

CHAPTER XLV

THE LIFE OF A SPY

I AM sure my readers would wish to hear what became of the gallant Tandura. Some weeks later we learned that messages were being received from him, which was a great relief, for it had seemed almost certain that that dark moment when he was launched into the air was his last. The rest of his story he related when the War was over. "I seemed to sleep," he said, "as I rose to a height of 10,000 feet"—I think this is rather higher than we went—"and when I least expected it I suddenly found myself thrown into the void. Then I had the impression of being uplifted. I raised my eyes and I saw that the parachute was open; I screwed up my courage to look below and could perceive country roads I knew well. I raised my eyes again and waited. A sudden blow in the chest apprised me that I was landed, my feet in the air. I had been thrown from a height of 500 metres and had fallen on a vine. In the meantime it was raining very hard." It took Tandura two hours, so he said, to recover from his stunning and to bury his parachute and his officer's uniform. Then he put on peasants' clothes and, with his knapsack on his back, ready for any surprise, determined to clear off as