

"As a ruler the Khalifa finished when he rode out of Omdurman. His own pampered Baggara horsemen killed his herdsmen and looted the cattle that were to feed them. Somebody betrayed the position of the reserve camels . . . His followers took to killing one another. . . . The whole population of the Khalifa's capital was now racing to pilfer the Khalifa's grain . . . Wonderful workings of the savage mind! Six hours before they were dying in regiments for their master; now they were looting his corn. Six hours before they were slashing our wounded to pieces; now they were asking us for coppers."

This difficulty with the soldier's psychology is not special to Dervishes or to savages.*

To do the soldiers justice, they very rarely raise this plea of war being a moral training-school. "War itself," said on one occasion an officer, "is an infernally dirty business. But somebody has got to do the dirty work of the world, and I am glad to think that it is the

* I have so far departed here from the rule to leave these chapters exactly as they appeared before the war as to cut out from the stereotyped plates of "The Great Illusion" at this point two somewhat long quotations from Captain March Phillips's book, "With Remington" (Methuen, pp. 255-6), dealing with the character of the British soldier. Their nett purpose is to show that "soldiers as a class are men who have disregarded the civil standard of morality altogether. They simply ignore it," and to justify in the soldier what no one would think of justifying in the civilian. These passages were cited simply as the evidence of a competent witness, and I did not necessarily associate myself with them. But they seem to have given immense offence to certain officer-readers, who have urged that, as they constitute a gross slander on the British soldier, they should at the earliest opportunity be deleted. In order not to become, even in the presentation of evidence, the vehicle of such slander, I have decided, with, I confess, very grave misgiving, to leave them out. The determining consideration in so doing is perhaps that Captain March Phillips wrote of the British soldier in the South African War, and that there is evidence to suggest that his characterization is out of date.