

the shop, and at last a regular scramble took place. If there had been any order preserved, and a regular distribution arranged, they would no doubt have been steady enough, but hunger makes men selfish; each man felt that his stopping behind would do no good—he would simply lose his share; so it ended by almost the whole regiment joining in the scrimmage, and the shop was cleared out in a couple of minutes; while, as for paying, you could not get your hand into your pocket for the crush. The colonel tried in vain to stop the row; some of the officers were as bad as the men. Just then a staff officer rode by; he could scarcely make way for the crowd, and was pushed against rather rudely, and in a passion he called out to us to behave properly, like soldiers, and not like a parcel of roughs. “Oh, blow it, governor,” says Dick Wake, “you arn’t agoing to come between a poor cove and his grub?” Wake was an articulated attorney, and, as we used to say in those days, a cheeky young chap, although a good natured fellow enough. At this speech, which was followed by some more remarks of the sort from those about him, the staff-officer became angrier still. “Orderly,” cried he to the lancer riding behind him, “take that man to the provost-marshal. As for you, sir,” he said, turning to our colonel, who sat on his horse silent with astonishment, “if you don’t want some of your men shot before their time, you and your precious officers had better keep this rabble in a little better order,” and poor Dick, who looked crest-fallen enough, would certainly have been led off at the tail of the sergeant’s horse, if the brigadier had not come up and arranged matters, and marched us off to the hill beyond the town.