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THE RED YEAR

A Story of the Indian Mutiny

BY LOUIS TRACY

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CHAPTER XIV—(Continued.)

The British soldier, who has fought and bled in so many lands, showed his remarkable adaptability to circumstances by the way in which he made himself at home on the reverse slope of the Ridge. A compact town had sprung up there with its orderly lines of huts and tents, its long rows of picketed horses, commissariat bullocks and elephants, its churches, hospitals, playgrounds, race-course and cemetery.

Malcolm took in the general scheme of things while he walked along the Ridge towards the most advanced picket at Hindu Rao's House. On the left front lay Delhi, beautiful as a dream in the brilliant sunshine. The intervening valley was scarred and riven with water-courses, strewn with rocks, covered with ruined mosques, temples, tombs, and houses, and smothered in a overgrowth of trees, shrubs and long grasses. Roads were few, but tortuous paths ran everywhere, and it was easy to see how the rebels could steal out unobserved during the night and creep close up to the pickets before they revealed their whereabouts by a burst of musketry. Happily they never learnt to reserve their fire. Every man would blaze away at the first alarm, and then, of course, in those days of muzzle-loaders, the more resolute British troops could get to close quarters without serious loss. Still the men who held the Ridge had many casualties, and until Nicholson came the rebel artillery was infinitely more powerful than the British. Behind his movable column, however, marched a strong siege train. When that arrived the gunners could make their presence felt. Thus far not one of the enemy's guns had been dismounted.

Frank had ocular proof of their strength in this arm before he reached Hindu Rao's House. The Guides, picturesque in their loose, gray-colored shirts and big turbans, sent one of their cavalry squadrons over the Ridge on some errand. They moved at a sharp canter, but the Delhi gunners had got the range and were ready, and half a dozen eighteen-pound balls crashed into the trees and rocks almost in the exact line of advance. A couple of guns on the British right took up the challenge, and the duel went on long after the Guides were swallowed up in the green depths of the valley.

At last Malcolm stood in the shelter-trench of the picket and gazed at the city which was the hub of the Mutiny. Beyond the high, red-brick walls he saw the graceful dome and minarets of the Jumna Musjid, while to the left towered the frowning battlements of the King's palace. To the left again, and nearer, was the small dome of St. James' Church with its lead roof riddled then, as it remains to this day, with the bullets fired by the rebels in the effort to dislodge the ball and cross which surmounted it. For the rest his eyes wandered over a noble array of mosques and temples, flat-roofed houses of nobles of the court and residences of the wealthy merchants who dwelt in the imperial city.

The far-flung panorama behind the walls had a curiously peaceful aspect. Even the puffs of white smoke from the guns, curling upwards like tiny clouds in the lazy air, had no tremors until a heavy shot hurtled overhead or struck a resounding blow at the already ruined walls of the big house near the post.

The 61st were on picket that day and one of the men, speaking with a strong Gloucestershire accent, said to Malcolm:

"Well, zur, they zay we'll be a-lootin' there zoon."

"I hope so," was the reply, but the phrase set him a-thinking.

Within that shining palace most probably was a woman to whom he owed his life. In another palace, many a hundred miles away, was another woman for whom he would willingly risk that life if only he could save her from the fate that the private of the 61st was gloating over in anticipation.

What a mad jumble of opposites was this useless and horrible war! At any rate why could not women be kept out of it and let men adjust their quarrel with the stern arbitrament of sword and gun!

Then he recalled Chumru's words anent the Princess Roshinara, and the fancy seized him that if he were destined to enter Delhi with the besiegers he would surely strive to repay the service she had rendered Winifred and Mayne and himself at Bithoor.

That is the way man proposes and that is why the gods smile when they dispose of man's affaire.

CHAPTER XV.

At the King's Court.

Without guns to breach the walls, even the heroic Nicholson was powerless against a strongly fortified city.

The seige train was toiling slowly across the Punjab, but the setting in of the monsoon rendered the transit of heavy cannon a laborious task.

On the 24th of August an officer rode in from the town of Bagput, twenty-five miles to the north, to report that the train was parked there for the night.

"What sort of escort accompanies it?" asked Nicholson, when the news reached him.

"Almost exclusively natives and few in numbers at that," he was told.

An hour later a sepoy spy from Delhi came to the camp.

"The mutineers are mustering for a big march," he said. "They are providing guns, litters, and commissariat camels, and the story goes that they mean to fight the Feringhis at Bahadurgarh."

The place named was a large village, ten miles northwest of the ridge, and Nicholson guessed instantly that the sepoys had planned the daring coup of cutting off the siege train. With him, to hear was to act. He formed a column of two thousand men and a battery of field artillery and left the camp at dawn on the 25th. If a forced march could accomplish it, he meant not only to frustrate the enemy's design, but to inflict a serious defeat on them.

