

CHINESE GORDON.

WHO HE IS AND WHAT HE HAS DONE.

Many centuries ago it was said "a man is not without honor save in his own country," and seldom has the world seen the saying more strikingly verified. Here is a man, a Major General in the British army, a Chinese Mandarin of the highest order, an Egyptian Pasha; Governor General of the Soudan; a man who when little more than a boy distinguished himself in the Crimean War; who quelled the Taiping Rebellion in China, one of the greatest rebellions the world has ever seen, and saved the Empire when the Chinese themselves were powerless in the matter; who did, almost single-handed, what it was thought never could be done, destroyed the terrible slave trade in the Soudan; and yet when, about the beginning of the year, the British Government decided to send him again to the Soudan, as the only man they could find who would be at all likely to quell the troubles which had arisen since he was last there, the majority of people had never heard of him, and all were asking, Who is Gordon and what has he done?

But this is quite in accordance with the character of the man. He shuns popularity, and publicity he loathes. He "regards no feat of war as due to efforts of his own; no peril he surmounts as due to daring; no victory he wins as due to prowess or skill. Whatever his triumphs he holds them none of his, but the triumphs of a higher cause, whose instrument he is and whose flag he bears." God is his captain and his whole life is consecrated to His service. What he knows to be God's will he does, and whenever he succeeds he refuses to take any credit to himself, believing that he alone is nothing, but that it is God who works through him. Once on his return from China, where he won his name, he asked for some of his journals and papers which he had sent home some time before containing the whole account of his campaign there, and was told that a friend had asked for them to have them printed. Very indignant he at once rushed to his house and demanded their return, but was told that they were already in the hands of the publisher. Away he went to the publisher and insisted upon their being given up to him, ordered what was already in type to be broken up, and brought them all away with him, and it is feared that he destroyed them, for nothing has ever been seen of them since. The fascinating life of him by Mr. Egmont Hake is written not only without his consent but without his knowledge.

General Gordon is a soldier by inheritance as well as by education. For generations back his father's ancestors have been soldiers, and fierce ones at that, being "distinguished for their constitutional inability to know when they were beaten." There is an old Scotch couplet which asserts that

"The gale, the Gordon, and the blood of a hero
Are the three worst things that Scotland ever saw."

At the celebrated battle of Preston-Pans, in 1745, ancestors of his fought on both sides; and his grandfather fought at the siege of Louisburg, and with Wolfe on the plains of Abraham, and is buried in Halifax.

His mother's family were equally distinguished as merchants and ship owners. Her father, Samuel Enderby of Blackheath, owned the ships on which was the celebrated tea which was thrown into Boston harbor,

which act put the match to the fire of the American Revolution. His whalers in their outward trips to their fishing grounds in the southern ocean carried the first convicts to Botany Bay and the first settlers to Australia and New Zealand, and were the first to fish in the waters of Japan. His Horn and trade among the Pacific Islands. General Gordon's father was "a good and cultivated soldier, firm and humorous, generous and robust," intolerant of carelessness or neglect, and of strong individuality. His mother's character was equally remarkable. Through no matter what difficulties she was always cheerful, possessed a perfect temper, and was distinguished for her genius for making the best of everything.

Charles Gordon was born at Woolwich, on January 28th 1833. There is little

known of his school life except that he had a boyish love for pitched battles, and delighted in tales of travel and wild adventure. From Taunton he went to the military school at Woolwich, and nothing is related of him there except a little burst of temper. He was told, for some reason not stated, that "he would never make an officer" and he tore the epaulets from his shoulders and threw them at his superior's feet.



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In 1854 he was appointed an officer in the Royal Engineers and ordered to the Crimea, where the war was then raging; and while here, though a very young man, he became distinguished for his dauntless courage and the speed and accuracy with which he detected the movements of the enemy. Long afterwards Colonel C. C. Chesney wrote of him. "We used to send

him to find out what new move the Russians were making."

This was a time of fierce trouble in China. For various reasons the people of the province of Kwang-tung, in which is the city of Canton, were very much discontented and on the point of revolt against the government. A schoolmaster, named Hung, in a village near Canton, got the idea from somewhere, and persuaded many people around him, that he was sent of God to deliver them from their oppressors and reign himself on the Dragon Throne. In a short time he gathered a large army, marched north for about seven hundred miles, spreading ruin and desolation wherever he went, captured all the cities in his path leaving them in command of his chiefs or Wangs, and finally reached Nankin which soon fell before him; and here he set up his throne

had called themselves the Ever Victorious Army but had never deserved the name until Gordon took the command. Space forbids going into any details of the campaign, but city after city was soon captured and there remained only Soochow. The Chinese authorities with little sense of honor continually broke faith with him, refused to pay him men regularly, and once actually fired upon them. He was disgusted and started to Shanghai to resign his command. When near the city, however, he heard that Burgevine, the former commander of the Ever Victorious Army, had raised a well armed band of foreign rowdies, joined the rebels in Soochow, and was planning to win over his old followers. The aspect of affairs was graver than ever. For Gordon to abandon the cause now was to give the country over to misery and ruin for years to come. And yet he stood alone. He could not trust the Imperial Government and he could not trust his men. But he concluded to stand and see the end of the rebellion. Burgevine was doing his best to take Gordon's life and Gordon knew it, and yet when he heard that the rebels had suspected Burgevine and threatened him with death he wrote begging them to spare him.

Gordon himself worked harder than any one in the army and was always in the front of every battle. When a leading officer faltered he would take him quietly by the arm and lead him forward. He had so many hair breadth escapes that his men came to believe that he led a charmed life and that where he was there was safety. He carried no arms; his only weapon was a little bamboo cane with which he pointed in directing the fight, and this the natives called "Gordon's magic wand of victory." Soochow fell, and with it the main part of the rebellion.

But side by side with his victory General Gordon experienced the greatest sorrow of the whole campaign. When the Wangs surrendered the city it was on condition that their lives would be spared and their city saved from plunder, but the next day as he went alone into the city expecting to find everything settled he found to his horror that Li had broken faith and that the five Wangs had been murdered and the city given up to plunder of the Imperial troops. In a fury he seized his revolver and started off in search of the treacherous governor, but Li was nowhere to be found. There is no doubt but that if Gordon had found him then he would have shot him on the spot. He never spoke of the murdered kings afterwards without tears. A little more fighting and Nankin fell; the rebels were conquered and China was saved.

The gratitude of the people was unbounded and they at once proceeded to heap upon him both riches and honor. But Gordon would none of them. Twice a fortune was offered him but he would accept nothing. After much persuasion he consented to accept the title of Mandarin in the service of China, and with this Prince Kung presented him with a magnificent gold collar from his own neck which he could not refuse. He had spent all his pay in relieving the wants of the poor people around him, he had refused to accept any reward from the government for his services, and he returned to England in the end of 1864 as poor a man as when he left. An incident on the voyage home serves to show his character. A collection was being

and proclaimed himself the Heavenly King, the Emperor of the Great Peace. Soon all the cities between here and the coast fell and Shanghai itself was threatened. The foreign merchants and traders in the city seeing that there was no help to be expected from the Chinese Government, and fearing for their lives, raised an army composed chiefly of the paid-off ship hands and idlers and vagabonds of all nationalities always to be found about Eastern ports. The command of this was given to two American adventurers, Ward and Burgevine. Ward was soon killed and Burgevine was dismissed for corrupt practices, and Li Hung Chang, the governor of the province applied to the British to send them a new leader, and Gordon, who was then engaged in surveying the country around Shang-hai was appointed. This was early in 1863.

He had undertaken a hard task. They