

full of blood and brains; and I found that the spent shot had come just in time to save my life. Meanwhile, the battle raged with redoubled fury on the left, and we in the centre had a short respite. And some of us needed it. For my own part, I had fired about a hundred rounds; and my right shoulder was as blue as your waistcoat.

“You will wonder, master, how I should notice such a thing in the heat of an engagement; but I remember nothing better than that there was a flock of little birds shrieking and fluttering over our heads for the greater part of the morning. The poor little things seemed as if robbed of their very instinct by the incessant discharges on every side of them; and, instead of pursuing a direct course, which would soon have carried them clear of us, they kept fluttering in helpless terror in one little spot. About mid-day, an aide-de-camp went riding by us to the right.

“‘How goes it? how goes it?’ asked one of our officers.

“‘It is just who will,’ replied the aide-de-camp, and passed by like lightning. Another followed hard after.

“‘How goes it now?’ inquired the officer.

“‘Never better, boy!’ said the second rider. ‘The forty-second have cut Bonaparte’s invincibles to pieces, and all the rest of the enemy are falling back!’

“We came more into action a little after. The enemy opened a heavy fire upon us, and seemed advancing to the charge. I had felt so fatigued, master, during the previous pause, that I could scarcely raise my hand to my head; but, now that we were to be engaged again, all my fatigue left me, and I found myself grown fresh as ever. There were two field pieces to our left that had done noble execution during the day; and Captain Turpic’s company, including Bill and me, were ordered to stand by them in the