

CHAPTER XXVII

PEKING AFTER THE SIEGE

Everybody was eager to leave the Legation. Douglas set out to find lodgings. Acres and acres of the city about the Legations were heaps of ruins. One could not tell even where the streets had been. The walls of the Legations had been battered and beaten until they were a mass of crumbling debris. In going about, Douglas was hailed by an American who had formed one of the Relief Column.

"Hello! Doc Medhurst, is that you? Were you one of the incarcerated band we fellows took such trouble to reach?"

"How are you, Devereux? I have been imprisoned, sure enough. What kept you so long coming to slip back the bolts?"

"The same old question, Why didn't we come sooner? I had reasons which seemed sufficient to me. It does my heart good to see you looking thin and dirty. I've been feeling savage."

"What about?" asked Douglas.

"Why, the well-groomed condition we found