Malcolm went with him and never had he taken part in a harder day's work. The road was a bullock track, a swamp of mud amid the larger swamp of the ploughed land and jungle. Horses and men floundered through it as best they might. The guns often sank almost to the trunnions; many a time the infantry had to help the elephants and bullocks to haul them out.

In seven hours the column only marched nine miles, and then came the disheartening news that the spy's information was wrong. The rebels had, indeed, sent out a strong force, but they were at Nujufgarh, miles away to the right.

Officers and men ate a slight meal, growled a bit, and swung off in the new direction. At four o'clock in the afternoon they found the sepoy army drawn up behind a canal, with its right protected by another canal, and the centre and left posted in fortified villages. Evidently, too, a stout serai, or inn, a square building surrounding a quadrangle set apart for the lodgment of camels and merchandise was regarded as a stronghold. Here were placed six guns and the walls were loopholed for musketry.

In a word, had the mutineers been equal in courage and morale to the British troops the resultant attack must have ended in disastrous failure.

But Nicholson was a leader who took the measure of his adversaries. Above all, he did not shirk a battle because it was risky.

The 61st made a flank march, forded the branch canal under fire and were ordered to lie down. Nicholson rode up to them, a commanding figure on a seventeen-hands English hunter.

"Now, 61st," he said, "I want you to take that serai and the guns. You all know what Sir Colin Campbell told you at Chillianwallah, and you have heard that he said the same thing at the battle of the Alma. 'Hold your fire until you see the whites of their eyes,' he said, 'and then, my boys, we will make short work of it.' Come on! Let us follow his advice here!"

Swinging his horse around, he rode straight at serai and battery. Grape-shot and bullets sang the death song of many a brave fellow, but Nicholson was untouched. The 61st leaped to their feet with a yell, rushed after him, and did not fire a shot until they were within twenty yards of the enemy. A volley and the bayonet did the rest. They captured the guns, carried the serai, and pelted the flying rebels with their own artillery. The 1st Junjabis had a stiff fight before they killed every man in the village of Nujuffgarh on the left, but the battle was won, practically in defiance of every tenet of military tactics, when the 61st forced their way into the serai.

Utterly exhausted the soldiers slept on the soddened ground. That night, smoking a cigar with his staff, Nicholson commented on the skill shown in the enemy's disposition.

"I asked a wounded havildar who it was that led the column, and he told me the commander was a new arrival, a subadar of the 8th Irregular Cavalry, named Akbab Khan," he said.

Malcolm started. Akbab Khan was the young sowar whose life he had spared at Cawnpore when Winifred and her uncle and himself were escaping from Bithoor.

"I knew him well, sir," he could not help saying. "He was not a subadar, but a lance-corporal. He was one of a small escort that accompanied me from Agra to the south, but he is a smart soldier, and not at all of the cutthroat type."

Nicholson looked at him fixedly. He seemed to be considering some point suggested by Malcolm's words.

"If men like him are obtaining commands in Delhi they will prove awkward," was his brief comment, and Frank did not realize what his chief was revolving in his mind until, three days later, the Brigadier asked him to don his disguise again, ride to the southward, and endeavor to fall in with a batch of mutineers on the way to Delhi. Then he could enter the city, note the dispositions for the defence, and escape by joining an attacking party during one of the many raids on the ridge.

"You will be rendering a national service by your deed," said Nicholson, gazing into Frank's troubled eyes with that magnetic power that bent all men to his will. "I know it is a distasteful business, but you are able to carry it through, and five hours of your observation will be worth five weeks of native reports. Will you do it?"

"Yes, sir," said Malcolm, choking back the protest on his lips. He could not trust himself to say more. He refused even to allow his thoughts to dwell on such a repellant subject. A spy! What soldier likes the office? It stifles ambition. It robs war of its glamour. It may call for a display of the utmost bravery—that calm courage of facing an ignoble death alone, unheeded, forgotten, which is the finest test of chivalry, but it can never commend itself to a high-spirited youth.

Frank had already won distinction in the field; it was hard to be chosen now for such a doubtful enterprise.

His worst hour came when he sought Chumru's aid in the matter of walnut-juice.

"What is toward, sahib?" asked the Mohammedan. "Have we not seen enough of India that we must set forth once more?"

"This time I go alone," said Frank sadly. "Perchance I shall not be long absent. You will remain here in charge of my baggage and of certain letters which I shall give you."

"Why am I cast aside, sahib?"

"Nay. Say not so. 'Tis a matter that I must deal with myself, and not of my own wish, Chumru. I obey the general-sahib's order."

"Jan Nikkelsen-sahib Bahadur?"

