CAPTAIN SYNGE'S EXPERIENCES AT SALAMANCA

A WAR MEMORY OF A TIPPERARY HUSSAR

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CAPTAIN SYNGE'S EXPERIENCES AT SALAMANCA

A WAR MEMORY OF A 10TH HUSSAR

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done;
And he, before his cottage door,
Was sitting in the sun.

SIXTY years ago in the Western wilds of Ireland there lived a certain Colonel Charles Synge, late of the 10th Royal Hussars. It is believed that he only bore the courtesy title of Colonel by virtue of the brevet rank which the son of Erin so readily bestows on anyone who has been connected with the Army. The records of the 10th Hussars show that he left the regiment as a captain on its return from active service in 1814, and there is some ground for supposing that his resignation may have been due to the circumstances which resulted in the admission to that famous regiment of the officers who were known as the 'Elegant Extracts.'

No, The Dictionary National Biography states "he was promoted L.Col. 9 Aug. 1821"

Among the Colonel's papers, which have come into the hands of one of his grandsons who now writes these lines, is a short account of the part he played in the battle of Salamanca, of the wound which he received there, and of the primitive surgical treatment to which the poor fellow was subjected.

The paper has suffered from time and ill usage, the Colonel's handwriting is, as he himself acknowledges, not of the best, and, maybe, his grammar and punctuation are at times faulty (he did not write it for publication), but it is deemed better to publish it in his own words, as the story is graphically told, and is of interest.

Captain Synge at the time of the battle was aide-de-camp to Major-General Pack (afterwards Sir Denis), who commanded a Portuguese Brigade under Marshal Beresford in Wellington's Army.

Some portions of the notes are missing, and some words are illegible.

'As often as an anniversary of any great battle, that I was engaged in, comes round, I am asked by one or other to tell

them the story of the battle; this is all fair—but it often results in some who were not present, but who think they have as much right to my gossip as their neighbours, insisting on my telling over again what they had heard only at third hand—this is not fair. It happens unfortunately for me that my book of notes, made during the Peninsular War, is so written, or rather scribbled, as to be unintelligible to anybody but myself; so that I cannot save myself by offering them the original, and I am too indolent to write the book out "fair."'

From the few words which still exist on the rest of the first torn page it appears that the Colonel had set himself a task to write out a certain portion of his notes at the time of each battle's anniversary. 'In the course of a year' he might, presumably, complete his work.

'It had been clear to many of us young officers for several days, ever since in fact we began to retreat from the neighbourhood of Valladolid, that the Duke had an itching to try his hand at a little "Tactic." Hitherto he had confined himself to regular "Positions," the attack and defence of which he had maturely considered and planned; but now his judgment decided him to go behind the Coa, and the Army was put in motion for that purpose. He was determined however not to be bullied, his army was in good order, and his numbers not very unequal to those he was immediately opposed to (though he knew reinforcements were gathering for his enemy).'

The torn page cuts us off from the enumeration of Wellington's advantages—the possession of the fortresses, the favourable season, and the improved 'morale' of the Portuguese Army. We are plunged now in *medias res*; the retreat has begun, and the rear guard is engaged.

'They were, however, there before us, and in greater numbers, and drove back our people, several of whom were wounded.

'I was sent to take some reinforcements, but while doing so they were countermanded. Had they continued, it seemed probable the struggle might bring on a general action, and for a moment I believe the Duke, who came up accompanied by Marshal Beresford, had *half a mind*. I believe the Marshal expressed himself very strongly opposed to it. However, the Duke decided to put the Army in motion again on his original line of retreat.

'To understand in some degree (*i.e.* as far as is necessary for non-professionals) the nature of the operations that followed, you must suppose the Tormes to be a considerable river making a bend of nearly a right angle just before it reaches Salamanca, at a small town called Alba de Tormes. There, there is a con-

siderable bridge guarded by a tête de pont in which were 300 Spaniards of Don Carlos d'Espagne's Corps.

'A mile up the river it is fordable, and from that part of the country a range of heights stretches along towards Portugal. Along the plain, at the foot of and parallel to these heights, lay our retreat.

'The order was to move in two columns parallel to each other, the one along the open plain, the other on the high road. The Cavalry and Horse Artillery, supported by our Brigade, were to cover the retreat. Soon we were all in shape and in motion.

