

"THE BRAVEST DEED I EVER SAW."

ARCHIBALD FORBES writes in Pearson's Weekly of the bravest deed ever done. Colonel (now General Sir) Redvers Buller had been ordered to make a reconnaissance before Cetewayo's kraal of Ulundi. Beresford led the advance, Buller bringing on the main body. Beresford, on his smart chestnut, with the white ticks on withers and flanks, was the foremost rider of the force. The Zulu chief bringing up the rear of the fugitive suddenly turned on the lone horseman who had so outridden his followers. A big man, even for a Zulu, the ring round his head proved him a veteran. The muscles rippled on his shoulders as he compacted himself behind his cowhide shield, marking his distance for the thrust of the gleaming assegai. It flashed out like the head of a cobra as it strikes; Beresford's cavalry sabre clashed with it; the spear head was dashed aside; the horseman gave point with all the vigor of his arm and the impetus of his galloping horse, and lo! in the twinkling of an eye, the sword point was through the shield, and half its length buried in the Zulu's broad chest. The gallant induna was a dead man, and his assegai stands now in a corner of Beresford's mother's drawing room. The flight of the groups of Zulus was a calculated snare; the fugitives in front of the irregulars were simply a decoy. Suddenly from out a deep watercourse crossing the plain, and from out the adjacent long grass, sprang up a long line of several thousand armed Zulus. At Buller's loud command to fire a volley and then retire, Beresford and his scouts rode back towards the main body, followed by Zulu bullets. Two men were killed on the spot. A third man's horse slipped up, and his wounded rider came to the ground, the horse running away. Beresford, riding behind his retreating party, looked back and saw that the fallen man was trying to rise into a sitting posture. The Zulus, darting out in haste, were perilously close to the poor fellow, but Beresford, measuring distance with the eye, saw a chance of anticipating them. Galloping back to the wounded man, and dismounting, he confronted his adversaries with his revolver, while urging the soldier to get on his horse. The wounded man bade Beresford remount and fly. Why, said he, should two die, when death was inevitable but to one? The quaint, resourceful humor of his race did not fail Beresford in this crisis; he turned on the wounded man and swore with clinched fist that he would punch his head if he did not assist in the saving of his life. This droll argument prevailed. Still facing his foes with his revolver, Beresford partly lifted,

partly hustled, the man into the saddle, then scrambled up himself and set the chestnut agoing after the other horsemen; another moment's delay and both must have been assegaied. A comrade fortunately came back, shot down Zulu after Zulu with cool courage, and then aided Beresford in keeping the wounded man in the saddle till the laager was reached, where no one could tell whether it was the rescuer or rescued who was the wounded man, so smeared was Beresford with borrowed blood. Going into Beresford's tent the same afternoon, I found him sound asleep, and roused him with the information, which Col. Wood had given me, that he was to be recommended for the Victoria Cross. "Get along wid your nonsense, ye spalpeen!" was his yawning retort, as he threw a boot at me, and then turned over and went to sleep again.

THE BRITISH SERGEANT.

THE special correspondent of The Times with the Soudan expeditionary force, pays the following well-deserved tribute to the patience and efficiency and high-mindedness of British non-commissioned officers: "There is yet one other Englishman now in Korosko, a sergeant in the Gloucestershire regiment, who has been sent up here as drill-instructor. He is, by the way, possibly the best boxer in Egypt, and has taken it upon himself to impart the noble art of self-defence to the Egyptian soldiers in their leisure moments. A good many British sergeants are now attached to the Egyptian army as instructors, and one comes across them at nearly every military station. They make their influence felt in a remarkable way, and leaven the native battalions with their own soldierly qualities. They often acquire the language with an astonishing facility. One day at Wady Halfa I watched for some time one of these sergeants, who had been only a few months in the country, as he put through their facings his awkward squad of blacks—savages many of them, of low intelligence, speaking various uncouth dialects of the Soudan; and yet there was this young Englishman contriving in some wonderful way to drive into their dull brains a comprehension of what he required of them and obtaining marvellous results in a very short time. There he is employed for six hours daily, carefully explaining, and vigorously abusing, too, when necessary, in his freshly-acquired Arabic, while giving the orders in Turkish, as is the rule in the Egyptian army, a concession to the fiction that Turkey can still call upon the Egyptian troops to fight her battles. These British sergeants appear to understand the men, are in touch with them,

are patient with the clumsy, but willing recruits, and quite appreciate the many good qualities and the soldierly spirit of the Soudanese blacks. One realises here of what excellent stuff the British non-commissioned officer is made, quickly adapting himself to strange conditions, intelligently grasping his duty, and making himself respected by the natives."

VOLUNTEER PIGEON POST ASSOCIATION.

AN effort has been made to establish a British Volunteer Pigeon Post Association, and the correspondence which has passed between one of the originators of the movement and the War Office officials has recently been published. As set forth in a circular issued, the aims and objects of the British Volunteer Pigeon Post Association will be to encourage and foster in every way practicable the utilization of the people's homing pigeons, in arrangements connected with the national defence of the British Empire; to collect and supply all necessary information to the military and naval authorities; and to keep in close touch with the volunteer forces; and to co-operate with all societies, clubs, and individuals willing to place homers at the disposal of the authorities; in maintaining and keeping up to date the registration of such owners; the number of birds and their markings; to move Parliament to extend the necessary protection to such a useful class of bird as the pigeon against wanton and mischievous shooting at, killing, damaging, or decoying in any way by our own people, where their thoughtlessness and indiscretion exceed their patriotism.

A communication forwarded with the authority of the Secretary of State for War, stated that "The Marquis of Lansdowne sees no objection to experiments as suggested in your letter under reply being carried out at places where suitable terms can be arranged. With regard to the last paragraph of your letter, Lord Lansdowne is not prepared to issue any instructions on the subject of pigeon flying to officers commanding volunteer corps, as he is of opinion that any experiments which may be carried out by them in connection with societies, clubs, or individuals should be left entirely to their discretion. In conclusion, I am to suggest that in Lord Lansdowne's opinion the best practical results from a military point of view, would be obtained by flying the pigeons from ships in the Channel or in the North Sea to the shore; and I am to state that should any such experiments be carried out his lordship would receive with much interest a report upon the results obtained from them."—The Volunteer Service Magazine.