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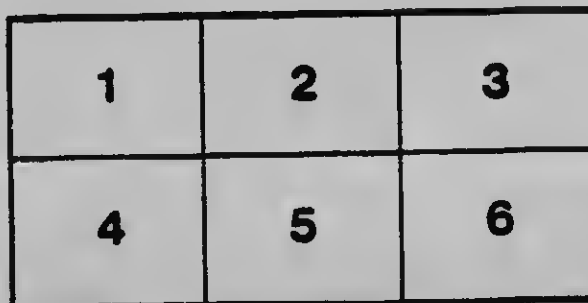
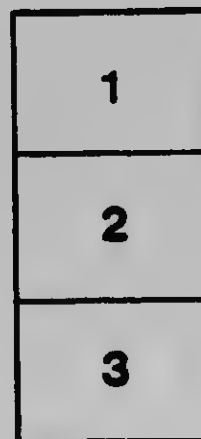
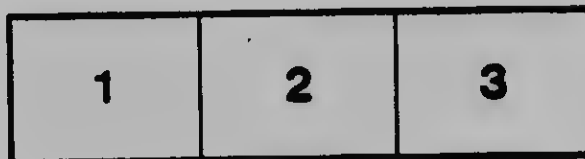
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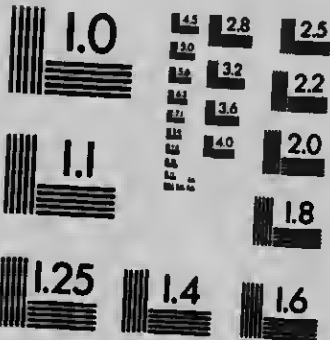
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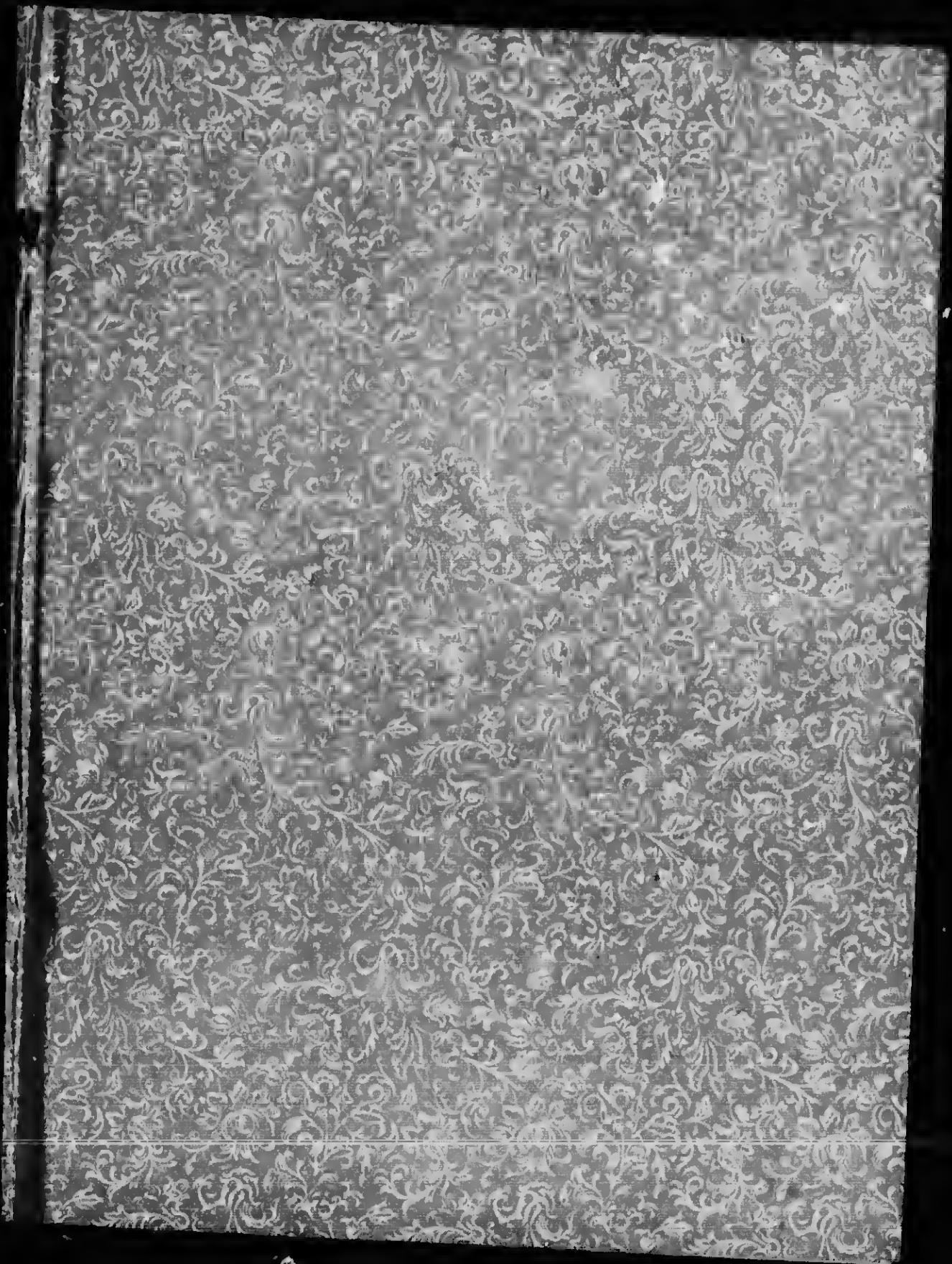
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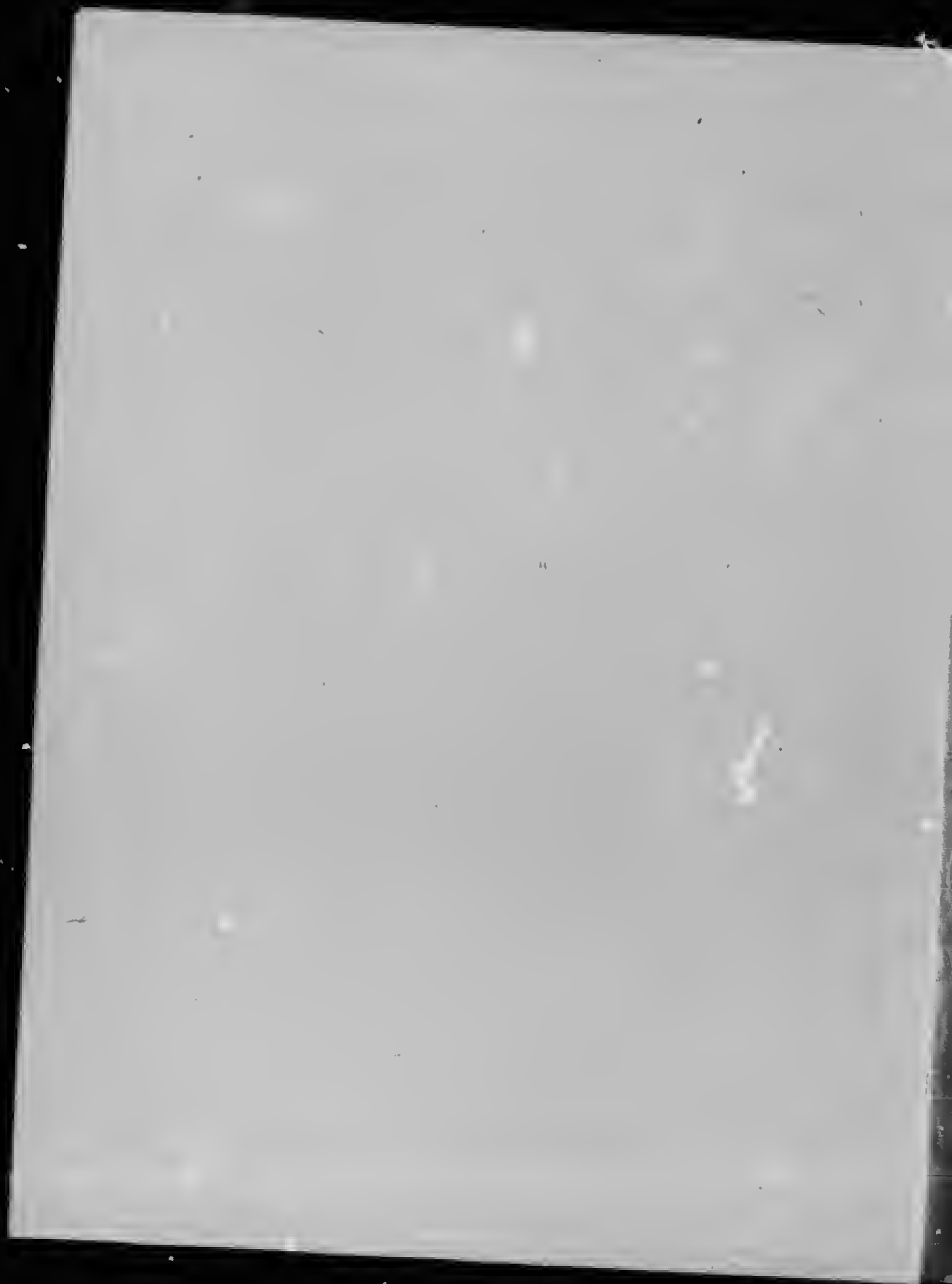


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EARL ROBERTS, V.C.

# Earl Roberts, V.C.,

From Cadet to Commander-in-Chief.



EARLY LIFE OF A GREAT SOLDIER; TRAINING IN INDIA;  
EXPERIENCES IN INDIAN MUTINY; THE UMBEYLA EX-  
PEDITION; THE ABYSSINIAN EXPEDITION; INTO THE  
LAND OF THE LUSHAIS; LEADING THE KURAM FIELD  
FORCE TO VICTORY; THE TREATY OF GANDAMAK;  
FIGHTING HIS WAY TO KABUL; THE MARCH TO  
KANDAHAR; HONORED IN ENGLAND; A "WILD-GOOSE  
CHASE" TO SOUTH AFRICA; COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN  
INDIA; APPOINTED FIELD MARSHAL; THE GREAT BOER  
WAR; COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE BRITISH ARMY;  
EARL ROBERTS. : : : : : : : : : : :

-By-

**T. G. Marquis, B. H.**

Author of "STORIES OF NEW FRANCE;" "STORIES FROM CANADIAN HISTORY;"  
"MARGUERITE DE ROBERVAL;" "CANADA'S SONS ON KOPJE AND VELDT;"

With Personal Reminiscences of Earl Roberts

-By-

**Frederick Hamilton, M. H.,**

War correspondent in the Great Boer War for The Toronto Globe.

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HER MAJESTY THE LATE QUEEN AND EMPRESS



H. R. H. THE PRINCE CONSORT



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KING EDWARD VII.

## PREFACE.

CARLYLE in the opening lecture of his inspiring book, "Heroes and Hero-Worship," remarks that, "Great Men, taken up in any way, are profitable company. We cannot look, however imperfectly, upon a great man, without gaining something by him. He is the living life-fountain, which it is good and pleasant to be near."

After a careful study of the life of Earl Roberts and the conflicts through which he has passed; after living with him in imagination through his long military career; after seeing him in school, in the mess, in camp, on the battlefield, and in the council chambers of the Empire, I have been led to the conclusion that he is one of the truly great men of the world, one who is a living life-fountain, one who would be profitable company for the young man beginning his fight of life, for the mature man in the heat of the noonday struggle, for the old man, who, if he be not successful himself, can still rejoice in the achievements of those who began the race with him. It is with this feeling, a feeling akin to hero-worship, that this Life has been written.

Tennyson in his magnificent "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington" wrote:

"Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,  
As fits an universal woe,  
Let the long, long procession go,  
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,  
And let the mournful martial music blow;  
The last great Englishman is low."

In that death hour he seemed the last; but in many ways Roberts is worthy of a place side by side in men's memories with the Iron Duke. He has not the intellectual force of his great predecessor; he could never have been the power in the governing body of the nation that Wellington was;

but in the army to which he has consecrated his life he has proved himself in many respects as great a general.

It would be a difficult matter to compare their careers, as they operated on entirely different fields and under vastly different circumstances. It is true Wellington gained great renown in India, but when he crushed the Indian hordes, he found them much as Miltiades and Themistocles found the Persians—a vast body of cowardly, raw, undisciplined soldiers; whereas when Roberts operated in Afghanistan his military career as a general begins with his Afghan campaign) he found opposed to him numerically a vastly superior force, well-generalled, armed with modern artillery and modern rifles which they knew how to use, and with the added advantage of fighting behind almost impregnable hills. But a comparison of their fields of operation would add lustre to or detract from neither general. It is sufficient for their renown that throughout their careers they have known, in whatever work they undertook, only ultimate success.

There is, however, one direction in which Roberts has surpassed all previous generals. Others have inspired as great confidence, others have filled their soldiers with greater awe, but no English general has been as universally loved by his men as the present Commander-in-Chief of the British forces. And he has deserved this love. From the moment he landed in India he has ever been solicitous of the comfort and happiness of the men under his command. Indeed the hardy drivers and gunners, young giants, seem ever to have filled him with admiration. In some respects he felt them a superior race to himself. Splendid animals they; and it has ever been his care to make easier their necessarily hard lives, and by his influence to ennoble them; and very largely due to his thoughtfulness and watchfulness in the last forty years the service in India has become a comparatively pleasant one. So unostentatious have been his reforms that the men have accepted them without a murmur; indeed his work of reform in the interests of the rank and file of the army has only increased the respect in which he is held.

I cannot help feeling that a grave injury was done Roberts in the public eye when Kipling published his poem "Bobs." No doubt the Tommy in

his barrack-room has his rollicking moments when he will reel off verses in enthusiastic humour on all of his commanders, but for the world to have held up to it a picture of the first soldier of the time as a "Little red-faced man called Bobs," belittles the man it is intended to laud. The personal appearance of a man should not be too much in evidence; the will of the hero, the will that has repeatedly redeemed England's honor in dark hours should alone be in evidence. The Roberts that marched first on Kabul and then on Kandahar; the Roberts that swept the Orange Free State and the Transvaal with his triumphant river of men is not the "Bobs" of Kipling, but a stern fighting giant, capable of willing and doing the greatest of tasks, of allowing nothing to stand in the way of his end, and even his loved soldiers he would sacrifice by the hundred to gain his goal. While Kipling's poem lives the heroic Roberts will never have his proper place in the minds of the public. He will ever be a genial, jovial individual fighter, but among his peers, Wellington and Nelson and Marlborough, he will not stand.

It is impossible to think of Roberts without calling to mind the first great picture of a modern English Knight we have drawn for us. Geoffrey Chaucer in his Prologue to the "Canterbury Tales" has given us in a rapid sketch the character of a man that serves not for one, but for all time as the ideal English soldier. In the latter part of the last century this type was reproduced with great fidelity in Gordon and Roberts, as it had been in the earlier part in Havelock and John Nicholson.

"A knight ther was, and that a worthy man,  
 That from the tyme that he first bigan  
 To ryden out, he loved chyvalrie,  
 Trouthe and honour, fredom and curtesie,  
 Ful worthi was he in his lordes werre,  
 And thereto hadde he ridden, noman ferre,  
 As wel in Cristendom as in Hethenesse,  
 And evere honoured for hie worthinesse  
 And though that he wss worthy, he was wys,  
 And of hie port as meek as is a mayde.  
 He never yit no vilonye ne sayde  
 In al is his lyf, unto no maner wight.  
 He was a verray perfight gentil knight."

It is only necessary to read Roberts' autobiography "Forty-One Years in India" to realize what a perfect, gentle knight the great Commander-in-Chief of the British forces is and has ever been. Kindly, humane, heroic, religious; his view of life is almost too serious. The book is entertaining solely on account of its noble contents and its nobly simple style. If Kipling's poem were taken as a standard by which to judge the man, an utterly false conception would be formed. Earl Roberts as we have him in this book, as a soldier and as an administrator, has proved himself a man of epic proportions, a worthy successor of Wellington and Lord Clyde.

His task in India was a difficult one, his work in South Africa was done with a celerity and thoroughness that astonished the world; but he has now before him in a way, the heaviest work of his life. The War Office has proved itself effete. It has to be renovated root and branch: and already in the few brief months in which he has held power, he has made some radical and far-reaching changes.

To few men have such opportunities of doing great deeds for their country been given; and none among the many workers for the Empire have done their work better. Since he landed in India in 1852 till he took charge of the War Office in 1901 he has never failed to answer the call of duty, and truth has been the lodestar of his life.

T. G. MARQUIS.



## CHAPTER I.

### ROBERTS' EARLY YEARS.

*The Year 1832 a Year of Peace—Reforms in England and in India—Abraham Roberts' Work in India—Frederick Sleigh Roberts Born at Cawnpore—His Father's Experience on the Afghan Frontier of Great Benefit to Him—His Mother Likewise of Military Stock—Roberts a Delicate Child—Boyhood Years Spent in England—At Eton College—Selects His Father's Profession—Preparing for Service in India—An Indomitable Will—En Route for India—The Wonderful Progress Made in the Last Fifty Years—Roberts' Prominent Part in the Development of the British Empire.*

**T**HE year 1832 was in many respects the most important of the last century. In it the Reform Bill, which was to change the entire complexion of the English Parliament and give the people, for the first time, the government of the country, was passed. That it was possible to force this measure through both Commons and Lords was due very largely to the fact that England was at peace with the world, and the people freed from foreign enemies, had time and opportunity to consider their home grievances, and to compel the redress of these grievances. In this time of calm even distant India shared, and excepting for an occasional punitive expedition against the fierce robber hands of the hills on the northern frontier, peace reigned supreme throughout the length and breadth of the British possessions in the east.

It was in this year, when, so far as the British were concerned,

“No war or hattle's sound  
Was heard the world around,”

that Frederick Sleigh Roberts was born.

The peculiar life of the Nineteenth Century for England dates from 1832 and the passing of the Reform Bill; and the military history of England since the Crimea is but the history of the great soldier who, in the closing

years of the century, was fitly appointed Commander-in-Chief of the British forces.

If the year of his birth was a time of reform in England, it was equally a period of reform in India. Lord William Bentinck had been appointed Governor-General in 1828, and till 1835 the settled peace along the Ganges, and as far north as the Afghau Mountains, gave him an opportunity of reconstructing India. Among other reforms he remodelled the judicial system; put down the Thugs, that wide organization of murderers and robbers, and succeeded in abolishing the rite of Suttee, by which widows were burned with the dead bodies of their husbands. In this period of reform one of his wisest and bravest officers was Ahraham Roberts, father of Frederick Slelgh Roberts.

In 1832 Ahraham Roberts and his wife were residing in Cawnpore, and it was in this city, afterwards so celebrated for the tragedies enacted in it and the heroism of the English troops defending it, that the subject of this story was born.

The town of Cawnpore was in the early part of this century one of the most important military stations in India. Situated on the banks of the Ganges about 1000 miles from its mouth, it served as a kind of half-way house between the eastern coast and the northern frontier of India. It was then, as it is to-day, a narrow town extending for miles along the sluggish river, presenting, especially to the eye of one accustomed to western cities, a most picturesque appearance. Here and there were Hindoo temples, crowned with mitre-shaped domes, broad-built mosques, magnificent white residences of wealthy natives, ghauts, and the cool hungalows of the European sojourners in the east; and the eye, as it gazed on these fine specimens of eastern architecture was ever relieved by the restful groves that grew in great magnificence about the more important buildings.

This is Cawnpore as viewed from the river; but behind the narrow fringe of dwellings that skirted the Ganges for six miles was a very different town. Here was a wide wilderness of huts of unbaked mud, among which at rare intervals, "like oases in the desert," stood out substantial houses surrounded by pleasant gardens. The cantonments, however, are of the

greatest interest to the English student of East India history. Here the small British army had its abode, and the soldiers for the most part droned away their existence in the feverish climate of India doing police duty over the surrounding districts. It was in these cantonments on the boundary line between the East India Company on the western bank of the river, and the Kingdom of Oudh that Frederick Roberts, who was to do so much for India and the Indian army, was born.

No man's ancestors ever had more to do with the moulding of his character than had young Roberts' His father, afterwards Sir Abraham Roberts, G.C.B., an Irishman with a dash of Huguenot blood in his veins, at the time of his birth had already seen much service in India, and was one of England's most trusted officers. He had been, since the beginning of the century, actively engaged in the difficult country bordering on the mountainous region occupied by the fierce Afghan tribes. Like his more illustrious son, he coupled splendid judgment with dauntless courage, and by his wisdom and military skill gained at once the confidence of the government, the admiration of the able Amir of Afghanistan, and shaped the policy of his successors. Although his son was not to come directly under his influence till he had reached his twentieth year, much of the marvellous success he has had in handling Indian troops and dealing with friendly princes and treacherous chieftains, has been due very largely to his father's advice, and to his own readiness to profit by his father's experience.

His mother, too, was of military stock, being a daughter of Major Abraham Burnbury, 62nd foot, of Kilsheale, County Tipperary, Ireland. In early life she married Major Maxwell of Ardwell, and was in India with her husband at the time of his death. Her great beauty and excellent character won the admiration of Abraham Roberts, who, after the death of his first wife, till meeting her, seemed to have determined to forget his sorrow in his profession. On August 2, 1830, they were married; and on the 30th of September 1832 our hero was born.

He was a delicate child, and his parents fearing for his life took him to England with them in 1834. But India needed the services of General Roberts, and after a brief rest in the genial climate of England, he and his

wife returned to India leaving their child to be educated and reared by strangers, as has ever been the custom and the necessity of the parents of Anglo-Indian children. He was not to see his parents again until he had grown to youth's estate, and not to come directly under his father's influence until like his father he was wearing a sword at his side and ready to fight for his country.

Usually in taking up the life of any man readers desire a glimpse at his boyhood years. They like to use the actions of his early days as food for speculation on his fully developed character. The stories that cluster about Cromwell's early life, the stories that Carlyle has created about the first years of the illustrious Teufelsdröckh in Sartor Resartus, add greatly to the understanding of the mature man. Unfortunately for the curious reader there is a great dearth of material for an account of Roberts' boyhood days. Nor is much matter needed. As a lad there was nothing remarkable about him. He seems ever to have been a simple-minded, simple-hearted being, with a tremendous capacity for work, with singleness of aim, and a stern sense of duty.

When his parents returned to India they left him at Clifton where he remained for some six years. He received his elementary education at a Miss Carpenter's, Long Ashton; and likewise at a very excellent school kept by one Monsieur Desprez, at Clifton. If he were a brilliant child his teachers have not chronicled the fact, and about the only records we have of these years are that he was happy; that he was a pale, delicate-looking child, but buoyant of spirit, scrupulously neat about his person, and very courageous. After leaving these schools he was placed in the hands of a Mr. Mills of Hampton, who prepared him for Eton, which great public school he entered in 1845.

He made only a brief stay in this institution, but must have had more than ordinary ability, as he obtained a prize in mathematics; however at that time, the course of instruction was altogether classical, and it was not till 1851 that mathematics was incorporated into the curriculum of Eton College. A late writer in dealing with the life of Lord Roberts at this time has said: "He was never 'sent up for good,' which being interpreted signifies being

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EARL ROBERTS' MOTHER



EARL ROBERTS' FATHER  
GENERAL SIR ABRAHAM ROBERTS,  
G C B.



EARL ROBERTS' FIRST SCHOOL



Sandhurst

Eton

Addiscombe

**EARL ROBERTS' EDUCATION: HIS SCHOOL AND COLLEGES**

singled out for exceptional scholarship. Nor was he ever 'scut up for play': no glittering trophies fell to his lot; in the lists of prizemen there is no 'Roberts' at this period. If he played 'footer' it was with nothing more than an ordinary aptitude, and the 'Cricket Eleven' and 'Boating Eight' alike knew him not."

The associations of Eton could not but influence his life. He has ever been a hero-worshipper, and the knowledge that he was walking the halls where before him had walked Sir Robert Walpole, Lord Bolingbroke, Horace Walpole, Hallam the historian, and the great Duke of Wellington, must have done much to mould the character of this sensitive, impressionable boy. Now, no doubt, when in his declining years, weary with much toil at home and abroad for his country, he looks upon the scene of his early education, he can say with the poet Gray:

"Ye distant Spires! Ye antique Towers!  
That crown the watery glade  
Where grateful science still adores  
Her Henry's holy shade;  
And ye that from the stately brow  
Of Windsor's height the expanse below  
Of grove, of lawn, of mead, survey,  
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among  
Wanders the hoary Thames along  
His silver-winding way.

Ah happy Hills! ah pleasing shade!  
Ah fields beloved in vain!  
Where once my careless childhood strayed,  
A stranger yet to pain!  
I feel the gales that from ye blow  
A momentary bliss bestow,  
As waving fresh their gladsome wing  
My weary soul they seem to soothe,  
And, redolent of joy and youth,  
To breathe a second spring."

The time soon came for young Roberts to choose his profession, and despite the fact that he was not over-robust, and exceptionally small for his years, he unhesitatingly selected his father's calling with the hope of getting to India in due time.

After a little over a year's residence at Eton he went to Sandhurst to begin the studies that were peculiarly to fit him for his life's work. Here he worked industriously for a year and a half, and then went to a preparatory military school at Wimbledon; and finally in February 1850 a vacancy occurred at Addiscombe where "John Company" trained cadets for service in the Indian Army, and Roberts entered that institution to prepare for his future career, and for forty-one years of residence in the land of his birth, in the land where his father was winning renown.

Although but few of the facts of his daily life at this time have come down to us, sufficient is known to show that never was the saying, "The child is father to the man" truer than in the case of Roberts. He had set his heart on serving in India, the country at that time the hardest in the world on the constitution of the European soldier, and yet while at Addiscombe his health was far from good, his heart apparently was affected and he was subject to attacks of faintness that must have alarmed him when he thought of the rigorous climate of India. He had, however, an indomitable will and none of his comrades realized that he suffered severely from ill-health at this period of his life. The same will that carried him from Kabul to Kandahar, that kept him resolutely on the track of Cronje after he had lost his 176 convoy wagons with the food for his army of 40,000 men, that enabled him to rise by slow degrees from a lieutenant in the Bengal Artillery to the office of Commander-in-Chief of the British army—kept him steadfast in his resolve to be a soldier and to seek service in India.

In 1851 his final examination took place, and, notwithstanding his ill-health, so well had he worked that he stood ninth in the long list of passes. He then entered the Honorable East India Company's service, and received a lieutenancy in the Bengal Artillery. He was not long to be kept from the country of his hopes. In two months after receiving his lieutenancy, he, along with several other Addiscombe boys, was on board the Peninsular and Oriental Company's Steamer "Ripon" on his way to Alexandria, from which place he was to journey in a variety of vehicles to Calcutta.

The steamer "Ripon" sailed from Southampton on February 20, 1852; and the lads, as the vessel pitched and tossed in the stormy English Channel



and the tempestuous Bay of Biscay, began, with sinking hearts, to realize what a serious step they had taken. The opening sentences of Lord Roberts' magnificent autobiography—an autobiography with few superiors in modern literature—"Forty-One Years in India," give an excellent idea of the thoughts that must have hurdened their hearts as the shores of England sank from view.

"Forty years ago," he says, "the departure of a cadet for India was a much more serious affair than it is at present. Under the regulations then in force, leave, except on a medical certificate, could only be obtained once during the whole of an officer's service, and ten years had to be spent in India before that leave could be taken."

If they were lucky some of them might return to spend the closing years of their lives in England, but for the most part each felt that he was saying good-bye forever to the land of his boyhood.

This was in 1852, just forty-nine years ago, and yet in that brief period what changes have been wrought in the world, and particularly in war. The Suez canal bringing the east to the doors of the west had yet to be constructed; the great modern guns and modern explosives had yet to be invented; ships capable of carrying large bodies of troops rapidly overseas were yet to be built—and the nerves of the world, the electric cables capable of sending messages of life or death with the swiftness of light around the world had yet to be laid. In this modern development no nation has stood out more prominently than the English nation, and no man in that nation more prominently than the one who was now about to enter on his career as a boy-lieutenant of the Bengal Artillery.

## CHAPTER II

### IN INDIA.

On Board the Steamer "Ripon"—At Gibraltar and Malta—Picturesque Cairo—Loath to Leave Shepherd's Hotel—A Tiresome Desert Journey—Associates of the Voyage—Their Ship, the "Oriental," Reaches Madras—War in the Air—Roberts Anxious to Accompany the Troops to Burmah—Calcutta—Homesick—Disappointment on all Sides—Finds Military Life Dull at Fort William and Dum-Dum—Disgusted with India—Promotion Remote.

**T**HE steamer "Ripon" after a stormy trip reached the historic rock of Gibraltar, where her bunkers were replenished, and where the young soldiers had an opportunity of viewing the magnificent fortress that still proclaims that England has the key to the Mediterranean and the east. Another brief halt was made at Malta, and then after a tedious voyage, of which they were all heartily tired, they landed at Alexandria. From this place they were towed up the Mahmoudieh Canal until Atfieh on the Nile was reached. Here they boarded a steamer and after sixteen hours landed at Cairo.

Much to the delight of the young cadets they had to spend a couple of days at Shepherd's Hotel in this picturesque city. They made the best possible use of their time. They were in a strange, new world; a world of eastern dress, eastern manners, eastern bazaars. Lieutenant Roberts and his comrades gazed with the curiosity of school-boys, and despite their ambitions and mission they were nothing more, on the turbanned Turk, "the donkey boys with their gayly caparisoned asses waiting for customers; the heggar asleep on the steps of the mosque; the veiled woman filling her water-jar at the public fountain." How different all this was from the England they had just left. The buildings, too, tall and narrow, the narrow unpaved streets, the "little wooden shop-fronts, like open cabinets full of shelves, where the merchants sit cross-legged in the midst of their goods, looking out at the passers-by and smoking in silence," interested them much.

