

required the assistance of their companions to save them from drowning. Others, hurt by shots or blows in the confused mêlée, implored help or threatened vengeance, and in one or two instances such accidents led to actual strife. The trumpets, therefore, sounded⁵ the retreat, announcing that the commanding officer, with whatsoever unwillingness, had for the present relinquished hopes of the important prize which had thus unexpectedly escaped his grasp, and the troop-¹⁰ers began slowly, reluctantly, and brawling with each other as they returned, again to assume their ranks. I could see them darkening as they formed on the southern bank of the river, whose murmurs, long drowned by the louder cries of vengeful pursuit, were now heard hoarsely mingling with the deep, discontented, and¹⁵ reproachful voices of the disappointed horsemen.

—SIR WALTER SCOTT, [1771-1822].

THE FUNERAL OF GORDON

From *With Kitchener to Khartum*¹

The steamers—screws, paddles, stern-wheelers—plug-plugged their steady way up the full Nile. Past

¹In 1879 at the request of the Khedive, England and France undertook to control the finances of Egypt, which was threatened with national bankruptcy. This Anglo-French interference was the signal for a rebellion, led by Arabi Pasha, the Egyptian minister of finance. The rebels were, however, finally defeated by Lord Wolseley at Tel-el-Kebir in 1882. In order to safeguard her interests in the Suez Canal England now undertook a military protectorate of Egypt, and in consequence became involved in fresh difficulties. In 1883 a Mohammedan leader appeared in the Soudan, proclaiming himself El Mahdi, the Mohammedan Messiah. He was generally victorious, and in a short time the Egyptian garrisons in the Soudan were threatened. General Gordon was sent by the British government to effect the withdrawal of these troops, but in the meantime the Egyptian army under Hicks Pasha was cut to pieces and Gordon was besieged in