

This rank he held at the time when the Russian war broke out, and when his eastern experience pointed him out as one of those officers whose talents and energies could be turned to good account. Lord Clarendon, who at that date held the seals of the foreign office, at once selected Colonel Williams as the fittest man for the post of her Majesty's commissioner at head quarters with the Turkish forces, with the rank of a brigadier-general. His appointment was dated in July, 1854: early in the following September he reached Erzeroum, and before the close of the month proceeded onward to Kars—a city whose name he was destined to render famous through all time in the annals of English military exploits.

To use the emphatic and impressive term of Lord Granville, certain "painful events" arose in the course of the year, during which General Williams held the command of Kars, on which severe comments were passed by the daily papers and society at large. These "painful events," however, upon being thoroughly sifted, resolved themselves into one notorious fact, that although the gallant general had repeatedly sent official information to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, our ambassador at Constantinople, that the force at his disposal was too weak to be able to hold permanent possession of the place, his excellency, from private pique or personal jealousy, chose to turn a deaf ear to his requests for further supplies of men and money, and refused to send assistance until it was too late to be of any avail. But we are anticipating events.

With the assistance of Colonel Teesdale, Colonel Atwell Lake (known to the Russians as the English Todtleben), and General Kmety, General Williams was enabled to render the petty fortification of Kars almost impregnable. On September 29th, 1855, after the town had been invested for four months by Mouravieff, General Williams resolved to give his besiegers battle, and, after a sanguinary conflict of eight hours' duration, defeated a much larger force than his own, on the heights which rise above Kars. This victory at once raised General Williams into note as the "hero of Kars;" he was almost immediately afterwards gazetted a knight commander of the Bath; whilst the Sultan honored him with the rank of mushir, or full general, in the Turkish service.

Still, however, with the scanty force at his disposal, General Williams was unable to force Mouravieff to raise the siege, as he hoped to have been able to do had he been properly seconded by the haughty ambassador at Constantinople. It will be enough to state here that the siege was pressed on more closely than ever; and as week after week no reinforcements arrived, and the garrison army (for so we ought, perhaps, to call it), began to die from hunger. At length, on the 14th November, the gallant defenders of Kars were forced to capitulate and surrender their swords to General Mouravieff as prisoners of war, Lord Stratford thus