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VIEW OF CALCUTTA





**VIEW OF CAWNPORE, FROM THE RIVER**  
Here Roberts was born.

And what a mixed, strange crowd they jostled against in these narrow lanes! \* "Syrian dragomans in baggy trousers and braided jackets; bare-footed Egyptian fellahen in ragged blue shirts and felt scull-caps; Greeks in absurdly stiff white tunics, like walking pen-wipers; Persians with high mitre-like caps of dark woven stuff; swarthy Bedouins in flowing garments, creamy white, with chocolate stripes a foot wide, and a bead-shawl of the same bound about the brow with a fillet of twisted camel's hair; Englishmen in palm-leaf hats; native women of the poorer class, in black veils that leave only the eyes uncovered, dervishes in patchwork coats, their matted hair streaming from under fantastic head-dresses; blue-black Abyssinians; Armenian priests; majestic ghosts of Algerian Arabs; all in white; mounted Janissaries with jingling sabers and gold-embroidered jackets; merchants, beggars, soldiers, boatmen, laborers, workmen, in every variety of costume, and of every shade of complexion from fair to dark, from tawny to copper color, from deepest bronze to bluest black."

But what interested them most, and what still seems to interest the European travellers in Cairo most, were the bazaars; and the greater part of the two-days sojourn in the Egyptian city was spent in going through, with curious eyes, the saddle bazaar, the slipper bazaar, the bazaar of the gold and silver-smiths—every conceivable trade had its bazaar. These strange sights, the odd buildings, the picturesque gates, the churches and the mosques kept their two days in Cairo fully occupied. They were loath to leave the city soon, and would fain have spent a few days longer in Shepherd's Hotel, roused in the morning by the croaking of the grey and black crows, the scavengers of Cairo. These two days, however, gave them an insight into the east. This half-way-house on the road to India prepared them for their life on the Ganges.

If the trip to Cairo had been tiresome, the next stage of their eastward journey was to be still more so. They had to cross the Egyptian desert for ninety miles through the burning sand, and this journey had to be made in a conveyance like a gigantic hatching machine drawn by four mules. While the travellers were borne in this fashion, beside them toiled the heavy-gaited

\* Edwards: "A Thousand Miles up the Nile."

camels laden with "baggage, mails, the cargo, and even the coal for the Red Sea Steamers."

When they reached Suez they found the good ship "Oriental" awaiting them, and though the vessel was overcrowded the companionship of a number of East India officers gave the young cadets of "John Company" plenty of entertainment. Although Lieutenant Roberts was only twenty at that time he seemed thoroughly on the alert for information about India, and in the record he gives of the trip from Suez to Calcutta in his "Forty-One Years in India" shows the deep interest he took in the land in which he was to rise to the highest honors, and likewise shows a trait of his character which is noticeable during the whole of his early life—a hero-worship, a veneration for older and more experienced men than himself.

With regard to this trip, he says: "We were thus very inconveniently crowded until we arrived at Aden, where several of the passengers left us for Bombay. We were not, however, much inclined to complain, as some of our new associates proved themselves decided acquisitions. Among them was Mr. (afterwards Sir Barnes) Peacock, an immense favorite with all on board, and more particularly with us lads. He was full of fun, and although then forty-seven years old, and on his way to Calcutta to join the Governor-General's Council, he took part in our amusements as if he were of the same age as ourselves. His career in India was brilliant, and on the expiration of his term of office as member of Council he was made Chief Justice of Bengal. Another of the passengers was Colonel (afterwards Sir John Bloomfield) Gough, who died not long ago in Ireland, and was then on his way to take up his appointment as Quartermaster-General of Queen's troops. He had served in the 3rd Light Dragoons and on the staff of his cousin Lord Gough, during the Sutlej and Punjab campaigns, and was naturally an object of the deepest veneration to all the youngsters on board."

This was written over forty years after taking the first great journey of his life, and when he himself had risen to a higher position in the Empire than any of his fellow-travellers ever attained, and yet with the modesty

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\* Roberts: *Forty-One Years in India*.

of true greatness he still seemed to look upon the men whose words and actions had done much to direct his genius as greater than himself.

The ship "Oriental" was soon out of sight of Aden, and pounding her way steadily across the blue stretch of the Indian Ocean. It was a long journey to Calcutta and the travellers were glad to have it broken by a short rest at Madras. The long stretches of sandy shore, the small barren hills forming a background to the city were not very prepossessing, but it was India, and Roberts was delighted to get ashore to visit some Addiscombe boys who were stationed here.

The substantial structure of Fort St. George, with the light-house rising nearly a hundred feet above it, built almost to the water's edge; the picturesque minarets and pagodas set off by a background of luxuriant eastern foliage made quite as deep an impression on the young traveller as the bazaars and mosques of Cairo. Thoroughly rested by the change of experience he once more boarded the steamer and began the final stage of his journey to Calcutta—a long voyage of itself of 1030 miles. While at Madras he got his first glimpse of real war. Out in the roads about two miles from the fort rode a fleet of transports making preparations to sail for Burmah.

In 1852 the Earl of Dalhousie was governing India. He had had control of its affairs for four years; and for the last two years, with the exception of several expeditions against the Afridis and other robber-tribes near Peshawar where Ahrabam Roberts was then quartered, a universal peace had reigned throughout India. When he took control of affairs the finances of the country had been in a most unsatisfactory condition; but during this time of peace the able administrator had got them on an excellent basis. He had, however, little hope that they would remain so. He dreaded Burmah; the threatening war-cloud that hovered over that kingdom made him fear for the future, and he had declared to the home authorities that "Conquest in Burmah would be a calamity second only to the calamity of a war." It would be impossible to call the Earl of Dalhousie a Little Englander, but he feared that Imperial extension in that direction at least would mean "exhausted cash balances and re-opened loans."

Since 1837 war had been brewing. The British for diplomatic reasons had removed their political agent first from Ava to Rangoon, and finally altogether from Burmah. The British merchants nevertheless continued to trade with Rangoon, and were both loud and bitter in their complaints at the treatment they received at the hands of the Burmese Government. At the close of 1851 Commodore Lambert was despatched to Rangoon to examine into the complaints. The result was war; and for this war stores and men were being hurried on board the transports lying in the Madras Roads. Roberts and his comrades were filled with a good deal of regret because they could not become a part of this expedition. However it was no doubt for the best. Had they suddenly been sent to the front before becoming injured to the trying eastern climate, some of them would doubtless have fallen victims. This campaign proved to be a particularly severe one, and at the beginning of the blockade of Rangoon in an engagement on Easter Sunday many of the officers were slain by the intense heat. Roberts, not over robust, would hardly have borne the rigors of this exhausting struggle. It was well then that he was not able to leave his ship and join the Madras division, but was perforce of circumstance compelled to finish the voyage on the "Oriental" with his comrades.

Six weeks after leaving England Calcutta was reached. Here Lieutenant Roberts was to be left very much alone. His father was in command of the Lahore division, but had been mindful of his boy, and had sent a letter to him instructing him to go to Spence's Hotel, and to put up there until he should report at the headquarters of the Bengal Artillery at Dum-Dum, a military station eight miles from Calcutta.

This was not an altogether welcome letter. He had hoped either to meet his father, or like the other cadets who had accompanied him, to be at once plunged into military life in India by way of Fort William. He was, therefore, thoroughly lonely and depressed when he sat down to dinner in Spence's Hotel after saying farewell—forever in several cases—to the friends of his journey to India.

In recalling this experience he says: "I was still more depressed at finding myself tete-a-tete with a first-class specimen of the results of an



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THE ANCIENT PORT AT ALLAHABAD





INTERIOR OF FORT WILLIAM, CALCUTTA



INDIAN CONVEYANCE

India climate. He belonged to my own regiment, and was going home on medical certificate, but did not look as if he could ever reach England." Lieutenant Roberts felt no doubt, as he gazed into the sallow face of the soldier fleeing from the death that would not yield him up, that the country from which he hoped so much might strike him down before he could achieve anything. But he determined to begin his military career without delay, and on the advice of his new-made friend reported himself at Dum-Dum on the following morning.

Here again he was to meet with disappointment. He had expected a bright, rollicking mess, "a cheery and large party"; but instead he found there only one subaltern. The Burmese War had depleted the garrison, and only a few soldiers, practically all natives, were about the place. It is little wonder that this boy was thoroughly homesick. The name India had lost its magic sound for him; the reality was far less than the dream. What he needed was plenty of work, with the hope of advancement, and for four months he was to eat his heart out in practical inactivity in and about Calcutta. However, he had an excellent opportunity of studying the Hindoo character in that crowded and filthy city.

His life was spent between the monotonous routine of military duty at Dum-Dum, and an occasional week in Fort William where his "sole duty was to superintend the firing of salutes;" but he must have been interested in the teeming life of Calcutta.

At that time the population of the city proper was almost half a million, while within a circle of twenty miles, according to the estimates of the magistrates some years before Roberts' arrival, at least 2,225,000 people struggled for existence. There seems to have been but little care taken for the health of the place, and daily much waste food from the tables of the wealthy Europeans was cast into the streets. This kept great flocks of crows, kites, and vultures ever hovering over the city, perched on the house-tops and in the trees, and gorging themselves without fear of being disturbed at the very feet of the wayfarers. Chief among these feathered scavengers were grotesque adjutant birds (a species of stork), one of the undertakers of Kipling's "Jungle Book." According to Lord Roberts these were the only

efficient scavengers, and in speaking of them he says: "So great was the dependence placed upon the exertions of these unclean creatures, that the young cadets were warned that any injury done to them would be treated as gross misconduct." These birds did their work by day, but during the night, from the jungles surrounding Calcutta, pariah dogs, foxes, and jackals crept stealthily through the darkness to fight over the refuse the gorged birds had been unable to devour.

There was another side to this eastern city. It had its beautiful buildings, its squares, its colleges, botanical gardens, and fine libraries. It had a sturdy intellectual life, too, and no city in the British Isles in 1852 published a greater number of periodicals in the English language than the Presidency of Calcutta. But while these things must have made some impression on the young soldier, so thoroughly was he disgusted with his enforced inactivity in barracks and fort, and so anxious to be off to Burmah, or away to the north-west where his father was engaged in active work, that he could see nothing good in Calcutta. To him it was a wretched nightmare; but his impression of Calcutta was largely due to the state of his mind.

He was thoroughly homesick, so he thought; to the modern soldier he would no doubt be described as merely "grouching." What he needed was companionship and work. No man who has helped others so much was more dependent on the support of others than Roberts, and he gives the true cause of his unhappiness when he says: \* "I must confess I was disappointed at being left so completely to myself; especially by the senior military officers, many of whom were personally known to my father, who had, I was aware, written to some of them on my behalf. Under these circumstances I think it is hardly to be wondered at that I became terribly homesick, and convinced that I could never be happy in India. Worst of all, the prospects of promotion seemed absolutely hopeless; I was the Supernumerary Second Lieutenant, and nearly every officer in the list of the Bengal Artillery had served over fifteen years as a subaltern."

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\* Roberts: Forty-One Years in India.

Lack of comradeship, the carelessness and thoughtlessness of those from whom he had expected much, the remoteness of the brilliant future he had hoped for when stepping on board the "Ripon," were the true causes of his homesickness. But all these things had to be borne for some months in dreary Calcutta; and no doubt this painful experience was an excellent initiation for the young soldier into his new life. Much patience and knowledge of men were the things most essential to the great career that was to be his, and these things are best learned through suffering.

## CHAPTER III.

### JOURNEY TO PESHAWAR.

Roberts on Homesickness—Anxious to Return to England—Narrow Escape in a Violent Cyclone—Anxious to go to the Burmese War—His Father Hoped soon to Have Him with Him at Peshawar—Wonderful Scenery and Buildings along the Ganges and Jumna—Benares, the Holy City of the Brahmas—At Cawnpore—Admiration for Bengal Horse Artillery—Tedious Palankin Journey—A Rest in the Hill Region—Peshawar—Meeting with His Father—Year with His Father—Learning Much of India and its Inhabitants.

THE first four months young Roberts spent in India were probably the most trying of his entire East India experience. When he bade India good-bye and had leisure to look back over his record in the east, he recalled with a measure of pain those first, bitter days. Disgusted with the country in which he found himself, yearning for the green fields of his England, regretting the friends of his schoolboy days, without the power to make himself new friends in his new environment, he was seized with what Heine has very aptly called "toothache in the heart." In his great autobiography he rarely complains, he rarely regrets, but there is one passage in it on homesickness that admirably shows the deep melancholy into which he had fallen.

"The life of a young officer," he writes, "during his first few months of exile, before he has fallen into the ways of his new life and made friends for himself, can never be very happy; but in these days he is encouraged by the feeling that, however distasteful, it need not necessarily last very long; and he can look forward to a rapid and easy return to England and friends at no very distant period. At the time I am writing of he could not but feel completely cut off from all that had hitherto formed his chief interests in life—his family and his friends—for ten years is an eternity to the young, and the feeling of loneliness and homesickness was apt to become insupportable."

In such spiritual condition his new life could interest him in no way. The enthusiasm he had had for a military career in India was dead for the time being. The palms and temples of the east had lost all attraction for him; the strange crowded life of Calcutta disgusted him; his mind as yet seemed to take no interest in the new civilization, in the strange manners, in the mystic religions, that met him at every turn. He would gladly have retravelled that long hot passage across the Indian Ocean, through the scorching Red Sea, to get away from the monotonous inactivity of his existence at Dum-Dum. England by absence had grown much dearer to him, and he would fain have transported himself to the banks of the Thames without even seeing the father whom he had so looked forward to meeting.

Only one incident seems to have enlivened, to use his own word, his experience at Dum-Dum; and this was an exceedingly violent cyclone. So tempestuous was the night that it came very nearly ending his career. He was caught out in black darkness on a narrow road with a deep ditch on either side, and along this narrow road he had to grope his way, stumbling over fallen trees, his heart standing still while before and behind him buildings, trees and pillars fell crashing to the ground; about him "huge branches were being driven through the air like thistle-down." He was preserved for great deeds, however, and after several hours of peril succeeded in reaching his house uninjured. How narrow were his escapes can be judged by the scene that he beheld next morning. "As I walked to the mess," he writes, "I found the road almost impassable from fallen trees; and dead birds, chiefly crows and kites, were so numerous that they had to be carried off in cart-loads." At the beginning of the gale he had stumbled against a column which "had been raised a few years before to the memory of the 1st Troop, 1st Brigade, Bengal Horse Artillery, who were killed in the disastrous retreat from Kabul in 1841." In the morning he found that this massive column had been hurled down.

This seems to have been the last straw. Away from the vicinity of Calcutta he must get, and so he wrote to his father urgently requesting him to use his influence to have him sent to Burmah. He had had enough of barracks and fort, he wanted active service; and the Burmese war was

then the hope of every young East India Officer. But General Roberts no doubt realized how much better his young son would be for a few years of camp discipline before being plunged into a hot campaign; and, while he did not grant the request of the impatient cadet, he held out the hope of soon having him join him at Peshawar, of which division the general expected to get the command.

The reason of his homesickness is now quite evident. He says that on receipt of his father's reply "his restlessness and discontent disappeared as if by magic." The homesickness was "grousing". It was not companionship he needed, but service that would be the gateway to a career.

Four months after reaching India he received word to join his father at once at far Peshawar. At last he was to be stationed in a district where he was almost sure to see some active service; at last he was to come directly under the influence of his wise and courageous father whom he had ever held in the greatest reverence. He lost no time in making ready to leave Dum-Dum, and about the beginning of August began his long journey of three months towards the Afghan frontier.

His trip at any rate was not a monotonous one; the varied modes of conveyance, the ever changing scenery, the wondrous buildings, like bits from "The Arabian Nights," the vast rich cities that he passed on his route, were a revelation even to one who had been familiar with stories of India from his boyhood.

The first stage of his journey was a somewhat tedious one—a month in a barge on the Ganges towed by a slow-moving steamer could not have been otherwise. At the end of this first stage, however, he was rewarded by a sight of the Holy City of the Brahmas, Benares, the holiest of the many sacred cities of Hindustan. The minarets of Aurungzebe's mosque, the stately residence of Paishwa, fine dwellings of wealthy Hindus who had houses here where they might reside when they came to worship, as the wealthy Americans now go to Newport or the Thousand Islands for rest. Roberts had a brief opportunity of viewing the fine buildings of Benares, wondering at the Brahmanee hells which occasionally blocked his passage in the narrow streets, viewing from some eminence the stately gardens, the



buildings, the broad squares, the fountains and gardens that on a level were concealed from the eye.

With a vivid impression of this city, which according to the Brahmans had originally been built of gold, but which the sins of the Hindus had changed to stone and even to clay, he boarded a horse-dak and journeyed towards Allahabad. It was a short journey of only eighty miles, and at the end of it one of his father's dearest friends, a Mr. Lowther, was to give him a welcome such as he had not experienced since coming to India.

Allahabad, like Benares, was a holy city, as many as 200,000 pilgrims having visited it in a single year. The Hindus seemed to worship their great fertilizing rivers, and here there was a double reason for worship; at this point the Jumna and the Gangee united their sacred waters and rolled by the massive fort whose towers and bastions bristled with guns. Beneath this fort the awesome depths of the temple of Siva, the destroyer, attracted the curiosity of the travellers.

So far Roberts had come about 500 miles, and as he was still only a short way on his journey there was no time for loitering, so forward he went to Cawnpore, the city of his birth. He made a longer stay here and shows himself not only observant but a thoughtful critic of existing military institutions. The fact that the Cawnpore Division was then commanded by Brigadier-General Palmer, who had attained his rank when probably not less than sixty-eight years old, made a deep impression on him. The wretched system of promotion by seniority and not by merit, which was the bane of the English army in India, and which to some extent tied the hands of the War Office and the commander-in-chief even so late as in the recent Boer war, and which the great majority of Englishmen hope to see the present great commander-in-chief of the English army take steps to reform, was even then attracting his attention. The hopeless years that he looked forward to when he landed in India, the sight of old men filling positions of difficulty and trust when both their years and their health demanded that they should be back in England, convinced him that a radical change was needed in the service.

From Cawnpore Roberts proceeded to Meerut. He here met the Bengal

Horse Artillery, and his enthusiastic description of the corps shows how genuinely he was in love with his calling.

"It certainly was," he says, "a splendid service; the men were the pick of those recruited by the East India Company, they were of magnificent physique, and their uniform was singularly handsome. The jacket was much the same as that now worn by the Royal Horse Artillery, but instead of the bushy they had a brass helmet covered in front with leopard skin surmounted by a long red plume, which drooped over the back like that of a French Cuirassier. This, with white buckskin breeches and long boots, completed a uniform which was one of the most picturesque and effective I have ever seen on a parade ground." This was his first association with the Bengal Horse Artillery, but it created in him "a fixed resolve to leave no stone unturned in the endeavor to become a horse-gunner."

So far his journey by barge and horse-dak had been, despite its tediousness, not altogether unpleasant; but, from the ruined walls of Meerut to Peshawar, there still intervened 800 miles, and this part of his journey had to be made in a palanquin, or doolie. His description of this part of his journey is of greatest interest, as it both recreates the past, and gives the reader an insight into India before the time when the way for the east and the west, the north and the south had been made easy by a network of railway lines. The palanquin journey was not only tedious, but it was slow and uncomfortable in the extreme. "Starting after dinner," he says, "the victim was carried throughout the night by eight men, divided into reliefs of four. The whole of the eight were changed at stages averaging from ten to twelve miles apart. The baggage was also conveyed by coolies, who kept up an incessant chatter, and the procession was lighted on its way by a torch-bearer, whose torch consisted of bits of rag tied round the end of a stick, upon which he continually poured the most malodorous of oils. If the palanquin-bearers were very good, they shuffled along at the rate of about three miles an hour, and if there were no delays, forty or forty-five miles could be accomplished before it became necessary to seek shelter from the sun in one of the dak-bungalows, or rest-houses, erected by the government at convenient intervals along all the principal routes. In these bungalows a

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LORD VISCOUNT CANNING  
Governor-General of India.



GENERAL SIR HENRY HAVELOCK, K.C.B.

bath could be obtained, and sorely it was needed after a journey of thirteen or fourteen hours at a level of only a few inches above an exceedingly dusty road."

It is no wonder that he hailed with delight the hill-station of Mussoorie, where a half-sister lived. He was fagged with the dust and the heat of the plains, and the hracing air of the hills made him over anew. The few days he spent here gave him a genuine rest. The gorgeous scenery of these piled-up mountains; the charming sunsets, unequalled by any in the world; the mists that settle like a veil over the nest-like dwellings on the hillsides, and then are dispersed, giving the varied landscape the charm of almost fairy-like beauty, held his young heart and mind under their spell. But his duty was before him, his goal, Peshawar, was still far off, and once more he had to consign himself to the tender mercies of the doolie-bearers. Through Umballa he proceeded to Ludhiana, where he met a cousin with whom he was to travel as far as Mian Mir, where another half-sister lived.

It is interesting to note how deeply young Roberts' life was bound up with India. On this journey to join his father it will be noticed that he met no fewer than three relatives, resident in India. His birth, his training, his connections, all made him an ideal man for the country in which, without ostentation, he was to do such magnificent work for the Empire.

At length his tedious journey came to an end, and, early in November, three months after leaving Calcutta, he reached Peshawar.

This city, built by Akber, is the frontier town of Hindustan towards Afghanistan. Its name is significant, and means the "Advanced Post." Here he would have an opportunity of studying his profession in a military camp kept wide awake by the bold tribes that dwelt in the surrounding hills, and were ever ready to swoop down in their predatory expeditions on the men of the plains.

His great reward, however, for his long journey was the meeting with his father. Abraham Roberts was, it is worthy of note, just sixty-nine, the age of his more illustrious son in the present year, when he received the temporary rank of major-general. In almost every way he had a character like his son's. He had the same deep religious feeling, the same high sense

of honor, the same respect for his fellow soldiers, a love of his profession, and untiring energy. Like his son, too, he had a thoroughly sympathetic nature, and young Roberts found in him at once a father and a friend.

Until this meeting at Peshawar, he had known nothing personally of his father. He had, it is true, caught passing glimpses of him when a boy of twelve at school in England, and had a faint recollection of a bronzed, wiry soldier, kindly and gentle; but this was all, and he says they "met at Peshawar almost as strangers." "We did not, however," he adds, "long remain so; his affectionate greeting soon put an end to any feeling of shyness on my part, and the genial and kindly spirit which enabled him to enter into and sympathize with the feelings and aspirations of men younger than himself, rendered the year I spent with him at Peshawar one of the brightest and happiest of my early life."

It was not only a bright and happy year, but a most profitable one. In it he laid the basis of his whole future career. Roberts' great renown will rest on his work in Afghanistan and in South Africa; and that he was, of all British generals, the best fitted to cope with the peculiar peoples and topography of both countries was due largely to the fine training he received at his father's hands in that year.

Major-General Roberts had seen service some eleven years before in Afghanistan, first in command of a brigade and then of Sha Shuja's contingent, and what he had learned of the country and its inhabitants from hard experience he gave to his son in no stinted measure. Twenty years later the world was to ring with the praises of the young British general who carried his troops successfully first on Kabul and then to the relief of Kandahar, fighting under the greatest difficulties and handling the tribes with which he came into contact with diplomacy and skill. That he was able to do his work so well was due largely, as he says, to the information he gathered from his father "regarding the characteristics of that peculiar country, and the best means of dealing with its still more peculiar people."

## CHAPTER IV.

### LIFE AT PESHAWAR.

*Military Life at Peshawar—Abraham Roberts' Wise Treatment of the Afghans—Roberts Makes Friends at Peshawar—Peshawar an Unhealthy Station—A Good Training School for His Career—"The Barbarous and Degrading Custom of Plogging"—Roberts' Sympathy with the Soldiers Under Him—The Murder of Lieut.-Col. Frederick Mackeson—A Punitive Expedition Against the Afridis—General Abraham Roberts Forced to Leave India on Account of Ill-Health—His Son Suffering from Peshawar Fever—Recuperating in the Vale of Kashmir—Back in Peshawar—Gazetted a Lieutenant in the Horse Artillery—Again Down with Fever—Colonel Becher's Kind Words of Encouragement—Masters Hindustani—The D. A. Q. M. G.'s Office in Sight—A Wonderful Ride.*

**T**HE life of Roberts at Peshawar was to be comparatively speaking uneventful, but this district gave him the best training he could have received at that time in India. It was, as has already been stated, the last town towards the Afghan frontier. The general who was fortunate enough to be placed over this part of the Empire held command over what was at once the largest and most important division in India. It included Attock, Rawal Pindi, and Jhelum; and through its whole length and breadth unceasing vigilance was necessary.

General Abraham Roberts was just the man for the position—careful, methodical, sympathetic, nothing escaped his eye; kindly towards his friends, he at the same time was most considerate of his enemies, and ever in his dealings with the Afghans endeavored to make friends of them. He was not only successful to a great extent himself, but shaped the policy of the other men in authority in India and of the commander at Peshawar who followed in his steps. Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General of India, approved of the good work he did in the short period he commanded at Peshawar; and the commissioners of Peshawar, Colonel Mackeson and Lieutenant-Colonel Herbert Edwardes, adopted the same policy, the latter "Establishing such a good understanding with the ruler of Kabul that,

when the mutiny broke out, Afghanistan stood aloof instead of, as might have been the case, turning the scale against us."

Peshawar seems to have been an excellent training school for others besides young Roberts. At that time on his father's staff were two young men, Lieutenant Norman and Lieutenant Lumsden. Whether it was their native genius, the difficult school in which they were trained, or the fine character of their commanding officer (no doubt all three) these two men rose to very high positions in the army and the nation, and when Roberts was writing his "Forty-One Years in India," he speaks in a foot note of his one time friends at Peshawar as General Sir Henry Norman, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., lately Governor of Queensland, and General Sir Peter Lumsden, G.C.B.

In this fine school he was placed under the immediate eye of his father; for although he was in the Artillery in the 2nd Company, 2nd Battalion of "The Devil's Own," and had to perform his regimental duties "strictly and regularly," he lived with and acted as aide-de-camp to his father. The homesickness was now gone; never again does he complain of India and his life in the army. He is of course critical of existing institutions, but has no thought of deserting his post as he had in those first four Calcutta months; instead he looks upon the army and India as part of himself, and the weaknesses and spots in their government are his to remedy.

However Peshawar was not an earthly paradise. The cantonment had been laid out by Sir Colin Campbell, and on account of the Afridis, who were forever swooping down on the plains from their hill strongholds, his chief aim had been to give the forces under him as much concentration as possible; as a result Peshawar, close and crowded, was a most unhealthy station. That the troops in it were never very far from war was evidenced by the great watchfulness exercised in it by the authorities. If hostilities had been under way between India, and Afghanistan a greater number of sentries, outposts, and piquets than surrounded Peshawar at that time would scarcely have been needed. At any moment the call to arms might be sounded, and the soldiers, unlike the men stationed in other parts of India, were ever hoping for and expecting the action that brings danger and death, or honor and advancement. The description given by Lord Roberts of the



vigilance exercised about Peshawar in 1852 gives a good idea of the character of the region in which he was being trained; and this training went far to make him what he is to-day—the first soldier in the Empire.

“In addition to the cordon of sentries round the cantonment strong pickets were posted on all the principal roads leading towards the hills; and every house had to be guarded by a *chokidar* or watchman, belonging to one of the robber tribes. The maintaining this watchman was a sort of blackmail, without consenting to which no one's horses or property were safe. The watchmen were armed with all kinds of quaint old firearms, which, on an alarm being given, they discharged in the most reckless manner, making it quite a work of danger to pass along the Peshawar road after dark. No one was allowed to venture beyond the line of sentries when the sun had set, and even in broad daylight it was not safe to go any distance from the station.”

Life in such a place could not but be good for a young soldier; the constant presence of danger would keep his faculties awake, and a month of the discipline and care demanded by the presence of actual enemies would be worth more than years of military duties in the safe cantonments of Cawnpore, or the monotonous service at the barracks in Dum-Dum or at Fort William.

Never has it been better illustrated what actual war is to the making of a soldier than the contest which Lord Roberts brought practically to a safe termination when he caused Pretoria to open her gates to his troops. The regulars of England, trained in the strictest discipline of the service in England and in India, found themselves in no way superior to the Colonial troops who were made veterans before they had been two months in the field. Indeed in the opinion of many military critics the long peace-drill, the discipline that made the soldier a machine, militated against the regular troops, and when it came to fighting where wit and individual courage were concerned, the Australians, the New Zealanders, the Natal troops, and the Canadians, proved themselves the superiors of the old and tried regiments. There was much surrendering in the dark years that have just taxed the Empire, but the percentage of Colonial troops that fell into the hands of the Boers has been small indeed; and yet time and time again their adventurous

spirit led them into hot corners where they were surrounded by a numerous enemy.

With his father's watchful eye upon him, with vigilant robbers ever ready to sweep down upon this station for plunder or for revenge, with daily contact with such men as Sydney Cotton, (afterwards Sir Sydney Cotton, G.C.B.,) and Lieutenant Henry Norman, and Lieutenant Peter Lumsden, it is little wonder that the young cadet, who a few months before would have given all he possessed to get out of India, rapidly grew to love the country and his calling, and that he began to show an astonishing insight into every detail of his profession.

