

I got the thanks of the constituted authorities for the conspicuous part I acted on this occasion.

A copy of the whole investigation was sent up to the Government, and the regiment was disgraced, broken up and drafted into different battalions serving in sickly climates.

My business was equal now to £100,000 every year. I was worth £70,000 when the very bad times came on at the end of 1815. A number of my intimate acquaintances became involved in difficulties. They applied to me to become their securities for amounts. They made me believe that it was only a temporary embarrassment, and that they had abundance of means to pay far more than all they owed, and that I would run no risk of even losing a farthing by them. John Spence shewed me statements of his affairs, and made it appear that he was worth £90,000. He failed and I had nearly £10,000 to pay for him. Hutchison & Coulter, J. Wingate & Son, McFarquhar, Campbell & Co'y, and various others all failed and I had for them in all, to bear a loss of about £35,000. O'Reilly, Young & Co'y next came down in London. I lost by them upwards of £12,000. Goods fell in price at home and abroad so that I lost in this way at least £14,000, besides numerous smaller losses in the fair course of business. I did not at first think that these estates would have turned out so very badly, otherwise I question if my mind would have stood it. As it was, my vexation, I may say misery, was so great or acute when I looked at my dear wife and children, that my hair turned grey in a few weeks. My wife, in place of blaming me for silliness in allowing myself to be so extensively taken in, I may say robbed, of my wealth, actually doubled her kindness and attention. She assured me that she was not at all ambitious for great wealth, and if matters were to turn out so that I should have only £100 per annum, she would try to live within it. This soothed my mind and feelings, while it shamed me for my weakness.

I determined to double my diligence to wind up with the least loss possible. I wrote to India, South America, Jamaica, Canada and the Mediterranean ports where I had stocks of goods, to sell and remit as quickly as possible, so as to enable me to meet these losses. I realized all within my own reach at home, with which I paid off first all those who I knew could least afford to grant indulgence. What I otherwise really owed, was to a few great and wealthy firms, with whom I had very long dealt, and to them I asked for time. They cheerfully granted my request, but stated that they thought I was wrong in attempting to pay all, in the face of such tremendous losses, that I was naturally sanguine, and that things would wind up much worse than I expected, but that if I would call a meeting privately of all my creditors and offer 10 shillings per pound, they would all at once accept. I thanked them from the bottom of my heart, but felt quite sure of being able to pay every one 20 shillings and interest, and at all events I would do my best. I really all along had been much wealthier than the public had imagined, owing to the moderate style we lived in. I intimated that I was determined