

It was one of those acts of audacity which were not uncommon in his remarkable career; but from which he always managed to extricate himself unharmed. In China he once accidentally, during the capture of a city, found himself in the midst of the rebel soldiers, amongst whom he was forced to spend a most anxious and uncomfortable night. Fortunately, they refrained from hurting him, and he subsequently persuaded them to let him go.

A similar danger happened to him not long since in the Cape Colony, when Mr. Sauer, the Secretary for Native Affairs, induced him to go on a friendly mission to the Basuto Chief Masupha. While he was there, alone and unarmed, as a messenger of peace, the Government induced another Basuto chieftain to attack Masupha. Gordon's marvellous power of inspiring savages with confidence in his perfect integrity once more saved his life, as Masupha, seeing clearly how completely his guest was ignorant of these tactics, allowed him to go in peace.

The great feature in Gordon's character is his sublime faith, which seems to interpenetrate his whole being, and is able to "remove mountains." The "Hill Difficulty" was ever swallowed up in the boundless sea of his unflinching faith; and danger fled away before the steady gaze of the calm, silent, benignant English Pasha, who swept across the solitary desert on his swift-footed dromedary. This strong faith enabled him to ride single-handed into the camp of the insurgent Slave-dealer and order him to give in his submission.

That Colonel Gordon had no easy time of it in the Soudan may be evident from the quotations already made from his voluminous letters. The following extract under date October, 1877, shows that the officials not only feared but respected him.

"Your brother is much feared and, I think, respected; but not overmuch liked. His refusals are definitive and very strongly couched. 'Never!' is the answer to many requests shouted with a loud voice, and followed with 'Do you understand?' and, 'Have you finished?' Pashas are threatened that if they do not move swiftly I will come after them myself. I pursued one all the way from Dara, and he barely got out of Khartoum in time. He halted at five days distance, thinking the pursuit at an end; but I gave him a telegram, and started him again. . . . Every one wants money, and we have it not.

"The people in the Soudan tremble before your brother. . . . Sometimes I take my watch and say, 'Now you may talk for an hour.' They do talk for a long time; then I say, 'Have you finished?' They begin again. At last, worn out (for I gave them no answer till they say they have finished), I say 'I will not hear of it.' Then they begin again; and when they own to having finished, I give them the same answer. They then give up and go away."