During this first year all he saw in India did not delight him with his new life. The "barbarous and degrading custom of flogging," to use his own words, was still practised in the army. That it was not practised to any great extent is evident from the fact that during his whole military career he attended but one flogging parade; still the punishment was possible, and until 1881 this mode of treating men for wrong-doing was not abolished from the English service. In this first year he saw two handsome young horse artillerymen punished by this means, and the fifty lashes administered to their bare backs seemed to burn into his own flesh. He felt then that such punishment was not educative, as all punishment should be, but merely tended to harden the heart and stiffen the neck of the sinner, and the sympathy felt for the two young fellows shows how intensely modern he was in his feelings and ideas. The Lord Roberts that watched with such a fatherly eye over his soldiers on their trying march to Pretoria was one with the Lieutenant Roberts whose soul cried out with indignation at the brutal punishment administered to his comrades-in-arms (and every good fighting man, be he private or general, has ever been his comrade-in-arms) on the parade ground of Peshawar. He saw that the punishment had no good effect on the moral natures of the men, for no sooner were they out of prison than, as if in defiance, they committed the crime (selling their kits) for which they had first been punished, and were once more sentenced to the "cat." This time, however, they were forgiven.

Now the value of this incident to the student of Lord Roberts' life is

seen. Already he was taking that interest in the soldiers of the India army that was to make him the idol of his men when he came to a command of his own. What flogging resulted in he saw, what effect forgiving men would have only years could tell, and he watched with the greatest interest the career of the two gunners. "I did not" he says, "lose sight of these two men for some years, and was always gratified to learn that their conduct was uniformly satisfactory, and that they had become good, steady soldiers."

The Peshawar district before Roberts finished his first year in it was thrown into the wildest excitement by the death of the commissioner, Lieutenant-Colonel Frederick Mackeson. He was murdered in a most cowardly manner by a religious fanatic on the verandah of his own house. His murderer for his dastardly crime was hanged, and his body burned; and as this, in the eyes of all Mahomedans, meant that he was forever excluded from the pleasures of Paradise, the fiercest hate for the British residents of the Peshawar cantonment was engendered in the hearts of all true Mahomedans along the Afghan frontier.

At this time General Abraham Roberts was feeling the effect of the bad climate at Peshawar, and was recuperating at the hill station of Murree, but the death of Colonel Mackeson made him forget self and his own safety, and he hastened back to Peshawar to endeavor to prevent the threatening war cloud from breaking. He had a difficult task, but succeeded admirably in the work; but had scarcely got things quieted down when the Jowaki Afridis, a warlike tribe which had been guilty of more murders and robberies than all the other hill tribes put together, were found to be up in arms. General Roberts and his son and a considerable force went out to guard the northern entrance of the Kohat Pass, and to prevent the Afridis from entering British territory.

This high land region in late autumn was very different from the hot weather of the plains, and General Roberts, now in his seventieth year, found himself unable to stand the rigors of this campaign. Much to his regret the doctors ordered him, as he valued his life, to leave India at once; and so he reluctantly made preparations to return to England which was now to him almost a foreign country. The hills and the plains, the temples and the

palaces of India were what he had grown to think of as home. So critical was his health that his son accompanied him for a considerable portion of his way towards the coast.

Lieutenant Roberts' battery had been ordered to go on a punitive expedition against the Bori villages of the Afridis, and as this was the first chance he had had of being under fire he was in a measure disappointed at having to accompany his father; and as soon as he could he galloped back to join his corps as fast as horseflesh could carry him. He was too late however, and as he approached Kohat Pass he heard the unwelcome sound of the firing of guns in the distance, and by the time he rejoined his battery he found that the enemy, after a stiff resistance, had been severely punished, and that their villages had been destroyed, with a loss of only 8 killed and 31 wounded to the British. He had missed the fight, but as the force of 1,500 men retired towards Peshawar the Afridis pressed hard after them and they did not feel safe till they were well out of the hills.

The Peshawar life began to tell on the young Englishman and he suffered a good deal from fever. Finally his health became so poor that in April, 1854, he obtained six months leave of absence. He set out for the beautiful vale of Kashmir with a congenial comrade, Lieutenant George Brown.

The two adventurous youths received permission to visit Khagan. The expedition to Khagan was a most daring one, and had the deputy-commissioner, Captain Beecher, been aware of the intentions of the young lieutenants he would never have permitted them to attempt to visit that out-of-the-way district, a journey to which was fraught with dangers of all kinds, and the greatest was the savage and fanatical character of the people. He found out their intentions after they had left, and sent a messenger recalling them; but they conveniently forgot to open the envelope until they were returning from Khagan. They were rewarded for their dangerous journey over snow bridges and along the narrow edges of precipices. They found the inhabitants more friendly than they had expected, and the gorgeous scenery made a lasting impression on their young minds.



AGRA  
A centre of military.



DELHI  
From the Palace Gate.

\*"Khagan was almost buried in snow. The scenery was magnificent, and became every moment more wonderful as we slowly climbed the deep ascent in front of us. Range after range of snow-capped mountains disclosed themselves to our view, rising higher and higher in the air, until at last, towering above all, Nanga Parbat" (26,000 feet above the sea level) "in all her spotless beauty was revealed to our astonished and delighted gaze."

From Khagan the two young soldiers journeyed to "the lovely vale of Kashmir;" and here Roberts dreamt away one of the most delightful summers of his life—hunting, wandering through exquisite valleys, visiting the fascinating ruins of Hindu temples. His description of the famous vale and the capital of Kashmir, Srinagar, is most delightful reading, and shows that the hand that wielded the sword to such purpose could use the pen with great power.

But there is an end to all things, and in September there was an end to this charming sojourn in the garden of India, and he made preparations to join his battery. He was loath to leave the floating gardens of Srinagar, the surrounding mountains, the streams and lakes; and the fertile soil "gay with flowers of every description, for in Kashmir many of the gorgeous eastern plants and the more simple but sweeter ones of England meet on common ground."

About the beginning of September the young cadet with restored health was back in Peshawar with the mountain battery to which he was attached. However he was not to continue long in this service. In November he received his "Jacket," and shortly afterwards was gazetted a lieutenant in one of the troops of the Horse Artillery.

Since first meeting with the Bengal Horse Artillery on his tedious journey from Calcutta to Peshawar his one desire had been to be admitted to that splendid body of troops, and when he found himself one of their officers his delight was unbounded. For the soldiers under him he had an immense admiration. Like himself, they were nearly all Irishmen—bardy, brawny, big fellows; "most of whom," he says, "in recalling that period of his life, "could have lifted me with one hand." What he lacked in stature, however,

\*Roberts: Forty-One Years in India.

he made up in will. He determined to prove himself as good a soldier as the best of them, and at once set to work on the mounts of the troop. The horses were fiery, vicious stud-horses; but he took them all in turn and conquered them one by one, and soon there was no better or stronger rider in Peshawar than the slight and delicate young lieutenant. From that time till he permanently left India he had few equals in the saddle.

But all was not roses for him: the Peshawar fever had taken a firmer hold on his system than he had at first imagined. The breezes and perfumes of Kashmir did not prove of lasting benefit, and during the winter of 1854 and 1855 the disease took such a grip on him that in the spring he found himself thoroughly used up. He was given eight months leave of absence, and once more hastened away to the dreamland of India. In August he felt that he had completely got rid of the enervating fever, and started on a journey of 400 miles across the great Himalaya range of mountains to Simla.

This visit to the mountain resort, which has since come to play such an important part in the life of Europeans in India, was big with importance for Roberts. It probably shaped his whole future. Here he met and had lunch with the quartermaster-general, Colonel Arthur Beecher, and in the course of the conversation between the experienced soldier and the young lieutenant, Colonel Beecher expressed a wish that Roberts might some day enter his department. He touched the right chord in the modest young soldier's heart. It had been his desire, his hope, his ambition some day to be deputy-assistant-quartermaster-general. He had never a thought that before he left India he would not only be quartermaster-general, but would have attained the highest possible rank in the India army. He had reached Simla after his long journey rejoicing that he had shaken off the dreaded fever; he left it with a still lighter heart, feeling as though Colonel Beecher had opened to him the gateway to fame.

Before returning to Peshawar he went to Mian Mir where he took the riding school course, after which he rejoined his regiment.

The next winter was an uneventful one. India was at that time a smouldering volcano, but no hint of the rising storm of rebellion seems to have reached the troops in the North-West Provinces. The time was spent



in sport, in hunting, and at drill. The Brigadier, Sydney Cotton, was a thorough soldier and kept officers and men at work. In describing this able soldier Roberts in his "Forty-One Years in India" gives one sentence which in the light of recent events in South Africa is well worth reflecting over.

He says that Sydney Cotton maintained that, "parade grounds were simply useful for drill and preliminary instruction, and that as soon as the rudiments of a soldier's education had been learned the troops should leave their nursery, and try as far as possible to practise in peace what they would have to do in war."

When the humiliating disasters to the British troops at the close of 1899 are recalled this sentence seems almost like irony. The whole history of England's wars goes to prove that the nation has not practised in peace what her soldiers would have to do in war, and, as in South Africa, England's generals have learned to fight only after severe reverses. Roberts, as commander-in-chief has now an excellent opportunity of putting in practice the lesson he learned from Sydney Cotton. Drill for show is of little use: and instead of wheeling and turning, officers and men alike should be taught to ride, to shoot, to dig, and to use their heads.

A joy was shortly in store for young Roberts. The government required a number of competent officers to assist in a survey of Kashmir, and Lumsden, the deputy-assistant-quartermaster-general was selected among others for this important task, and Roberts was appointed to officiate for him in his absence. His feet were on the lowest rung of the ladder, and although the appointment was only a temporary one he felt that he now had a chance to become as distinguished as his illustrious father. He was even dreaming that some day he might be quartermaster-general, when he received word that the governor-general had refused to ratify his appointment, as he was unacquainted with Hindustani.

This would have been a crushing blow for most young men, but it only served as a spur to him. An opening might soon occur again, and he must be ready for it. The half yearly examinations were still two months away. He had a ridiculously short time in which to master such a difficult language as Hindustani, but he had the will and the way was opened to him. He

engaged the best teacher of oriental languages to be found in Peshawar, shut himself up, and day night under the eyes of his instructor pored over Indian literature, and when the examination time arrived he faced the ordeal with every confidence of passing, and pass he did. Very soon after this the deputy-assistant-quartermaster-general's position was again vacant, and Roberts was asked to fill the office. He entered with enthusiasm upon his new work, and so mastered the details of his department that he rose slowly but surely until he left it in 1878 as quartermaster-general. He had several opportunities in the year 1856 of proving his ability, and thoroughly convinced his commanding officers that no mistake had been made in the appointment. He had, as he modestly remarks, "What is essential to a quartermaster-general in the field, the bump of locality."

In October of this same year the artillery corps to which he was attached had its quarters at the practice camp at Chamkanie. While at this place he received orders to join the divisional general (Reed) who was on a tour of inspection at Rawal Pindi. It was a hundred miles from Chamkanie to Rawal Pindi, and Roberts was anxious to be with his troops at the practice camp as long as possible, so he allowed himself but one day to make the journey. He started at 7 a.m., and through the October day he galloped, stopping but once for food, and at 6 p.m. Rawal Pindi was reached. A hundred miles in eleven hours! A tremendous ride under any circumstances; but then Roberts was a feather weight. However, a young man capable of doing such things could not but rise rapidly to a close, and he little dreamed that before another year had ended he would be a soldier trained and proved in bloody and cruel conflicts.

## CHAPTER V.

### ENGLAND AND AFGHANISTAN.

An Old Struggle Recalled—A Treaty Made with the Amir of Afghan—War with Persia—A Magnificent Ceremony—This Meeting Probably Saved North-West Provinces—Roberts Meets Lieut. George White, Afterwards General Sir George White, Hero of Ladysmith—"A Pillar of Strength on the Frontier"—Roberts' Description of John Nicholson—Mutiny in the Air.

**S**HORTLY before the Great Mutiny burst forth with such irresistible violence on the English in India Roberts had an experience of considerable importance in his life. The Afghan mountains have ever loomed black and threatening on the northern boundary of India, and from their hill fastnesses predatory bands and even large armies of fierce fanatics have repeatedly swooped down on the British possessions plundering and murdering, threatening to crush the comparatively small force that England is able to spare to do police duty in the difficult north-west provinces.

The history of England's struggle with Afghanistan for the first half of the century does not make pleasant reading. It is indeed the blackest page on England's colonial history. It is a history of misrule, of blundering, of bad management at home, and bad generalship in the field, of incapacity on the part of the officers, and too often, a thing hard to realize, cowardice on the part of the troops. The gravest injustice had been done to Dost Mahomed Khan, and for that injustice England paid dearly in men and treasure. A British column was wiped out, and though Sir George Pollock did afterwards march in triumph on Kabul, sweeping Akbar Khan's forces before him, the memory of what they had done to the *Feringhis* made the bulk of the people of Afghanistan look with disdain on the troops from over the sea. What the soldiers suffered in that ill-starred, ill-planned, cowardly retreat from Kabul can be gathered from this tragic sentence given by one who was with Pollock's column. "The bodies lay in heaps of fifties and hundreds, our

gun wheels crushing the bones of our late comrades every yard for four or five miles; indeed the whole march from Gandamak to Kabul may be said to have been over the bodies of the massacred army."

Abraham Roberts, who was through this humbling war, had long since seen the need of diplomacy rather than force in dealing with these hardy mountain tribes. He, as his son points out with pride, had initiated a policy of friendliness towards the Afghans, and was himself personally on the most friendly terms with Dost Mahomed and many of the leading tribal leaders. Mr. Herbert Edwardes, the Commissioner of Peshawar in 1854, saw the wisdom of this policy, and wrote to the Governor-General of India, Lord Dalhousie, with regard to Afghanistan in the following strain: "I should be very glad to see a new account opened on the basis of an open treaty of friendship and alliance."

The suggestion was a good one, but the time was inopportune for England to make advances to the Afghan Government. France and Britain were at that moment making preparations to go to war with Russia, and many of the civil and military authorities in India felt that any attempt to negotiate a friendly alliance with the followers of the Amir would be misunderstood. The Afghans would imagine that one war was as much as England felt like handling at a time. Weakness and not friendliness would be thought to be the cause impelling her to seek an alliance, and the fanatics among the Afghans would take advantage of the situation to rouse their followers, who in their hearts thoroughly detested the English, to attack her fortresses in force. So the matter hung fire, but Edwardes did not despair, and between him and Dost Mohamed a diplomatic correspondence of the most courteous and friendly character went on. This bore good fruit, and in March 1855 Dost's son and heir-apparent, Ghulam Haidar Khan, arrived at Peshawar. He had come in his father's name to consider terms of alliance, and before the end of the month a most satisfactory treaty was concluded. This treaty "guaranteed," in the words of Edwardes, "that we should respect the Amir's possessions in Afghanistan, and never interfere with them; while the Amir engaged similarly to respect British territory, and to be the friend of our friends and the enemy of our enemies."

For some months matters rested here, and the treaty remained unratified by Dost Mahomed, but fortunately for England before the end of the year he found himself in a somewhat critical position. His subjects at Herat were in rebellion; about Kandahar risings against his authority had taken place; and the King of Bokhara and the savage Turkoman tribes were making preparations to swoop down on his province of Balkh. To crown all Persia was organizing a large army to march on Herat and seize that fortress. Dost Mahomed's own right arm was not strong enough to resist this combination of difficulties, and so he appealed to England for assistance; and the hope of Edwardes and such soldiers as Havelock, Outram, and John Nicholson, that Afghanistan would make the first move towards more friendly relationship, was realized.

England had an excellent opportunity of winning the good will of the Amir and his countrymen. The Shah of Persia in marching an army into Herat and besieging it acted in direct violation of the treaty made with Great Britain in 1853. This coupled with the insult offered to the British flag at Telleran caused the authorities to declare war with Persia, and troops were despatched from Bombay, with General Outram as commander-in-chief, to bring the Shah to his knees. At the same time a meeting between Dost Mahomed and the commissioner was agreed upon. Meanwhile Lord Dalhousie, the most active of all the great governors-general of India, had resigned office and departed for England after eight years of arduous labor in the interests of the Empire, and Lord Canning occupied the office he had vacated.

It was not until New Year's Day, 1857, that the important meeting was consummated. The meeting place was at the mouth of the famous Khyber Pass, through which a few years before Dr. Brydon and four or five camp-followers were all who escaped of the thousands that began the tragic retreat from Kabul. It was deemed wise to impress the Amir and his chiefs with the military strength of England in India, so when they arrived at the meeting place they found no fewer than 7,000 troops camped on the plain near Jamrud.

The fine display had its effect, and the Amir and the Afghan chiefs

with him felt that they were greatly favored in having such a powerful nation as England at their back.

The treaty of the year before was confirmed. \* "In addition the Amir bound himself to keep a certain number of regular troops for the defence of Afghanistan, so long as the war with Persia continued, in consideration of a monthly subsidy of Rs. 100,000 and a gift of 4000 muskets. He also engaged to communicate to the government of India any overtures he might receive from Persia, and he consented to allow British officers to visit certain parts of his dominions, either for the purpose of assisting his subjects against Persia, or to ascertain that the subsidy was properly applied."

Lieutenant Roberts was attached to Barr's troop of horse artillery, and was an interested and observant spectator of all that went on at this meeting. It was his first contact with the subtle and treacherous mind of the Afghan, and his assimilating powers enabled him to take in much that was to be of the greatest service to him, when, some twenty years later, he had to battle against them both with diplomacy and with the sword.

The importance of this meeting, and the treaty signed by Dost Mahomed, who seems, despite the injuries done him in the past, genuinely to have desired to live on terms of sincerest friendship with the English, is not generally grasped by the student of East India history. No better statement of its far reaching influence is given anywhere than that contained in a succinct paragraph by Roberts. He seems to have taken particular pride in this meeting; to him it was the crowning result of his father's wise policy.

\* "I have dwelt," he says, "at some length on this treaty with Afghanistan, first, because the policy of which it was the outcome was, as I have already shown, initiated by my father; and, secondly, because I do not think it is generally understood how important to us were its results. Not only did it heal the wounds left open from the first Afghan war, but it relieved England of a great anxiety at a time when throughout the length and breadth of India there was distress, revolt, bloodshed, and bitter distrust of our native troops. Dost Mahomed loyally held to his engagements during the troublous days of the Mutiny which so quickly followed this alliance,

\*Roberts: Forty-One Years in India.



**MAHOMED SURAJ-OO-DEEN GAZEE, TITULAR KING OF DELHI**  
Born 1773, proclaimed Rebel King of Delhi, May 11, 1857,  
dethroned and captured, September 20, 1857.



ZENAT MAHAL, BEGUM OR QUEEN OF DELHI



when, had he turned against us, we should assuredly have lost the Punjab; Delhi could never have been taken; in fact I do not see how any part of the country north of Bengal could have been saved. Dost Mahomed's own people could not understand his attitude. They frequently came to him during the Mutiny, throwing their turbans at his feet, and praying him as a Mahomedan to seize that opportunity of destroying the 'infidels.' 'Hear the news from Delhi,' they urged, 'see the difficulties the *Feringhis* are in. Why don't you lead us on to take advantage of their weakness, and win back Peshawar?' "

Under the terms of the treaty a mission was despatched to Kandehar, and Peter Lumsden, the deputy-assistant-quartermaster-general was one of those selected for this mission, and Roberts was once more called on to fill that important office. He went on an extended tour of inspection as staff-officer with General Reed, and while at Rawal Pindi attracted the notice of John Lawrence, the chief-commissioner, who offered him a position in the Public Works Department. This was a tempting offer, and almost any other young soldier would have seized it, but it was otherwise with Roberts. To enter the Public Works Department would mean that he would have to give up soldiering. He was then in the department where he was most likely to see service in the field, and so he declined the generous offer.

During this tour he met at Nowshera a promising young subaltern five years his junior, George White, afterwards General Sir George White, who was to rise to the position of commander-in-chief of the forces in India, and who was later to gain the admiration of the world by his gallant defence of Ladysmith. White was at this time a lieutenant in the 27th Inniskilling regiment. During the Mutiny which was so soon to follow he was stationed in the north-west provinces to help guard against Afghan attacks, which, ever threatening, were prevented by the friendly attitude of Dost Mehomed. It is worthy of notice that more brilliant generals have received their training in the north-west provinces of India, more Victoria Crosses have been won in that same region than in all other parts of the Empire put together. The Afghan hills have been an excellent training school for the British army, although no doubt an expensive one.

That same spring Roberts had an important duty assigned him in his capacity of deputy-assistant-quartermaster-general. The climate of India has ever been most trying on European troops, and sanitariums were a necessity. He was ordered to inspect Cherat for sanitarium purposes. While engaged in this work he met, for the first time, the deputy-commissioner, Lieutenant-Colonel John Nicholson. It has already been pointed out that one of the leading traits in Roberts' character has been his reverence for his seniors and for strong men. He had often heard of John Nicholson; he had almost dreaded meeting him lest personal contact should disenchant him of the conception he had formed of the most talked-of, most loved, and most feared officer in India. But acquaintance only increased his admiration. Nicholson stands forth on the page of India's military history as does Gordon on China's. To Roberts he was the ideal soldier, and something of Nicholson's soul would almost seem to have entered his own. But all classes alike seem to have loved and revered this man. Lord Dalhousie called him "a pillar of strength on the frontier"; his magnetic personality so swayed the natives with whom he came in contact that they thought him a god, gave him a place in their saintly calendar, and the "Nicholseyns" even bent their knees to this new Allah. The meeting with Nicholson was one of the psychological moments of Roberts' life, and his impression of the man is well worth study.

\* "Nicholson impressed me more profoundly than any man I ever met before, or have ever met since. I have never seen any one like him. He was the beau-ideal of a soldier and a gentleman. His appearance was distinguished and commanding, with a sense of power about him which to my mind was the result of having passed so much of his life amongst the wild and lawless tribesmen, with whom his authority was supreme. Intercourse with this man amongst men made me more eager than ever to remain on the frontier, and I was seized with ambition to follow in his footsteps. Had I never seen Nicholson again, I might have thought that the feelings with which he inspired me were to some extent the result of my imagination, excited by the astonishing stories I had heard of his power and

\* Roberts: *Forty-One Years in India.*

influence; my admiration, however, for him was immeasurably strengthened when, a few weeks later, I served as his staff-officer, and had opportunities of observing more closely his splendid soldierly qualities and the workings of his grand, simple mind."

That last sentence might equally well have been written of Roberts himself. He is admirable at once for his splendid soldierly qualities and his grand, simple mind. In India and in Afghanistan his name among soldiers and natives alike is held in very much the same respect as was John Nicholson's. He has, indeed, more heart than Nicholson ever showed. We cannot imagine Frederick Sleigh Roberts ever urging on the government the necessity of passing a law authorizing, "the flaying alive, impalement, or burning of the murderers of the women and children in Delhi;" nor can we conceive of him ever using such extravagant language as "the idea of simply hanging the perpetrators of such atrocities is maddening." Roberts is all that Nicholson was and something more. He has during his long career of active service been forced to send many men to their deaths; but this trying duty he has always done with a painful calmness that showed how sacredly he held life. A Christian knight he has always been in every sense of the word, whereas in the presence of the brutal conduct of Nana Sahib's followers John Nicholson allowed the savage that is in every man to show itself; but Roberts under the most trying circumstances has ever maintained an unruffled calm and has never used intemperate language.

From Cherat Roberts returned to Peshawar. The last few months had been busy ones for him, and he was settling down to enjoy comparative rest, when, with the suddenness of a thunder-storm, the Mutiny broke out; and from Peshawar to Calcutta panic for the most part seized the sparsely settled Europeans. Roberts seems to have had no idea of the impending rebellion; but this is not to be wondered at when we remember that Lord Dalhousie had a few months before returned to England with the belief that India was never so peaceful and contented as in the last year of his rule.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE OUTBREAK OF THE MUTINY.

*The Great Indian Mutiny—Cause of Rebellion—The English Despise Natives—The Native Knew the Weakness of the Dominant Race—A Slumbering Giant—Lord Dalhousie's Errors—The Sepoys of Oudh—The Effects of Annexation of Oudh—The Nana—The Injustice Practised on the Rani of Jhansi—The Moulvie of Fyzabad—The Chupattees—The Storm Rising—Greased Cartridges—The Public Degradation of the Mulineers of Meerut—Confidence in England—A Storm of Rebellion Breaks over India.*

**E**NGLAND has had many struggles which have tried her strength, and for a time filled the nation with despair; but the one that will probably ever stand forth on the pages of her history as the most tragic, and at the same time most picturesque, will be the Great Indian Mutiny. The handful of English troops in the vast country, the distance from the homeland, the tens of thousands of rebels in arms or ready to spring to arms, the dread of Afghan invasion—made the struggle a most unequal one; but in the end, after receiving many hard knocks, no doubt the just punishment for the sins of the dominant race in the previous hundred years, England triumphed.

The world can at this distance judge the causes of this great outbreak much better than could those who took part in or lived contemporaneously with the bloody deeds that filled not only England, but the whole civilized world, with horror. Even yet, however, the majority of men dismiss the reasons for the Great Indian Mutiny with the brief words, "greased cartridges." This was only one among many causes, and served merely as the match to touch off the powder magazine. In the opinion of many the explosion coming when it did through these same greased cartridges, saved England from graver disasters than did actually befall her.

It would be well briefly to consider some of the many causes that were responsible for the savage uprising that spread like wildfire from Calcutta to

Peshawar; an uprising in which Earl Roberts was to get his early training, and in which he was to play an important and heroic part.

The first and most important cause was the utter lack of sympathy between the British in India and the Hindoos. The natives were a despised race; they could cook for their conquerors, wait on them, fight their battles; but for the most part no effort was made to win their affection and esteem. Taylor in his "Visit to India," published in 1853, four years before the Mutiny, wrote; "I allude to the contemptuous manner in which the natives, even those of the best and most intelligent classes, are almost invariably spoken of and treated. The tone adopted towards the lower classes is one of lordly arrogance; towards the rich and enlightened, one of condescension and patronage. I have heard the term 'niggers' applied to the whole race by those high in office; with the lower order of the English it is the designation in general use." Sir Charles Napier, who seemed to have a clear insight into the evils of India, and who repeatedly presaged the Mutiny, said "That nothing could be worse than the manners of Englishmen in India towards natives of all ranks."

A very clear-sighted Hindoo writer published, in 1858, in Calcutta an able book in which he acknowledged the great benefit British rule had been to his country; but he likewise saw where it had failed; and it was this failure that very largely enabled the Mutiny to become such a colossus.

"But it has failed," he says, "to foster the growth of an upper class, which would have served as a connecting link between the Government and the mass of the people. The higher order of the natives have, ever since its commencement, been shut out of all avenues of official distinction. They may acquire colossal fortunes in commercial and other pursuits or obtain diplomas and honors in colleges and universities; but they cannot be admitted into the civil service, or the higher grades in the military service, without undertaking a voyage to England, and complying with other equally impracticable conditions. The highest situations to which they can aspire, are Deputy-magistrateships and Sudder ameenships."

The Hindoo had long felt his position, but his natural cowardice had kept him from striking. However the rat that will scuttle to his hole at the

footstep of a man has been known, when joined by a sufficient number of his tribe, to turn upon man and rend him to pieces.

On the one hand the natives knew the strength and the weakness of the dominant race; on the other, the English knew practically nothing of what was going on in the natives' line. Many of the officials in every department of the service were raw youths who were "least qualified to make their way in their own country;" and this of itself, says a contemporary of the Mutiny, "Is such an insult to the natives, who are full of intelligence, and are making great progress in European knowledge of all kinds, that if anything could excuse them for rebelling it would be this." These young men, fresh from the great public schools of England, could write excellent Latin and Greek, but they made no effort to learn the language of the country they were to help govern. It is worthy of more than passing notice that Roberts, who was ambitious to rise to the very highest rank in the army in India, and who did ultimately attain that position, was four years in India before he made any effort to master Hindustani. And after all it was such a simple thing to do; two months sufficed him to get a good grip of the language of the people among whom he was to spend his best years.

Despised, their language treated with contempt, their wishes unheeded, a crushed, a contemptible race—it is little wonder that for years the subtler among them had slowly but steadily been disseminating a mutinous spirit throughout the whole of India. In the days of Hastings and Wellesley the magnificent feats of arms performed against them by their conquerors had awed them into timorous submission; but they had now learned to know how such victories were possible; they realized that they themselves were the main fighting force in the country. The British absolutely depended on them to fight their battles, and if they had but leaders they were ready to smite down their rulers. The terrible disaster to the force under Elphinstone in Afghanistan had greatly weakened the respect in which for a century British arms had been held; and many of the bitterer among the Hindus had for years hoped for an opportunity of repeating the brutal work done by Akbar Khan.

While this mutinous spirit was so widely diffused, it was without a

centre. It was a slumbering giant without a heart or a head. A rapid succession of events between the years 1850 and 1857 was to focus this spirit in the sepoy regiments along the Ganges and the Jumna. Lord Dalhousie, of whom Roberts has said that he had filled "the arduous and responsible position of governor-general for no less than eight years, adding year by year fresh lustro to his splendid reputation," could and did make some serious blunders.

In 1852, during the second Burmese War, Lord Dalhousie selected a regiment stationed at Barrackpur for service in Burmah. But the particular regiment selected "had enlisted on the condition that they were to serve in Hindustan and Hindustan only." The sepoys refused to embark, and Lord Dalhousie could not force them to obey his orders. Of this unhappy event Colonel G. B. Malleon says in his "The Indian Mutiny": "The story of this spread like wild-fire all over India. The effect of it was most disastrous to discipline. In the lines and huts of the sepoys the warmest sympathy was expressed for a regiment which could thus successfully defy a governor-general." The sepoys through this resistance began to realize their power but still rebellion was remote.

