

The first man killed near my young friend gave him a little shock; it was a nasty sight, but did not strike him as much more horrible than the noise made by the butcher's poleax the first time he had seen a bullock slaughtered for food. This surprised him beyond measure, for he thought he had a very tender heart; he did not appreciate, however, the force of the excitement which fighting for the first time with his life in his hand arouses even in the man who does not know what nerves are.

To-morrow it would be the turn of another regiment to be in front, and the operations might be ended without having an opportunity of testing his nerve. He felt that nothing could make him run away, but could it be possible that he was by nature a coward?

Soon after the forces had halted for the night, the opportunity he longed for presented itself, and he sneaked away from his comrades unobserved to avail himself of it. As soon as the carts carrying the bridge equipment came up, the engineers began to construct rafts for use next morning. The enemy soon found this out, and opened a brisk fire upon the spot. There my young friend went to test the fibre of his nerve, and he realized the sensation of being shot at.

He rejoined his comrades after a short absence, furious with himself and with the soldiers he had found there. This was the cause. He had established himself in the zone of the enemy's fire, and was so absorbed in his own sensations whilst he thus, as it were, felt his own pulse, that he failed to notice some rocket tubes which the artillery brought into position close to where he stood. His mind was engrossed with stories he had heard and read of what men feel under similar circumstances, when he was suddenly roused from his self-examination in a very undignified fashion.

Whizz! bang! went a rocket rushing from its tube with all that horrible spluttering, fizzing, hissing noise which is one of its special and peculiar terrors. Its long, screeching roar spread panic among a large number of waggon bullocks standing close by, who, with heads down and tails up, charged straight down for where my friend stood.

He was just able to escape by rushing behind some waggons where there happened to be a guard mostly composed of old soldiers. One of these bronzed and decorated warriors seeing a stripling bolt in among them, and ignorant of the cause, said, in a comforting, fatherly tone, "Never mind, sir; don't be afraid. You'll soon become accustomed to it."

The young officer, furious, pointed to the passing bullocks, and, I am afraid, used strong language to little purpose. He rejoined his bivouac abashed, possibly a wiser but certainly a more irritable man than he had quitted it. For days he brooded over the horrible thought that any private soldier should conceive he feared anybody or anything. Nor was it until about a fortnight afterward, when he took part in the two storming parties in one day, that he again felt quite satisfied with himself, or could forgive the old soldier, whose kindly meant words made him wince as if tortured by the thumb-screw.

When, shortly afterward, as I sat beside him, I saw his natural strength and his youth fight as it were, with death for his wounded body, he told me that of all the earthly delights he could imagine, all seemed tame in comparison with the ecstasy of charging at the head of a storming party.

Almost all those who composed the storming party which took the enemy's last position, were, like himself, undrilled, untrained recruits. He had forgotten his adventure with the bullocks, for he said with pride that some of the regiment who had so offended him upon that occasion had just been to ask about his wound.

One of the very pluckiest private soldiers I ever knew was my young servant in the Crimea. The day before Sebastopol fell, he came to my bedside in the hospital, where I was at the time, to ask leave to join his battalion. He had heard it was to be one of the two to lead the assault, and he said he could never in after life look any soldier in the face if he stayed in the rear. My heart went out to him as I told him to do as he wished.

Two years afterward we were again hard at work in the field, fighting our way into Lucknow against great odds. Whenever there was any difficult or dangerous duty to be performed, young Andrews—his name deserves to be recorded—was always the first to spring forward. The example he set of daring courage was invaluable in a company composed of very young soldiers. In all trying moments he was close behind his captain.

In the final assault that opened out communication with our besieged garrison, he was very severely wounded. Anxious to show the way to some men coming up with tools to break into the palace, he ran into a street swept by canister and by musketry fire.

He was at once shot down, and while in the arms of an officer who was taking him under cover, a second bullet, fired from a neighbouring loophole, went through poor Andrew's body.

He lived for many years, always in more or less pain from this last wound, which never healed completely, and which eventually killed him. He was a cockney, with the most amiable disposition.

His was a lion's heart, and he possessed in a curious degree all the fighting instincts of the bull dog. He was many times offered promotion, but, like many I have known, he preferred the freedom and irresponsibility of the simple sentinel. Peace to his ashes! If such heroes—the nobility of nature—have some splendid heaven of their own, he will there hold high rank, for no braver private soldier ever wore the Queen's uniform.

To illustrate the conduct of young men in action, I venture to pursue for a little longer the events which occurred after Andrews fell.

On that day every sort and condition of soldier fought as though he had been born an English gentleman. All knew well for what they were fighting; that within Lucknow a handful of gallant comrades, hard pressed for food, and by crowds of relentless enemies, were struggling with might and main to protect the lives of the many British families besieged there.

Sir Colin Campbell intended the companies that had stormed the "Mess House" to remain there for further orders. But the men were firmly impressed with the idea that this arrangement was made to favour a battalion of Highlanders that followed us. It was believed he desired his own countrymen to have the honour of actually opening out communication with the garrison fields.