'The enemy appeared to be making considerable exertions by pushing his divisions along the range of heights I described as parallel to our columns in retreat: in the hope, it seemed, of out-flanking us, or perhaps of intercepting our communications with Portugal.

'I happened to be with Headquarters when the Duke dismounted and fixed his telescope on the enemy's operations. It was evident that so numerous a Staff attracted the concentrated fire of the French Artillery, and somebody, I believe Lord Fitzroy, told us to disperse, and not crowd round the Duke. It was at this moment that a shot cut the wrist of his coat. This was at the foot of the enemy's heights and between the rear division of our column next the heights, and our brigade with the Cavalry, who were preparing to act as a Rear Guard. I mention these trifling circumstances because it was precisely at this time that the Duke made up his mind to attack the enemy. He saw that in their anxiety to menace our line of retreat, they had stretched themselves out so much, that if their leading division was attacked, they could not support it before it was beaten in detail.

'No sooner was it decided to attack than orders were given that the two columns of divisions should form two lines, facing the heights. Our leading Division, the 3rd, now became the right of our front line, and was ordered to move at once to attack the enemy's leading Division; and to overthrow it, if possible, before it could receive support. This operation could not have been confided to better hands. Sir Edward Pakenham, whom I knew very well, and who was always particularly kind to me, had hitherto been acting as Assistant Adjutant-General, which did not at all suit his taste or ambition to distinguish himself in command of a Corps; but, whenever he mentioned his wish to the Duke, his brother-in-law, he only got snubbed for his pains and advised to stay as he was. Now, however, owing to the absence of Sir Thomas Picton, he was placed in command of the 3rd Division. He commenced his attack with his right Brigade, in which were both battalions of the Fifth Regiment, and while he was giving them their orders he

addressed a few words to them; "this was the first time he had command of a Division, and he looked now to the Fifth Regiment for a character."

'His character was in safe hands, and was soon made, for nothing could surpass the brilliancy of the whole operation. The leading Brigade of the enemy had made the best disposition in their power to meet Pakenham, but "he would not be denied," went bang at them, and knocked them over or rolled them up whenever they attempted to rally. Even when their Cavalry tried to stop "the Fifth," they threw back only one of their wings and received them with the other in line; and, after a moment's destructive firing, actually moved on against the Cavalry in that shape. So complete was the overthrow, and so excited were the victors, that Mr. Bolton, carrying *both* colours of the Fifth (the officer who carried the other having fallen in the last charge), was moving so fast that Pakenham rode up to him and said, "If I cannot stop the Fifth from doing too much, I must only cut down the officer carrying the colours!"

'I left my General only for a moment, and was tempted to remain longer than I intended just to see what the Duke would do, and had galloped towards our advance (now becoming our right), when I met the Prince of Orange coming from it. He too was galloping, but hallooed out as he passed, "Oh, Synge, it is to be a fight after all. Pakenham is to begin on the right. Hurrah!" This made me pull up. I felt I was out of bounds and turned to retrace my steps to my own General. Anybody else would have blown me up for leaving him, but he always spoiled me, and I am ashamed to say I often presumed on his forbearance to go larking when our own Corps was inactive.

'He told me that he had that moment received his orders, which were to remain where he was in observation of the "lesser Arapiles," which were now to be a point d'appui for the enemy's right. They were very awkwardly situated for us, as they were *in the rear of the left* of our Divisions as they moved to assail the heights opposite to their respective fronts.

'It happened that Marshal Marmont's army extended unequally along the heights, by which, as I said before, he weakened his left. Consequently he was more massed on his right, and Sir Lowry Cole with our extreme left Division, the Fourth, whose part it was to assault that portion of the position (for which purpose he passed us by), found more than he could do. We saw, that, having ascended the heights he was being roughly handled and after some time, though fighting desperately, he was losing ground.