The thing, however, which was most disastrous to the British at this critical period of their history in India was the annexation of Oudh. The ablest sepoys in the army had been enlisted in Oudh, and as the natives looked upon the action of Lord Dalhousie as a gross injustice to their king and to themselves, a sullen bitterness was engendered in the hearts of the soldiers in the Bengal Presidency who had come from Oudh, and this spirit soon spread throughout the entire army. Individually they felt themselves to be great sufferers by the change. Malleon thus strongly puts the case: "The majority of the sepoys serving in the Bengal Presidency, and a portion of those serving in the Bombay army, were recruited from the kingdom of Oudh. The sepoy so recruited possessed the right of petitioning the British Resident at the court of Lakhnao (Lucknow) on all matters effecting his own interests, and the interests of his family in the Oudh dominion. This right of petition was a privilege the value of which can be realized by those who

have any knowledge of the working of courts of justice in a native state. The Resident of Lakhnao was, in the eyes of the native judge, the advocate of the petitioning sepoy. The advantage of possessing so influential an advocate was so great that there was scarcely a family in Oudh which was not represented in the native army. . . . All at once this privilege was swept away." English officials, incapables for the most part, sat in the seats lately occupied by the native judges.

When Lord Dalhousie's design to annex this important district became known the greatest indignation was expressed by the sepoys; and when Sir James Outram was sent from Calcutta to take possession, it was all some of the officers commanding sepoys from Oudh could do to prevent a mutiny from culminating them. Of the situation Malleson, writing as he says from his own personal experience, remarks: "Never shall I forget the agitation which prevailed in the sepoy guard over my official quarters when the object of the expedition oozed out. Most of those forming it were Oudh men, and I had to use all the influence I possessed to prevent an outbreak. My native subordinates in the Commissariat Department assured me that a similar feeling was being manifested in the lines of the sepoys."

After the annexation was accomplished red tape and incapacity showed themselves to an alarming degree, with the most disastrous results. If the sepoys from Oudh in the British army were dissatisfied, the leading men of their country had even greater reason for dissatisfaction. The whole fabric of society in the annexed kingdom was affected by the change; and hatred for the English grew and spread. When Mr. Gubbins' "Mutiny in Oudh" is read, the reason for this will be evident to the most careless thinker on Indian affairs. Mr. Gubbins was financial commissioner for Oudh during the annexation period, and therefore speaks with authority.

\*"The nobles," he says, "had received large pensions from the Native government, the payment of which, never regular, ceased with the introduction of our rule. Government had made liberal provision for their support; but before this could be obtained it was necessary to prepare careful lists of the grantees, and to investigate their claims. It must be admitted

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\*Gubbins: Mutiny in Oudh.





**LIEUT. ROBERTS KNOCKED OVER BY A ROUND SHOT, IN No. 1 BATTERY,  
BEFORE DELHI**

"The enemy had got our range with wonderful accuracy and immediately on the screen in front of the right gun being removed, a round shot came through the embrasure knocking two or three of us over."

*Roberts's Forty-One Years in India.*



**LIEUT. ROBERTS' LAST SIGHT OF GENERAL NICHOLSON,  
AT THE TAKING OF DELHI**

"While riding through the Kashmir Gate I observed by the side of the road a dhoolie, without bearers and with evidently a wounded man inside. I found to my grief and consternation that it was General Nicholson with death written on his face."

*Roberts: Forty-One Years in India.*

that in investigating this there was undue delay, and that for want of common means of support the gentry and peasantry of the city were brought to great straits and suffering. We were informed that families, which had never before been outside the Zunana, used to go out at night and beg their bread."

England had undertaken more empire than she was able to govern. The few troops already in India by being scattered over wider districts were rendered still less able to check the storm of rebellion that was silently but surely gathering head.

Nor were these the only causes for general discontent. The brutal Nana Sahib, with whom it is impossible for a European to sympathize in any way, according to eastern ideas had been outrageously treated; and the Rani of Jhansi, a "largely gifted" woman "of great energy" had been, by the hand of the same despoilers, "lashed into a fury which was not to be governed." In this latter case Malleon says: "In vain did the Rani dwell on the services which in olden days the rulers of Jhansi had rendered to the British government, and quote the warm acknowledgement made by that government. Lord Dalhousie was not to be moved. He had faith in his legions. With a stroke of his pen he deprived this high-spirited woman of the right which she believed, and which all the natives in India believed, to be hereditary. That stroke of the pen converted the lady of so high a character, and so much respected, into a veritable tigress so far as the English were concerned."

Thus lack of sympathy with the natives, red-tape, dependence on a despised people, careless, and, from a Hindu point of view, unjust treatment of native princes, had made the whole region drained by the Ganges and Jumna an excellent soil for the growth of mutiny; and a deadly upas tree was soon to spread its branches over that fair and fertile land.

The Mutiny had been decided on by the end of 1856, and the priestly caste in the army and in the country had much to do with disseminating its principles. Chief among those who had to do with the work of cementing the Hindus and Mahomedans into a strong revolutionary unit was Ahmad-

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\*Malleon: The Indian Mutiny.

Ullah, better known as the Moulvie (learned man) of Fyzabad in Oudh. He was "a man of great ability, undaunted courage, of stern determination, and by far the best soldier among the rebels." He travelled throughout the length and breadth of India, and wherever he went he left behind him Chupattees (cakes of unleavened bread), and whosoever received them held himself in readiness to obey the call to arms. That the distribution of these cakes aroused but little suspicion in the minds of the English officials shows in what blind security the British in India were living. Rev. J. Cave-Brown gives the following noteworthy paragraph on this mysterious performance:

"One district officer, who saw a chupattee-laden messenger arrive in a village, and observed him breaking his cakes into pieces and distributing them among the men of the village, asked what it meant; he was told that there was an old custom in Hindustan that when their *malik*, or chief, required any service from his people, he adopted this mode to prepare them for receiving his orders, and everyone who partook of these chupattees was held 'pledged to obey the order, whenever it might come and whatever it might be.' 'What was the nature of the order in the present case?' he asked; the answer, accompanied by a suspicious smile was, 'We don't know yet.'"

Roberts, who seems to have shared with the majority of British soldiers in India in the feeling of security, had for several months heard at Peshawar of this distribution, but apparently attached no importance to it, excepting that he believed it was done "with the object of preparing the natives for some forthcoming event."

Previously to the great outburst that thrilled the civilized world there were several local outbreaks at Berhampur and Barrackpur; and Englishmen had been murdered and bungalows burned, but there was no general uprising till the greased cartridges brought matters to a head, rousing the cowardly Easterner by religious frenzy to a high pitch of courage.

The cartridges had to be bitten, and, as they were said to be greased with the fat of the cow and the hog, the fomenters of the Mutiny had no difficulty in making the Hindus and Mahomedans believe that the English were attempting to deprive them of their caste, as to the one the fat of the cow was

forbidden, to the other that of the hog. The indignation against the use of the cartridge is said to have arisen from the following incident: "A lascar engaged in the factory at Dum-Dum asked a Brahman sepoy to let him have a drink of water from his *lotah*, or brass pot. The sepoy indignantly refused, on the ground that his caste would not permit him to use the *lotah* afterwards if it should be defiled by the drinking of a man of a lower order in the Hindu hierarchy; the lascar, in reply, laughed at him for talking of defilement, and he added, 'You will all soon be hitting cartridges smeared with the fat of the cow and the pig.' He then told the sepoy the method of the new cartridges. The incident occurred when the minds of the sepoys had been inflamed, in the manner already recounted, to a high state of excitement." The story spread like wildfire. Thenceforward the sepoys were as soft as clay in the hands of the chief conspirators.

However, the English did not realize the danger till it was upon them; until for the great majority of those stationed in the country at any distance from the sea-coast there was no escape from the hardships of a trying siege or of death. It was not till early in May, when the eighty-five troopers at Meerut refused to receive the cartridges, that the English in India awoke to the seriousness of their position. These troopers were promptly court-martialed, and though the members of the court were all native officers they were sentenced to imprisonment with hard labor for periods varying from six to ten years. It was deemed wise to make as great an example as possible of these mutinous soldiers, and so they were marched in a body to the parade-ground, and before the entire force at Meerut were degraded, shackled, and ironed. The natives watched the proceedings in sullen silence, and heard the clink-clank of the hammer on the rivets of the shackles without a murmur, and when their comrades were marched to their prison they settled down to their routine of duty, apparently having submitted to the inevitable, but in their hearts they looked upon every man of the eighty-five as a hero.

The English officers were confident that the mutinous spirit of Meerut had been nipped in the bud. The incident related in the last paragraph occurred on Saturday; the quiet of the following Sabbath was to see a savage outburst. Women and children were to be slaughtered; men, who

prided themselves on the affection in which they were held by their soldiers, were to be smitten down by the troops they trusted; the prisons were to be emptied; murder, plunder, burning of hungalows was to go on on all sides. And alas! there was no strong man present capable of grappling with the situation. Had there been, India might have been saved the horrors of Delhi, although it was impossible to check the rising mutiny that had to come to purify the air and to teach the English their duty in India.

Now that the rebellion had broken out in earnest it found a fertile soil. Religious enthusiasm was its handmaid; confidence of success gave the rebels an unnatural courage; and superstition assured them that they would win. The sepoys believed that there had been a deep-laid scheme by means of the greased cartridges and by mixing the ground bones of hullocks with their flour to make Christians of them. Nana Sahib had already been at work, and his agent to England Azim-ullah Khan had brought back stories of England's weakness. He had seen England's blunders in the Crimea, he had heard the critics of that great war on the floor of the Commons, and he believed her to be a declining nation who had a small force in India because she could spare no more men, and he made every native with whom he came in contact believe it too; and had it not been prophesied that on the centenary of Plassey English rule would end in India?

It was in such an India that the Meerut outburst occurred; and while the people in England were making preparations to celebrate the great victory of 1757, and were reading in the daily papers and hearing in the houses of parliament of the peaceful and hopeful condition in the east, rapine and murder were rampant along the Ganges. No wonder Roberts and his comrades were startled when, on May 11, the telegraph signaller rushed into the mess to tell them that Meerut was aflame with mutiny, and that the rebels had fled in a body to the badly protected city of Delhi.

The force at Peshawar was awake in an instant. The mutiny was upon them and many of the soldiers in the little army at that station were to prove themselves heroes in the next two years; and no man was to show greater courage or to do his duty more thoroughly than the son of Abraham Roberts who had already won the esteem of some of the best officers in India.

## CHAPTER VII.

### ON THE ROAD TO DELHI.

An Exciting Telegram Received at Peshawar—Prompt Action of the Officers on the Frontier—The Situation a Most Alarming One—A Movable Column Formed—Roberts Goes as Staff Officer with Brigadier Chamberlain in Command of the Column—Roberts' Magnetic Personality—An Experience with the Sterner Side of John Nicholson's Character—Fear of an Outbreak at Peshawar—At Rawal Pindi—News of Tragedy and Heroism from Delhi—The Movable Column on the March—Two Mutineers Blown from the Guns—Rebellion in Many Places in the Punjab—Chamberlain Goes to the "Ridge"—Nicholson in Command of the Movable Column—An Incident in the Career of John Nicholson—Roberts Needed at the "Ridge."

**N**ATURALLY enough the telegram with regard to the outbreak at Meerut threw the officers in Peshawar into a state of great excitement. Fortunately, however, there were at this station several officers, who, though young in years, were old in experience and wise in their knowledge of the native character. Lieutenant-Colonel Davidson, who commanded the 16th Irregular Cavalry, was present at the mess when the message arrived with the tragic tidings, and at once grasped the situation and acted with a promptness that very probably saved the district of Peshawar from suffering the fate of Meerut and Delhi. He commanded every officer present to maintain the most absolute secrecy with regard to the telegram that had been received and at once hastened to Commissioner Edwardes, who fortunately lived with his Deputy-Commissioner John Nicholson in close proximity to the mess. These two courageous and capable officers saw the danger that was threatening them and knew that a rising at Peshawar would very probably mean the destruction of the small force of European troops stationed there. They therefore lost no time in acting. Edwardes at once hurried to consult with the general in command of the division, while John Nicholson went to the mess to impress on the young officers the need of being watchful and of keeping a close guard on their tongues.

He found them still very much excited; and little wonder. There was at Peshawar but two regiments of British troops, which, with the artillery, made up a total of 2,000 men, while the three regiments of Native Cavalry and five of Native Infantry gave an armed force that could not be trusted of no less than 5,000 men. This was not the only thing to be dreaded; 2,000 British troops could easily have crushed the 5,000 natives; but there was another factor to be considered. The inhabitants of the city of Peshawar numbered 50,000, and if the sepoys should once revolt this mob would swarm to their assistance. Moreover, the chupattees had done their work, and the inhabitants of the whole valley of Peshawar would doubtless join with the rebels in the city and in the army. Then, too, the border tribes which the Peshawar force was keeping in check would have all their predatory instincts aroused if once the natives rose against their rulers; and in their hearts the frontier people hated the English with an intense hatred. The situation was a grave one, and but for the presence of such men as General Reed, Commissioner Edwardes, John Nicholson, Neville Chamberlain, and Sydney Cotton, all of whom had displayed exceptional wisdom in their dealings with frontier tribes, India might have been overrun from the north, and nothing could have saved the Punjab. Neville Chamberlain, Commandant of the Punjab Frontier Force, was not at Peshawar when the telegram arrived; but he was needed by General Reed, who promptly summoned him from Kohat.

Edwardes and Nicholson were busy men for the first twenty-four hours after the tragic telegram was received. All native mail was seized by their orders and opened, and for the first time these astute men realized on what a sleeping volcano they were living. Treachery and sedition were rife; every regiment was concerned in it, and the sepoys were but waiting the order to spring to arms and strike down their officers. The situation was an appalling one; an incautious word, a false move would mean calamity. General Reed called a meeting of the officers under him to consider how the Punjab might be saved. At this meeting there were present General Reed, Brigadier Sydney Cotton, Colonel Edwardes, Colonel Nicholson, Brigadier Neville Chamberlain, and Captain Wright. To it, likewise, was called Lieut. Roberts in his capacity of Deputy-Assistant-Quartermaster-General.



The situation was not a promising one. In the Punjab there were about 15,000 British troops with 84 guns, while the natives had over 65,000 men and 62 guns, and moreover, some of the stations were without European soldiers. The gravest danger, however, was from the frontier tribes, and now the wisdom of the policy instituted by Abraham Roberts manifested itself. Edwardes and Nicholson, who knew the frontier better than any men at that time, advised that confidence be placed in the chiefs. The chiefs knew these men, and stood by them rather than by the English throughout the Mutiny. It was decided, too, at this meeting, that General Reed should join the chief commissioner, John Lawrence, at Rawal Pindi; that Brigadier Sydney-Cotton should remain in command at Peshawar; and what is of more importance to this narrative, that a movable column of reliable troops should be formed. For the command of this column an accurate knowledge of the country and an intimate acquaintance with the natives were necessary. Brigadier Neville Chamberlain was chosen for this difficult and important command, and Lieutenant Roberts waited anxiously till the commander-in-chief in India, General Anson, should sanction the appointment. Although his "Forty-One Years in India" was written when he was over sixty years old, there is a boyish freshness about the paragraph giving the state of his feelings while he waited to see who would command this column.

"My anxiety," he said, "as to the commander-in-chief's decision was very considerable; for Brigadier Chamberlain, to my infinite delight and astonishment, had offered, in the event of his being appointed, to take me with him as his staff-officer—the most wonderful piece of good fortune that could have come to me; my readers must imagine my feelings for it is impossible for me to describe them. My most sanguine hopes seemed about to be more than realized; for though the serious aspect of affairs seemed to promise a charco of active service, I little thought that I should be lucky enough to be employed as staff-officer to such a distinguished general as Neville Chamberlain."

It was indeed an honor, and something of which a young man of twenty-five could be exceedingly proud. There must have been something

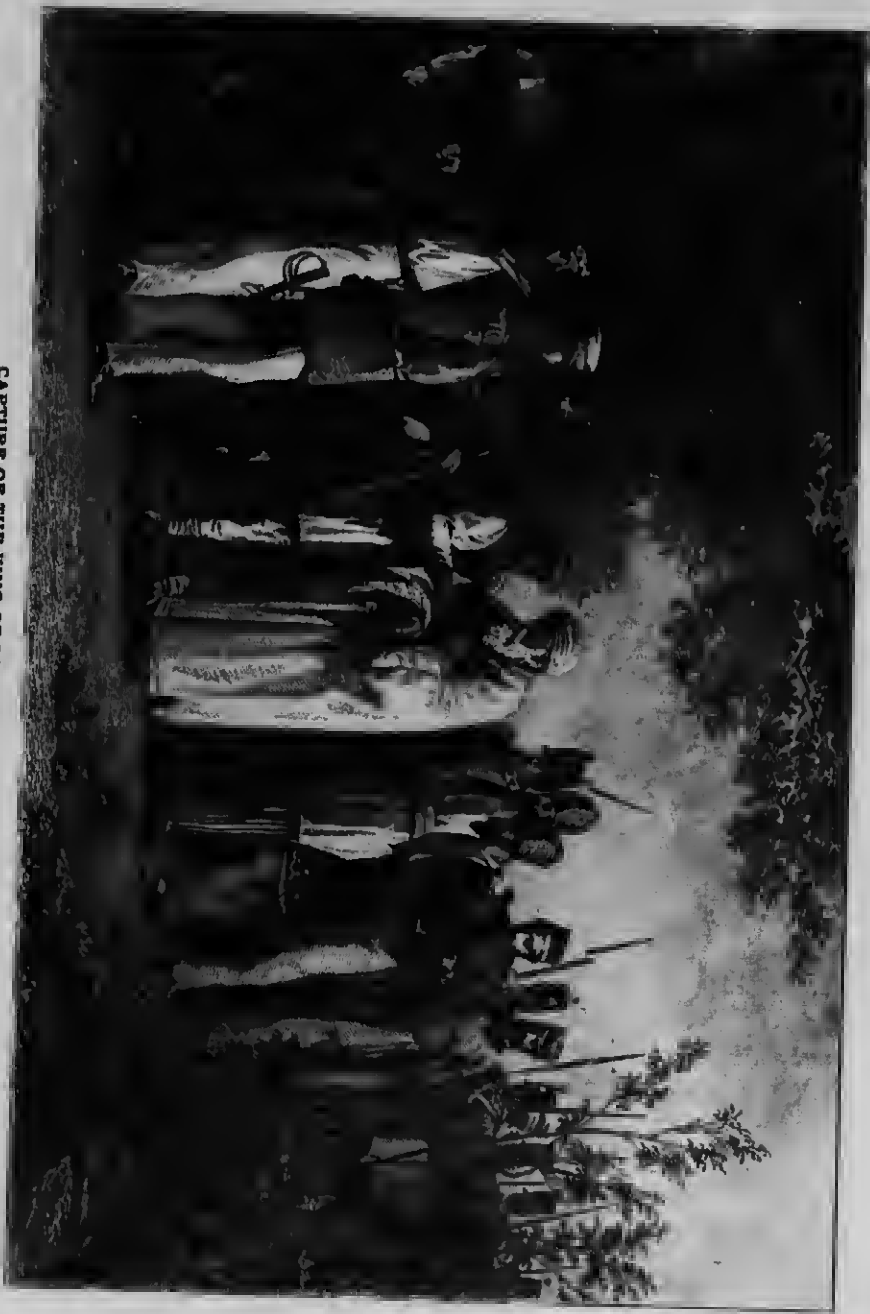
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\*Roberts; *Forty-One Years in India*.

remarkably magnetic about Roberts' personality even in those years. He had been in India less than four years, and had already attracted the attention of Colonel Beecher, quartermaster-general; John Lawrence, the chief commissioner; of John Nicholson, and now of that distinguished soldier, Nevillo Chamberlain. How absolutely General Reed trusted him is evident from the fact that he was given the task of seeing the despatches sent off which "disclosed more or less the measures that had been decided upon." The following despatch was the all important one, and from it may be dated Roberts' career of active service in India:—

"The senior military officer in the Punjab, Major-General Reed, having this morning received news of the disarming of the troops at Mian Mir, a council of war was held, consisting of General Reed, Brigadier Cotton, Brigadier Nevillo Chamberlain, Colonel Edwardes, and Colonel Nicholson, and the following measure was decided on, subject to the confirmation of the commander-in-chief. General Reed assumes the chief military command in the Punjab; his headquarters will be the headquarters of the Punjab Civil Government, and a movable column will be formed at Jhelum at once. . . . The necessary orders for this column have been issued. The column will move upon every point in the Punjab where open mutiny requires to be put down by force, and officers commanding at all stations in the Punjab will co-operate with the column."

Roberts, flushed with pride at the confidence placed in him, saw that this message was sent to its various destinations. He had spoken to no man about it; and the next morning was somewhat amazed when he received a visit from John Nicholson. The contents of the message were known in the British lines; and who could have divulged them but the young lieutenant in whom such confidence had been placed. The stern eye and the severe face of the man among men whom he most admired did not make him flinch. He denied the charge, and when the matter was investigated it was found that the signaller had in the usual way told a friend. Roberts was exonerated. How keenly he appreciated Nicholson's friendship is evident from his closing remarks on this incident. "The result to me of this unpleasant incident was the delightful increase of intimacy with the man



CAPTURE OF THE KING OF DELHI BY CAPTAIN HODSON



**KOER SING**  
A Typical Indian Prince of the Mutiny Days.

for whom above all others I had the greatest admiration and most profound respect. As if to make up for his momentary injustice, Nicholson was kinder to me than ever, and I felt I had gained in him a firm and constant friend."

Fortunately, however, the lack of sympathy between the Europeans and natives in Peshawar, increased by the situation, kept the contents of these despatches from reaching the native lines.

Roberts was now on Chamberlain's staff, and with the other officers of Peshawar spent a thoroughly uncomfortable week before departing to join the movable column. The air was heavy with mutiny, at any moment the thunderbolt might fall. As he lay at rest at night listening to the footfalls of his guard, he felt how uncertain life was; without warning the sepoy supposed to be protecting him might turn on him and slay him. He was, therefore, greatly relieved when orders came for him to hasten to Rawal Pindi to join the movable column, which was to be formed at Wazirabad. So Roberts left Peshawar, where his father had ruled so well and which had been such an excellent preliminary school for him—left the comfortable house where he and Lieutenant Hovenden had settled down to enjoy the summer; and so ended his life at Peshawar.

For six days he remained at Rawal Pindi drafting or copying confidential letters and telegrams. The message that had startled the mess at Meerut had made him realize that the English in India were in great danger; but his present work gave him an opportunity of learning of the extent and depth of the plot on foot to drive the English out of India. Day by day the cloud grew thicker, day by day the utter hopelessness of stemming the tide of mutiny made itself evident. He was in the confidence of John Lawrence and Neville Chamberlain, and, while they did not despair, they saw that fierce fighting would have to take place before the swarming mobs centring at Delhi and Cawnpore and Lucknow could be put down. Fortunately they were but mobs—mad fanatic rabbles bent on plunder and murder. They were without competent leaders, and this alone saved England in her hour of peril.

The cloud that was over Delhi spread to Peshawar. The English were

thought to be tottering to their fall; and even John Nicholson, with all his persuasive powers, could not get men along the frontier to enlist. It was thought that in a few weeks at the outside the small army at Peshawar would be crushed beneath the weight of a general rising. However, Brigadier Cotton, old, experienced and wise, met the difficulty. The native troops with weapons (which they knew how to use) in their hands were a menace, and so he forced (literally forced in some cases, for the officers would not believe their men mutinous) their commanders to disarm them; this act, with the good will of the frontier chiefs, saved Peshawar.

The situation at Delhi grew graver, and it was found necessary to hasten the completion of the movable column, and Chamberlain and Roberts set out for Wazirabad to join the column, and found Major Davis' troop of European horse artillery, a European battery of field artillery, commanded by Captain Bouchier, and Her Majesty's 52nd Light Infantry, commanded by Colonel George Campbell, already on the ground. "In addition, and with a view of reducing the native garrison of Sialkot, a wing of the 9th Bengal Light Cavalry and the 35th Native Infantry were attached to the column."

On May 31 the column reached Lahore, a city of about 100,000 inhabitants, and found the wildest excitement prevailing there; but this was somewhat allayed when on June 2 the strong and well officered force under Neville Chamberlain marched into the city. It soothed the feelings of the Europeans, it made the Sikhs strong in their resolve to be loyal to the English, and it for a time cowed the mutinous natives. But it was only for a time; six days after the column entered Lahore Roberts was roused by one of the men "With the news that the 35th Native Infantry intended to revolt at daybreak." At once Roberts awoke Chamberlain. The men were ordered to fall in, and two of them were found to have loaded muskets.

It was time for prompt action, perhaps cruel action. It is hard to judge unless one has been in the thick of the struggle. The strongest defence of Cromwell's life is the faith, trust, and sympathy he had from the pure-souled John Milton; and the fact that Roberts, whose career is without stain, who has never been unnecessarily cruel, saw nothing wrong in the action taken by Chamberlain on this critical occasion, should make the critic pause. Good

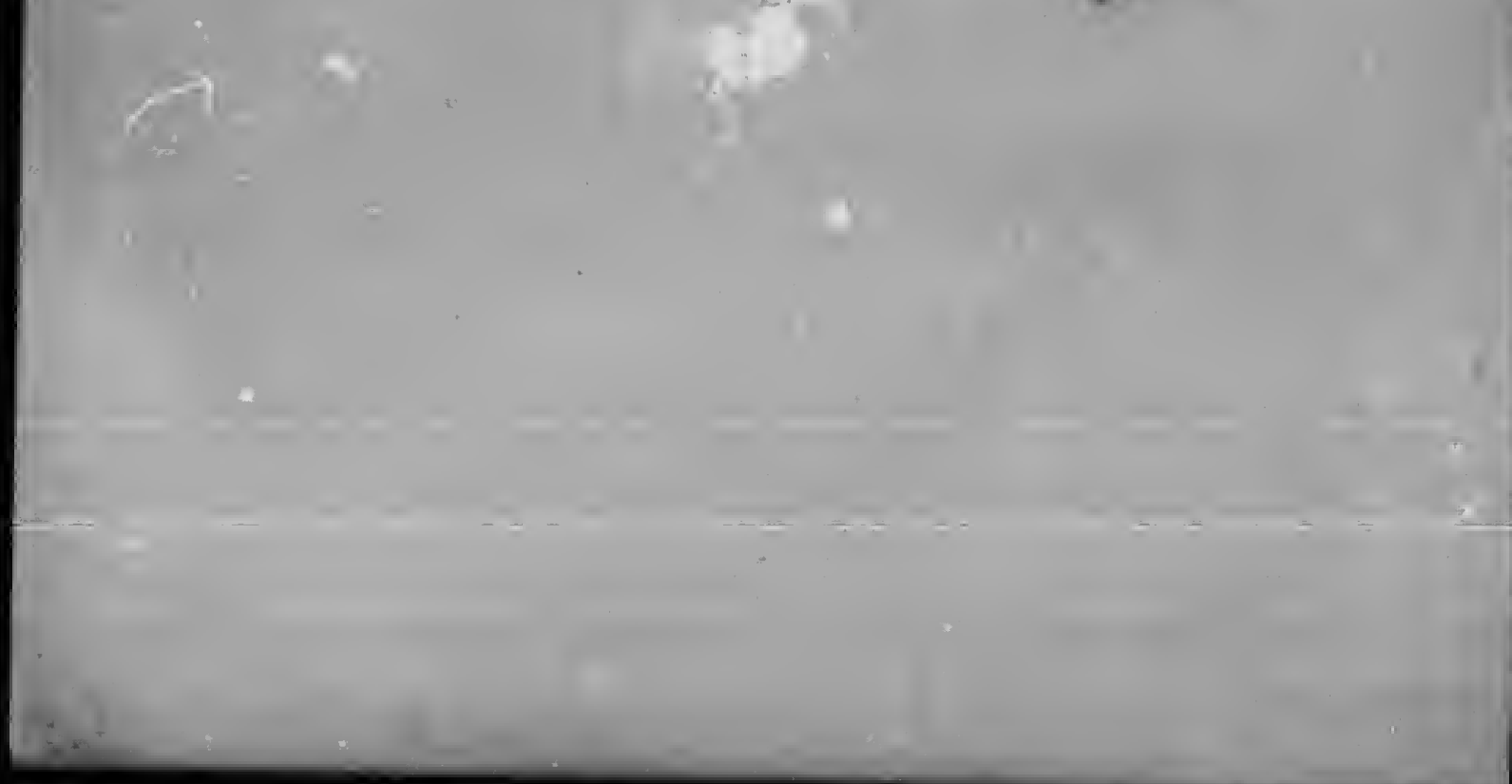
people have been heard vehemently defending the lynchings of the Southern States. However, the situation is such an interesting one, and throws so much light on the early character of Roberts, that it will be best to quote in full the account he has given of it in his "Forty-One Years in India."

Chamberlain ordered a drum head court-martial at which the two soldiers were found guilty of mutiny and sentenced to death. "Chamberlain decided that they should be blown away from guns in the presence of their own comrades, as being the most awe-inspiring means of carrying the sentence into effect. A parade was at once ordered. The troops were drawn up so as to form three sides of a square; on the fourth side were two guns. As the prisoners were being brought to the parade, one of them asked if they were going to be blown from the guns. I said 'Yes.' He made no further remark, and they both walked steadily until they reached the guns, to which they were bound, when one of them requested that some rupees he had on his person might be saved for his relations. The brigadier answered: 'It is too late!' The word of command was given; the guns went off simultaneously, and the two mutineers were launched into eternity.