"Yes. I would refuse any other. But haste thee, for time presses."

Chumru went off. He returned in half an hour, to find his master sealing a letter addressed to "Miss Winifred Mayne, to be forwarded, if possible, with the Lucknow Relief Force."

There were others to relatives in England, and Frank tied them in a small packet.

"If I do not come back within a week—" he began.

"Nay, sahib, give not instructions to me in the matter. I go with you."

"It is impossible."

"Huzoor, it is the order of Jan Nikkelsen-sahib Bahadur. He says I will be useful, and he hath promised me another jaghir."

The Mohammedan's statement was true enough. He had waylaid Nicholson and obtained permission to accompany his master. Like a faithful dog he was not to be shaken off, and, in his heart of hearts, Malcolm was glad of it.

Their preparations were made with the utmost secrecy. The same men who sold Bahadur Shah's cause to the British were also the professed spies of the rebels. They were utterly unreliable, yet their tale-bearing in Delhi might bring instant disaster to Malcolm and his native comrade.

Nejdi was in good condition again after the tremendous exertions undergone since he carried his master from Lucknow. Malcolm was in two minds whether to take him or not, but the chance that his life might depend on a reliable horse, and, perhaps, a touch of the gambler's belief in luck, swayed his judgment, and Nejdi was saddled. Chumru rode a spare charger which Malcolm had purchased at the sale of a dead officer's effects. Fully equipped in their character as rebel non-commissioned officers, the two rode forth, crossed the Jumna, reached the Meerut road unchallenged and turned their horses' heads toward the bridge of boats that debouched beneath the walls of the King's palace.

Provided they met some stragglers on the road they meant to enter the city with the dawn. By skilful expenditure of money on Malcolm's part and the exercise of Chumru's peculiar inventiveness in maintaining a flow of lurid language, they counted on keeping their new-found comrades in tow while they made the tour of the city. The curiosity of strangers would be quite natural, and Malcolm hoped they might be able to slip out again with some expedition planned for the night or the next morning.

Of course, having undertaken an unpleasant duty he intended to carry it through. If he did not learn the nature and extent of the enemy's batteries, the general dispositions for the defense and the state of feeling among the different sections that composed the rebel garrison, he must perforce remain longer. But that was in the lap of fate. At present he could only plan and contrive to the best of his ability.

Fortune favored the adventurers at first. They encountered a score of ruffians who had cut themselves adrift from the Gwalior contingent. Among these strangers Chumru was quickly a hero. He beguiled the way with tales of derring-do in Oudh and the Doab, and discussed the future of all unbelievers with an amazing gusto. Malcolm, whose head was shrouded in a gigantic and blood-stained turban, listened with interest to his servant's account of the actions outside Cawnpore and on the road to Lucknow. It was excellent fooling to hear Chumru detailing the wholesale slaughter of the Nazarenes, while the victors, always the sepoys, found it advisable to fall back on a strategic position many miles in the rear after each desperate encounter.

In this hail-fellow-well-met manner the party crossed the bridge were interrogated by a guard at the Water Gate and admitted to the fortress. It chanced that a first-rate feud was in progress, and the officer, whose duty it was to question new arrivals, was taking part in it.

Money was short in the royal treasury. Many thousands of sepoys had neither been paid nor fed; there was a quarrel between Mohammedans and Hindoos, because the former insisted on slaughtering cattle; and the more respectable citizens were clamoring for protection from the rapacity, insolence and lust of the swaggering soldiers.

That day matters had reached a climax. Malcolm found a brawling mob in front of the Lahore gate of the palace. He caught Chumru's eye and the latter appealed to a sepoy for information as to the cause of the racket.

"The King of Kings hath a quarrel with his son, Mirza Moghul, who is not over pleased with the recent division of the command," was the answer.

"What, then? Is there more than one chief?"

"To be sure. Is there not the Council of the Barah Topi? (Twelve Hats.) Are not Bakht Khan and Akbab Khan in charge of brigades? Where hast thou been, brother, that these things are not known to thee?"

"Be patient with me, I pray, my friend. I and twenty more, whom thou seest here, have ridden in within the hour. We come to join the Jehad, and we are grieved to find a dispute toward when we expected to be led against the infidels."

The sepoy laughed scornfully.

"You will see as many fights here as outside the walls," he muttered, and moved off, for men were beginning to guard their tongues in Imperial Delhi.

A rowdy gang of full five hundred armed mutineers marched up and hustled the mob right and left as they forced a way to the gate. Their words and attitude betokened trouble. The opportunity was too good to be lost. Malcolm dismounted, gave the reins to Chumru, and told him to wait his return under some trees, somewhat removed from the road, for Akbab Khan had sharp eyes, and the Mohammedan's grotesque face was well known to him. Chumru made a fearsome grimace, but Malcolm's order was peremptory. Summoning a fruit-seller, the bearer led the Gwalior men to the rendezvous named and distributed mangoes amongst them.