'The orders Sir Denis Pack had received were discretionary. He was to watch and mark the Arapiles, and not to let any

of the enemy come down from it to molest the flank or rear of our left Division (Cole's). He was to exercise his own judgment, and if he saw a favourable opportunity, he was authorised to try and carry the Hill of the Arapiles. As soon as he communicated to me the orders the Duke had given him, he said, "I think the best thing I can do is to form my Corps as if we were going to storm the Hill, and then remain quiet until we see what will happen." He did so immediately, intending to attack it as if he was storming a fortress. A party of about one hundred men of the 4th Cacadores under Major Fearon were to form the advance, or storming party, and were ordered to gain as much ground up the Hill as the enemy would let them, and then lie down. Two companies of Grenadiers of the 16th, and two companies of the Grenadiers of the 1st were formed as a support for the storming party, and the command given to Sir Niel Campbell. The remainder of the battalion of the 4th Cacadores were to steal up the sides of the Hill and to cover themselves as best they could. Sir Niel Campbell's four hundred Grenadiers were in line; in rear of his right, in column, was the First Regiment under Sir Noel Hill (my dearest friend), while in rear of his left, also in column, was the 16th under Colonel Pizarro. The whole, thus formed, lay down, while my General and I kept a sharp look-out at our friends on the hill, and also on Cole's Division, which we soon perceived was overmatched. In a short time Sir Denis received a message from Cole to send him some assistance.

'There appeared to Sir Denis Pack, and also to myself, to be so fierce a struggle just at this moment between Sir Lowry Cole's Division and the enemy, that it must be over, one way or the other, in a few minutes—long before we could get to his support, which at the shortest time would have been half an hour. He explained to the Aide-de-Camp who brought the message what the Duke's orders were, and that, if we moved to try to get to Sir Lowry, the fellows on the Arapiles would be down on our flank and rear before we got half way. In this dilemma he decided on rushing on the instant to try to carry our own hill, very properly arguing that if we succeeded we should soon be with Cole, and if we failed our attack must have the effect of preventing those on the Arapiles from detaching any men to add to Sir Lowry's difficulties. In a moment all the commanding officers were under weigh. As the General and I were riding to Major Fearon's storming party, he remarked that both on the right and left of the point of direction which the storming party were taking there appeared better openings to get to the top, and he added, "I wish I had divided Fearon's party into two and sent half towards each of the openings, but

it is too late now." I said, "Not if you choose to let me gallop at once and give him the order, and allow me to take command of one." He hesitated for a second, but on my repeating the offer and urging the necessity of my being off or it would be too late, he consented. I was soon up with Major Fearon. He took fifty to the left, and I the same number (not that we stopped to count) to the right. Immediately after this change my direction led through a patch of standing rye, where several of my little party fell, at first I supposed killed, for the enemy opened their guns as soon as they saw what we were about; but one man near my horse fell in such a manner that it struck me it was sham, and as he lay on his face I gave him rather a sharp prod with my sword—there was no time for any other appeal to his "honour"—on which he turned up perfectly unhurt! What became of him afterwards I know not; I had other matters to think of. I should here mention that Sir Denis Pack had ordered that none should load, but that the Hill should be carried with the bayonet (knowing well that if once such troops as we had began firing they would never get to the top). While I was appealing to feelings of all sorts and had just got through the last of the rye, Pack overtook me, and said in a whisper, "Synge! I think those fellows won't carry it for you." I said, "Oh! yes, they will, we are over the worst of it." I meant the ground. The roar of the enemy's guns was tremendous as we approached the top, and somewhat unusual in its sound, for they tried to depress the muzzles of their guns as much as possible, and though they could not do so much harm, so steep was it, it sounded as if they all but touched the top of our heads. I have never heard the like before. Those following in support fared worse.

'The last part of the ascent was so steep that it was almost impossible for a horse to climb it; even the men did so with difficulty—but I had a horse that would do what scarcely any horse would attempt. It was not until I was close upon the summit that I knew what we had to contend with, for I found the ground, which had at a little distance the appearance of a gentle slope, formed a natural wall of I suppose between three and four feet high, at the top of which it spread out into a level table-land, on which the enemy were drawn up in line about ten yards from me. We looked at each other for a moment. I saw immediately that what we had undertaken was impracticable, as the men could not mount the scarped ground without first laying their arms upon the top, and even then in such small numbers that it would be absurd—but I also saw that we were so easily covered by "the wall," and the enemy so exposed from head to foot, that if we fired they could not remain

