

Serjeant Osborne, but was answered by the Corporal that a woman had come there about an hour previous, and having spoken to the serjeant for a few moments, the latter left the guard-room in great agitation, and had not yet returned. 'Then,' said the Major, 'let us see if he be in his barrack-room; and you sir,' added he, addressing the corporal, 'I have a very good mind to confine for not having made a report of his absence sooner.' So saying he went to the room, where he found the poor fellow in a state bordering on distraction. 'Hallo, sir,' said he, 'why are you absent from your guard?' Scarce had he spoken, when the young man turned round and sprang upon him with the fury of a tiger. Several men, however, interfering, prevented any further mischief, and poor Osborne, who did not even get the usual privilege of one of his rank, in being confined to his room, was sent to the guard-room and hand-cuffed.

"A general court-martial was applied for by Daley, in which the charges of quitting his guard and assaulting his commanding officer, were stated against Serjeant Osborne, with every species of exaggeration; and in about a week afterwards a vessel arrived from Barbados, bringing an order for his immediate trial.

"I may as well digress a little at this period of my narrative, as it may be necessary to account for the sudden appearance of Osborne on the night when his wife was enticed to the hut where she met with Daley. The woman whom the major had employed, having perhaps, felt a little compunction, or shame, for the service in which she was engaged, had scarcely left the hut when she proceeded to the main guard, and having requested to speak with serjeant Osborne, informed him that his wife was then in her hut, and that Major Daley was there also, and as the Major's libertine character was well known, she thought it highly improper that they should be left alone together. This was sufficient. Blinded by passion, the unfortunate young man committed the very serious crime of quitting his guard, and the scene which I have related took place.

"The order for the trial of Osborne having arrived, the court was convened, and Colour-Serjeant Charles Osborne, of Captain Montrose's company, having been duly arraigned, pleaded '*Not Guilty*.' The evidence against him was indeed conclusive, and the prosecution having closed, the prisoner was placed upon his defence. He spoke in a manly, open and eloquent style, dwelling in a forcible and affecting manner, upon the circumstances

which occurred from the time he had received the intelligence, until he discovered his beloved wife in the situation already described; 'which of you gentlemen,' he continued, 'would not, if placed in my situation, have acted as I have done? Which of you, I ask, would have had such command over his passions, as to forbear inflicting summary chastisement upon a villain who sought to rob you of the honor of your wife? I am well persuaded that there is not one among you, who would not, if similarly circumstanced, have acted in a similar manner; I therefore leave the circumstances to your consideration, and will fearlessly await the result.' The appeal went home to the hearts of the greater portion of the members, of whom there was one, and this part of his defence having closed, witnesses to character were called, who one and all spoke in excellent terms of his previous conduct, and my own evidence with regard to his upright demeanour since he had known him, was also given, and recorded on the face of the proceedings; but as he had no evidence to prove the major's conduct, the court had to proceed in its painful duty, and a majority of the members having found him '*guilty*,'—it accordingly proceeded to award the sentence—that sentence was DEATH! In consequence, however, of the strong recommendation of the court, and the prisoner's previous praiseworthy character, the sentence was commuted to *transportation for life*.

"The result of her husband's trial had such an effect upon the health of Mrs. Osborne, who had begun slowly to recover, that she took a relapse of her disease, which in a few days terminated the existence of that beautiful and innocent young woman.

"My feelings cannot well be described as I witnessed the ruin of this little family, caused by the villainy of one, who, though ruling over a set of good soldiers, was far removed from them in the feelings of honour and of virtue. He was indeed a fiend in human shape. So I must frankly declare that the memory of his conduct with regard to myself, had great weight in my detestation of him. It is indeed a fortunate circumstance that there are few such characters as Major Daley, to be found in any grade, throughout the British Service. He was one who often brought to my mind those lines of the poet,

— 'Man, vain man,  
Drest in a little brief authority,  
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven  
As make the angels weep.'

"But to return. The tidings of the death