



QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
JOURNAL

VOL. XXXVIII.

NOVEMBER 16th, 1910.

No. 5.

Campaigning in Scotland.

"Old unhappy far-off things
And battles long ago."

THERE was once a little war in Scotland which has, so far, found no historian or *sacer rates*; and until now the world has never known the secret history of its critical moment. As the only captive in that war, and the only man who saw both sides, I wish to set the facts down plainly for the benefit of future generations.

We had advanced some seventy miles from Glasgow, a little army twenty strong (including a Hindu, who found the Scottish roads and climate too robust) and had effected a junction with the main Edinburgh force in the face of an enemy of unknown strength and composition. Our transport motor had broken down some half-dozen times; thirty hours cold rain had damped our equipment, if not our spirits; we had lost twelve hours invaluable time, but we were still resolute to push the unknown enemy from our front. It was Sunday, but persistent rumours kept us busy, and by noon the Edinburgh O. C. had become convinced that the enemy would attack our force that night.

As a first precaution he sent me with my men to a rising ground some two miles in advance of the main position, and there, dinnerless and rather disconsolate, we fortified ourselves, arranged an outlying piquet, and awaited events. In front lay a country, pastoral in the foreground but leading on to some hills, through which a highland stream cut a deep glen, its sides thick with bush and scrub, and with a good marching road along the river-bank. As evening fell the possibilities of this region as a lurking ground for our foes suggested a thorough search; and as my men were all required to guard the position, I borrowed a Lee-Enfield, took a pouch-full of cartridges (blank), left a subordinate in charge, and, contrary to ordinary usage, went a-scouting.

My first few miles were through an open country and as there was still a little light, I advanced slowly under cover of hedges and walls. I finally halted for an hour, near a farm where a good Samaritan gave me my first square meal that day, and was willing to let virtue be its own reward. When darkness fell, I pushed on, only to find an obstacle in front of me. I wished to push due north to an inn, where as military men are proverbially convivial, I hoped to find the enemy carousing. If it were empty, I would then turn east, sweep across the front of my position, inspect an old castle, and return. But right in front of me was a river with precipitous banks, swinging me off to the west whether I had no desire to go, and apparently too swift to permit me to ford it. There was