Frank joined the ruck of the demonstrators and passed through the portals of the magnificent gate. A long, high-roofed arcade, spacious as the nave of a cathedral, with raised marble platforms for merchants on each side, gave access to a quadrangle. In the center stood a fountain, and round about were grassy lawns and beds of flowers.

The sepoys tramped on, heedless of the destruction they caused in the garden. They passed through the noble Nakar Khana, or music-room, and entered another and larger square, at the further end of which stood the Diwan-i-Am, or Hall of Public Audience.

Not even in Agra, and certainly not in gaudy Lucknow, had Malcolm seen any structure of such striking architectural effect. The elegant roof was supported on three rows of red sandstone pillars, adorned with chaste gilding and stucco-work. Open on three sides, the audience chamber was backed by a wall of white marble, from which a staircase led to a throne raised about ten feet from the ground and covered with a rarely beautiful marble canopy borne on four small pillars.

The throne was empty, but an attendant appeared through the door at the foot of the stairs, and announced that the Light of the World woud receive his faithful soldiers in a few minutes.

The impatient warriors snorted their disapproval. They did not like to be kept waiting, but carried their resentment no further, and Malcolm, with alert eyes and ears, moved about among them, as by that means he hoped to avoid attracting attention.

Even in that moment of deadly peril he could not help admiring the exquisite skill with which the great marble wall was decorated with mosaics and paintings of the fauna and flora of India. The mosaics were wholly composed of precious stones, and the paintings were executed in rich tints that told of a master hand. There was nothing bizarre or crude in their conception. They might have adorned some Athenian temple in the heyday of Greece, and were wholly free from the stiff drawings and flamboyant coloring usually seen in the East. He did not then know that a renegade Venetian artist, Austin de Bordeaux, had carried out this work for Shah Jehan, that great patron of the arts, and in any event, his appreciation of their excellence was spasmodic, for the broken words he heard from the excited soldiery warned him that a crisis was imminent in the fortunes of Delhi.

"Who is he, then, this havildar of gunners from Bareilly?" said one.

"And the other, Akbab Khan. They say he fought for the Nazarenes at Meerut. Mohammed Latif swears he defended the treasury there," chimed in another.

"As for me, I care not who leads. I want my pay."

"I, too. I have not eaten since sunrise yesterday."

"We shall get neither foor nor money till some one clears those accursed Feringhis off the hill," growled a deep voice close behind Malcolm.

There was something familiar in the tone. Frank edged away and glanced at the speaker, whom he recognized instantly as a subadar in his own old regiment.

But now a craning of necks and a sudden hush of the animated talk showed that some development was toward. Servants entered with cushions, which they disposed round the foot of the throne and at the base of its canopy. A few nobles and court functionaries lounged in, two gorgeously appareled guards came through the doorway, and behind them tottered a feeble old man, robed in white, and wearing on his head an aigrette of Bird of Paradise plumes, fastened with a gold clasp in which sparkled an immense emerald.

Malcolm had seen Bahadur Shah only once before. He remembered how decorous and dignified was the Mogul court when Britain paid honor to an ancient dynasty. And now, what a change! The aged emperor had to lift a trembling hand to obtain a hearing, while, ever and anon, even during his short address, belated officers and troopers clattered in on horseback, and did not dismount within the precincts of the sacred Hall of Audience itself.

He began by explaining timorously that while affairs remained in their present unsettled condition he could not arrange matters as he would have wished. He knew that there were arrears of pay and that the food supply was irregular.

"But you do not help me," he said, with some display of spirit. "Respectable citizens tell me that you plunder their houses and debauch their wives and daughters. I have issued repeated injunctions prohibiting robbery and oppression in the city, but to no avail."

He was interrupted with loud murmurs.

"What matters it about the bazaar-folk, O King," yelled a sepoy. "We want food, not a sermon."

The Emperor seemed to fire up with indignation at the taunt, but he sank into the chair on the throne. He raised a hand twice to quiet the mob, and at last they allowed him to continue.

"I am weary and helpless," he said faintly. "I have resolved to make a vow to pass the remainder of my life in service acceptable to Allah. I will relinquish my title and take the garb of a moullah. I am going to the shrine of Khwaja Sahib, and thence to Mecca, where I hope to end my sorrowful days."

This was not the sort of consolation that the mob expected or wanted. A howl of execration burst forth, but it was stayed by the entrance of two people from the private portion of the palace.

