

How I Was Married ;

By Hurkaru.

CHAPTER IV.

I suppose all novel readers have, some time or other, been delighted with the beautiful romance of "Ivanhoe," and will remember how, when the hero Sir Willfred was in prison, the Jewish maiden stood at the casement—there were no windows in those days—and described to the impatient knight the battle which was being waged below. So in like manner, when I lay imprisoned by my wound on my couch, did my Rebecca recount the commencement of the assault on Delhi on the 14th September 1857, with the difference that no religious creed separated our affection, and that I made no pretence of preferring any prim Lady Rowena to the fair narrator, as she stood at the door of my tent and told me the thrilling tale.

"The whole forces are moving towards the city," she said, with a field glass to her eyes, "now they are spreading themselves, and I think—yes, Brigadier Wilson is going to make the attack upon the Kashmir and Lahore Gates simultaneously. The artillery has halted on a slight eminence—They are placing their guns in position—There—there—do you hear? The bombardment has begun, and oh I can see nothing for the smoke from the cannons."

"Can you make out the 167th?" I cry in a state of excitement.

The thunder of the artillery drowned her reply. Again and again the booming sounds belched forth, and I raised myself on my elbow in the vain hope of catching a glimpse of the scene. Kate turning round, quickly stepped to my side and said with pretty authority "If you do not lie still I will not tell you another word."

"Well, well, I promise," I answer falling back on my pillow. "Only let me know when you see our regiment," with an accent on the pronoun which calls forth a smile and a blush.

The cannonade continued for a considerable time, then the bugles were heard giving the orders to advance.

"Now they are going on again—the infantry at the double," remarked my historian. "And there is your—our regiment in front, nearest to the Kashmir Gate."

"Always to the fore," I murmur proudly.

"They have met the enemy—they are charging through them—but oh Dick the odds are too great! They are surrounded and cut off."

"God forbid!" I exclaim.

"Ah what a struggle! I think it must be five to one. Thank heaven you are not there dear, and yet I would like you to share the glory Dick. Oh there, there, Hodson's irregulars come crashing to the rescue! What a swoop! The mutineers give way, bravo! they turn and fly. The Kash-

mir Gate is ours! Stay, who is that who has dismounted and is placing the English colors upon the Gate? I do believe—yes it must be Mr. Churchill."

"Brave boy Archie!" I shout.

"There the flag waves, victory! victory! Merciful heavens!" screams Kate with a white face as a frightful report rends the air.

A mine has exploded at the Kashmir Gate and Archie Churchill, having planted his country's banner, falls beneath it never to rise again. I do not dispute the epithet of Horace—somewhat hackneyed yet always true—"Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori," yet it seemed hard that a noble lad so full of promise should be taken away from us so young. I recall his laughing face, his eyeless and conceited ways, but above all his dauntless courage which made me, and our brother officers, treasure his memory and feel better for having known him.

You will understand that in a short tale like the present I have given the above description of the battle in disjointed sentences.

The fight continued until sundown when we had captured the eastern portion of the city, but it was not until six days later that the whole town fell into our hands, and we finally abandoned our camp where we had been four long months. The old king of Delhi and his sons were taken prisoners, the latter being shot and the former eventually transported to Rangoon to ruminate for the remainder of his existence over his short lived power and the cruelties with which he had disgraced it.

The ladies and children were now more comfortable than they had been since the outbreak at Meerut. A garrison was established, but the cavalry troops, including my own regiment of course, departed to join General Havelock then marching upon Lucknow. My wounded leg forced me to remain behind though I looked forward to taking active service once more in about a fortnight, before the expiration of which time, however, certain news reached me that hastened forward an event which I remember always with a gratitude too deep for words and from which I date all the happiness of my subsequent life. I mean, as you will guess, my marriage.

CHAPTER V.

At the beginning of October I received a letter dated three months back which had reached me in a roundabout way and which shocked me not a little. The epistle was from our family solicitor at Chester informing me that my father and brother had both been killed in a railway accident near Conway in Wales, and that consequently I was now owner of Neston Hall. It was also pointed out to me in the usual legal phraseology, that with the exception of a jointure of five hundred pounds a year, to be settled on my wife if I married, the

estate was entailed, and that unless I had a son, it would revert to my cousin. Besides the grief for the death of my father and brother I naturally felt an anxiety inseparable from my present position, for however others might have acted, I could not leave the army during the crisis we were then passing through, and if I fell what was to become of Kate?

Pondering thus, and wondering at the strange fate which had carried off two in a land of peace, while in the midst of war I had been left, I limped across to what had been the king of Delhi's palace, where the laddies were now quartered, and sought out Miss Marsden. I found her seated with Mrs. Johnston and they both noticed that something important had happened to disturb me, so I briefly told them my news.

"Then of course you will retire and be off home as soon as possible," said Mrs. Johnston at once.

"Yes, as soon as possible," I replied, at which Kate appeared to start in a rather uncomfortable manner I thought.

"Which way will you go Captain Clevedale?" asked Mrs. Johnston. "I fear the road via Calcutta or Bombay will be equally dangerous just now."

"I intend proceeding via Lucknow, madam," I said quietly.

"Gracious goodness!—you can never be such a fool!"—began Mrs. Johnston, when Kate coming to my side and placing her arm within mine, said with a smile, which was like a light from heaven, "Captain Clevedale cannot turn his back while the enemy is in front."

"Spoken like a soldier's daughter!" I cried; "No Mrs. Johnston, I am sure you will see that wealth and broad acres must wait till I can claim them without loss of honor, and that I would rather forfeit them for ever and find my grave on India's plains, than cause one blush of shame to this brave girl."

"Oh Dick darling why did I doubt you, even for half a moment?" murmured Kate.

"For doing what is right my dear? It is not very difficult as long as I have you before me as a model," I reply, and am still of that opinion.

"I think you are a couple of nincoms," exclaimed Mrs. Johnston, "but I wish there were more of you in the world." At which I laugh first, because there are hundreds of men better than I am, and secondly, because it was impossible to suppose another woman like Kate.

"And now I have a favor to ask of you which you have already made easier for me Kate," I said...

"I am not going to stay any longer," interrupted Mrs. Johnston rising, "Captain Clevedale I beg your pardon for having called you names, and I am almost in love with you myself."

"If I were not Diogenes I would be Alexander," I replied with a bow as the lady left the room, though I do not be-