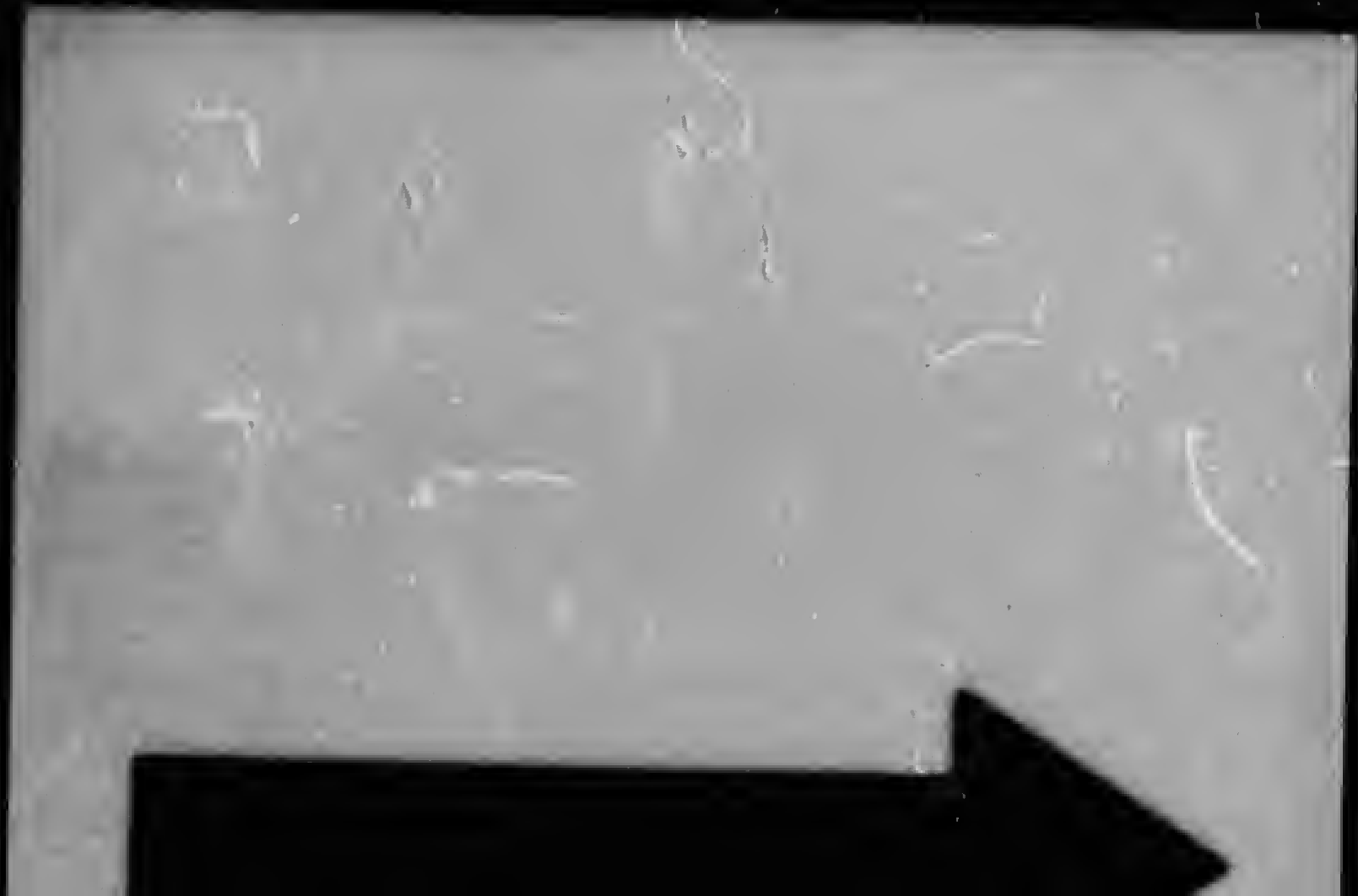
"It was a terrible sight, and one likely to haunt the beholder for many a long day; but that was what was intended. I carefully watched the sepoys' faces to see how it affected them. They were evidently startled at the swift retribution which had overtaken their guilty comrades, but looked more crestfallen than shocked or horrified, and we soon learned that their determination to mutiny and make the best of their way to Delhi was in no way changed by the scene they had witnessed."

"In no way changed by the scene they had witnessed!" These are important words; the brutalizing sight had not deterred them from joining their rebel comrades, and it doubtless hardened their hearts still more against the British. It may have in some cases, served as an incentive to their butcheries; blood will have blood, especially among savage people; and if the civilized and cultured Englishmen could practise the most disgusting form of execution conceivable, what could be expected of a cowardly mob of semi-civilized fanatics when the stronger race was in their power.

This execution is worthy of note, too, on account of the calm way in

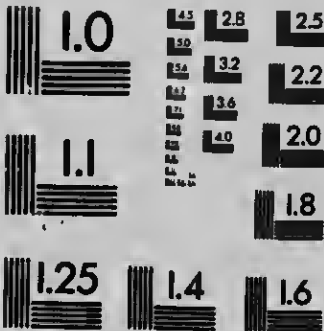






# MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

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which Roberts viewed it. He seems ever to have been able by the will that has made him England's first soldier to steel himself into the power of enduring unmoved any situation in life. He has been able to send men to their death; to send troops on forlorn hopes, knowing that they must inevitably be cut to pieces; he has suffered the most trying reverses with an absolutely unmoved countenance. No Cato could be more stoical than he, and of all qualities this is the most needed in a great leader of men. He would have been more admirable, however, to many had he been shocked or horrified at this horrible execution. But then, doubtless, to him, as to most of the English in India, sepoys were only "niggers."

For several days after this execution the column remained inactive at Lahore. Whither would they proceed? Many places in the Punjab were reaching out beseeching hands to them. Ferozepore, Multan, Jhelum, Sialkot, Umritsar, Jullundur, Phillour, Ludhiana, all needed them. Robbery and incendiarism were rife, and the Europeans in these and many other places were living in constant fear of death.

Multan was perhaps the most important of these towns, but fortunately there was in it a commander capable of meeting the situation. The native soldiers in Multan, under Major Crawford Chamberlain, were inclined to be mutinous; and every effort was made to seduce them from the British service. In one instance the emissaries of the rebels, who penetrated the lines of the sepoys, held out as a bribe to a native adjutant of the First Irregular Cavalry an offer of the throne of Multan if he would turn on the English with his men. But the First were attached to Chamberlain by the strongest ties of love, and its adjutant was not to be tempted even by a throne. However soon afterwards a plot was discovered to murder Chamberlain and his family; and fearing that in the universal feeling of revolt his men could not stand the strain much longer, Chamberlain disarmed the native soldiers in the suspected corps, and Multan was saved.

The column was now free to march to Umritsar, and when it arrived there it found it was to lose its leader. The men were on their way towards the city of Delhi, and all hoped that Umritsar was but a stage on the journey. They were to be disappointed. There was still work for them to

do in the Punjab, but their leader was needed at the "Ridge," and on June 13 he set out for Delhi having been promoted to the rank of adjutant-general. Roberts was in high hopes that he would be taken to Delhi with Chamberlain. He had, as he says with a soldier's selfishness, dreaded that Delhi would fall before he could reach it; and now a chance of helping storm its high walls seemed to have come his way. Chamberlain, however, much as he would have liked to take his young staff-officer with him, thought first of the needs of the column. Roberts was its staff-officer; he would be a serious loss to it, and so the ardent young lieutenant suffered disappointment. However the disappointment was somewhat allayed when he learned that John Nicholson was to command the column in place of Chamberlain.

Jullundur was in a mutinous state, and before Nicholson could join the column a rapid march began for that place. In the meantime the command rested on Colonel Dennis who had never had a command before; and not knowing how to act, in his despair left practically everything to his energetic young staff-officer, probably the youngest officer in the command. Fortunately Roberts had at his shoulder an experienced and helpful, if somewhat eccentric, soldier in the person of Colonel Campbell.

When they reached Jullundur they found affairs there as they were in too many of the stations. Incendiarism was common; plunder went on unchecked. The sepoye were mutinous, and as the regular garrison had been withdrawn to Delhi, Major Edward Lake, the commissioner, was doing all in his power to keep on the most friendly terms with the Raja of Kapurthala whose troops were doing garrison duty. In order to cement the British and the Kapurthala people into a firm union Lake called a meeting of the leading officers and civilians at his house to consider the situation. At this meeting an incident occurred which well showed the state of the native mind, and the bold and wise character of John Nicholson, who now, as brigadier-general, was in command of the column.

\* "At the close of the ceremony Methab Sing, a general officer in the Kapurthala army took his leave, and, as the senior in rank at the durbar, was walking out of the room first, when I observed Nicholson talk to the

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<sup>5</sup> Roberts: Forty-One Years in India.

door, put himself in front of Methab Sing, and, waving him back with an authoritative air, prevented him from leaving the room. The rest of the company then passed out, but when they had gone, Nicholson said to Lake: 'Do you see that General Methab Sing has his shoes on?' (in evident disrespect). "Lake replied that he had noticed the fact, but tried to excuse it. Nicholson, however, speaking in Hindustani said: 'There is no possible excuse for such an act of gross impertinence. Methab Sing knows perfectly well that he would not venture to step on his own father's carpet save barefooted, and he has only committed this breach of etiquette to-day because he thinks we are not in a position to resent the insult, and that he can treat us as he would not have dared to do a month ago.' Methab Sing looked extremely foolish, and stammered some kind of an apology; but Nicholson was not to be appeased and continued: 'If I were the last Englishman left in Jullundur, you,' (addressing Methab Sing) 'should not come into my room with your shoes on.' Then politely turning to Lake he added, 'I hope the commissioner will now allow me to order you to take your shoes off and carry them out in your own hands, so that your followers may witness your discomfiture.' Methab Sing, completely cowed, meekly did as he was told."

This incident greatly increased Roberts' appreciation of Nicholson, and the will and courage displayed by the brigadier-general on this occasion did much to shape Roberts' mode of treating natives in India. The training he was receiving under John Nicholson was invaluable, even better than he had had under Neville Chamberlain.

But not even Nicholson was able to down the spirit of mutiny that was in the native lines at Jullundur; and when the column marched from this station a few days after the Methab Sing incident the commander found it necessary to disarm the 35th, already with the column, and the 33rd, which joined it at Hoshiarpur. It was well he did so, for many in these two corps as they marched towards Delhi only waited the opportunity to slip away and rush to the assistance of their friends in that city.

As the column trudged onward all the soldiers hoped that Delhi was their destination, but in this, too, they were to be disappointed. The Punjab was not yet quiet, and despite the disarming and punishment of so many native

corps its removal would probably have caused an instant rising. Roberts, however, was to receive word that would rejoice his heart. The siege was being vigorously pushed forward, but the small force at the "Ridge" required every available artillery officer; and Nicholson received a telegram from Sir Henry Barnard to send to him all artillery officers not doing regimental duty.

The young and ambitious lieutenant would in a few days be in the thick of the fight. He rejoiced at the prospect, although he had considerable sorrow at leaving the column. John Nicholson's personality so dominated his spirit that he deeply regretted parting with him. His career, however, called him away. At Delhi lay his duty, and at Delhi he would have a chance that counts for much—honors won on the bloody field of battle. The regret was mutual; Brigadier-General Nicholson loved his young staff-officer, and expressed the pain it caused him to have him go, especially as in the whole column there was no man who could take his place.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### FIGHTING ON THE "RIDGE."

Roberts on the Road to Delhi—Approaching the Ridge—Welcomed by His Father's old Staff Officer, Assistant Adjutant-General Henry Norman—Justin McCarthy on the Outbreak of the Mutiny—The Heroism of Lieut. Willoughby and His Comrades—An Inadequate Force Sent to Capture Delhi—The Defences of the City—Constant Fighting Around the "Ridge"—Roberts' Baptism of Fire—Courageous Hindoo Servants—Daring Deed of Captain Tombs and Lieutenant "Jemmy" Hills—Roberts Wounded While Helping to Save English Guns—Hospital Experiences—Birds and Beasts of Prey About the "Ridge"—The Fall of Delhi Apparently Very Remote.

**R**OBERTS had good-bye to John Nicholson and set out by mail-cart for Delhi, the point of the greatest military interest at that time in India. His first stopping place was Ludhiana and while resting here and refreshing himself he was regaled by George Rickets, the Deputy Commissioner, with stories of sharp fighting that had already taken place in that region. These tales of reverses, heroism, and death only filled the ambitious young lieutenant with a greater desire to reach the scene of conflict. The next stopping place was Umballa. He here found that an immediate opportunity of reaching Delhi was not likely to be his. The place was crowded with officers waiting for a chance to join the besieging force, and the mail-cart service was so limited that he would have to wait his turn, which might be some days distant. But he had the will, and the way opened up. An extra cart was to be sent with ammunition, and by skilfully managing the authorities he got a seat for himself, Captain Law, and Lieutenant Packe in this cart, much to the chagrin of the other soldiers.

On they sped as fast as the ponies could carry them until Alipur was reached; and then the driver refused to go further. Bands of the enemy were prowling about the country in the rear of the British force, plundering and elaying; but the young men were not to be kept back, and taking the mail-cart ponies they rode towards the camp. They were uncertain of the



**ROBERTS SAVED FROM DEATH AT AGRA**

In a hand to hand fight Roberts was unable to use his sword, his pistol missed fire, and he was apparently at the mercy of a Rebel, when a man of the 9th Lancers came to his rescue.





**LIEUT. ROBERTS SAVED BY HIS RESTIVE HORSE AT BULANDEKAHR**  
"In the midst of the affaie I observed a repony taking deliberate aim at me. He fired; my frightened animal reared and received in his head the bullet which was intended for me."  
*Roberts: Forty-One Years in India.*

way, but soon the welcome booming of guns in their front served as a guide. They met no natives, save an occasional dead one on the road, a ghastly evidence of the work they were soon to take part in—and towards nightfall were at the "Ridge."

Roberts as usual was in luck. The Assistant Adjutant-General, Henry Norman, had been his father's old staff officer, and at once showed an interest in the son of his former commander. He took him into his tent and though he could not offer him a bed, so tired was the lieutenant after his long and almost uninterrupted journey that he slept like a tired child on the ground until the sounds of the stirring camp woke him in the morning.

There, less than two miles away, was the city of the Moghuls, a city with magnificent walls behind which was a horde of fairly well trained native soldiers. When the natives broke out into mutiny at Meerut on May 10, looting, and burning and slaying, as if by inspiration they had fled to this city. Justin McCarthy in his "History of Our Own Times" thus forcibly tells the importance of this step to the rebels:

"In the vast palace of Delhi, almost a city in itself, a reeking Alsatia of lawless and privileged vice and crime, lived the aged king of Delhi, as he was called—the disestablished, but not wholly disendowed sovereign, the descendant of the great Timour, the last representative of the grand Moghul. The mutineers fled along the road to Delhi; and some evil fate directed that they were not to be pursued or stopped on their way. Unchecked, unpursued, they hurst into Delhi and swarmed into the precincts of the palace of the king. They claimed his protection; they insisted upon his accepting their cause and themselves. They proclaimed him Emperor of India, and planted the standard of rebellion against English rule on the battlement of his palace. They had found in one moment a leader, a flag, and a cause, and the mutiny was transfigured into a revolutionary war."

At this time there were no European regiments in Delhi. The only protecting force being three regiments of Sepoy Infantry and a battalion of Native Artillery, with their European officers and sergeants. Slaughter of soldiers and civilians began at once; but the opening struggle at Delhi was to be made memorable by one of the most heroic deeds in British history—a

deed that was still an inspiration to every soldier before the walls at the time of Roberts' arrival.

The great magazine with the stores and ammunition was in the heart of the city. Lieutenant Willoughby was in command of this magazine when the Meerut mutineers burst into the city, and he soon learned that the Delhi sepoy had joined the rebels. He and the gallant eight men under him determined to sell their lives dearly. He first posted several six-pounders before the gate; and when Bahadur Shah sent in a messenger demanding his surrender he refused to parley. Then the fanatical mob, already drunk with blood, pressed towards the magazine, but the six-pounders swept them till the ammunition about the guns was exhausted and could not be replaced. To the walls the yelling sepoy swarmed, and when scaling ladders had been raised against the magazine, and the mutineers were pouring in, Lieutenant Willoughby saw that the moment had come for prompt action. He gave the signal. Conductor Scully touched the train which had been prepared, and an explosion like the hursting of a volcano shook the city, and reached the few British at the cantonments on the "Ridge." Scully and his four comrades perished; Willoughby and the three other officers escaped, desperately wounded, only to die shortly afterwards of their wounds. But the gallant hand had not given their lives in vain; between 1,000 and 1,500 natives lay dead about the ruins of the magazine.

Nothing could now save Delhi, and the British on the "Ridge" were forced to flee for their lives. The occupation of this city by the rebels roused Lord Canning to the true state of affairs; and he sent telegrams ordering the European troops in Bombay, Burmah, Madras, and Ceylon to hasten to the seat of rebellion.

It was not until the 6th of June, almost a month after the outbreak, that the British felt themselves strong enough to attempt to recapture this important city. The commander-in-chief had a ridiculously small force with him, only 600 cavalry, 2,400 infantry, and 22 field-guns. Within the city were at least 30,000 native soldiers; and these were being daily augmented, with abundance of provisions and ammunition, and 114 pieces of artillery. Their soldiers were, it is true, of but little service in the open, but the

drilling they had received under European officers made them excellent artillerymen behind the city ramparts. How hopeless was the task of the little British army can be gathered from J. Talboys Wheeler's description in his "India" of the defences of Delhi.

"The defences of Delhi covered an area of three square miles. The walls consisted of a series of bastions, almost sixteen feet high, connected by curtains, with occasional martello towers to aid the flanking fire. Every bastion was mounted with eleven guns; namely, one on the salient, three on each face, and two on each flank. Both bastions and curtains were built of masonry about twelve feet thick. Running around the base of these bastions and curtains was a berm or terrace varying in width from fifteen to thirty feet, having on its exterior edge a wall loop-holed for musketry. The whole was surrounded by a ditch twenty feet deep and twenty-five feet wide. On the eastern side of the city the river Jumna ran past the palace of the king and the old state prison of Selimgurh. The bridge of boats leaving Meerut was in front of Selimgurh."

It was on such a city that the British force of 3,000 men began to march on June 8, hoping to take it with field-guns. When about ten miles from Delhi at Badli-ki-serai a horde of natives came out of the city to annihilate the force under General Barnard, but they got a hot reception and were beaten back with heavy loss of men and guns. On the British pressed till the "Ridge" appeared in their front, and although tired from the previous fight they made ready for the battle they saw was prepared for them.

The leaders of the rebels had taken up an excellent position, and were in great force; but after a sharp struggle British valor won and the enemy fled precipitately to the city leaving behind nearly 1,000 dead and thirteen guns. The troops then reoccupied the old cantonments which had been deserted when the rebels of Meerut seized Delhi. Here they were to remain for more than two months devoting their energies "not to capturing the city, but to defending ourselves, having to be ever on the watch to guard

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\*India, by J. Talboys Wheeler.

our communication with the Punjab, and to repel the enemy's almost daily sorties." In other words the besiegers were besieged.

At last the memorable 23rd of June, the 100th anniversary of the battle of Plassey arrived. It had been prophesied that on that day British rule would end in India, and a tremendous effort was made to destroy the little force on the "Ridge." To the natives it was a peculiarly propitious day, as on it was held the *julsa*, a Hindu festival; and a new moon was in the heavens, a sure sign of luck to the Mahomedans. But the British were in luck too; on the previous day six horse-artillery guns were added to the force, a thing worth more than many new moons. Swarm after swarm of sepoys pressed around the long "Ridge," and swarm after swarm was beaten back. When night fell the British still held their position with but little loss, while the enemy had retired to the safety of the city, leaving behind fully a thousand dead. After this, assault after assault was made on the heights, but every assault was bravely repulsed, and the little army was rapidly becoming a band of heroes.

It was while these assaults were occurring that Roberts joined the force on June 28. He found it a very different army from the one he had left at Philour. Every man in it was now a veteran warrior, and some of them, such as Harry Tombs of the Bengal Horse-Artillery, were almost worshipped for their gallant deeds. The officer who had first recognized his ability, Colonel Becher, quartermaster-general, was with the force, and Roberts found himself at once installed in the office of deputy-assistant-quartermaster-general with the artillery. On June 30 he had his baptism of fire in a fight which cost eight men killed and thirty wounded. There was a lull in the fighting for a few days and he had time to look about him and examine his surroundings. Wheeler's pen picture of the "Ridge" gives an excellent idea of the camp in which he found himself.

\*"The British camp on the 'Ridge' presented a picture at once varied and striking; long lines of Europeans' tents, thatched hovels of the native servants, rows of horses, parks of artillery, English soldiers in their grey linen coats and trousers, Sikhs with their red and blue turbans, Afghans with

\*India, by J. Talboys Wheeler.

their gay head-dresses and colored saddle-cloths, and the Gurkhas in Killmaruoc hats and woollen coats. There were but few Hindu sepoys in the British ranks, but the servants were very numerous. In the rear were the hoots of the native bazaar; and further out in the plain were thousands of camels, bullocks, and heggage horses. Still further to the rear was a small river crossed by two bridges; but the bridges were subsequently blown up. To the extreme right of the camp, on the spot nearest the city walls, was a battery on an eminence known as the Mound Battery which faced the Mori gate. Hard by was Hindu Rao's house, the headquarters of the army during the siege. From the summit of the 'Ridge' was to be seen the River Jumna winding along to the left of the city: the bridge of boats, towers of the palace, the minarets of the great mosque of the Juma Musjid, the house roofs and gardens of the domed city, and picturesque walls, with batteries here and there sending forth white clouds of smoke among the green foliage that clustered round the ramparts.

"To the right of the Mound Battery was the old suburb known as the Subzi Mundi. It was the vegetable bazaar which figures in the scandalous stories of the later Moghul princes as the scene of their frolics and debauchery. It was occupied by old houses, gardens with high walls, and narrow streets and lanes; and thus it furnished the very cover which makes Asiatics brave. Similar suburbs intervened between the actual defences of Delhi and the whole line of the British position."

The sorties of the enemy began again on July 3. They came out in great strength, but as the British now numbered about 6,000 men they were easily repulsed. Two days later the commander-in-chief was stricken with cholera and his death speedily followed. General Reed took command of the army, the third commander in the brief space of two months.

Up to this date Roberts had had a busy and thoroughly uncomfortable time. When he left Philour he was forced to travel light. Servants, horse, and the few luxuries he had with the movable column had to be left behind, but by this time his servants reached the "Ridge," and life was more worth living. He seems to have had very great influence over his native servants, and he records with pride that they waited on him under the hottest fire, and

that nothing that the sepoys could do could induce them to be unfaithful. He adds in this connection the interesting remark that the servants generally were faithful, courageous, and trustworthy; and that when Colin Campbell asked the Ninth Lancers to name the man most worthy of the Victoria Cross, they unanimously named the head *bishthi* (water-carrier).

On the 9th of July Roberts was in one of the hottest fights of the war, 500 of the enemy were killed and the British loss amounted to 233 in killed and wounded. In this engagement it was discovered that the few sepoys in the force on the "Ridge" were not to be trusted. In the thick of the fight it was found that some of the officers were shot from behind by their own men. In this struggle, too, one of the most gallant incidents recorded of the entire war took place. It won for Captain Tombs, afterwards Sir Harry Tombs, and Lieutenant "Jemmy" Hills, an old Addiscombe friend of Roberts', afterwards Sir James Hills-Johns, the much-coveted Victoria Cross. Roberts deals with this incident at some length, but the account given by Colonel Malleon is more stirring.

\*"On the 9th the rebels made another grand attack in force. They despatched the 8th Irregulars through the right of the British camp, by the rear, and as their uniform was the same as that of the loyal irregular regiment in the camp, they were allowed to pass unchallenged. The consequences of this mistake were alike deplorable and glorious. They were deplorable in that the cavalry picket at the mound, half-way between the "Ridge" and the canal on discovering their error, turned and fled. Not so the artillery, commanded by James Hills, one of the most gallant and daring soldiers in the world. Hills promptly ordered out his two guns for action. But the rebels were upon him, and he had not time to fire. Then, with the cool courage of a man determined at all costs to stop the foe, he dashed into the midst of the advancing troopers, cutting right and left at them with splendid effect. At last two of them charged him and rolled over his horse. Hills speedily regained his feet, just in time to renew the combat with three troopers—two mounted, the third on foot. The two first he cut down; with the third the conflict was desperate. Hills had been shaken by his fall, and

\*Malleon: The Indian Mutiny.

was encumbered by his cloak. Twice did his pistol miss fire, then he missed a blow at his opponent's shoulder, and the latter wrested his sword from his tired hand. But Hills was equal to the occasion. Closing with his enemy, he smote him several times with his clinched fist in the face until he fell. Just at the moment Tombs, who had found his way through the enemy, seeing Hills' danger shot the trooper dead. It was a splendid pistol shot, fired at a distance of thirty paces. To reach that point Tombs had cut his way through the enemy, whose advance Hills had checked, but not completely stopped. The danger to them was not over then. It required the sacrifice of another native trooper to insure perfect safety, but this was only accomplished at the cost to Hills of a sword cut, which clave his skull to the brain."

Hills was not easy to kill, however, and he recovered from his severe wound to do equally brave deeds in the latter days of the Mutiny, in China, in Abyssinia, and in Afghanistan.

It was in such a camp, and in the companionship of such daring fellows that Roberts was learning the art of war. His heart and the heart of every young officer, and indeed of every man in the ranks, were stirred by the recital of such deeds at the bivouac, and each man hoped that the opportunity would be given him to prove that he was made of the same stuff as Tombs and Hills. It is little wonder that the "Ridge" has become so famous in history and romance, and that the splendid fighting done by the troops at that particular spot practically killed the chances of the Mutiny in India terminating successfully for the rebels.

The opportunity that Roberts was longing for was soon to present itself. Five days after Tombs and Hills had done the deeds that were to win them the Victoria Cross, the enemy once more came out in great strength. But their efforts were as futile as the beating of the waves against the granite cliff. They were driven back with the usual 1,000 killed. The British determined to punish them as severely as possible on this occasion and hotly pursued them as they fled to the protection of Delhi. But the gallant soldiers overshot the mark, and found themselves under fire from the excellent artillerymen who were manning the walls. There was nothing for it



but to retreat with all possible speed. Roberts found that the soldiers of his corps had some difficulty in limbering up the guns to get them out of fire, and so remained with the gunners to assist in keeping the spirited and frantic horses quiet while they were engaged in this dangerous work. While busy with the restive horses he received a tremendous blow in the back, a blow that almost unseated him. At first he was made faint and sick, but his will sustained him, and he managed with great difficulty to stick to his horse till within his own lines. He had had a narrow escape; the sepoys were hard at his heels; nor did they stop the pursuit till the very pickets of the English were reached.

When he got into the hands of the able army surgeon, John Campbell Brown, he found that his wound was not a dangerous one, and likewise learned what a miraculous escape he had had. He was shot near the spine, and had not the bullet first passed through a leather pouch for caps which he wore in front, but which in the heat of the fight had slipped round to his back, he would doubtless have been instantly killed or mortally wounded. It is worthy of note that the first wound Roberts received was given while he was aiding in performing a task similar to that which caused the death of his gallant son in South Africa—saving England's guns from falling into the hands of her enemies, a misfortune she feels more keenly than even the loss of a fortress.

Although his wound was not a serious one it kept him in hospital for several weeks where he suffered a great deal more from the plague of flies that swarmed about him by day and blackened the tent roof by night, than from his wound. It was some time before he was able to take part in the fighting about Delhi, but as soon as he could leave the hospital the quartermaster-general had plenty of useful work ready for him. The health of the camp was threatened, and he was kept busy through the hot days having the carcasses of dead animals dragged from the "Ridge" and hurried or burnt. In the work of keeping the camp clean and sanitary, he had able assistance from the prince of scavengers the adjutant bird, which, sniffing the carrion from afar, had come in hundreds to gorge themselves where man, made in the image of God, devoted his energies to making food for the birds

VIEW OF LUCKNOW





**THE RESIDENCY OF LUCKNOW**  
Before the Siege.

of the air and beasts of the field. Vultures in great flocks hovered over this place of death, and jackals left their haunts to prowl among the dwellings of men.

Still the struggle went on, and the fall of Delhi seemed very remote. The strain was telling on officers and men alike, and at length the commander-in-chief, General Reed, broke down and was forced to leave the "Ridge" to recuperate. General Wilson succeeded to the command and watched over the men, who, as has been truly said in Mrs. Steele's powerful historical novel "On the Face of the Waters," were performing "Isolated deeds which went to make up the finest record of pluck and perseverance the world is ever likely to see." Many a gallant fellow in those trying months laid down his life uncomplainingly. They died with the thought given expression to by one of the heroes of this struggle in his death hour, the brave Lieutenant Quintin Battye, "*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.*"

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE CAPTURE OF DELHI.

The Sepoys in Delhi Growing Alarmed—News from Havelock on His Way to Lucknow—General Reed Breaks Down Under the Strain of Constant Sorties—General Wilson Yields to the Desire of His Officers to Assault Delhi—Baird-Smith Plans an Attack—Breaching the Walls—General Nicholson Leads the Attack—Within the City's Walls—The Gallant Deed of Lieutenants Home and Salkald at the Kashmir Gate—General Wilson Sends Roberts to Inquire into Unfavorable Reports—Comes on John Nicholson Mortally Wounded—Delhi Captured—The Terrible Cost of the Prolonged Struggle—Lieutenant P. S. Roberts Especially Thanked for His Zealous Conduct During the Siege.

ALL through July the force before Delhi was being strengthened, and the officers soon hoped to be able to take the city by assault. The natives kept up their sorties but were invariably driven back with great loss. Meanwhile the engineers were doing excellent work making ready for the advance of the assaulting columns and generally studying the ground and maturing the plan of attack.

August 1 was the anniversary of a celebrated Mahomedan festival, and on this day the rebels determined to make a last great effort to destroy the army on the "Ridge," which, despite the reinforcements, was still a small one. It would be a glorious thing to die on such a day; they would be sure to go straight to Allah's arms. So they poured out of the city in swarms, and in a religious frenzy swept towards the English position. But the British were ready for them and the well-manned guns sent their iron storm ploughing great gaps through the rebel's ranks. Still they came, and still they were shot down and beaten back, until at last not even the hope of eternal felicity could make them face those steady gunners. Once more they fled to the protection of the ramparts, and the hopelessness of their cause began to dawn upon them.

