for others also. But when it was read to him, he could not contain his astonishment and admiration, and spoke of it to every body.

“ Lady B., though I have not the honour of knowing her, and am ignorant if she be in this militant state, I have some reason to believe, was a person of decided piety. But however that be, for I did not myself see her letter, it shewed a strength of mind and principle, not common to the gentle nature and indulgent feelings of a mother. She had heard that in some of the depôts, there had been midshipmen who had broken their parole, and come home. And she entreated her son not to let any personal suffering, or ill treatment, or example induce him to do what would disgrace himself, distress his family beyond measure, and cast a reflection upon his country. Young as he was however, no officer grown old in the career of British service, had less need of the pious and self-denying counsel of such a mother. He and some others afterwards escaped, in the most honourable manner, after having been once re-taken ; though he himself might perhaps even then have succeeded, but that he would not leave behind him, a brother midshipman, who had lamed himself on the journey ; and thus, after two attempts,