

less by the linear formation. But when men are broken and separated, they become like the pieces on a chess board; the shot which passes one will hit another, and the same shot may thus disable a considerable number of individuals. By firing into the rabble of a crowd, more men will suffer than by firing against the same individuals, at the same given distance, after these individuals have been drawn up in military array.

When men talk of heavy loss sustained in battle, it should be remembered that the smaller the loss the greater the honour, if successful, and, *vice versa*, the more loss the less honour. The killed and wounded of a native army in India, in the time of Hyder Ali, would carry away the palm from the bloodiest of our battles; yet we do not find that a great loss to the army of the Sultan was considered as a mark of courage or military conduct. On the contrary, they are considered as improving in military skill when they fight with smaller loss than formerly. The French understand these matters well; and while they loudly proclaim their victories, and omit nothing that can give them an air of importance, they do not talk of their losses, nor endeavour to swell them by detailing every casualty, however trifling, afraid lest any should escape notice. They act differently, and justly believing that victory is more valuable, and more honourable, if gained with small loss, they rather lessen than exaggerate the amount. Hence the country and the army being told, and wishing to believe, that their battles are easily won, an idea of great superiority is entertained.

Many men are cool, collected, and firm, whatever the danger may be; nothing, on the other hand, makes some men more brave, than when they think there is no danger. Hence we may discover one cause of the rapidity with which the ranks of the French army were so easily and so frequently completed, even after their most disastrous defeats. Would young men have served so readily had they been told that the enemy annihilated a whole corps in one battle, and that one regiment lost near 14,000 men in the course of twelve years? Would they not have also been startled, and felt hesitation in joining a regiment which has been called, as the 42d has been in the Highlands, the "graves of the brave," or in more homely language, "the slaughter-house of the youth of the north?" Such accounts of death and destruction disparage and deteriorate the national character. They are unjust towards our brave troops, damp their ardour, check recruiting, and would lower their military fame, were it true that they cannot overcome an enemy without great destruction to themselves. How different this is from the fact will be seen by reference to Maida, Salamanca, Vittoria, Quatre Bras; in short, to every occasion where the troops have been led on with judgment and skill, or have not been met by overwhelming numbers. At Maida, only 1 man out of every 104 engaged was killed; at Salamanca, 1 out of 90; at Vittoria, 1 out of 74; and at Quatre Bras, 1 out of 40.* Without noticing fractions, these are

* In our navy all the great victories have also been gained with small comparative loss, while that of the enemy was frequently great beyond all proportion. The loss in some of the single actions was hardly worth notice, except in the great superiority proved by a comparison of the number which fell on each side. In the instance of the *Guerrier* frigate, captured by Captain Robert Barlow, with only 11 killed and wounded, the loss of the French frigate was about 300 men. The *Guerrier*, to be sure, was crowded with men, but still there was no disparity of numbers that could balance the difference of killed and wounded. This must have proceeded from the ability with which the commander manœuvred his ship, the courage and coolness of the officers and sailors, and the precision with which they took their aim. In Lord Howe's battle of the 1st of June 1794, the number of British engaged was 26