News filtered through the sepoy lines to the British camp that many in the city were in dread of the future fate in store for them, and that not a few

had left Delhi and had gone to their homes. The natives heard, too, that John Nicholson was coming against them with the Movable Column which had saved the Punjab; and at the mention of his name their spirits quaked. Only destruction could come to them if John Nicholson led the British troops.

The people on the "Ridge" had been for some time cut off from the rest of India, and they were now to learn with deep sorrow that Sir Henry Lawrence was dead. They learned, too, that Cawnpore had fallen and that Lucknow was besieged. General Reed, however, received a buoyant letter from General Havelock saying, "We shall soon be with you." Four days, he thought, would be sufficient to capture Lucknow. There was great rejoicing on the "Ridge" when the contents of this letter were known. Delhi would fall an easy prey when Havelock's force was joined with theirs. It was four months before Lucknow fell, and then the army that had done such deeds of prowess at the city of the Moghuls was to be an important factor in the final struggle.

Early in August the enemy sent out a strong force of guns and posted them at Ludlow Castle expecting to sweep the English troops; but the men on the "Ridge" only made this another opportunity to do gallant deeds. A determined assault was made on the position. The gunners were bayoneted or beaten back and the guns were dragged and pushed by their captors to the British lines amidst the wildest exultation.

At length John Nicholson arrived at the camp, and a feeling of greater confidence was in the hearts of the men as they saw his commanding figure moving among them. The Movable Column arrived shortly after and the total force was now 8,000, besides 1,535 sick and wounded.

Still Delhi held out; how short sighted the British must have been when they thought that Barnard with but 3,000 men and a few field-guns could take it! They needed better guns still to batter down those strong walls. They were coming. Towards the end of August it was known that a strong siege-train was approaching the "Ridge." This information likewise reached the rebels, and they determined to intercept the train; but John Nicholson with 2,000 men and sixteen Horse Artillery guns went out after

them, and in a daring and well-planned attack routed their army killing almost a thousand men and capturing thirteen field-pieces besides great quantities of stores of all kinds.

The critical moment was rapidly approaching. No more forces could be expected. The strength was now 8,748, and they had likewise an efficient siege train. The officers were clamoring to be led against the walls. Nearly 3,000 men were in hospital and the fierce sun and trying rains were telling on the whole army. Even General Wilson, who now commanded the force—General Reed having broken down under the strain—over cautious for the most part, recognized that an attack was inevitable; if he could not take the place by assault, the "Ridge" could not be held much longer. To withdraw would have been a grave calamity. After such a step the flames of mutiny would burst out afresh in every part of India. When the rebels had occupied Delhi it was truly said that if "Delhi were not taken, and that speedily, there would be a struggle not only for the European dominion, but even for European existence within the Punjab itself."

At length Wilson yielded to the need of the hour, and set Baird-Smith of the Bengal Engineers to work to plan an attack. The general, however, showed no enthusiasm for the assault, and some of the officers doubted his intention of ordering one. But John Nicholson was determined that such a course should be followed, and at once; and to Roberts he said—and it shows what confidence this greatest of soldiers in India must have had in the young lieutenant that he could say it to him: "Delhi must be taken and it is absolutely essential that this should be done at once; and if Wilson hesitates longer, I intend to propose at to-day's meeting that he should be superseded." There was no need to make such a proposition; Wilson had already decided on acquiescing in the course recommended by every officer in the force.

The engineers had been busy for some days and had prepared 10,000 fascines, 10,000 gabions, 100,000 sand bags, field magazines, scaling ladders and saps, platforms. On the 8th of September the preliminary work began. Four batteries were detailed to breach the walls, and after great daring got their guns into position to play on Mori Bastion, Kashmir Bastion and Water

Bastion. Roberts was with the left-half of No. 2 Battery of twenty-four guns. He had charge of two guns, and began to direct their fire against Kashmir Bastion. He made effective shooting, and the men of No. 2 cheered lustily as they saw the stones flying from the strong bastion under their well-directed fire. But the natives could shoot, too, and as soon as the screen from in front of the guns was removed a shot entered the battery which knocked Roberts off his feet; when he rose from the ground he found that a gunner who had been serving the vent of one of the guns had had his arm shot off. Several times during that first day he had equally narrow escapes from both grape and round shot. Soon, however, the enemy were unable to use the bastions, but they boldly came from the city walls, and opened fire on the batteries. At the same time rockets were hurled at the besieging force from the martello towers and a steady musketry fire was kept up against them. It was hard work manning No. 2; but for six days Roberts never left his post save to go to Ludlow Castle for his meals or for rest. He had his reward, however, for his courage and endurance, for on the evening before the assault John Nicholson came into the battery, and looking with admiration on the lieutenant whose character he was doing so much to mould, said: "I must shake hands with you fellows; you have done your best to make my work easy to-morrow."

The batteries had indeed done good work. The Water Bastion and the Kashmir Bastion were in ruins, and the courageous soldiers sent forward to investigate the condition of the walls reported to Baird-Smith that it would be practical to enter the city by both. The hour that for three months the army of heroes on the "Ridge" had been waiting for had arrived. At four o'clock in the morning the assault was to commence and every man prepared to win or sell his life dearly. They had been daily living in the comradeship of death, and now they made ready to go forth to meet it as if going to a festival.

Four columns, the first under Brigadier-General Nicholson, the second under Brigadier Jones, the third under Colonel Campbell, the fourth under Major Reid, were to attack the wall simultaneously, while a fifth under Brigadier Longfield, was to be held in reserve. In all, the force assaulting



Delhi did not amount to quite 5,000 men; and to make up this number it had been necessary to weaken the pickets, and to place many who should have been in hospital on duty as a camp guard. The following was the order of attack planned by Baird-Smith: "The first column to assault the main breach, and escalate the face of the Kashmir Bastion. This column was to be covered by a detachment of the 60th. The second column to enter the breach at the Water Bastion, having a similar detachment of rifles to cover their approach. The third column to attack the Kashmir Gate, preceded by a party of engineers under Lieutenants Home and Salkald, to blow open the gate with petards and powder. This attempt was to be covered by a party of the bhiquitous rifles. The fourth column to force an entrance at the Kahul gate. A rifle party also covered this approach. The reserves were further strengthened as a *dernier resort* by the remainder of the rifles. The cavalry under Brigadier Grant, were disposed so as to guard the lines, the sick and wounded, and prevent the enemy from making an assault in any direction."

In the bright light of the early Indian morning the columns moved forth. Roberts was not with them. He with his comrades in the batteries had been doing gallant work for six days, but on this day he had to remain behind, much to his regret, on General Wilson's staff. He watched the confident army move forward on their desperate task, and looked with worshipful eyes upon the magnificent figure of General Nicholson, who had been given command of the column, and to whom every eye was turned waiting for the signal to rush the walls. Edwardes had written to Lord Canning, early in the war, of Nicholson: "You may rely upon this, that if ever there is a desperate deed to be done in India John Nicholson is the man to do it." The capture of Delhi was indeed a desperate deed, the successful accomplishment of which was to save England in India. Had the force before Delhi failed to reduce the city, not even the military genius of Colin Campbell could have saved the country for England—not without the despatch of such an army as was necessary to reduce the Transvaal: and in the fifties that would have been a matter not of months but of years, and the loss of life would have been tremendous.

At last Nicholson gave the signal, and leading his men to the assault he

was first in the breach. The first and second columns soon got within the walls, then they wheeled to the right, and the mutineers who were making a desperate stand were driven along the ramparts. In quick succession Nicholson captured the batteries, the tower between the Kashmir and Mori Bastions, the Mori Bastion, and the Kabul Gate. But the rebels at the Burn Bastion and Lahora Gate beat back every attempt to seize them. A galling fire mowed down the impetuous British troops. It was a desperate situation, but Nicholson would not admit defeat. Sword in hand, cheering on his men he led them along a narrow lane against the Lahore Gate. From the windows, the housetops, the mosques, a leaden rain fell at short range upon the advancing column. At last the noble leader was shot through the chest, but not until the men he had led so well had got a firm grip on Delhi.

The coolest and most daring piece of work done on the 14th was that performed by the small party of engineers led by Lieutenants Home and Salkald at the Kashmir Gate. This powerful gate barred the progress of the third column. It was necessary to blow it up; but the approach was so well guarded by a party of marksmen at the wicket that to attempt such a deed seemed like walking to instant death. It is rare indeed in England's wars when the need occurs that men cannot be found who are willing to walk "into the jaws of death, into the mouth of hell," for their country's honor. The sappers succeeded in laying the powder and the party by whom the train was to be fired crossed the broken bridge in broad day under a withering fire.

Colonel Baird-Smith gave the following official report of the deed, a deed as heroic as that performed by Lieutenant Willoughby at the magazine four months before: "Lieutenant Salkald while endeavoring to fire the charge was shot through the arm and leg, and handed over the slow match to Corporal Burgess, who fell mortally wounded just as he had successfully accomplished the onerous duty. Havildar Tilluh Singh, of the Sikhs, was wounded, and R. uloll Sepoy, of the same corps, was killed during this part of the operation. The demolition being most successful, Lieutenant Home happily not wounded, caused the bugler (Hawthorne) to sound the regimental call of the 52nd, as a signal for the advancing columns. Fearing

that amidst the noise of the assault the sounds might not be heard, he had the call repeated three times, when the troops advanced and carried the gateway with complete success."

On the column dashed through the thoroughfare known as the Chandni Chalk in the direction of the Juma Masjid, but were met by a swarming horde of natives who forced them back to the ramparts. When day closed after a desperate conflict and great loss the English were sure of their footing in Delhi. "The first and second columns hold all the towers, bastions, and ramparts, from the vicinity of the Kashmir Gate to the Kahul Gate; the third column and the reserve held the Kashmir Gate, the English church, Skinner's house, the Water Bastion, Ahmed Ali Khan's house, the college gardens and many buildings and open spots in that part of Delhi." The fourth column had not been successful and Major Reid, after doing all man could do, was compelled to retreat to the "Ridge."

During the conflict of the day General Wilson had been anxiously watching the progress of the assault from Ludlow Castle. At first he rejoiced in the success of the columns under Nicholson, but later in the day disquieting rumors came in. The sepoys were making strong resistance; only the fringe of the ramparts were being successfully held; and, worse than all, Nicholson, "that tower of strength" was reported desperately wounded. He learned, too, that the column under Reid was unsuccessful and despatched Roberts to find out the truth of these reports. While on this mission Roberts was to experience one of the most painful moments of his life; but the scene he came upon is best told in his own words.

\*"Just after starting on my errand, while riding through the Kashmir Gate, I observed by the side of the road a doolie without hearers, and with evidently a wounded man inside. I dismounted to see if I could be of any use to the occupant, when I found, to my grief and consternation, that it was John Nicholson with death written on his face. He told me that the bearers had put the doolie down and gone off to plunder; that he was in great pain and wished to be taken to the hospital. He was lying on his back; no wound was visible, and but for the pallor of his face, always colorless, there

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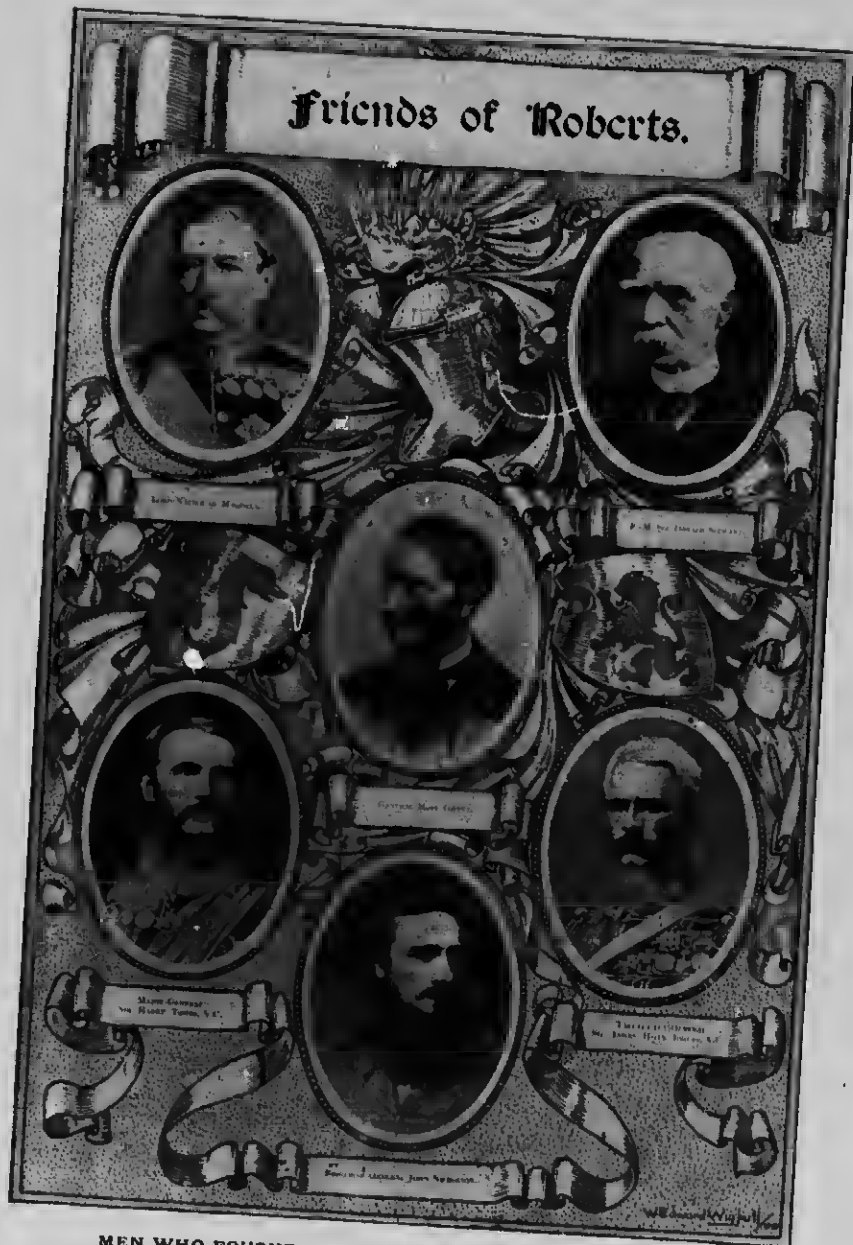
\*Roberts: Forty-One Years in India.



**SIR COLIN CAMPBELL**

Commander-in-Chief of the forces in India.  
Created Baron Clyde of Clydesdale, Scotland, August 31, 1856.

Friends of Roberts.



MEN WHO FOUGHT WITH ROBERTS IN THE GREAT MUTINY

was no sign of the agony he must have been enduring. On my expressing a hope that he was not seriously wounded he said: 'I am dying; there is no chance for me.' The sight of that great man lying helpless and on the point of death was almost more than I could bear. Other men had daily died around me, friends and comrades had been killed beside me, but I never felt as I felt then—to lose Nicholson seemed to me at that moment to lose everything."

No wonder he mourned with such a deep mourning. There lay the beau ideal of a soldier and a gentleman. He was at once the Wellington and the Bayard of the army. Young in years and of infinite promise! a man who had conquered himself, and who made a conquest of every man he met. Roberts could not leave his commander and friend there in the doolie. He had some difficulty in finding bearers as the soldiers were bent on plunder and slaughter; but at length he succeeded in getting four men together whom he placed in command of a sergeant of the 61st, and saw Nicholson slowly borne away to the hospital which he was never to leave alive.

Roberts then went about the performance of his mission, and learned of the gallant deeds that had been performed by the different columns, that many of his tried friends had been killed, but found to his delight that some, such as Tombs, who had been reported dead, were still alive. He then hurried with the news to Wilson, who was somewhat relieved by his report, but who in his over-cautiousness thought that it would perhaps be well to withdraw the troops from the walls of Delhi. When Nicholson, suffering uncomplainingly the most excruciating pain from his wound, heard of the possibility of General Wilson commanding a withdrawal, with his remaining strength indignantly cried out: "Thank God I have strength yet to shoot him if necessary."

There was no withdrawal. On the 14th the columns had attempted too much; it was sufficient for that day to get a firm footing within the walls. Until the 20th the fighting went on and then Roberts was in at the final and complete capture of the city. The party he was with succeeded in seizing the Burn Bastion and the Lahore Gate, thus clearing the way for the capture of

the king and his sons and the utter routing of the rebels. On the following morning the firing of the royal salute told him that Delhi was once more in the possession of the British troops.

The king, who had taken refuge in Humayun's tomb surrendered to Captain Hodson, and the rebels were without a king or a cause. Hodson then forced the surrender of the king's sons and grandson, and when a mob threatened to rescue them he shot them with his own hand and caused their bodies to be exposed on the wall. Much has been written in condemnation of this act, and even Roberts was horrified at it; but in condemning it he treats Hodson very leniently. He could never have done it; but he was even then much in advance of the soldiers of his day. Had John Nicholson been in Hodson's place he would probably have acted just as Hodson did. The horrors perpetrated against women and children in Delhi had turned the milk of human kindness in many men to gall.

Delhi had been won at last, but at terrible cost; during the three months some 4,000 soldiers had been killed or wounded, but the greatest loss was the loss of General Nicholson. The news of success caused the greatest rejoicing in India. In the language of Kaye: "From city to city, from cantonment to cantonment went the checkered tidings: Delhi had fallen, the king was a captive—but John Nicholson was dead." No, he was not dead: his body only was at rest; his spirit lived in the heart of every soldier in the Delhi army and lives to-day in the great commander-in-chief of the British army.

Although unable to take part in much of the actual fighting about Delhi, Roberts had evidently done exceptional service. He was "mentioned in despatches," and General Wilson in his official despatch of December 22nd says: "I beg also to bring very favorably to notice the officers . . . also that gallant and active officer Lieutenant F. S. Roberts, attached to the artillery brigade in the capacity of deputy-assistant-quartermaster-general;" and when the general orders were issued by the governor-general in council on November 5, 1857 it was found that Lieutenant F. S. Roberts was among the officers especially thanked "for zealous assistance offered to their commander and to the state."

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\*Kaye: A History of the Sepoy War in India.

## CHAPTER X.

### AFTER DELHI.

Roberts to go with Relief Column to Lucknow—A Ghastly March Through Delhi—A Brush with the Rebels—A Narrow Escape From Death—Roberts on a Humorous Mission—A Message from Havelock Begging Assistance—A Fight at Aligarh—The Column Turns Aside to Help the Troops at Agra—The British Force Surprised—The Enemy Finally Beaten Off—Roberts Again Escapes Death—The Beauties of Agra—The Column Marches on Cawnpore—The Massacre of the Women and Children Recalled.

**D**ELHI had fallen; but a part of the army which had endured so much was to have no rest. Havelock had failed to relieve Lucknow and moreover he had been forced to retreat to Cawnpore. Scarcely had the sound of the fierce fighting ceased in the streets of Delhi before it was known that General Wilson intended to send a column to assist in the relief of Lucknow. Even as early as September 21 preparations were made to get this column ready, and the pick of the army, among whom was Roberts, was prepared by the 24th for arduous marching and severe fighting.

The force consisted of 750 British soldiers, 1,900 natives, and sixteen guns. Just as day was breaking they began their march through the city that was silent as death. Roberts' description of the beginning of this march has a Homeric strength and simplicity which shows what a lucid and powerful pen he can use.

"Our way from the Lahore Gate by the Chandni Chalk led through a veritable city of the dead; not a sound was to be heard but the falling of our own footsteps; not a living creature was to be seen. Dead bodies were strewn about in all directions, in every attitude that the death struggle had caused them to assume, and in every stage of decomposition. We marched in silence or involuntarily spoke in whispers as though fearing to disturb those ghastly remains of humanity. The sights we encountered were horrible and sickening to the last degree. Here a dog gnawed at an



uncovered limb; there the vulture disturbed by our approach from its loathsome meal, but too completely gorged to fly, fluttered away to a safer distance. In many instances the positions of the bodies were appallingly life-like. Some lay with their arms uplifted as if beckoning, and, indeed, the whole scene was wierd and terrible beyond description. Our horses seemed to feel the horror of it as much as we did, for they ehook and snorted in evident terror. The atmosphere was unimaginably disgusting, laden as it was with the most noxious and sickening odors."

After Delhi the next four days through the open country was a blessed relief. On the 28th the column reached a fort governed by one Walidad Khan. This man was an arch-rebel and was ruling the country tyrannically in the name of the Emperor of India. His district was a hotbed of mutiny of which he was the centre, and when the column reached his fortress they found that the enemy had a strong position near Bulandshahr. But it would be a strong native position indeed that the men who had learned their war on the "Ridge" could not take; and soon the enemy were routed with the loss of three 9-pounders, 300 men, and great quantities of stores, and many valuables which had evidently been plundered from the Europeans in Delhi and elsewhere.

In this fight in which the British loss was only six killed and forty-one wounded, Roberts had a very narrow escape. When John Nicholson's effects were sold he had succeeded in buying his steed, a splendid Waziri horse. It had been used to the control of a man who stood 6 feet 2 inches in height, and no doubt it had not yet got accustomed to the guiding hand of the diminutive young lieutenant who now owned it. At any rate in this fight it plunged about in such a way that Roberts' time was largely taken up in controlling it. While it was in the act of rearing a Sepoy took deliberate aim at its rider, and its head fortunately served as a shield to its master. The horse was severely wounded, and Roberts could chronicle another escape.

That he showed remarkable bravery on this field, and performed exceptional service is evident from the account of the Bulandshahr fight given by Colonel George Bouchier in his "An Eight Months' Campaign."

"By the cross-fire which was kept up upon the enemy's battery, their

fire was subdued; an advance was then ordered. A few salvos of grape cleared the front, and the commanding officer being anxious that the position should be secured ordered an immediate advance of artillery. Lieutenant Roberts of the artillery, who seemed ubiquitous brought the order at a gallop. The guns charged and took the battery, the enemy scampering before us as we came up to it. Lieutenant Roberts was first at the guns. A second burst, after clearing our front with grape, brought us to the goal: the enemy flying before us like sheep."

This was their first brush with the enemy on their road to Lucknow, and its complete success greatly cheered the men of the column. It was necessary to blow up the fort and to look to the sick and wounded, and so they were delayed until October 3. In the blowing up of the fort Lieutenant Home, one of the heroes of Kashmir Gate, while superintending the work lost his life. His death cast a gloom over the entire force.

In Robert's great autobiography it is rare indeed to find a touch of humor. He is almost too serious; occasionally he smiles at his own expense when making references to his height; but it is the smile of a man whose strength and reputation permit him to laugh at what may seem to the world his physical defects. As page after page of his book is read his serious, thoughtful, earnest soul is revealed. It has but one defect; it lacks humor. One incident, however, which he relates of himself, and which occurred while he was in the vicinity of Bulandshahr, shows that he was not without that quality without which no man can be truly great.

He had heard of an English woman who was in "duress vile" at a village twenty miles away. His gallantry at once asserted itself, he went to Colonel Greathead and got permission to go forth and rescue the fair damsel. No doubt as he began his march with several fellow officers and two squadrons of cavalry, he, like Sir Galahad, kept saying to himself,

"For them I battle to the end  
To eave from shame and thrall."

At early dawn the troop crept up to the village and closed the exits so that the fair captive could not be spirited away to the hills. Then the officers entered the village.

"We three," writes Roberts, "proceeded up the little street to the house where the guido told us the lady was confined. Not only was the house empty, but, with the exception of a few sick and bed-ridden people there was not a soul in the village. There had evidently been a hasty retreat, which puzzled me greatly, as I had taken every precaution to insure secrecy, for I feared that if our intention to rescue the lady became known she would be carried off. As day broke we searched the surrounding crops and found the villagers and some soldiers hidden amongst them. They one and all denied that there was the slightest truth in the story, and as it appeared a waste of time to further prosecute the fruitless search we were on the point of starting to rejoin our camp when there was a cry from our troopers of, "*mem sahib hai*"! ('Here is the lady!'), and presently an excessively dusky girl about sixteen years of age appeared, clad in native dress. We had some difficulty in getting the young woman to tell us what had happened; but on assuring her that no harm should be done to those with whom she was living, she told us that she was the daughter of a clerk in the commissioner's office at Sitapur; that all her family had been killed when the rising took place at that station, and that she had been carried off by a *sowar* to his place. We asked her if she wished to come away with us. After some hesitation she declined, saying the *sowar* had married her (Mahomedan fashion) and was kind to her, and she had no friends or relatives to go to. On asking her why she had sent to let us know she was there, she replied that she thought she would like to join the British force, which she heard was in the neighborhood, but on further reflection she had come to the conclusion it was best for her to remain where she was. After talking to her for some time, and making quite sure she was not likely to change her mind, we rode away, leaving her to her *sowar*, with whom she was apparently quite content. I need hardly say we got unmercifully chaffed on our return to camp, when the result of our expedition leaked out."

On October 3 Colonel Greathed's column arrived at Khurja where some fugitive sepoys were captured, and after trial were hanged. Here, too, a message reached them from Havelock. He was on his way to Lucknow with a weak and inadequately equipped force, and begged any commanders into

whose hands his message might fall to hasten to his assistance with all possible speed. On reading the message Greathed decided to set out for Cawnpore at once.

Soon after the march recommenced it was learned that the rebels had assembled in considerable force at Aligarh, and were prepared to dispute the way with the British column. When the troops approached the city they saw before them a great crowd, shouting and cursing; but when the column formed into battle array and advanced to sweep them from their path they broke and fled. These were the men who had stormed the strong walls of Delhi and had resisted for months the howling horde of Mahomedans and Hindus who had tried to crush them on the "Ridge." They had not the courage to face them; not even in the streets of Aligarh. Through the city they ran pellmell and out into the fields. The cavalry swept round Aligarh in determined pursuit, slaying them as they fled across the open country or rooting them out of their hiding places in the fields and killing them on the spot. We read of no prisoners being taken on this march.

Meanwhile epistles and messages were pouring in from Agra, "imploping aid, in every language both dead and alive, and in cipher." The troops and civilians who had been shut up in Akhar's fort were in the greatest alarm as they feared they could not hold out much longer. Agra was an important centre; it would never do to let it fall into the hands of the rebels, and so, much to his regret, Greathed turned aside his steps from the road to Cawnpore and began a rapid march to the Jumna.

The column arrived at its destination on October 10, crossed the bridge of boats, and entered the three-hundred-year old fort before the enemy were aware of their presence. They were a band of ragged, bronzed, unkempt heroes. The long months of privation and constant fighting under the hot sun on the "Ridge;" the trying march of the past three weeks,—had given them the appearance of a lot of Afghan brigands. As they lined into the fort, where they were welcomed with the wildest demonstrations by the besieged, a lady remarked: "Was there ever such a dirty looking lot seen!" Another spectator wrote of them, "The Queen's 8th passed within three yards of us. 'Those dreadful looking men must be Afghans,' said a lady to

me, as they slowly and wearily marched by. I did not discover they were Englishmen till I saw a short clay pipe in the mouth of nearly the last man. My heart bled to see those jaded miserable objects, and to think of all they must have suffered since May last, to reduce fine Englishmen to such worn, sun-dried skeletons." These same spectators were soon to learn that the "worn, sun-dried skeletons" had a good deal of fight left in them.

The officers of the column found Agra in a thoroughly disorganized state. India at this time suffered much from the stupidity and incompetency of both the military and civilian officials, and it was now found that Agra seemed peculiarly cursed in these particulars. The besieged had been having a fairly comfortable life of it despite the nearness of danger, and the officials had apparently taken no care to watch the movements of the enemy. They were confident that the knowledge that the Delhi column was coming to their relief had frightened away the enemy, and so they reported to Greathead that the country round about for many miles was clear of the troublesome rebels.

