
FACT AND FICTION

"The General has just told us that peace is practically settled. If this proves true, you will not get another letter from me. I presume we shall be sent home directly, and I shall make straight for London and Mount Street, where I expect I shall find you. Dear old chap, I can guess what you have been going through; but it looks as if we should meet again in this world after all."

What this letter meant to Philip Vaughan they only know who have been through a similar experience; and words are powerless to express it.

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After the first bewilderment of joy had subsided, Philip began to study the practical bearings of the letter. By a comparison of the date within and the post-mark outside, the letter appeared to have been a long time on the way, and another delay had occurred since it had arrived at Mount Street. It was possible that peace might have been actually concluded. News in those days took long to travel through Scottish glens, and Vaughan had never looked at a paper since he left England. It was conceivable that the Guards were already on their homeward voyage—nay, it might even be that they were just arriving, or had arrived, in London. The one clear point was that Vaughan must get home. Twenty miles on his landlord's pony brought him to a telegraph-office, whence he telegraphed to his servant, "Returning immediately," and then, setting his face southward, he travelled as fast as steamers and express trains would take him. As he travelled, he picked up the news. Peace had been concluded on the 30th