

Gordon in China.

(By Dr. Gordon Stables.)

The Tai-pings were in number like the sands of the sea-shore. Counting the forces of Chung, the Faithful King, probably the army that confronted Gordon in Soochow and elsewhere, amounted to about 100,000 men. Gordon's intention was a tremendous and daring assault upon the north-west wall of Soochow.

The attack was to be made at night, and

very strong stockade. It was a forlorn hope, and the marvel is that Gordon was not killed.

'Scarcely,' says Hake, 'were the troops at the front engaged on the stockade to support their commander, when the Tai-pings opened a tremendous fire of grape and musketry. The rebel line seemed one line of fire, while the attacking party were throwing rockets and shells.'

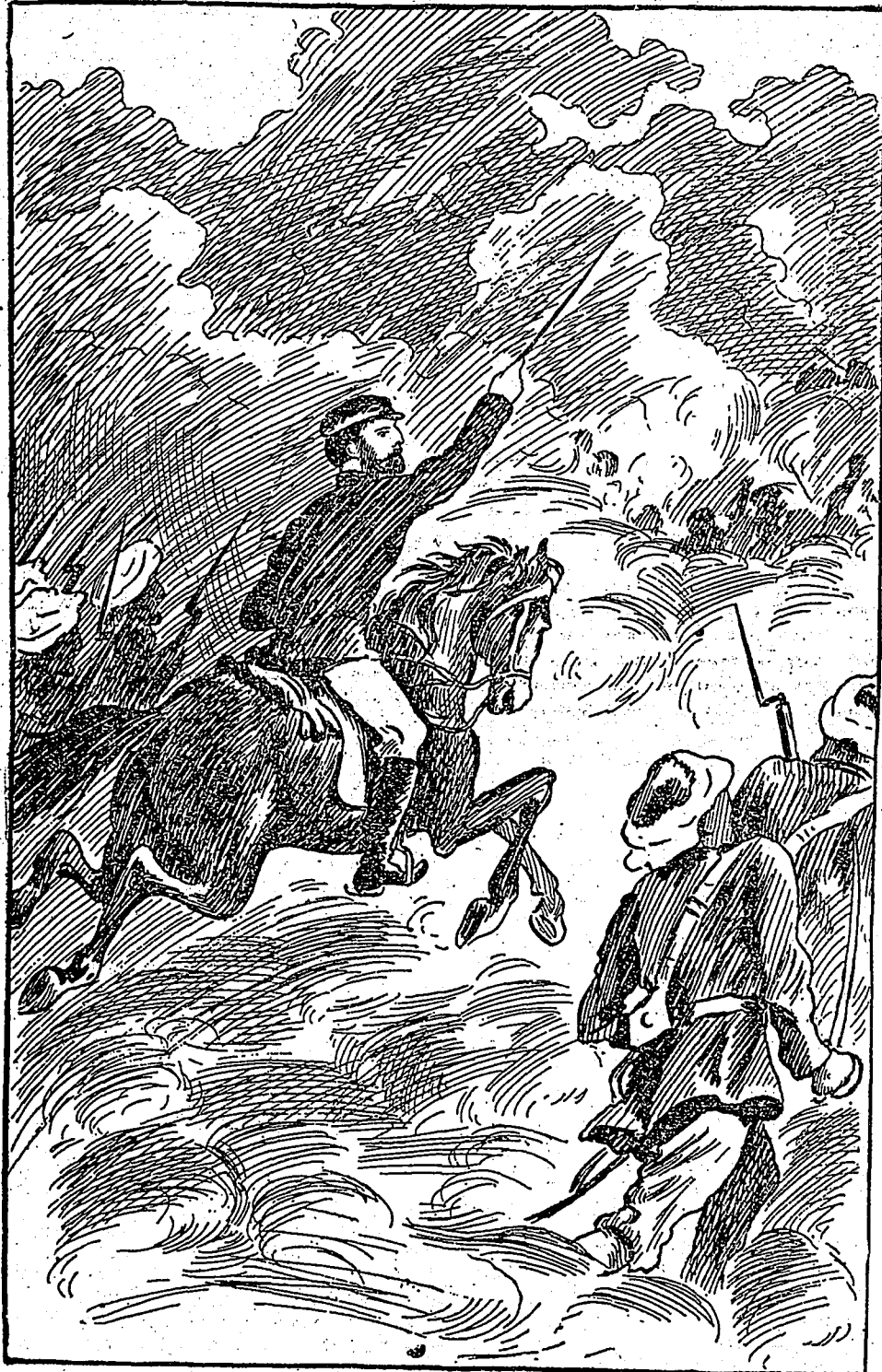
But the firing becomes fiercer than ever. And then, alas! the retreat is sounded,

ever, and Gordon, with but a handful of his men, is cut off from the main body of his army.