There was no need that Malcolm should ask who the pale, haughty, beautiful woman was who came and stood by her father's side. Roshinara Begum did not share the Emperor's dejection. She faced the rebels now with the air of one who knew them for the canaille they were. But that was only for an instant. A consummate actress, she had a part to play, and she bent and whispered something to Bahadur Shah with a great show of pleased vivacity.

A man who accompanied her stepped to the front of the throne, and his words soon revealed to Malcolm that he was listening to the Shahzada, the heir apparent, Mirza Moghul. "Why do you come hither to disturb the King's pious meditations?" he cried angrily. "You were better employed at the batteries, where your loyal comrades are now firing a salute of twenty-one guns to celebrate the capture of Agra by the Neemuch Brigade."

He paused. His statement was news to all present, as, indeed, it well might be, seeing that it was a lie. But his half petulant, half boastful tone was convincing, and several voices were raised in a cry of "Shabash! Good hearing!"

"This is no time to create mischief and disunion," he went on loudly. "Help is coming from all quarters. Gwalior, Jhansi, Neemuch and Lucknow are sending troops to aid us. In three or four days, if Allah be willing, the Ridge will be taken, and everyone of the base unbelievers humbled and ruined and sent to the fifth circle of hell."

The man had the actor's trick of making his points. Waiting until an exultant roar of applause had died away, he delivered his most effective hit.

"At the very time you dared to burst in on the Emperor's privacy he was arranging a loan with certain local bankers that will enable all arrears of pay to be made up. Today there will be a free issue of cattle, grain and rice. Go then! Tell these things to all men, and trust to the King of Kings and his faithful advisers, of whom I am at once the nearest and the most obedient, to lead you to victory against the Nazarenes."

For the hour these brave words sufficed. The sepoys trooped out and Malcolm went with them. A backward glance revealed the princess and her brother engaged in a conversation with Bahadur Shah and a courtier or two. Their gestures and manner of argument did not bear out the joyful tidings brought to the conclave by the Shahzada. Indeed, Frank guessed that they were soundly rating the miserable monarch for having allowed himself to speak so plainly to his beloved subjects.

Malcolm knew there was not a word of truth in Mirza Moghul's brief speech. The Gwalior contingent had gone to Cawnpore. All the men Bareilly had to send had already arrived with Bakhat Khan, the "havildar of artillery," who was now the King's right hand man. Jhansi, Neemuch and Lucknow had enough troubles of their own without helping Delhi, and, as for the bankers' aid, it was easy to guess the nature of the "loan" that the Emperor hoped to extract from them.

Indeed, while Malcolm and Chumru and their new associates were wandering through the streets and making the circuit of the western wall, there was another incipient riot in the fort. Delay in issuing the promised rations enraged the hungry troops. A number hurried again to the Diwan-i-Am, clamored for the king's presence, and told him roundly that he ought to imprison his sons, who, they said, had stolen their pay.

"If the Treasury does not find the money," was the threat, "we will kill you and all your family, for we are masters."

This later incident came to Malcolm's ears while Chumru was persuading a grain-dealer to admit that he had some corn hidden away. The sight of money unlocked the man's lips.

"Would there were more like you in the King's service," he whined. "I have not taken a rupee in the way of trade since the huzoors were driven forth."

It was easy enough to interpret the unhappy tradesman's real wishes. He was pining for the restoration of the British Raj. Every man in Delhi, who had anything to lose, mourned the day that saw the downfall of the Sirkar.*

"Affairs go badly, then," Malcolm put in. "Speak freely, friend. We are strangers, and are minded to go back whence we came, for there is naught but misrule in the city so far as we can see."

"What can you expect from an old man who writes verses when he should be punishing malefactors?" said the grain-dealer, bitterly anxious to vent his wrongs. "If you would act wisely, sirdar, leave this bewitched place. It is given over to devils. I am a Hindu, as you know, but I am worse treated by the Brahmins than by men of your faith."

"Mayhap you have quarreled with some of the sepoys and have a sore feeling against them?"

"Think not so, sirdar. Who am I to make enemies of these lords? Every merchant in the bazaar is of my mind, and I have suffered less than many, for I am a poor man and have no family."

In response to Chumru's request the grain-dealer allowed the men to cook their food in an inner courtyard. While Malcolm extracted additional details as to the chaos that reigned in the city the newcomers from Gwalior consulted among themselves. They had seen enough to convince that there were parts of India much preferable to Delhi for residential purposes.

"Behold, sirdar!" said one of them after they had eaten, "You led us in, and now we pray you lead us out again. There are plenty here to fight Feringnis, and we may be more useful at Lucknow."

Malcolm could have laughed at the strangeness of his position, but he saw in this request the nucleus of a new method of winning his way beyond the walls.