an instant. At this critical moment the head of Sir Noel Hill's column, which had followed me in support, was close up, and Hill himself called to me to ask what to do and what was before us (he could not see). I said, "Be quick, and let your leading company close up to this bank and fire away while the others deploy as fast as they can and fire as they get up—the enemy are exposed and we are protected by this parapet." To my horror Hill replied, "You forget we are not loaded!" "Well," said I, "we have no other chance. Load away as fast as you can." He gave the word of command, and the men were in the act—I was addressing some few words of encouragement as well as the breathless state of anxiety I was in permitted (my poor old Ronald with great difficulty keeping his position on the steep), and two or three of the storming party were trying to scramble up the scarp, when the whole line opposed to us fired, knocked me over and literally cut to pieces the few that had climbed the "wall." My thigh was broken, and in falling, having no hold of the saddle, I could not in any manner save myself. Ronald made a couple of springs down the hill while I was falling, and this, together with the mangled bodies of those who fell back off the scarp on to the head of Hill's column, which in the confusion of loading was unable to see what was happening above, caused a sensation of panic which was complete.

'The French line followed up their volley by charging up to the edge of the scarp, down which they leapt when they saw our confusion.

'Sir Niel Campbell's Grenadiers, the left column and all, went!—the disaster was complete. I had fallen to the ground on the near side of my horse, it being the left thigh that was broken, and was in great agony owing to a sort of instinctive effort to use the broken limb in which the marrow also seemed to be breaking. A gallant little fellow, an ensign, who was adjutant of Hill's Regiment, ran up to me and put his arms under mine to try and raise me, and if his strength had equalled his courage and goodwill he would have carried me off, but he was of the smallest stature. I told him that my thigh was broken, and that it was of no use. The bayonets of the charging army were all but touching him before I could persuade him to save himself, and I actually pushed him away. A lot of the French ran over where I was, and amongst them an officer, cheering them on. As he passed over me, seeing me twirling about in frightful agony owing to the position in which I had fallen, he called out at the appalling spectacle my state exhibited, "Oh! mon Dieu!" and then asked, "Est-ce-que vous êtes Anglais?" I said, "Yes," and he pointed to a man by his

side as he ran by and told him to save me. The man, who I suppose was a non-commissioned officer, did stop for a second or two, which perhaps saved my life. Some of the enemy then began to plunder those who had fallen, wounded, dying, or dead, and several began at me. I was in Hussar uniform, and wore all my riches about me, with some smart things about my neck, which there was a scramble for. Most foreign soldiers, at least such as I have known, conceal their money in the waistband of the dress or inside the leg of the boot. To see if I had any such store some began cutting my clothes off, as you might have seen a sheep in the act of being shorn, and one began to pull off my boots. This was horrid, for my overalls were fastened down by curb-chain piping, and the attempt to get the boot off the broken limb was intolerable. I was soon left to go out of the world nearly as naked as I had first entered it.

'Just then my attention was called from my own state to a fine young fellow of the 1st Grenadiers, who was defending himself with his musket against four or five men who surrounded him, and who were all trying to bayonet him. I called to them to spare him as he was now their prisoner. Someone, who I believe was in authority, thought I wanted something for myself and seemed disposed to ascertain what I stood in need of, but when he learnt I was appealing for the young Portuguese sergeant, he turned away. "Oh! as for these canaille!" was all I heard, and how it ended I do not know, for I myself became an object for some of the same sort of extinguishers. Suddenly they were all called off to re-form on their original position on the top of the Arapiles, and I and the bodies of my comrades were left to our fate.

'I could not perceive that any near me were alive. It was some time too before I could realise the particulars of my own situation. I was a prisoner. I was wounded. I was naked. An open artery was bleeding fast. I was dying. Could this be death? There could be no doubt about it, and in a few moments I should be dead. Having come to that conclusion I lay down to die, and, having said my prayers, waited with composure for the last struggle. After lying some little time expecting faintness and some of the usual symptoms of death, my attention was attracted by some cannon shot. The balls were literally ploughing the ground all about me. They were from our own Artillery, who were in reserve on the other hill of the Arapiles, and who had opened their guns on those with whom my body lay. I thought it probable that one of those balls must hit me, and I am afraid I must acknowledge that I sat up and stretched my head as high as I could in the hope of a friendly ball ending

my misery. But it was not to be. God, in His mercy, willed it otherwise. I began to think that I should be a long time dying, for, though I had lost much blood, I still felt no faintness. Then, for the first time, it came into my head that somehow I might have "a chance," and I have often since thought of that "trying to put my head in the way of a friendly ball." It was not that I doubted His power who gave my life to preserve it. I knew well

