

do you mean?" said William; "I do not understand you." "I understand, my man, you've enlisted in this fine regiment (I leave out the oaths, &c., used on the occasion), and a good-looking soldier you'll make, when we have you in our hands for a while." "Nonsense," said William, trying to sober himself, "I'm no more enlisted than you are." "Just so," replied the other; "I enlisted ten years ago, and see what I am now; and you enlisted now, and maybe you'll be as high as me in ten years' time." "It's a lie," roared the young fellow. "If you say that again I'll put you under arrest, you impudent—" but before he could conclude the sentence, the tall sergeant-major had measured his length on the pavement, struck down as if he was shot, by a terrible blow from the strong arm of William Maher, who was immediately seized by half-a-dozen soldiers, and securely handcuffed; and when the dragoons were ready to proceed to the barracks in K——, he was tied on a hired car, and, having a soldier, with a loaded carbine, beside him, was taken off to taste his first experience in military life. More than half bewildered, and not recovered from the drink he had lately swallowed, part of which had been mixed with whiskey, he sat silent, inwardly and bitterly cursing his guilt and folly, but quite unable to realize his dreadful situation, or look into the future; when Robert—who had unfortunately gone to K—— on that day, was returning in the public car which plied between the towns, and was, beyond all measure, astonished at hearing his name in his brother's voice, from the midst of a company of dragoons—sprang from his seat, ran after the soldiers, and with frantic cries called upon them to stop; to which they paid not the slightest attention, until he begged the officer in command to order a halt for a few minutes, which request was kindly granted; and then to his horror he learned the circumstances of his brother's case, as far as he could from the contradictory statements of the soldiers and their prisoner.

Finding it vain to entreat to be allowed to accompany William, and stay with him during the night, he watched with tearful eyes the cavalcade proceeding on its way; and, filled with dread apprehensions for the future of his unfortunate brother, returned to his home to watch for the morning, when he was determined to make every effort to rescue the victim of folly and intemperance from the position in which they had placed him.

#### CHAPTER III.

Having obtained, at an early hour of the ensuing morning, letters of recommendation from his own clergyman, and the rector of the parish, he proceeded to the barracks, expecting to find William still a prisoner, awaiting his trial; but was agreeably surprised, for a few moments, at seeing him at liberty, and waiting at the barrack gate for the loving brother, who he well knew would lose no time in coming to see after his interests. The few moments of pleasure were at an end, when he heard that the recruit had been already attested, passed the surgical inspection, and was a *full* private in the dragoons; which rapid proceeding had been carried out in consequence of the sergeant-major's threatening to punish his assailant to the utmost extent of military law for striking a superior officer; and his promising, on the other hand, not only to withdraw the charge, but prove a friend, if William followed his advice, and was entered on the books of the regiment. The dread of disgraceful punishment, and the flatteries with regard to his success, as a splendid soldier, confused the young man's mind; and almost unconsciously he took the necessary steps, and, before his brother arrived, his destiny was fixed.

Almost maddened by grief and indignation, Robert hastened to the quarters of Captain Selbright, who had allowed him to speak with William on the previous day, and there protested loudly against the cruel injustice of the case, and the wickedness of those men who made his only brother drunk, and led him to do what, in all