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DISCOURSE DELIVERED TO THE 93d HIGHLANDERS, ON THE NATURE AND  
DUTIES OF THE MILITARY PROFESSION.

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2 SAM. 23, 35.—“He teacheth my hands to war.”

As it is probable, that in the course of Providence, you will soon depart from this to another station in the province, I have thought proper, with a view to present to you, the moral and religious bearing of the matter, to address to you, while the opportunity lasts, a few observations on the nature and the duties of your calling. It is not unknown to me, that in this country where any foolish opinion may have its advocate, that the profession of a soldier has been represented to some of you as inconsistent with the religion of Christ. There is a sort of plausibility and glittering in the arguments usually adduced, and it is desirable that you should be warned against them, that no ignorant and talking person should have any influence upon your convictions. As to the duties of your profession, you have long had the reputation of an exemplary correctness in the discharge of them—a reputation that has not diminished since the time you were quartered here, and which I trust in God *never will* be diminished by any conduct of yours, either in the sunshine of peace or in the tempest of war; and in alluding to those duties, I am moved by a warrantable jealousy of the honorable conduct of my kinsmen according to the flesh, the willing subjects and defenders of the British Crown, rather than any particular necessity, that requires your being admonished of them.

The profession of a soldier is one which the soldier has no reason to be ashamed of. He may always give if he pleases, a sufficient reason for his adoption of the calling. He may engage in it without scruple. He may

continue in it innocently and with the approbation of his conscience, and he may discharge the severest duties of it with a perfect confidence that he is acting a part honorable in the eyes of men, and well pleasing in the sight of God. There is no objection of the ignorant and disaffected, no objection of the fanatical or spuriously religious person, but may be fairly obviated and proven absurd. You may always render a reason for the faith that is in you, and proclaim with the boldness of a servant of Christ, and with the courage which naturally belongs to the race of the British islands, that your cause is unexceptionable, the cause of *mankind* and the cause of God.

But in order to proceed with some regularity in the observations I shall address to you, we may first advert to the *nature* of the military profession, and in the second place to the *duties* of it.

Now, as to the nature of the military profession, we say, it is a lawful one. We say, it is has the sanction of God. There are many cases in which war had the *command*, the positive injunction and command of God, for the undertaking of it. Moses, by the instructions of God, said to the Israelites, “Avenge the Lord of Midian, and Samuel gave orders to Saul, to smite Amalek and utterly to destroy all that they had.” For the lawfulness of war, we have besides, the example of holy men, of Abraham, of Moses, of Joshua, of David, and others, all unquestionably guided in every important action and conjuncture by the Spirit of God. You remember that the approbation of the Most High was remarkably expressed, when