"Bide here," he said gruffly, "until Ali Khan and I return, which we will surely do ere night. Then we shall consider what steps to take. At present, I am of the same mind as you."

He wanted to visit the Cashmere Gate and examine its defenses. Then, he believed, he would have obtained all the information that Nicholson required. He was certain that Delhi would fall if once the British secured a footing inside the fortifications. The city was seething with discontent. Even if left to its own devices it would speedily become disrupted by the warring elements within its bounds.

Chumru and the rode first to the Mori Gate. Then, by a side road, they followed the wall to the Cashmere Gate. Traveling as rapidly as the crowded state of the thoroughfare permitted and thus wearing the semblance of being engaged on some urgent duty, they counted the guns in each battery and noted their positions.

Arrived at the Cashmere Gate they loitered there a few minutes. This was the key of Delhi. Once it was won, a broad road led straight to the heart of the city, with the palace on one hand and the Chadni Chowk on the other.

Malcolm saw with a feeling of unutterable loathing that the mutineers had converted St. James's church into a stable. Not so had the founder, Colonel James Skinner treated the religions of the people among whom he lived. The legend goes that the gallant soldier, a veteran of the Mahratta wars, had married three wives, an Englishwoman, a Mohammedan, and a Hindu. His own religious views were of the nebulous order, but, so says the story, being hard pressed once in a fight, he vowed to build a church to his wife's memory if he escaped. His assailants were driven off and the vow remained. When he came to give effect to it he was puzzled to know which wife he should honor, so he built a church, a mosque and a temple, each at a corner of the triangular space just within the Cashmere Gate.

Whether the origin of the structures is correctly stated or not, they stand to this day where Skinner's workmen placed them, and it was a dastardly act on the part of the men who worshipped in mosque and temple to profane the hallowed shrine of another and far superior faith.

Malcolm was sitting motionless on Nejdi, looking at a squad of rebels erecting fascines in front of a new battery on the river side of the gate, when Chumru, whose twisted vision seemed to command all points of the compass, saw that the commander of a cavalry guard stationed there was regarding them curiously.

"Turn to the right, huzoor," he muttered.

Malcolm obeyed instantly. The warning note in Chumru's voice was not to be denied. It would be folly to wait and question him.

"Now let us canter," said the other, as soon as the horses were fairly in the main road.

"You did well, sahib, to move quickly. There was one in the guard yonder whose eyes grew bigger each second he looked at you."

They heard some shouting at the gate. A bend in the road near the ruined offices of the Delhi Gazette gave them a chance of increasing the pace to a gallop. There was a long, straight stretch in front, leading past the Telegraph Office, the dismantled magazine, and a small cemetery. Then the road turned again, and by a sharp rise gained the elevated plateau on which stood the fort.

Glancing over his shoulder at this point Malcolm caught sight of a dozen sowars riding furiously after them. To dissipate any hope that they might not be in pursuit, he saw the leader point in his direction and seemingly urge on his comrades. It was impossible to know for certain what had roused this nest of hornets, though the presence of a man of the 3rd Cavalry in the palace that morning was a sinister fact that led to only one conclusion. No matter what the motive, he felt that Chumru and he were trapped. There was no avenue of escape. Whether they went ahead or made a dash for the city, their pursuers could keep them well in sight, as their tired horses were incapable of a sustained effort at top speed after having been on the move nearly twenty hours.

He had to decide quickly, and his decision must be governed not by personal considerations but by the needs of his country. If he had been recognized, the enemy would follow him. Therefore, Chumru might outwit them were he given a chance.

"Listen, good friend," he shouted as they clattered up the hill. "Thou seest the tope of trees in front."

"Yes, sahib."

"This, then, is my last order, and it must be obeyed. When we reach those trees we will bear off towards the palace. Pull up there and dismount. Give me the reins of your horse, and hide yourself quickly among the trees. I shall ride on, and you may be able to dodge into some ditch ornullah till it is dark. Rejoin those men from Gwalior if possible, and try to get away from the city. Tell the General-sahib what you have seen and that I sent you. Do you understand?"

"Huzoor!—"

"Silence! Wouldst thou have me fail in my duty? It is my parting wish, Chumru. There is no time for words. Do as I say, or we both die uselessly."

There was no answer. The Mohammedan's eyes blazed with the frenzy of a too complete comprehension of his master's intent. But now they were behind the trees, and Malcolm was already checking Nejdi. Chumru flung himself from the saddle and ran. Cowering amid some shrubs of dense foliage, he watched Malcolm dashing along the road to the Lahore Gate of the palace. A minute later the rebels thundered past, and they did not seem to notice that one of the two horses disappearing in the curved cutting that led to the drawbridge and side entrance of the gate was riderless.