> He could arrest the flying ball,
> And send it back, and bid it fall
> On those from whose proud ranks the thunder broke;

nor was it that I ever thought myself at liberty to put an end to my existence, but I considered that God's final decree was issued and that I had received my summons. Thousands of as good, or better, had already fallen, and every moment on that field someone was breathing his last, and I had no claim to exemption. All I thought of doing at the time was to ease the last pang and palliate what, from my feeling of strength while bleeding so much, I imagined was likely to be a severe last struggle. I believe now that I was wrong, and the following anecdote will show how I felt on a former occasion when I was judging for another. When we broke up from the Lines of Torres Vedras, and were driving Masséna's army out of Portugal, I think it was at the affair of Redinha, I remained in a pine wood, from which we had just dislodged the enemy, to point out the directions some different regiments were to take. Exactly at the spot I stood lay a man who had just fallen, shot through the head. He was insensible, but was writhing in the most violent contortions it was possible to conceive. So violent, indeed, and so unusual were they, that almost every man of a column of riflemen which was passing at the time uttered some exclamation. At last one of the men fell out of the column with the humane intention of putting the poor sufferer out of his misery. I had thought of it myself while I was waiting there, and was very doubtful if I should not do the same, on the principle of "doing as I would be done by"; nevertheless, I stopped the rifleman and desired him to join his regiment.'

There is a page of the Colonel's narrative missing. Pack's Brigade was rallied, and the arrival of the 6th Division prevented the disaster which their retreat had threatened. The Portuguese once more are led forward to the Arapiles, and the General himself comes across his wounded Aide-de-Camp, whom at first he does not recognise.

'At last he stopped his horse, looked for a second, and then said, "My dear Synge, is that you?" I said, "Yes, General,

here I am." The dear fellow put his hand across his eyes and as soon as he could speak asked me to tell him the worst at once, and what my wounds were. I told him. He then said a word of comfort, sent for a surgeon, and went on with his men. It seems he was moving to attack the Arapiles a second time. This attack was abandoned with only a skirmish, for the battle was won on the right wing, and seemed likely to go on well now on the left and in the centre. This, of course, I could not judge of.

'In another moment my gallant, valued, tried friend, Sir Augustus West, who was Sir Denis Pack's Staff Surgeon, came up. He said nothing to me, but made some men, who had placed me on a bearer, lay me down. I told him as much as was necessary. He soon untwisted my fine tourniquet, and said that it was very wrong, that it would be necessary to put on a bandage and splints at once, and that afterwards, when we got to the rear, he would see what was best to be done. While he was busy with me, never thinking whether he was under fire or not, some other kind friend had found a hospital wagon, and then my servant came up with my led horse. They placed me in a wagon and sent me, as I afterwards learnt, towards our line of retreat.

'I knew nothing of what happened after Sir Augustus West left me, until they came to tell me that an escort with a "bearer" had arrived to carry me to Salamanca. With the movement my agonies began anew, though I was managed with more care than comes to the share of many. I could bear but little at a time. If the "bearer" was not kept stretched, or if one of the men made a false step it nearly put an end to me. However, I reached Salamanca, and was carried into a house allotted to me, and laid on a bed in one of those alcoves where beds are usually placed.

'West was soon with me; he again set my limb with better means, and desired I should have a basin of water poured over the thigh every fifteen minutes until he came again. I was to have water to drink if I wanted it, but nothing else. Either Lord Clinton himself or somebody from him told me that one of the Duke's Aides-de-Camp was to take home the news of the victory, which I now understood was most glorious. So much so, that the Duke was pursuing the French in the direction of Madrid.

'I managed to write one line by Clinton to my father, which fortunately arrived by the same post which brought the news of the victory and the names of the killed and wounded.

