

Chapter One.



To Save a Comrade.

A sharp volley, which ran echoing along the ravine, then another, just as the faint bluish smoke from some hundred or two muskets floated up into the bright sunshine from amidst the scattered chestnuts and cork-trees that filled the lower part of the beautiful gorge, where, now hidden, now flashing out and scattering the rays of the sun, a torrent roared and foamed along its rocky course onward towards its junction with the great Spanish river whose destination was the sea.

Again another ragged volley; and this was followed by a few dull, heavy-sounding single shots, which came evidently from a skirmishing party which was working its way along the steep slope across the river.

There was no responsive platoon reply to the volley, but the skirmishing shots were answered directly by *crack! crack! crack!* the reports that