Will he be taken prisoner, and instantly killed? Not he. He just looks once behind him. He sees at a glance he cannot rejoin his force. At any rate, like all Scotsmen, he has a horror of going back. A true Gordon never yet went back in scenes of danger, nor turned his back upon a friend.

'On, lads, on!' he shouts, waving his cane—his magic wand of victory. On they rush!

It seems to be to certain death. But no, the stockades he enters are nearly empty—they are completely empty before Gordon has finished with them. Now with his handful of brave men he captures a fort. More of his men come up. Victory is won! But in that one desperate assault fifty of Gordon's privates were slain, and many of his own staff, Scotch and English.—'Our Darlings.'



Gordon, never forgetful of the minor details of fighting, gave orders that all his men should wear white turbans or purgrees, lest they might mistake each other for the enemy.

The assault took place at one o'clock in the morning, Gordon's gallant fellows advancing in silence to the strong stockade. Gordon led the advance. Gordon was armed to the teeth—with a cane! He had nothing else, save his own dauntless courage, and his little bible, or Prayer-Book. Near to Gordon were Major Williams and Major Howard.

At first the surprise was complete, for our hero and his brave fellows got through the outer works; but next came the inner, and

and Gordon withdraws, repelled but not defeated.

Early on the morning of the 29th, therefore, Gordon's guns once more began to thunder, and soon a terrible assault was delivered. All our hero's forces were to the front. They fought desperately and against fearful odds, swarming up breastworks with sword and climbing stockades, sometimes even swimming ditches.

Death or victory! Yes, that's what it meant.

Yet Gordon's men are paying deeply and dearly with their very heart's blood for the victory that is to come. But lo! see, there is a wilder, madder rush of the enemy than

The Shepherd of the Sewing Machine.

(By the Rev. S. M. Zwemer, in 'Christian Intelligencer'.)

In the blue waters of the Persian Gulf there lies a coral island called Bahrein. At a few hundred yards to the north-east of it is a still smaller island shaped like a pack-saddle, where palm trees and white coral-rock houses are reflected in the salt water at high tide. The little island town is called Moharrekk, that is, the Burning place, because it is very hot there in summer. After sailing across in a boat one day, and wending our way through a dirty bazaar full of flies and Arabs, we were directed to the house of the man called 'The Shepherd of the Sewing Machine.' His real name is Mohammed bin Sooltaan, but nobody knows him by any other name or title than Raee el karkham, which literally means shepherd of the sewing-machine. Let me tell you his story and how he got that queer name.

Years ago, as pilot on the native boats that sail from Bahrein to Bombay, Calcutta, Zanzibar and Jiddah, he had experience of a wider world than the little island where he was born. But the life was a hard one and his wages small. Moreover, the coming of steamships up the Gulf took away the profit of the sailing craft, and so Mohammed fared from bad to worse. He loved an Arab lass with plaited, well-greased locks of hair and a pleasant face, but her father asked a larger dowry than he could ever pay.

Finally he once more went in a ship to Jiddah, the port to Mecca, where pilgrims from all the Moslem world exchange thought and money for bad bread and fanaticism. And yet even here the civilization of the West tries to enter. Wandering through the bazars Mohammed for the first time saw a sewing-machine in the hands of an Indian tailor. A marvel to the sailor fisherman, indeed! Almost as great a miracle to him as the Koran. The more he looked the more he coveted, and he could not pass the place without reckoning up the possible profits of such an investment should he return with it to his native island. The result was that he forswore the sea and preferred another kind of wheel to that of the pilot. With many mutual wallahs the bargain was concluded and the machine reached Bahrein. It was the first on the islands, and all the sheikhs came to see its marvellous build and wonderful work. Mohammed has a Western head on Eastern shoulders, and there was not a screw or tension from treadle to