Chumru ought to have taken immediate measures to secure his own safety. But he did nothing of the kind. He lay there, watching the hard-riding horsemen, and striving most desperately to do them all the harm that the worst sort of malign imprecations could effect. They, in turn, vanished in the sunken approach to the fortress, and the unhappy bearer was imagining the horrible fate that had befallen the master, whom he loved more than kith or kin, when he saw the same men suddenly reappear and gallop towards the Delhi Gate, which was situated at a considerable distance.

Something had happened to disappoint and annoy them—that much he could gather from their gestures and impassioned speech. Whatever it was, Malcolm-sahib apparently was not dead yet, and while there is life there is hope.

Chumru proceeded to disrobe. He kicked off his boots, untied his putties, threw aside the frock-coat and breeches of a cavalry rissaldar, and stood up in the ordinary white clothing of a native servant.

"Shabash!" muttered he, as he unfastened the military badge in his turban. "There is nothing like a change of clothing to alter a man. Now I can follow my sahib and none be the wiser."

With that he walked coolly into the roadway and stepped out leisurely towards the Lahore Gate. But he found the massive door closed and the drawbridge raised, and a gruff voice bade him begone, as the gate would not be opened until the King's orders were received.

*The Government.

TEMPERANCE PEOPLE DEAL WITH F. M. SPROUL

Call on Him to Clear Himself of Intoxication Charge or Resign Seat in Local House.

Norton, N. B., Oct. 2.—Many prominent men from churches, Sunday schools and temperance societies of this county met yesterday afternoon in the Institute Hall, Sussex, and deliberated on ways and means respecting the enforcement of law, etc., at the coming Federal election.

C. W. Weyman, president, and M. G. Harmer, secretary-treasurer, were in their places.

Devotional exercises were led by Rev. Geo. Ross, of Hampton. The president opened by a speech and Rev. Mr. Grant expressed pleasure that the Canada Temperance Act had been amended, as had been requested, and that it was now illegal to ship liquors into Scott Act counties.

The result of the deliberations was summed up by a resolution moved by Rev. H. G. Kennedy and seconded by W. D. Fowler that a committee to be known as the Political Purity Committee of the Temperance Federation of Kings Co. be appointed to press the work of the federation in the approaching election campaign.

The committee was composed of Rev. H. G. Kennedy, Rev. E. J. Grant, Rev. Geo. Ross, Rev. Frank Baird, J. D. McKenna, W. D. Fowler, S. H. Flewelling, J. E. McAuley, Nelson Eveleigh, W. B. Jonah, M. G. Harmer, E. Myers, J. P. McAuley and M. A. Innis, with power to add. The intention is to organize and have detectives at each polling booth.

Different members claimed that owing to the pledge given by Fred M. Sproul, M.P.P., before the last election to the temperance people upon which they claim he gained his election that the following resolution in justice to the federation should be and was passed:

Whereas, It has been reported on what seems to be reliable testimony, that Mr. F. M. Sproul has been frequently intoxicated since he was elected as a member of the provincial legislature, and whereas Mr. Sproul had the support of many temperance people on the pledge that he abstain from the use of intoxicating liquor while he remained a representative in the legislature, therefore resolved that a committee be appointed to interview Mr. Sproul and unless he is prepared to deny the charge the Temperance Federation of Kings Co. hold that in all fairness to temperance people of the county he should resign.

Carried unanimously.

The committee appointed consisted of Rev. E. J. Grant and C. W. Weyman.

Rev. Mr. Baird gave notice that at the evening meeting he would move the following resolution: That whereas he had been led to believe that the bar in the House of Commons was closed and whereas he has learned on good authority that this is not so, therefore it is considered that the federation take action on this matter and try to get the pledge of the present candidates to investigate the matter and do what is possible if elected to have said bar removed.

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The Rhode Island Hospital offers a 3-year course of training in care of patients in Medical, Surgical, Obstetrical and 6 Special Departments. 4,999 patients treated in 1907. Applications are now being considered for classes entering in Oct., 1908, and January and April, 1909. Maintenance and money allowance sufficient for personal expenses are given. For further information and circulars, address Miss Lucy C. Ayers, Rhode Island Hospital, Providence, R. I.

MR. MAXWELL BOTHERED WHEN LIGHTS WENT OUT

Made a Scene in Opera House, Alleging Design to Break Up Meeting.