'It seemed as if "I was going on as well as could be expected," notwithstanding the excessive heat, when, about the

third day, I was startled out of a doze by feeling swarms of disgusting creatures crawling all over my face, without having the least notion what they were. West came in soon, and I saw all was not right. He wouldn't tell me what they were, but as soon as he had relieved me from them and left the room my man told me they were from my wound. I thought that meant that mortification had set in—but again my time had not yet come. For two or three days I was quite comfortable and even in good spirits, notwithstanding that I had to be moved again. In the hall where I was quartered there was a large room like a ball room with one angular window looking into the "Place Maior" and a side window into the Calle de Zamora. Immediately opposite was a very large, handsome house in which the "Marshal," who was also wounded, was placed. On the evening of the day West found me in the horrid state I described he brought two of his professional friends to see me, and they decided to move me from the alcove I was in to the large ball room. This they performed in the kindest manner and with their own arms. There was no furniture in the room, and I was placed on a boarded stretcher, that the quantities of cold water they kept constantly pouring over my limb might run off. Several of my friends found me out, and amongst them I remember Lord Hardinge brought me *Childe Harold*, which I saw for the first time, and which entertained me much, more particularly as I had known Lord Byron at Cambridge. When I began I did not feel as if I could read, but it was no common work and I read it through.

'For the first week I had no fever nor any swelling, and I was to understand that there was still time to take off the limb, but that, when once it began to swell, it would be impossible. I had no hesitation in deciding to take my chance. I was young and healthy, unmarried, no children, and no great loss to any body; besides, a circumstance that had occurred a few days before had given me an opportunity of considering calmly, and when in possession of all my faculties, what I should wish to be done with me if ever it fell to my lot to be in such a state as I then found myself, and I was therefore prepared to decide at once. About the tenth day I began to lose my spirits and to feel really ill. My thigh began to swell and continued increasing in size for several days. Then the misery of being always in one position, and of not being allowed to move the limb, or stir in the least, became every day more intolerable. I sank to the most miserable state of weakness, and became so emaciated that my hip bones, my shoulder blades, and my elbow joints came through my skin. What puzzled West a good deal was that after a month, when I had begun to show signs of mending,

and had been gaining a little strength, a great and rather sudden change for the worst took place, and I was very ill for some days. It turned out that a piece of dark cloth had come away from the wound, which I could not account for as I had on light blue overalls when I was hit. We found out, a long time afterwards, that it must have been a piece of the Hussar cloak, which was folded according to our regimental custom over the holsters. It seems the ball, after passing through the bone of the thigh, had struck against the bar in the saddle for the stirrup-leather, after which it turned off, luckily for poor Ronald, through many doubles of the cloak, some little portion of which must have been over the thigh at the moment. We only found this out when I began to travel and first unfolded the cloak, which had many little windows in it.

'As soon as the last splinter and this portion of the cloth came away I began to mend fast, and longed to be able to look out of the angular window on to the square. Indeed, each day brought more wants. I wanted letters from home. I wanted to see the newspapers that contained the news of the victory, and to know whether people in England thought as much of us as we did of ourselves.

'After about six weeks I made an attempt to get up for a while, and thought I should be able to walk with crutches; but the moment my servant put me in an upright position I became giddy and fatigued, and was only too happy to lie down again; and yet, strange to say, the next morning I decided to try again, and so far succeeded as to take a couple of steps, during which time my stretcher was moved so that I could see out of the window, which gave me new life.

'In another week I determined to see if I could sit on a horse, and had one prepared with pillows on the saddle. It was backed up to the great stairs in the house I was in. I had got as far as the first step, and did not anticipate any difficulty in descending on crutches with my leg hung by a sling from my neck, when I very nearly fell head foremost from top to bottom. The effort to recover myself shook me all to pieces, and I was taken back to bed. I did not dare to tell West. In a few days I tried again more cautiously and had actually got on the horse, when, to my horror, who should walk up but West! He wasted no time in scolding me, but my servants "caught it." He directed them to take me back at once to my bedroom, superintended the operation, and walked off so angry that he would not speak to me. I was good for a while, but West was summoned to join the Army destined to invest Burgos, and I began to plan a journey to Madrid. I had not

yet ridden 200 yards and I felt sure I could ride 150 miles. The fact was, that before I was hit, I was so accustomed to living on horseback, that it presented itself to me as my easiest position, and it was not until I was outside the town of Salamanca that I began to think of what a folly I was committing. My thigh began to ache so much that before a mile had been accomplished I was lifted off and placed on the grass. After an hour's rest I was again put upon my pillowed saddle to return to Salamanca, but the rest of the convoy having to reach Alba de Tormes, and one of the party being a surgeon, I thought I might get so far. I was young then, and took a good deal of killing it appears, for in that miserable state I continued to move a little every day until I reached the Escurial, where I halted for a few days very ill and quite knocked up.

