



DEVOTED TO TEMPERANCE, SCIENCE, EDUCATION, AND LITERATURE.

VOLUME XXVII., No. 24.

MONTREAL & NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 25, 1892.

30 Cts. Per An. Post-Paid.

**LORD ROBERTS OF KANDAHAR.**

It was in the nature of things that Frederick Sleigh Roberts should have embraced the military profession. For one thing, he was an Irishman. For another, he was born in a gallant and distinguished regiment, whose bayonets have swayed the issue of Indian battles from Plassey to Lucknow. And yet again, he had for sire a noble old soldier, who began his service almost with the century, campaigned with Lake against the Mahrattas, fought through the Nepal war, marched to Cabul with Keane and Cotton, and after fifty years of Indian soldiering was still a Colonel. The son of a warrior so staunch was bound to be himself a fighting man. Born in 1832, he received part of his education at Eton, thus furnishing another illustration of the truth of Wellington's famous saying. At the end of his professional course at Addiscombe, he got his commission in that fine service the Bengal Artillery, now merged in the Royal regiment. The outbreak of the Mutiny gave young Roberts his first opportunity. In the hardship, toil, fighting, and glory of the arduous struggle which ended in the reduction of Delhi Roberts participated in full measure, and thus early in his career he had made for himself a name as one of the most promising young officers of the Indian service.

In the column which, on the fall of Delhi, Greathed led through the Doab and onwards towards Cawnpore, Roberts served in charge of the Quartermaster-General's department. He had a signal share in the hot pursuit of the fugitive mutineers from Agra, and when Hope Grant succeeded Greathed, he joined the staff of the former fine soldiers. During Sir Colin Campbell's advance from Cawnpore to Lucknow, Roberts had charge of the reconnaissance service, and led the advance from the Alumbagh to the Dilkoosha. He it was who guided the column of Highlanders and Sikhs from the Martiniere through the river-side low ground to the storm of the Secundrabagh and the desperate fighting in the interior of that enclosure. He it was, and none other, who, on the following day, in the face of a hailstorm of bullets and shot, planted on the roof of the mess house the flag which was to indicate to Outram and Havelock the position attained by the re-

lieving force; and who, when time after time the hostile missiles struck the standard down, replaced it as often with dauntless resolution. It was during the subsequent operations against the Gwalior contingent that, in pursuit after the storm of the village of Khodagunj, Roberts earned the Victoria Cross by capturing a standard from two rebels sepoys, one of whom he killed with a trenchant sword-cut. After an interval of desultory fighting, he parti-

cipated with distinction in the final reduction of Lucknow, soon after which he was invalided home. On his return to India he took an active and responsible part in the conduct and fighting of the Umbeyla campaign, earned distinction and promotion in the Abyssinian expedition, and was selected by Sir Robert Napier to carry home the despatches announcing his final success. His services in the Loosha campaign brought him his

C. B., and on attaining the qualifying rank of Colonel in 1875 he was confirmed in the position of Quartermaster-General in India, with the local rank of Major-General.

It was in August, 1878, that Stolietoff and his Cossacks rode into Cabul; and when a month later the Afghan major in the Khyber Pass told Cavagnari that he had orders to oppose by force the progress of Sir Neville Chamberlain and his mission,

Lord Lytton made prompt preparations for the invasion of Afghanistan. Of the three commands, the smallest as regarded force, and the least important apparently as regarded apparent opportunities, was assigned to Roberts, whose appointment to any command, indeed, caused some jealousy, since, although he was locally a Major-General, his substantive rank at the time was that of a major of artillery. While Brown had the Khyber line of advance, and Stewart was directed on Kandahar with secret instructions to make Herat his ulterior objective, Robert's commission was simply to occupy the comparatively insignificant Kuram valley. But the opportunity came to him to fight the only battle of the war, and he was not the man to let the fortunate chance evade him. The Afghan position on the Peiwar Kotal was all but inaccessible, but he found his way to its flank up the rugged and precipitous Spingawaravine, "a mass of stones heaped into ridges and furrowed into gullies," took the Afghans by surprise in the dim twilight of the dawn, rolled up their left, shattered their centre, and finally hurled them into headlong rout; maintaining the chase of them to the Shutargardan, from the summit of which he looked down on the Cabul plain, the head of his column within fifty miles of Sher Ali's capital. Wintering in the Kuram valley, the melting of the snow found him in the spring of 1879 again advanced to the Shutargardan, his little army of 5,000 men concentrated behind him ready for the forward order he was expecting, when Yakoub Khan rode down the Khyber, and signed with Cavagnari the treaty of Gundamuk which constituted the short-lived "scientific frontier." While the war was in progress, Roberts had attained the full rank of Major-General; when it ended he received the thanks of Parliament,



GENERAL LORD ROBERTS, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.I.E.

W. M. P. 200 GALLON QUE ROBERT