

II

THE EXPEDITION STARTS

IN ordinary circumstances, and with an ordinary man, I should have said no, and have stuck to it. But the General was not an ordinary man. More than that, he knew me, and knew just how to play upon my weak points to sway me to agree with him.

Sir Donald was one of the first soldiers in the land. Such was his popularity, indeed, that a brand of biscuits had been named after him. The reader may smile, but stars and orders and decorations and columns in the newspapers do not testify to a man's hold on the public mind nearly so eloquently as does his name on a biscuit tin. Was not Garibaldi so honoured? One recalls his famous red shirt—emblem of liberty!—every time one enters a grocer's shop. Is not Wellington also immortalised in boots and knife-powder?

It is unnecessary for me to detail how and why I yielded to the sponsor of the Donald Taylor biscuits, but yield I did. Two days after he had come into my life again we left Southville—with its soft breezes, its public gardens, its bands, and its invalid chairs—for the General's place in Leicestershire. The departure filled me with inexpressible relief, and I believe the General was glad to see the