'I could see but little of "the wonder"; indeed I was in such constant pain my curiosity was almost cured, but I remember having had myself laid on my back on the grand staircase to gaze at the dome. As soon as I could move I set out for, and actually did reach, Madrid, whence I was ordered to England as there was no chance of my being able to do any duty for some time.'

Here this paper ends, but among the others there are a few pages which refer to the time when Colonel Synge was confined to his room in Salamanca. The story runs as follows:

'Before we advanced as far as Salamanca we had had some little skirmishing with the rear guard of the enemy, who made a show of keeping us in check. I was desired to take a squadron of cavalry, and ascertain if a river was fordable, somewhat lower down than where the Duke was then operating. I had not gone very far when, perceiving a mill a little out of my route, I left the squadron and rode across to try and procure the information from the miller. As I approached his house my attention was attracted by the figure of a female more than usually well dressed, standing outside a garden on the road I was to pass. It was so very long since my eyes had been blessed with the sight of a lady, that I stared as if something supernatural had crossed my path. I was as civil as I could be in one minute, but ended in the next by saying I must leave her. I could only point to the squadron which had halted awaiting my return. Nevertheless she said that I must stop to answer one question. She told me that she had heard that the British Army was advancing and that a battle was likely to take place in Salamanca. In dread of this she had left her house in the town and had come to conceal herself with the miller, one of her tenants. Alarmed and embarrassed at not having the advice she antici-

pated from her friends, she had determined to ask a British officer if she was safe where she was for a day or two. I implored her not to judge British officers by the apparent want of feeling in her first acquaintance, for I had already stayed longer than the importance of my duty permitted.

'I advised her to stay where she was and to make herself known to the Commanding Officer of the first detachment that arrived at the mill, but that if it were possible, though from the nature of the service I was employed on it was most improbable, I would return and see how I could serve her. I then told her the name of my General, which she would find was well known, and that I was his Aide-de-Camp. In thanking me and in saying farewell, she added, "If you ever do take yonder city, which I fear is impossible, think of No. 42 Calle de Zamora, and give me an opportunity of repeating my thanks." I vowed to take the town if it were only to see her again, and having asked one question of the miller, galloped off to verify his account of the ford.

'It happened that when I had been some days in the billet after my wound, I began to ask questions as to what part of the town I was in, and the name of the Calle de Zamora struck a chord. I then ventured to ask in what part of the street No. 42 was. "Oh!" said my informant, "that is exactly opposite, and Marshal Beresford, who was also wounded, is there."

'I then sent West to tell the lady that the first British officer she ever saw was opposite to her, delighted to hear she was safe at home, and that only for a wound received in taking the town for her sake, would have himself visited her in person. In a short time two smart maids asked to be admitted and were ushered in. They came on the part of the lady opposite to inform themselves of my state and ascertain whether she could be of any use. I was desperately ill at the time, but I sent back word that if I survived I would call on her whenever I could get so far. Every morning my two maidens came for their bulletin, and when at last I became so bad that there appeared little hope of me, one fine morning in walked my Dulcinea herself. Our meeting was tender. She loved me for the dangers I had passed, and I her, that she did pity them. I am afraid I must own that I wished her safe at home, for I was at death's door. My watchful friend West forbade any more visits until I was out of danger, after which my inamorata began the meetings anew, until I fancied for her some name of chivalry and that I was her Knight of the Lance. But all illusion was soon to vanish. Hitherto my fair one came early, impatient to know how I had slept, but one day her visit was

postponed until after dinner, when—Oh, Dulcinea! Oh, queen of my Château en Espagne! What have you been and gone and done? eaten at least a stone of pure garlic! Nothing less could have filled the whole room with the odour. I was cured of one of my wounds by a single breath!!! The very recollection of the garlic always prevents me from remembering any more.'

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F. St. L. Tottenham.