When the lights in the Opera House went out on Thursday night because of trouble in Mill street, there were some angry Conservatives and Hon. Robt. Maxwell figured in an incident which has been much discussed. J. W. Stackhouse, stage carpenter in the Opera House says that Mr. Maxwell was much excited and began to accuse the management of trying to break up the meeting. The stage carpenter examined the switches and found them all right. He told Mr. Maxwell this, but that gentleman exclaimed: "You needn't tell me everything is all right, don't I see the lights burning in the lobby?" Mr. Stackhouse tried to explain that the lights in the house and on the stage were on a different circuit from those in the lobby. Mr. Maxwell, however, would have none of his explanations and said: "I don't know who put the lights out, but I know who will not get any pay," adding, "for God's sake bring some lights or the people will be all leaving the house."

At this moment, H. J. Anderson, the manager, appeared on the scene and Mr. Maxwell turned on him with "Anderson, I give you fair warning, I will not pay the rent of this hall, it was a put up job and you needn't think you will get any money."

B. R. Armstrong also took occasion to remark to Mr. Anderson that it was "a very funny thing the lights should go out when there was a Conservative meeting in the place."

Woodstock Temperance Meeting.

Woodstock, Oct. 2.—A rousing temperance meeting was held in the Reformed Baptist church here on Tuesday night. It was attended by many of the leading citizens of the town. Stirring speeches were made and enthusiasm on the temperance question was everywhere evident in the meeting. The music led by Dr. Baker was good, the John H. Roberts campaign sheets being used. Mr. C. L. Smith presided. After the public meeting an I. O. G. T. lodge of fifty members was organized by Mrs. L. R. Hetherington, grand treasurer; Donald Munro, M.P.P., was elected chief and N. F. Thorne, editor of The Carleton Sentinel, lodge deputy. It was largely through the energy and influence of Mr. Thorne that the lodge was instituted. There were many other prominent citizens present, taking an active part in the organization, among them being Postmaster Smith, Rev. A. J. Fulton, Rev. S. A. Baker and Alderman Fisher.

Pie Social at Little River.

The pie and basket social held on Wednesday evening in Little River school house by the ladies of the East Side Suburban Association was a marked success. Buckboards drove a number of people from the city. An excellent programme had been arranged. One of the new features was a lady auctioneer. Mrs. John Flood kindly consented to act and it was due to her that the social was a financial success. Ice cream and candy were sold by the young ladies. The president of the association, Joseph Lee, thanked the people for attending and for being so generous to improve the sidewalk. The entertainment closed with cheers.

NOTICE OF SALE

To Richard B. Stackhouse of the Parish of Simonds in the County of the City and County of Saint John and Province of New Brunswick, Farmer, and Annie L. Stackhouse his wife, and James E. Stackhouse of the same place, Farmer and Lydia J. Stackhouse his wife and all others whom it shall or may concern.

Notice is hereby given that under and by virtue of a power of sale contained in a certain Indenture of Mortgage bearing date the thirteenth day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand, eight hundred and ninety eight, and made between the said Richard B. Stackhouse and Annie L. Stackhouse his wife of the first part and Catherine Barton of the City of Saint John in the County and Province aforesaid of the second part, and duly registered in the office of the Registrar of Deeds in and for the said City and County of Saint John in Book 67 of records pages 175, 176 and 177 on said last mentioned date there will for the purpose of satisfying the moneys secured by said Indenture of Mortgage default having been made in the payment thereof, be sold at public auction on Saturday the thirty-first day of October A.D., 1908, at twelve o'clock noon at Chubb's Corner (so called), on Prince William Street, in said City of Saint John, all those lands and premises situate, lying and being in said Parish of Simonds in the County and Province aforesaid in said Indenture of Mortgage described as all that lot piece or parcel of land situate in the Parish of Simonds which is described in a certain deed from George Selmes and wife to the said Richard Stackhouse, which deed bears even date herewith as follows, commencing at the shore of the Second Loch Lomond Lake at the north eastern corner of land owned by one William Hayward, thence in a northeastern direction along the shore of the Second Loch Lomond Lake until it strikes a cedar post, thence in a southerly direction three feet or until it strikes another cedar post on the Public Road or Highway leading past the Second Loch Lomond Lake, thence following the westerly boundary of said Road until a point equidistant between the two side lines of the said George Selmes lot in a southeasterly direction preserving an equal distance between the said two side lines until the base or rear line of the said George Selmes lot is reached, thence in a southwesterly direction along the said base line until the said base line meets the eastern line of said Hayward lot, thence along said eastern line of said Hayward lot in a northwesterly direction to the place of beginning, one hundred and twenty-six acres more or less together with all and singular the buildings erections and improvements on the said lands and premises standing and being and the rights members privileges and appurtenances whatsoever to the said lands and premises belonging or in anywise appertaining or used or reputed or known as parcel or member thereof.

Dated the fourth day of September, A.D., 1908.

CATHERINE BARTON,
Mortgagee.

EARLE, DRURY & CAMPBELL,
42 Princess street, St. John, N.B.
Solicitor to the Mortgagee.

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