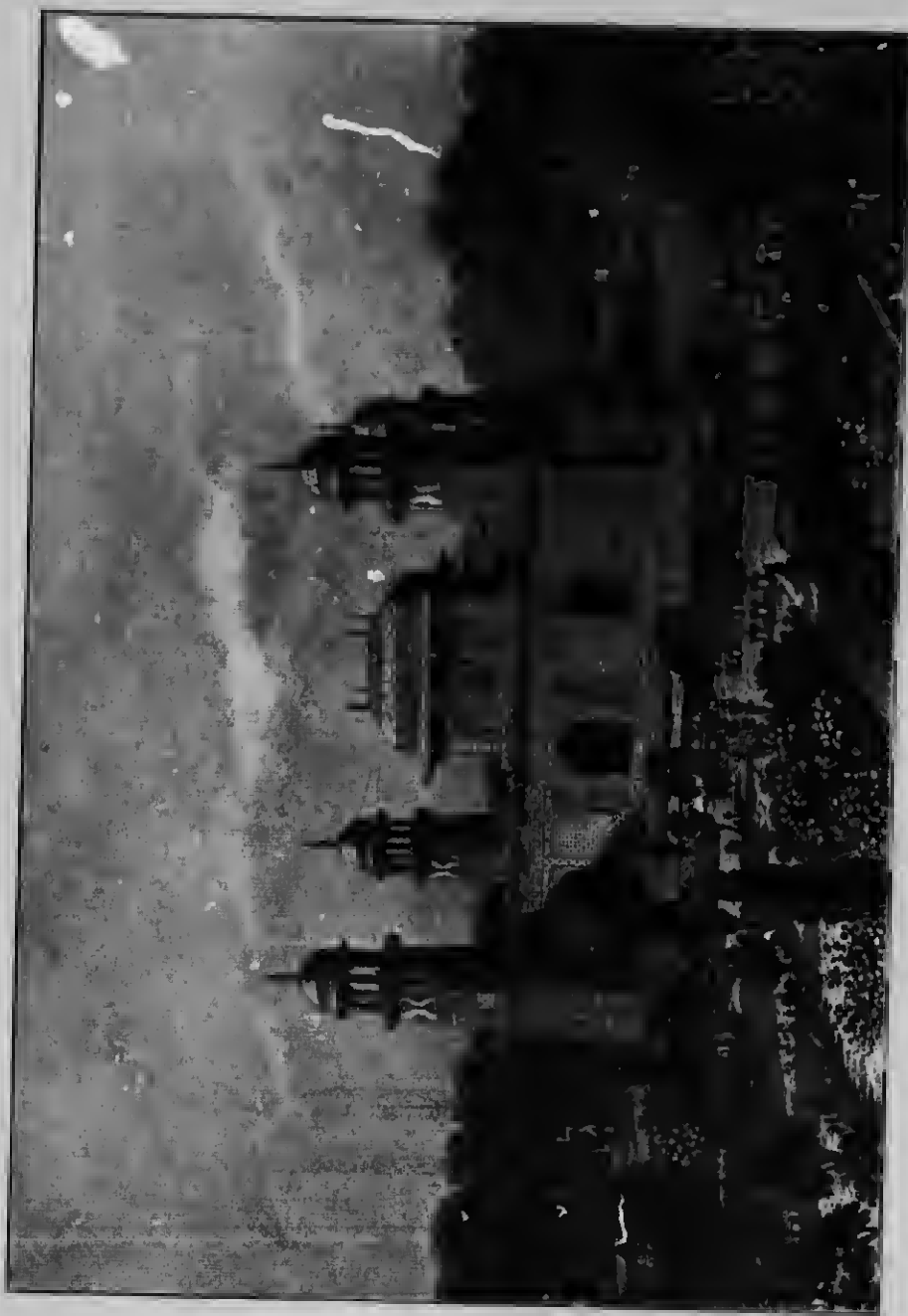
Roberts as deputy-assistant-quartermaster-general had the task of selecting the camp for the column, and selected a spot on the grassy plain about a mile and a half from the fort. There was some delay, as it was necessary to wait for the transports, and while the soldiers rested till the tents and baggage would arrive, Roberts and several fellow officers went to the fort to enjoy a meal, the first in months, in the society of women and with something of home comforts. But they had scarcely seated themselves at the breakfast table when the booming of artillery from the direction of the camp told them that all was not well. Leaping to their feet they rushed from the fort, mounted their horses, and galloped furiously towards the camp, where the sounds of conflict were growing ever louder.

The following description by a contemporary writer of the battle of Agra will show how nearly incompetency succeeded in smashing one of the finest columns ever sent into the field:

"The column after crossing the river had marched on to the great parade ground. There the soldiers pitched their tents and went to breakfast. Relying on the official information they had received that the mudineers were



**THE KASHMIR GATE, DELHI      THE "RESIDENCY" OF LUCKNOW**  
"And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew."  
**TWO FAMOUS RUINS**



TOMB OF ELMAD-COD-DOULAH, AORA

far away, the commanding officers neither threw out pickets nor adopted any other of the usual precautions against surprise. Especially no search was made in the high crops or in the gardens; also the crowds from the city were allowed to flock around the camp—as many as liked to.

“Among these crowds there was a troop of jugglers; they came on throwing balls and doing tricks, and advancing always nearer and nearer towards the tents. Some English lancers and a party of Sikh soldiers were standing watching them. All of a sudden the jugglers jerked away their balls; threw off their jugglers’ dresses, and displayed themselves as Mahomedan fanatics. They drew their swords, uttered the Mussulman war cry, and rushed among the tents, slashing right and left. Their shouts appeared to be the signal, for at the same moment two troops of cavalry galloped out from among the tall crops. There was a roar of artillery, and round shot came rolling in from batteries concealed near the Wrestlers’ Tomb and among the gardens.

“The alarm was so sudden, and the attack so utterly unexpected, that it might have thrown many troops into disorder, but those of the column were fresh from Delhi, and prepared for all incidents of the war. The first momentary confusion over, they behaved with the utmost coolness. The lancers ran to their horses, saddled and mounted; the infantry seized their muskets, and the artillerymen limbered up the guns. The rebel cavalry had calculated on a surprise, when instead the lancers charged them. They themselves were seized with a panic; they fought for a few minutes, then turned and fled.”

A crowd of sight-seers who had gone out to the camp of the column were blocking the way as they rushed back for safety to the walls of Agra. They had become mixed with the transport on its road to the camp, and into this confused mass Roberts and his friends rode; and it was with the greatest difficulty that they could beat their way through the surging, terrified horde of men and women, horses and hullocks, camels and elephants. At length they broke through, and found themselves on the scene of a most picturesque fight where infantry, cavalry and artillery were all battling with the same brilliancy that had beaten back the daily sorties of Delhi. They were,



however, without organization, and Roberts galloped about the field in search of Colonel Greathed, who did not appear on the scene till the enemy were beaten in the fight.

On this occasion Roberts' career almost ended. While looking for the brigadier he came upon a *sowar* who made a determined assault on him. The *sowar* was a wily native, and seeing that the young lieutenant had a restive mount, he pulled off his turban, and waving it in front of the horse kept Roberts busy managing his steed. Roberts endeavored to shoot him with his revolver but it failed to explode. He felt himself powerless to resist the *sowar* when one of the 9th Lancers, the corps that had done so much to save the day, ran the rebel through the body.

The men from Delhi, worn-out skeletons as they were, were too much for the attacking rebels, who hastily fled and were pursued for four miles by the victorious troops, who to their surprise came upon the strong camp of the mutineers about which the Agra authorities had been in such blissful ignorance. Here the infantry remained, but the cavalry continued the pursuit slaying any rebels they overtook and capturing thirteen guns with large quantities of ammunition. What an effect their work before Delhi had had on the native mind can be imagined from the whispered words that passed from lip to lip in the fleeing army: "I say, brother! these are the fellows from Delhi!"

After so effectively scattering the enemy from before Agra the column remained in its vicinity for three days. They were busy days, but Roberts found time to wander through the ruins of this city of mosques, and view with enraptured eyes the Juma Musjid, and Taj Mahal (the Crown of Edifices) built by the Emperor Shah Jehan to show his undying love for his favorite wife, the Empress Nour Jehan, or "Light of the World." The description of the gorgeous Taj Roberts refrains from attempting. He is on his knees before it, and his words show how the beautiful in art, like the beautiful in nature, could move him. "I will not attempt," he says, "to describe the indescribable, neither words or pencil could give to the most imaginative reader the all-satisfying beauty and purity of this glorious

conception. To those who have not already seen it, I would say 'Go to India.' The Taj alone is well worth the journey."

Bishop Heber's description of this majestic tomb will give a fair idea of the buildings of the famous cities of India about which the tramp of war was now heard and the horrors of war were witnessed.

"After hearing its praises ever since I have been in India, its beauty rather exceeded than fell short of my expectations. The building itself is raised on an elevated terrace of white and yellow marble, and has at its angles four tall minarets of the same material. In the centre of the hall, enclosed within a carved screen of exquisite design and workmanship, is the tomb of the favorite Nour Johan; and upon a marble dais slightly raised, by the side of her remains, is that of the emperor himself. The windows are of white marble, elaborately traced, and perforated for light and air—of the same design as the screen. The walls, screens, and tombs are covered with flowers and inscriptions, executed in beautiful mosaics of cornelian, lapis-lazuli, pearl and jasper; and yet, though everything is finished like an ornament for a drawing room, the general effect is solemn and impressive, irrespective of the associations naturally attached to it in the mind of the spectator."

Strange that men brought up in the presence of such a superb mark of affection could have such hearts as the Nona.

On October 14 the column had a day of rest and amusement, and then began its march on Lucknow *via* Cawnpore. At Monipuri, to the delight of probably every soldier in the column, Hope Grant, who had signally distinguished himself on numerous occasions during the siege of Delhi, took command of the force. No one regretted that Colonel Greathed had been superseded, especially since the fight before Agrahere they had been practically forced to fight without a leader. Three days later a messenger from Sir James Outram, with a despatch carefully concealed in a stick, brought them a request to rush with all possible speed to the Lucknow Residency.

On the 23rd of the month they came upon a strong force of the enemy who had concentrated with the intention of stopping their advance. But the

men from Delhi after some brilliant fighting beat them into the Ganges, killing many and seeing those who had attempted to escape by swimming in a number of cases sink from sight in the swift waters of the stream.

How little Roberts was sensitive on the score of his stature is well illustrated by a story he tells on himself concerning this fight. A friend had been severely wounded in the hand, and he chaffed him about allowing himself to be wounded by a mere boy, when the tables were turned on him with the words: "Well, boy or not, he was bigger than you."

After this brush with the enemy they pushed forward with all possible speed to Cawnpore, and on October 26 the city which will ever live in British history, black with the horrors of its unparalleled massacre, was reached; and the men who had had their hearts hardened by the brutal treatment of their countrymen in Delhi, were to have the last drops of compassion turned to stone by the awful recital of the deeds of the Nana.

## CHAPTER XI.

### MARCH TO THE RELIEF OF THE RESIDENCY.

*At Cawnpore—The Crowning Crime of the Mutiny—The Nana and the Mutineers—Sir Hugh Wheeler's Bravery and Blunders—The Siege of the Garrison—The Massacre—Sir Colin Campbell on the Road to Lucknow—An Exciting Adventure in Roberts' Life—A Band of Rebels Severely Punished—A Messenger from Outram—Thomas Henry Kavanagh Wins the V. C.—The Troops Eager to Advance on the Residency.*

**C**AWNPORE at last! It was only a halting place on the road to Lucknow, but it did even more than the work about Delhi to nerve the men of the Movable Column for the fighting that was before them. Stories of the struggle at Cawnpore had already reached them; something of the horrors of the loathsome massacre was known to them, but so ghastly was it all that they did not fully take it in till they stood on the scene of the work of the brutal Nana.

Although the story is well known it is necessary briefly to narrate the events that lead up to the crowning crime of the Mutiny.

Major-General Sir Hugh Wheeler, K.C.B., was the officer in command at Cawnpore when the first mutterings of the rebellion were heard. He knew of the mutiny at Meerut, of the initial work at Delhi; but his sepoy had long been his pets. He had treated them with a kindness and consideration shown to few troops. He knew their lives, he knew their language like one of themselves, and he believed he understood their prejudices. With every confidence he patiently waited till the sudden local storm, as he thought, that had broken out about Delhi would have spent itself.

On the 18th of May after calmly reviewing the situation, he wrote: "All well at Cawnpore . . . The plague is, in truth, stayed." Stayed! Only two days later flames broke out in the lines of the First Native

Infantry; and even the hopeful and sanguine Sir Hugh Wheeler began to realize that a rising was not impossible among his favored soldiers. On the 24th of May the ceremonies in honor of the Queen were dispensed with, and the English instead of rejoicing were in a state of the utmost alarm, and the mail that was being made up for England was full of bulky, gloomy letters—the last many of them were ever to pen. Even Sir Hugh trembled, and sent a telegram saying that he considered a mutiny inevitable.

The Second Cavalry was the centre of the mutinous movement, and with this body the Nana was thoroughly in touch. He was in the vicinity of Cawnpore, but kept changing his residence from time to time to deceive the English, who, alas, due largely to the character of the Commander of the forces and his attitude to the sepoys were only too easily deceived.

While the lack of insight of Sir Hugh is to be deplored it is impossible not to admire the chivalry and generosity of the old soldier. A sea of troubles was rising about himself, but Sir Henry Lawrence was in greater need, and on the 3rd of June, after he had confessed to himself and to the authorities that it was impossible to prevent a rising, he sent some of the few troops he had under him to the help of the sorely pressed garrison at Lucknow. Scarcely had these troops marched out of Cawnpore than it was said that the Second Cavalry were making preparations for a fight, and two days later, burning, plunder and slaughter began. The 53rd might have stood by the English as they were much attached to their commander, but as they advanced towards his position Sir Hugh turned his guns on them believing that they were in league with the others, and they, too, went to the lines of the mutineers. The horrors that had been reported from Delhi were upon the English in Cawnpore, and those who could fled from the threatened city.

The mutineers turned to the Nana begging him to become their leader, as the Meerut mutineers had appealed to the old King of Delhi. "Maharaja," they said, "A kingdom awaits you if you join our enterprise, but death if you side with our enemies." To this the Nana replied: "What have I to do with the British? I am altogether yours." This was sufficient. They had a cause and a head; and the brutal soldiery were let

loose on the inhabitants of Cawnpore as they had been at Delhi.

Sir Hugh had made preparations for the mutiny, but he had entrenched himself in the worst possible place about Cawnpore. In fact the gallant soldier seems to have blundered from the beginning to the end of the trouble. As a native writer said after considering the action of the British at this time: "The Sahibs put a sword into the enemy's hand and thrust their own heads forward."

The Nana decided to conduct the siege in orthodox fashion, and so on June 6 sent in a letter to the commander saying that he was about to attack. Within the entrenchments were 1,000 souls; of these but 465 were men, fully half of them civilians. It could not be expected that they would hold out against the hordes of the Nana in such a place for twenty-four hours. There is, however, one thing an Englishman can do well—die. The stoical ancient world gives no more thrilling and heroic incident than the terrible siege of those three weeks that went on through the hot summer weather. Thousands of natives played upon the position with muskets day and night; the roar of the cannon kept the besieged continuously awake; and all through the twenty-four hours grape and round shot and a hail of bullets swept the doomed garrison. At first the fire was vigorously and effectively returned, but as the gunners were slain and the ammunition grew scantier and scantier, it slackened. Meanwhile the enemy's forces were increasing, and the bullets fell thicker with each day. Still there was no thought of surrender. Women and children bravely sustained the courage of their protectors, and all prepared to die, but determined to bring down as many of their foes as possible before giving up their lives. Their water supply was short, food ran low; and to procure both deeds of unparalleled heroism were performed. A plague of dust swept through the camp intensifying their thirst. Many were dead, some through suffering had become maniacs, and all were weakened. There was nothing left for them to do but die, and this they prepared to do like Britons. But the Nana was afraid to assault their position. He had tried several times and had lost so heavily that he now determined to resort to treachery.

He sent in a message, "To the subjects of Her Majesty, Queen

Victoria." The message, according to Trevelyan, \*ran as follows, in caricature of a proclamation issued from the government house of Calcutta:—

"All those who are in no way connected with the acts of Lord Dalhousie, and are willing to lay down their arms, shall receive a safe passage to Allahabad."

Death awaited them within the rude fortifications which they had defended so nobly; brave old Sir Hugh was for holding out to the death; but the others prevailed. They had women and children under their charge and these they had to consider. They would not, however, accept the terms without a show of boldness, and so sent back the Nana's messenger, Mrs. Jacobi, announcing that "the commander was in deliberation as to the answer that should be given." At last it was concluded to accept the Nana's terms; but even while they were coming to this decision he was holding a council planning the wholesale murder of the brave remnant of the little garrison.

The band of heroes enfeebled by their privations, dragged themselves hopefully down to the Sati-Choura Ghat. The boats that were to bear them to safety, as they thought, were waiting them and they were eager to leap on board. But above the clamor of the moving crowd a bugle was heard—a note of doom rang out. It was a warning to the native escort and boatmen to get out of the way. It took them but a moment to do so, then grape and musketry swept the helpless crowd of Englishmen. One boat only escaped and the daring flight of the men in it is one of the most thrilling episodes in the Great Mutiny. It were well to draw a veil over the scene—the dead strewn the shores, the strong swimmers shot down in mid-stream, the cowering women and children bereft of their protectors. The worst was yet to come. Many of the women and children were still alive, and these were brought to shore. The brutal Nana after gloating over them had them placed in Savada House. Later they were taken to a wretched abode and here after two weeks imprisonment, just as the avenging guns of Sir Henry

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\*Trevelyan: Cawnpore.



THE NANA SAHIB WITH HIS ESCORT





THE HILL FORTRESS OF GWALIOR, A REBEL STRONGHOLD

Havelock could be heard coming to their relief they were butchered in cold blood.

The story of this frightful massacre drove the men of the movable column frantic. As they viewed the marks of the butchery, as they stood on the Sati-Choura Ghat, as they examined the dilapidated fort, where their countrymen had fought so well and so hopelessly, they burned to rush to Lucknow and slaughter and slaughter. It is little wonder after Cawnpore that even Roberts could speak calmly of striking down the mutineers, and, indeed, took evident delight in the work.

The movable column learned on its arrival at Cawnpore that there was hot work before it. Havelock and Outram with a little over 3000 men and fourteen guns had, after most gallant fighting, forced their way through Lucknow. The feat had cost them 700 men, and when it was performed they found themselves in the Residency besieged by a swarming host of natives.

There were but few troops in Cawnpore when Brigadier Hope Grant reached it; a tragic calm seemed to rest over the place. On the day of his arrival, however, good news awaited him. The new commander-in-chief, Sir Colin Campbell, was on that very evening to leave Calcutta to take command of the forces which were to march to the relief of Lucknow. At the same time orders came for the movable column to get into communication with the Alambagh at once. This was a small garden house a short distance from Lucknow where stores were kept, and where the sick and wounded soldiers had been left when Outram and Havelock began their celebrated march towards the Residency.

The column rested four days, and on October 30 crossed the Ganges into Oudh. Along with it went four companies of the 93rd Highlanders. This was Roberts' first experience with the kilted soldiers from the north, and the admiration for and confidence in them, which has lasted till the present day, began then. The following day they halted at Bani Bridge when news came that Sir Colin was already at Cawnpore and Hope Grant was requested to halt till he should arrive.

The place where they then were was most unfit for camping, and it was

Roberts' duty to select a more suitable spot. His work with the column as deputy-assistant-quartermaster-general was exceedingly heavy, and Lieutenant Augustus Otway Mayno had been appointed his assistant. The two young men rode forward three miles till they reached the village of Bhanira. There had been enemies about; camp followers had been slain, and it was necessary to keep a most careful lookout. Not a foe was seen that afternoon, and after selecting a suitable spot they rode back to the column to await morning.

At daylight they were up, and with several *sowars* moved in advance of the main force towards the new camping ground. Feeling that the country was entirely free from danger Roberts and Mayne rode on utterly heedless of their surroundings, and as a result came upon one of the most thrilling experiences of their Indian career. The whole of this story is so well told in Roberts' "Forty-One Years in India" that it would be an impertinence for another pen to attempt to describe it.

"Mayno and I," he says, "rode on ahead with a couple of *sowars* and reached the site we had chosen for the camp without meeting a single suspicious-looking individual. We then sent back the escort to bring up the camp colourmen, and while waiting for them, we entered into conversation with some passing pilgrims, who told us they were on their way to Benares to procure holy water from the Ganges. Suddenly a bullet whizzed over our heads, fired from the direction from which we had just come. Looking back, to our amazement we saw a crowd of armed men at a distance of between three and four hundred yards, completely cutting us off from the column. The whole plain was alive with them. When they saw they were observed, they advanced towards us, shouting and firing. Fortunately for us, we had made ourselves perfectly acquainted with the country the previous day, and instantly realized that escape by our right (as we faced Lucknow) was impossible, because of a huge impassable *jhil*. There was another *jhil* to our left front, but at some little distance off, and our only chance seemed to be in riding hard enough to get around the enemy's flank before they could get close enough to the *jhil* to stop us.

"Accordingly, we put spurs to our horses and galloped as fast as they

could carry us to our left; the enemy turned in the same direction and made for a village we must pass, and which we could see was already occupied. The firing got hotter and more uncomfortable as we neared the village, the walls of which we skirted at our best possible pace. We cleared the village, and hoped we had distanced the rebels, when suddenly we came upon a deep *nulla*. Mayne got safely to the other side, but my horse stumbled and rolled over with me into the water at the bottom. In the fall my hand was slightly cut by my sword, which I had drawn, thinking we might have to fight for our lives; the blood flowed freely, and made the reins so slippery when I tried to remount, that it was with considerable difficulty I got into the saddle. The enemy were already at the edge of the *nulla*, and preparing to fire, so there was no time to be lost. I struggled through the water and up the opposite bank, and ducking my head to avoid the shots, now coming thick and fast, galloped straight into some high cultivation in which Mayne had already sought shelter. Finally we succeeded in making our way to the main body of the force, where we found Hope Grant in great anxiety about us, as he had heard the firing and knew we were ahead. The dear old fellow evinced his satisfaction at our safe return by shaking each of us heartily by the hand, repeating over and over again in his quick quaint way, "Well, my boys; well, my hoys, very glad to have you back! Never thought to see you again."

Such were the men of the movable column; and such was their commander! This incident in the career of Earl Roberts is only equalled in interest by the indifference with which he relates it. Evidently to him meeting armed hodies of natives, dodging bullets, being rolled with his horse into a deep *nulla* were in very much the same category as a violent rainstorm. In this thrilling escape, he shows all the qualities that have gone to make him such a superb commander of men. A quick eye, a cool head, a daring heart, are ever needful on the field of battle; and never did he show these qualities to more purpose than in planning and executing his escape from death on this eventful morning.

When Roberts and Mayne rejoined the column the advance began towards the camp ground; but it had not proceeded far when they came

upon a crowd of natives. It was just what the "Men from Delhi," and the Highlanders desired; and the mutineers recognizing their desire, broke and fled in all directions. They scuttled to hiding places; but the British soldiers with the horrors of Cawnpore still fresh in their memories sought them out and ruthlessly smote down all they could find. Many were killed, and a brass 9-pounder was captured. The British loss was small, only thirty killed and wounded. This rabble which seemed to Roberts and Mayne to have sprung from the earth, had been stationed over night at Bhanira with the intention of cutting the column to pieces when it attempted to pass. Fortunately they were drawn out of their hiding places by the presence of the two young English officers; otherwise, although they would have been beaten to their holes, the column, taken by surprise, would have sustained considerable loss.

In obedience to a telegram from Sir Colin the force halted for several days, but on the 5th of the month the brigadier sent a part of it to the Alambagh to escort a long line of carts and camels with provisions and ammunition. Sir Colin feared lengthy operations and was thus making adequate preparations. Roberts went with the force, and before reaching the Alambagh had a brisk encounter with the enemy's artillery and cavalry. They were easily routed, and after the stores were deposited, the sick and wounded in the Alambagh were sent back to rest at Cawnpore.

On the 9th of November Sir Colin joined the column, and all were expectant of a general engagement. On the following morning the curiosity of everyone was aroused by the arrival of a messenger from Outram. To pass from the Residency to the relieving force was a daring and seemingly impossible deed, but one Thomas Henry Kavanagh, a clerk in one of the civil offices, had successfully performed it. He bore important information from Outram, who was anxious that Sir Colin should benefit by the experience of himself and Havelock. For the fine courage in bearing this message Kavanagh deservedly was awarded the V. C. Colonel Malleson's account of the man and his brave deed is well worth perusing.

\* "To all appearance," he says, "there were few men less qualified than

\*Malleson; The Indian Mutiny.

Kavanagh to escape detection. For he was a fair man, much taller than the general run of the natives of Oudh; and his red hair glittered like gold. On the other hand he possessed a courage that nothing could daunt. A perfect knowledge of the native *patois*, and a will of iron. No one loved a brave man more than Outram. The offer made by Kavanagh was an offer after his own heart. But humanly beyond the ordinary run of men, he hesitated to expose a fellow creature to almost certain death. Whatever doubts he may have entertained on this head were, however, dissipated after his first interview with Kavanagh. In him he recognized a man whose innate pluck and iron resolution would carry him through all dangers. He accepted, therefore, his offer, and bade him prepare for his enterprise.

"Kavanagh then had his hair and his skin stained with lamp black; the hair he also cut short. Then donning the dress of a *Badmash*—a native 'Swashbuckler,' a type very common in those days—he set out, on the evening of the 9th of November, accompanied by a native spy of proved fidelity, Kanauji Lal by name."

Kavanagh after many adventures and narrow escapes met, on the morning of the 10th, a party of the Punjab Cavalry who led him to Sir Colin. He proved a welcome messenger, indeed. The information he brought greatly helped Sir Colin to mature his plan of attack; and the presence of such a daring fellow in the relieving force had an inspiring influence on all. But his information was too precious to be permitted to become common property, and so he was kept under cover.

Every one was now expectant. The force and the commander-in-chief had arrived; reliable information as to the strength of the enemy and the condition of the troops in the Residency had reached the camp; there were abundant supplies and ammunition at hand;—the advance on Lucknow could not fail to begin at once.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE RESIDENCY RELIEVED.

Colin Campbell Determines to Relieve Residency and Retreat on Cawnpore—The Troops Reviewed—The Plan of Attack—Roberts Assigned an Important Duty—The Dilkusha Park—Sir Colin Wins, and Takes up His Headquarters at the Martiniere—Roberts' Deep Grief at Death of His Comrade, Lieut. Mayne—Roberts Makes an Exciting Night March—The Storming of the Sikandarbagh—A Ghastly Struggle—Nearing the Residency—Roberts Performs a Heroic Deed—The Residency Relieved.

**S**IR COLIN CAMPBELL gave the most careful consideration to the report from Outram brought in by Kavanagh and decided to act on the advice given him except in one particular—a trifling one. He knew he had a difficult task before him, but his work had to be done without delay, and then the women and children and non-combatants in the Residency must be hurried to comparative safety at Cawnpore. For the present it was impossible to capture and hold Lucknow. He must be content after relieving the Residency to leave a force on the Cawnpore side of the city which would hold the ground gained there till he could bring up an army of sufficient strength to scatter the rebel hordes and reduce the city to submission.

On the day after he had formed this resolution Roberts was in a most unexpected manner introduced to his distinguished Commander-in-Chief. He was with Normson, who had first befriended him at Delhi, when Sir Colin came to consult with that experienced soldier. He had come to discuss Kavanagh's report and Outram's telegram, and this demanded the utmost secrecy. So much confidence did the young D.A.Q.M.G. inspire in the veteran that he was permitted to be present during the important and interesting discussion.

That afternoon, November 11, the Column was reviewed. It was not a large force—only 600 cavalry, 3,500 infantry and 45 guns—but it was as

fine a force of tried soldiers as ever undertook a difficult task. Since early in May many of the men had been continuously in the field, and they were bronzed and hardened and had long since forgotten what fear meant. From regiment to regiment, from battery to battery, Sir Colin went, saying the right word to each corps. Naturally his strongest praise was for the men who had fought so nobly on the "Ridge." After the review they were dismissed to rest till morning, when the celebrated march which will live in history with all its horrors and heroism began.

The natives at once opposed the advance, and brisk fighting was experienced. It was on this day that Hugh Gough won his V.C. The enemy were beaten slowly back and by nightfall considerable progress had been made in the direction of Lucknow.

On the following afternoon as Roberts was riding along with Sir Colin he was made to realize that, as with the other leaders with whom he had come in contact, he had gained the full confidence of his new commander. The advance was to be made by the Dilkusha (a hunting box and country residence with a large game park) and the Martiniere, and Sir Colin informed him that he had been allotted the duty of guiding the troops on the Dilkusha. It was but a short way off—only five miles—but so difficult was the ground that a good guide was absolutely necessary. Roberts at once looked about him for the right man, and having secured one, whom he thought would answer his purpose, held him a fast prisoner. He was bound not to fail, and to be sure of his guide, never, as he says, let the man out of his sight.

The troops were roused at daybreak, took a good breakfast, packed their haversacks with three day's rations—a sure sign that the most trying work was expected—and the advance began. That Roberts had made no mistake about his guide was evident, for very soon the Dilkusha in all its beauty was seen in their front. The enemy were there in force, but the work of the previous day had no doubt alarmed them, and after a few scattering shots they fled.

The troops were in the midst of death, they were marching on a position that was to cost many lives and to gain which they were to wade through a



sea of their enemies' blood, and yet what an eye the young soldier had for the beautiful in nature. Shakespeare's description of the entrance to the castle of Macbeth before the murder of Duncan, does not present a finer contrast than Roberts' account of the Dilkusha.

"The gallop across the Dilkusha Park," he says, "was quite a pretty sight: deer, which had been quietly browsing, bounded away on all sides, frightened by our approach and the rattle of the guns; while the routed peopys flew down the grassy slope leading to the Martiniere. We reined up for a few moments to look at the view which opened out before us. In front rose the fluted masonry column of the Martiniere, 123 feet high; directly behind, the picturesque building itself, and in the distance, the domes and minarets of the mosques and palaces within the city of Lucknow; all looked bright and fair in the morning sun." Points around that city were about to become shambles, and the men thus viewing it were to be the slayers.

By noon both the Dilkusha and the Martiniere were occupied. The latter not without considerable stiff fighting, in which Roberts' old friend of his fever days, Watson, so distinguished himself, as he had already done on numerous occasions, that he won the V. C.

Sir Colin Campbell took up his headquarters at the Martiniere, and from the top of it kept up communications by means of a semaphore with Outram in the Residency. By his side stood Kavanagh giving him most valuable information about the city and its surroundings. "From this post of vantage Kavanagh was able to point out to the commander-in-chief the different objects of most interest to him—the positions taken up by the enemy; the group of buildings, of which the Chatta Manzil was the most conspicuous, then occupied by the gallant troops led by Outram and Havelock, who, by overwhelming numbers alone, had been prevented from carrying their glorious enterprise to a successful issue; the Residency, where, thanks to Sir Henry Lawrence's foresight and admirable arrangements, a handful of heroic Britons had been able to defy the hordes of disciplined soldiers and armed men, who, for nearly three months, day and night, had never ceased to attack the position, and the Kaisarbagh, that



**THE TAJ MAHAL OR CROWN OF EDIFICES, AGRA**  
Built of white marble.



**BASE OF KOOTUB MINAR, DELHI**  
Erected between A. D. 1210 and 1237.



THE KOOTUB MINAR, DELHI  
Erected between A. D. 1210 and 1231.

pretentious, gariel palace of the kings of Oudh, the centre of every kind of evil and debauchery."