The jealousy of Highland regiments was great wherever old Colin Campbell himself commanded, but at Lucknow the young soldiers who took the "Mess House" were determined, come what may, that no Highlander should that day get in front of them. Hence much of the haste and of the determined energy—brooking no delay and bearing down all obstacles—that was displayed by our leading companies. Refusing to stop, they pushed forward, resolved to be the first to join hands with their besieged comrades.

A rush was made for the great gate of the palace that seemed to separate us from our object.

Horror of horrors! It was built up with a great brick wall, and from the loopholes the enemy greeted us with a volley of musketry.

What was to be done? To get over a wall fifteen to eighteen feet high was impossible. We had no ladders, nor had we any powder-bags to blow it down. To remain in front of the gate was to be shot from within. Fortunately there was no ditch, so we could reach the loopholes.

Who were to hold them? The sepoys inside or the British soldiers outside? We decided the question in our own favour, but many fell before that decision was given effect to.

A rattling fire was kept up through the loopholes to clear the gateway inside, while our men worked like demons to break a hole through the wall. The captain in command went forward to search for an entrance he had been told of, but soon returned, having found it also built up.

I have heard him describe what he saw on re-joining his men. Every loophole double manned, and a heavy fire kept up through them, whilst crowbar and picks were plied by the strongest to widen the hole already made through the wall.

My friend said that what first attracted his notice as he hurried up were the soles of his young subaltern's boots as he struggled through the hole head foremost. "That," said he, "was the most daring act I have ever seen man do."

The enemy swarmed inside, and it has always been inexplicable to me how this young soldier did not have his head cut off the moment he pushed it inside the wall.

The hole was soon wide enough for others to follow, and so the palace and its spacious courtyards were quickly cleared of the enemy, a certain number of whom escaped by swimming the river under a heavy fire. It was not long before we joined hands with our besieged comrades, who made a sortie to meet us. While a desultory fire was maintained round the position, the memorable meeting between the two Generals, Lord Clyde and Sir Henry Havelock, took place in the courtyard of the palace that was taken as I have endeavoured to describe.—[GENERAL VISCOUNT WOLSELEY.]



It requires but little faith for a man to believe he is made of the dust after he had asked for credit and found that his name is mud.

A newspaper story is called: "The Head of Bacchus." Bacchus is responsible for many big heads and this may be one of them.

This was the answer given by Foote to a dissipated duke who asked him in what new character he should go to a masquerade; "Go sober."

A boy's description of having a tooth pulled expresses it about as near as anything we have seen: "Just before it killed me the tooth came out."

She (examining illustrations in Milton's "Paradise Lost"): "His satanic majesty looks thin. What do you suppose he lives on?" He, (grimly): "Fried soles."

It is said that a Minneapolis man who attempted to commit suicide the other day by taking poison, was saved by the active and indefatigable exertions of four directory canvassers.

Old benevolent gentleman (to little boy whom he has met on the beach): "What will you do, my little man, if I give you my blessing and a kiss?" Little boy: "I'll smash you in the snoot."

Jenkins, writing to thank his aunt for a large goose she had sent him for his Xmas dinner, says: "You could not have sent me a more acceptable present, or one that would have reminded me of you more pleasantly."

When on his death-bed in Bermuda, a caller said: "What a nice place for rest and change?" "Y-y-es," said Travers, "th-the waiters g-g-get the ch-change and the h-h-hotel k-k-k-keepers g-g-get the r-r-rest."

A tourist, who said to an idle Skyman: "Why do you lie there all day with your hands in your pockets," must have been taken back by the cool reply; "Cause she hasna been far enough south to learn to put them in other peoples."

A man about town said to a young lady: "No, I am not exactly engaged, but I have the refusal of two or three girls." He undoubtedly deserved the crushing rejoinder: "I suppose you mean you have asked them and they have said 'No.'"

An enviable quickness of repartee was shown by a French actor when the head of a goose was thrown upon the stage. Advancing to the footlights, he said, "Gentlemen, if any one among you has lost his head, I shall be glad to restore it at the conclusion of the piece."

Blood will tell: Lady (as a blood-curdling war-whoop is heard from the kitchen): "What is happening, Walters?" Maid: "That is Dinah. She always yells that way, ma'am, when she succeeds in turning the omelette without letting it drop on the floor. She's the daughter of a Zulu chief."

Mrs. Guzzler (who holds the purse-strings): "Do you mean to tell me you were not drunk last night, Guzzler?" Major Guzzler: "Well, perhaps I was loaded, my dear." Mrs. Guzzler: "I should say so. Now remember, Guzzler, the next time you come home loaded you are going to be fired."

A little dot of a girl asked her mother the meaning of transatlantic, and was told: "Across the Atlantic." "Does trans always mean cross, mama?" she then asked. "Yes," replied the mother, "but don't bother me any more." "Then I guess transparent means a cross parent," was the conclusion the unconscious little humourist came to as she lapsed into silence.