All this day more or less fighting went on, Roberts and his friend, Mayne, went galloping about the field doing intelligence work. At roll call Roberts found that Mayne, the friend with whom of late he had shared so many dangers, had been killed. Stevens in his "From Capetown to Ladysmith" has said in his brilliant way—with more brilliancy than truth, however: "In war they say—and it is true—men grow callous: an afternoon of shooting and the loss of your brother hurts you less than a week before did a thorn in your dog's foot." Not so with Roberts. He had now been five years in India seeing much of death; he had just been through six months of continuous fighting with death ever stalking at his elbow; but the loss of Mayne overwhelmed him with grief. Up and down the scene of the conflict of the day he went hunting for his friend's body, and only desisted when night fell, and it was impossible to search longer. Next morning at day break he renewed the search, and at length found the body near the wall of the Martiniere. As he expected to be called to action at any moment he and his friend Arthur Bunny decided to lay the brave soldier to rest on the field where he fell.

"I chose," he says, "a spot close by for his grave, which was dug with the help of some gunners, and then Bunny and I, aided by two or three brother officers, laid our friend in it just as he was, in his blue frock coat and long boots, his eye-glass in his eye as he always carried it. The only thing I took was his sword, which I eventually made over to the family. It was a sad little ceremony. Overhanging the grave was a young tree, upon which I cut the initials 'A. O. M.'—not very deep, for there was little time. They were quite distinct, however, and remained so long enough for the grave to be traced by Mayne's friends, who erected the stone now to be seen."

No, Steven! War does not make sword-companions callous; and good men ever bow their heads in the presence of their dead friends. It was well for Roberts that on this day he was fully occupied; it kept him from brooding.

The enemy were disputing the advance stubbornly; the infantry,

cavalry and artillery were continuously engaged. The soldiers were weary and were wishing for night and rest, and no one needed it more than Roberts. But he was not to have it. At nightfall just as he was anticipating a soldier's couch on the ground, a short but sound sleep, he received word that Sir Colin wished to see him at the Martinicre. A mistake had been made; there was not sufficient small-arm ammunition for the troops; and as the final advance was to begin at daylight it was most essential that an effort should be made to bring a supply from the Alambagh. Roberts was the one man in the force capable of performing this task successfully in the darkness of the night. On account of the fact that the country all about was infested with the enemy, his work would be both difficult and dangerous.

However he readily undertook it. The guide whom he had guarded so carefully when he led the forces to the Dilkusha, he had kept by him, and he determined to use him once more. While he was making arrangements for his enterprise he left this individual under close guard. Caution, stealthiness were necessary, and so he decided to take with him only native cavalry, as they could steal through the night with less noise than the British soldiers. At length all arrangements were made, and he set out for the spot where he had left his guide; but the bird had flown, and now in the blackness of the Indian night he must trust to himself. Turn back he could not; it was a duty laid upon him by the commander-in-chief, an important and very necessary one, and it must be performed. His reputation was at stake; and so, despite the difficult water-courses and ravines, and the "uncompromising *jhil*" which he knew to be between him and the Alambagh where the precious stores were, he started off without a guide at 9 p. m. with two squadrons of cavalry and 150 camels to bear back the ammunition.

As might have been expected he soon lost the road. The little force was now in the gravest danger. Near at hand could be seen the watch-fires of the mutineers, and on several occasions, as they stole through the night stumbling over the unfamiliar ground, they could hear the voices of the enemy. There was nothing to do but press on and keep a careful watch. This they did, and at last Jalalabal fort, which Brigadier Adrian Hope had partially blown up several days before, was reached. It was a welcome sight

to Roberts; he had at last got his bearings and felt that he would soon be at the Alambagh. He halted his force, left it under the command of Hugh Gough, who, with Lieutenant Younghusband, was accompanying him, and rode forward through the darkness alone. He thought he would never reach the Alambagh, and was beginning to despair, thinking that he had again lost the road, when the welcome walls loomed up through the darkness. He told his mission; ordered those in charge of the stores to get the ammunition ready; and hastened back to bring up the escort and camels.

No time was lost. The authorities at the Alambagh had been busy during his absence, and on his return everything was ready. The camels were at once loaded, and the journey back to camp began. They had to move cautiously still, but, as daylight was breaking, they reached the main force without mishap. Old Sir Colin was anxious and worried about Roberts, and when the latter went to the Martiniere to report the success of his enterprise, he found the venerable commander-in-chief "only partially dressed, standing on the steps in evident anxiety." He congratulated his energetic and trustworthy officer on the success of his mission, and considerably ordered him to get some breakfast, as the advance for which the small-arm ammunition was so much needed was about to begin. By good luck a young bullock had been killed by a round shot on the 14th, and was not yet all devoured. A steak was cut from the carcass for him and he had scarcely eaten it when the army was ordered to prepare for the advance. Without a wink of sleep he made ready for one of the most thrilling and trying days of his eventful career.

Fighting began almost at once, and men fell right and left till the wall of the Sikandarbagh was reached. Heavy guns were brought to bear upon it, and soon a breach was made. Then followed a repetition of the scenes when a hole was made in the wall at Delhi.

"It was," says Roberts, "a magnificent sight, a sight never to be forgotten—that glorious struggle to be the first to enter the deadly breach, the prize to the winner of the race being certain death! Highlanders and Sikhs, Punjabi Mahomedans, Dogras and Pathans, all vied with each other in the generous competition." A Highlander won—and received the prize; the

second in the race, a native soldier, was likewise shot dead. Roberts himself was soon within the walls, and when he got in he found lying just within the breach, a drummer boy of the 93rd, "a pretty, innocent-looking, fair-haired lad not more than fourteen years of age."

The Sikandarbagh had been entered, but the few officers and men who were able to creep through the breach found themselves in an enclosure 150 yards square. In the centre was a square building; and this was occupied by 2,000 howling natives. Then began an unequal contest: Lumsden was killed, Cowper was severely wounded, Ewart was slashing to right and to left, every slash of his sword smiting down a mutineer. It seemed, however, as if the party that had won the breach so gallantly would all be slain, when the front gate was burst open and into the enclosure rushed the main British force.

The scene that followed is one of the most ghastly and heroic in the history of war. The gateway and the breach were the only outlets from the Sikandarbagh. The British could not turn back; the mutineers could not break through. Two thousand of them were caught fast, and the soldiers, with the memories of Delhi and Cawnpore in their hearts, began an unparalleled slaughter. The most thrilling scenes of bloodshed in Sienkiewicz's "With Fire and Sword" do not equal in intensity and awfulness the work of this ghastly struggle. Two thousand rebels who could hope for no mercy fought desperately for their lives, and the avengers of the women and children of Cawnpore smote them down with smoking swords.

"Inch by inch," says Roberts with a graphic pen, "they were forced back to the pavilion, and into the space between it and the north wall, where they were all shot or bayoneted. There they lay in a heap as high as my head, a heaving, surging mass of dead and dying inextricably entangled. It was a sickening sight, one of those which even in the excitement of battle and the flush of victory, make one feel strongly what a horrible side there is to war. The wretched wounded men could not get clear of their dead comrades, however great their struggle, and those near the top of this ghastly pile of writhing humanity vented their rage and disappointment on

every British officer who approached by showering upon him abuse of the grossest description."

It was no longer a human spectacle; it had become a bit out of the inferno; and the raging sepoys on the piles of their dead comrades seemed like so many demons of the pit. Soon not one of the 2,000 was left alive within the enclosure. Three or four alone seem to have escaped by leaping over the wall. This deed of daring, this bloodiest of contests in so narrow a spot, cost the British but few men.

The Residency was still a long way off. Indeed the Sikandarbagh was but a minor position of the mutineers; so strong, however, that they had deemed it impossible for the British army to storm it, and had never anticipated an attack. The victors though weary with the hot fight in the crowded enclosure pressed on towards the Residency. The Shah Najaf, the tomb of Ghazi-ud-din Haidar, first king of Oudh, lay before them. Here the enemy had collected in strength, determined to drive back the force under Sir Colin. They almost succeeded. The position they had taken up was one of great strength. A dense jungle surrounded the Shah Najaf, and the attacking army had no idea of the difficult task they had before them. The first to attempt it were driven back in confusion, until rallied by Roberts' friend Norman. More men were brought up, but still neither infantry nor artillery were able to make any impression and the work of the day seemed lost. A retreat would be most disastrous.

Sir Colin, seated on his white charger, with stern face watched the struggle and the hopelessness of it; then, calling the men of the 93rd about him, he undertook to lead them in person to the assault. Forward they went cheering their gallant commander; but a shower of bullets and round shot mowed them down. But few in the advance escaped unhurt and Roberts was among the few. The solid walls of the Shah Najaf resisted the heavy guns, and the fierce fire from it made success seem impossible. A retreat was ordered, when Adrian Hope hit on a plan that succeeded in doing what force could not do. He stealthily led a party of fifty men through the jungle to what seemed a weak part of the wall. He was not mistaken. Unobserved



his small force climbed the wall, more men were brought up, and the surprised enemy deserted the place without a struggle.

The winning of the Shah Najaf was a blessed relief to the troops. They were thoroughly played out and needed a night's rest. No one needed it more than Roberts. For sixty hours he had been almost continuously in the saddle. The troops rested well till roused by the enemy before daybreak—rested knowing that, in the language of their commander-in-chief, both at the Sikandarhagh and the Shah Najaf they had performed deeds "almost unexampled in war."

The mess-house and the Moti Mahal, the famous Pearl Palace, had to be stormed before the Residency would be relieved; and after some severe fighting both positions were taken. When the mess-house was successfully stormed Sir Colin was anxious to let Outram see how he was progressing and commanded Roberts to place the regimental colors on one of the turrets. As soon as it was in place, the enemy, 850 yards away, saw it and poured such a storm of iron upon it that the flag tumbled into the ditch below. Roberts under a heavy fire put it in position once more. Again it was shot down; the staff was broken, but with the bullets singing about him he succeeded in propping it up where it remained without being again struck. It is worth noting that in Malleison's "Indian Mutiny" this daring deed is attributed to Captain Hopkins of the 53rd, who first assisted Roberts in bringing up the flag and staff and placing them in position.

When the Moti Mahal was entered by Captain Garnet Wolseley the Residency was practically relieved. In a short time Outram and Havelock were with Sir Colin, and soon after the British troops were viewing with interest the position which for months had withstood the swarms of natives who were thirsting to repeat the acts of Delhi and Cawnpore. Havelock, "the hero of a hundred fights;" Outram, "the Bayard of India," made almost as deep an impression upon young Roberts as John Nicholson had done. It was good, he felt, to belong to a nation that could produce such noble end brave men, and throughout the entire course of his life he has endeavored to follow in their steps.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### BACK AT CAWNPORE.

The Troops Rest—Sir Colin Wisely Decides not to Attempt the Capture of Lucknow—The Residency Deserted—The Heroic Garrison—Roberts Performs Another Difficult Night Task—The Horrors of the Sikandarbagh—Roberts Provides Transport for the Retreating Force—The Funeral of Havelock at the Alambagh—Roberts Endures His Arduous Work Splendidly—Fighting in the Vicinity of Cawnpore—Roberts Sent Forward to Investigate The Cawnpore Garrison Hard Pressed—Sharp Fighting—The Mutineers Scattered—The Troops Compelled to Rest at Cawnpore.

THE British troops had successfully fought their way inch by inch to the Residency, as had the men under Havelock and Outram several months before. With their small army they could not hope to capture the city and hold the Residency, and there was grave danger that they might find themselves cooped up in the strong position they had just won till another relieving force should be sent to their assistance. There was much work before them, but in the meantime they could have one good night's rest. The success of their advance from the Alambagh had greatly cheered their spirits, and many of them had almost forgotten how utterly exhausted they were; but the soldiers slept as they had not done for weeks, while their leaders worried and argued as to what course should be pursued.

The enemy, despite their losses, still outnumbered the British ten to one, and had a very strong position in the Kaisarbagh. It would be a crowning feat of arms to drive them from their last stronghold, and to force the city of Lucknow to once more submit to British rule. Outram and Hope Grant, both experienced soldiers in Indian warfare, urgently besought Sir Colin to be satisfied with nothing less than the capture of the city. But Sir Colin from long experience had learned how to wait. He knew the troops under him: no better men ever followed a leader into battle. He had seen them tried and had never found them wanting; but they were only men. They

were a mere drop compared with the great sea of mutineers which was surging about Lucknow. If they did take the city by storm, could they hold it? It was a question demanding the gravest consideration. Besides he had not the force with which he had started out from Cawnpore. Many of his best officers had been slain, and ell told over 500 men had been killed or wounded in their heroic march on the Residency. Moreover, when his force was still further weakened by hullet and disease, he could not fill up the gaps made in the ranks. Without a reserve, surrounded by an ever increasing enemy, he made a wise choice when he decided that after he had succeeded in withdrawing the women and children from the Residency he would lead his little army hack to Cawnpore about which he was becoming very anxious. So despite the enthusiasm of his generals for attacking Lucknow he concluded that the rebel centre could wait a little. He would come back in good time to finish up the work he had begun so well.

The day following the entry of the troops into the Residency was a warm one. Round shot and volleys of musketry were fired upon the British position from morning till night; however, but little harm was done. Roberts as Deputy-Assistant-Quartermaster-General was having a busy time of it. On his shoulders fell a great part of the task of preparing transport for the women and children; but the work was done quickly and well, and on the second day of the relief he was sent to Outram from his Commander-in-Chief with a note informing the General that all arrangements for the evacuation of the Residency were complete. Before nightfall the women and children were removed from the Residency and placed in a safer position in the Sikandarbagh. The signs of the frightful massacre of two days before, when the 2,000 natives had been cut down by the avenging troops, had all been removed and the bodies were piled in a great ditch by the north wall of the place. The women and children of Lucknow had, however, become so hardened to thoughts and sights of death that the presence of such a host of dead did not effect them in the least.

The next three days were busy ones; the time was occupied in getting the valuables of the inhabitants out of the Residency, and, though busy et this work, Roberts found time to visit every spot of interest in the place and



THE HOLY CITY OF BENARES



SINLA

drank in many of the tales of heroism performed against such fearful odds. Much had been done and much had been suffered. It was well for the besieged that at the commencement of their struggle they had with them the wise and brave and far-seeing Sir Henry Lawrence. That they were alive to grasp the hands of the relieving force was due very largely to his judgment and foresight. They had been cooped up in the Residency since July 1, and had suffered greatly. When the siege began they numbered about 1,000 Europeans and an almost equal number of natives, but when Havelock and Outram reached them 350 Europeans and 133 natives had been killed or had died of disease. They had a horror of the spot where for so long a time they had kept death at bay, and even the brave little garrison were glad to know that they, too, were to leave the place they had so nobly defended.

It was necessary to deceive the enemy. Had they swarmed out of their strongholds on the little army they might have overwhelmed the British by mere mass. To withdraw without much loss it would be necessary to keep the mutineers ignorant of the movement, to make them imagine that it was the intention of Sir Colin's force to deal with the Kaisarbagh as they had already dealt with the Sikandarbagh and the Moti Mahal. So, while the Residency was being evacuated, Captain Peel and his gallant sailors poured a fierce fire from their heavy guns against the Kaisarbagh, doing great execution. Several wide breaches were made in the walls and the natives were every moment expecting that the soldiers who had made such havoc among their countrymen in the Sikandarbagh would be upon them. The artillery fire, however, was only intended to cover the retirement, and very soon the women and children were safe within the walls of the Dilkusha, breathing in the pure air of that beautiful spot. Nothing but the garrison was left, and at midnight it, too, withdrew and the Residency was left vacant, a dumb target for the artillery practice of the mutineers.

During the retirement of the garrison Roberts came in for a bit of work that was both to test his judgment and to try his nerves. It was essential that the various brigades should withdraw on the Dilkusha simultaneously. It was necessary to send a messenger to Havelock's brigade letting him know when the retirement was to begin. General Mansfield had with him one of

Hale's officers whom he had designed to send back to his force when the proper time arrived. But when Mansfield gave this officer his orders darkness had fallen over the land, and the poor fellow was evidently more afraid of the night than of the natives. It was his duty to go; but he had to confess that he was afraid he could not find his way back over the comparatively unfamiliar ground in the darkness. Mansfield, touchy at any time, was exceedingly wroth with the lack of courage shown by Hale's officer, and impatiently turned to Roberts, who was standing by, and said: "You have been to Hale's position: Do you think you could find your way there now."

Ever since Roberts had been appointed temporary deputy-assistant-quartermaster-general at Peshawar he had been cultivating industriously that which he said on his first experience with troops forced to march in the darkness was most essential for one holding his office, "the hump of locality." As a late writer has said of him in considering this incident, "he must have had a genius for finding his way about in the dark." At any rate he promptly and briefly answered Mansfield's question, with the words, "I think I can." Mansfield then said, "Return to me here" (at the Sikandarhagh), "that I may be sure the order has been received."

The officer who had been too timid to undertake the duty, was sent with him, and off they started in the blackness of night to find the position of the brigade. Sure of the locality in which they were they could not be. There was no proper road, and the country was so cut up with paths that they could easily have been led astray. Roberts, it is true, had been over the ground twice before, but since he had passed over it the whole face of the country had undergone change. For several days the whirlwind of war had been sweeping over the land, and the huts and villages he had noted for future reference had for the most part been laid waste, and where he expected to find certain landmarks, through the darkness he could see nothing but a desolated wilderness. However he persevered with every confidence in his own ability to find General Hale, and was not disappointed. With considerable pride he delivered his message, and galloped back almost as the crow flies to General Mansfield. As he rode through the night the enemy

were still hammering away at the Residency, which was now empty. To his amazement when he reached the Sikandarbagh, where Mansfield had told him to report the success of his mission, he found it empty. The 2,000 mutineers lying there in the ditch in a ghastly heap were its only occupiers, and the memory of the pile of dead and wounded as it came back in the night added greatly to the loneliness of his situation. But horrors never long held possession of Roberts' mind. He has ever been essentially a man of action; not a brooder or a dreamer. At once he grasped the situation, considered in which direction the force under Mansfield would retire and then galloped after them. He was not mistaken; and before long came up with the stragglers of the retreating army. When he reported himself to Mansfield he found that the general had forgotten all about him, and the order he had given him to report at the Sikandarbagh.

When Roberts was beginning his Indian career, like every ambitious young officer, he looked about him to consider which department he would prefer to enter. "My father," he says, "had always impressed on me that the political department was the one to aspire to, and failing that, the quartermaster-general's, as in the latter there was the best chance of seeing service. I had cherished a sort of vague hope that I might some day be lucky enough to become a deputy-assistant-quartermaster-general, for although I fully recognized the advantages of a political career, I preferred being more closely associated with the army."

He realized his vague hope much sooner than he had expected; and realized, too, that he was seeing all the active service a soldier could desire. Night and day, day and night, he was kept in the saddle; but he never murmured, never complained. After the mid-night trip to Hale's position a little rest was necessary, but he was to have none. The force that had so lately been in the Residency was safe in the Dilkusha, but it could not stay there. It had to be sent to Cawnpore at once, and his office compelled him to be restlessly active in providing transport for the non-combatants. It was a big task, but was accomplished with his usual thoroughness.

On the 24th the troops were transported to the Alambagh, where the final preparations for the march to Cawnpore were to be made. The task



had to be done thoroughly and with the greatest wisdom. There was more than the transport to be considered. There were in the vicinity of Lucknow fully 50,000 mutineers, and at any time the retreating column might find itself surrounded by a horde of well-armed and fairly well-disciplined rebels.

The 25th was one of the gloomiest days experienced in India for the troops under Sir Colin Campbell and the little band that had so staunchly 'held out in the Residency for so many months. Havelock had passed away, "a martyr to duty." His dead body was on this day brought to the Alambagh and hurried there while the army wept. Ever since he came to the scene of conflict early in July, when he returned fresh from the Persian war, he had been working night and day in England's cause. His name had become a familiar one in every English home. In earlier times he would probably have been worshipped as a saint. His sweetness of disposition, his nobility of life, his unswerving sense of duty, his dauntless courage, had endeared him to all hearts; and now he was taken from the army and from England. Only one other loss during the Lucknow campaign compares with his,—the loss of Sir Henry Lawrence who was killed early in July, but not before he had made the Residency a safe stronghold for Outram and Havelock.

On this day there was a lull in Roberts' labors, and for the first time in ten days he was able to change his clothes and have a comfortable wash. Ever since his march on the Dilkusha he had been practically at work, living without sleep, snatching a meal when he could. He must have had a constitution of iron to stand what he went through. It is much to be doubted if any other man of the Lucknow force endured as much labor and suffered as many privations as did the hardy, wiry little lieutenant of twenty-five,—a mere boy, yet trusted beyond the majority of officers with many years experience by such generals as Sir Colin Campbell and Hope Grant. Privation appears to have been the breath of his life. "Personally," he says, "I was in the best of health, and though I almost lived on horseback, I never felt inconvenience or fatigue."

After the burial of Havelock there were still two more busy days of preparation. At length every detail had been attended to, and on the

morning of the 27th the column moved out of the Alambagh. It was a long one and owing to the state of the country had to keep to a very narrow road. For twelve miles it extended, but it moved forth on its journey free from attack. However, it might yet have to fight. From Cawnpore Sir Colin had been receiving most disquieting reports, and he quite expected that a bloody battle might still have to be fought before he could send the women and children in his charge safely on their road to Calcutta.

Though fighting had ceased for the time being, and though the transport arrangements had been completed, Roberts was to have no cessation from his toil. Ahead of the slowly moving column he had to ride selecting good camping grounds; and as the rainy season was now flooding the level lands of India this was no easy task. When the column did lumber into the spot he had selected, while other officers were able to throw themselves down and rest, he was forced as D.A.Q.M.G. to work on till long after midnight, seeing that nothing was left undone that would minister to the comfort of the women and children and the worn out troops; then he might throw himself down on the ground and snatch a few winks before the "rouse" would call him to another day of toil.

On the second day of the march from the Alambagh the distant, dull, ominous booming of guns was heard from the direction of Cawnpore. The reports that had reached Sir Colin were evidently true, and a fight was even then in progress about that city of so many tragic memories. The commander-in-chief became anxious, and his anxiety was not allayed when he received a message, a "most urgent" message from General Wyndham, commanding the forces at Cawnpore, addressed to "General Sir Colin Campbell, or any officer commanding troops on the Lucknow road." The letter told Sir Colin that before Cawnpore could be occupied, and the precious charge under his care could be placed in safety, a fight, and probably a hard one, would have to take place. Both the city and the cantonments were in the hands of the enemy and the troops were in a critical position in the entrenchments.

Sir Colin wished to know the situation more fully, and so sent Roberts on ahead of the column to find out if the bridge over which he would have

to cross to reach General Wyndham was still intact. Roberts found that it was, but he found likewise that the officer guarding it had but little hope for the garrison, so fierce were the attacks that were being hourly made upon it. He said, indeed, that the garrison was "at its last gasp." Later in the day he used the same unfortunate expression to Sir Colin and for it received a sound rating. Roberts lost no time with the guard, but pushed across the bridge into the entrenchments.

As soon as it was known that a member of the relief column from Lucknow was in their midst the anxious and frightened men surrounded him with eager enquiries. For the most part they were thoroughly unnerved, and it was with difficulty that he could force a passage through them to General Wyndham's headquarters. He found that brave soldier, "the Hero of the Redan" calm and hopeful in a camp that had become thoroughly dispirited. The general gladly welcomed him, and gave him a hopeful message to take back to Sir Colin. He could at any rate hold out till the Lucknow column should arrive.

Roberts was not, however, to take back the message. He was making ready to re-cross the bridge when the sound of loud cheering reached his ears from the men, who, a few moments before, had been in such a panic. He galloped to the place from whence the shouting came and found that Sir Colin, impatient of the fate of the garrison, had with some of his staff galloped ahead of his army and into the entrenchments. His presence gave new life to the men, and though the enemy had set fire to Cawnpore and the cantonments and were endeavoring to destroy the bridge, they felt they were safe. Such force is there in the presence of a single will that has been tried and proved.

Night was approaching and Roberts had to gallop back to look after the camp and to help prepare the troops for the passage of the river. Early next morning guns were placed in position and by a steady and well-directed fire the enemy were prevented from destroying the bridge or materially interfering with the passage of the river. The mutineers kept up a continuous fire on the structure, and even sent fire-rafts against it, but despite all their efforts the lumbering convoy that had wound slowly like a

mighty dragon from Lucknow, crossed the bridge, and the women and children were in comparative safety, while the soldiers were free to plan a way of recapturing the city and of driving the mutineers from about Cawnpore.

The first three days in the entrenchments were busy ones for Roberts. It was necessary for the anticipated movements that the country should be thoroughly known and he was engaged in reconnoitring the region round about. When not doing this work he was busy making arrangements for transporting the non-combatants to Allahabad, from which place they were to be taken as quickly as possible to Calcutta. They were all longing for that crowded city; until they were at the mouth of the Ganges they would not feel safe.

While this work was being done the enemy kept hammering away at the bridge and the entrenchments, and round shot occasionally rolled among the troops, but without doing much harm. Despite the surrounding host the British were able to send the women and children on the road to Allahabad on December 3. On the following day the mutineers made another determined effort to break the British line of communication by destroying the bridge, but their artillery and fire-rafts were of no avail. Fierce fighting went on with the outposts next day, and by this time Sir Colin felt that his men were sufficiently rested, and prepared to punish thoroughly the Gwalior troops who had come so near destroying Wyndham's force.

He had under him 6,000 men of all arms, and opposed to him were 25,000 rebels. The day was Sunday—a favorite one for battles—and the British force after their week of comparative rest, rose confident of treating the rebels of Cawnpore as they had treated the rebels about Lucknow. Soon the quiet of the Sabbath morning was broken by the vigorous voice of Wyndham's artillery; and this was followed by sharp volleys of musketry. The fire of the foe was beaten down, and an order for the troops to advance was given. Roberts was with Sir Colin at the commencement of the fight, and watched with a soldier's pride the splendid work done by Captain Peel and his sailors. He watched, too, the fine advance of the infantry, and longed to be in the pursuit. He had not long to wait. The excitement of

the man-hunt was too much for old Sir Colin, and he and his staff joined in the pursuit. The enemy were completely routed and many of them were slain. They lost, too, heavily in artillery—no fewer than nineteen guns being taken.

When the pursuit ended Roberts instead of having an opportunity to rest was ordered back to Cawnpore by Hope Grant to select the night's bivouac. When he had finished his task he threw himself down on the hard ground without covering, and despite the fact that there was a chill in the air like a Canadian November morning he slept soundly, so thoroughly was he worn out.

Fine work had been done on this Sunday; not only were the rebels scattered, but the best and most experienced and successful of the Nana's generals, Tantia Topi, had been defeated by a much inferior force. So much damage had been done by his troops, however, and so deficient were the British forces about Cawnpore in transport carts that they were compelled to rest comparatively inactive in the vicinity of this station until December 23.



CAMEL CARRIAGES IN INDIA



PATIALA ELEPHANTS



KURSALEE, A HILL VILLAGE NEAR SIMLA

## CHAPTER XIV.

### LUCKNOW CAPTURED.

*Marching Through the Doab—Storming Khudaganj—A Man-Hunt—Roberts Wins the Victoria Cross—Sir Colin Makes Careful preparation for the Capture of Lucknow—Outram's Good Work at the Alambagh—The Strength of the Rebels—The Nana Narrowly Escapes Capture—The Rebels Slaughtered at Mianganj—Roberts Shows Pity for His Foes—Chased by a Mirage—The British Before Lucknow—The Moulvie of Fyzabad Once More—Lucknow Captured—Roberts Breaks Down—Forced to go on Sick-Leave to England.*

**T**HE long delay at Cawnpore was a trying one on the troops. While the rebels were in the field they desired continuous action, and it was with a great deal of pleasure that they learned on December 23 that the march was to begin towards Fategarh. The Doab was in a disturbed condition; their first duty was to destroy or scatter the rebel bands that were plundering and burning and slaying throughout that wide district, and to open up communication between the Punjab and Bengal. On Christmas day, while their friends in England were listening to the "Merry Bells of Yule," they were resting at Chohipur. From this place they pressed onward and on the last day of the year reached Gursahaiganj. Here they halted again to spend the New Year and the main army went into camp.

A report came to the Commander-in-Chief at this point that the rebels were in force, some 5,000 in all, at the Kali Nadi. They had determined to stop the advance of the Column, and to this end had partly destroyed the suspension bridge over the stream. The bridge was only five miles from Gursahaiganj, and Sir Colin detached Adrian Hope's brigade from his force and sent it forward to repair the damage done by the enemy, and to guard the bridge till he would be ready to advance with his army. But scarcely had he sent Hope's brigade forward when he learned that the foe had assembled in great strength on the opposite side of the Kali Nadi. The troops were about to have an opportunity to begin the year 1858 well.



A fight that was to try their metal would have to be fought before this army of rebels could be scattered. Sir Colin Campbell at once despatched Sir Hope Grant to the bridge to take charge of the operations against the sepoy, and when that general reached the scene of conflict he found that the reports had not been exaggerated.

The enemy were in a well-sheltered position in the village of Khudaganj. The stream was a narrow one, and from their shelter, only some 300 yards away, they were pouring a hot fire into Hope's brigade. In dealing with natives in India it had been repeatedly proved that the proper policy was an aggressive one. Good gunners many of them were, and at Delhi in particular had fought well from behind strong walls, but a swift attack and a bayonet charge they could not withstand. A small force of Europeans, since the days when the English and French had been contending for supremacy in India, had always been able in the open to scatter a horde of natives. So Sir Hope at once made preparations to drive the sepoy in Khudaganj from their position and to annihilate their force.

Peel's naval guns were brought forward and under Lieutenant Vaughan made the passage of the river through a fierce fire. Once across they were not long in finding a sheltered position from which they could play upon the enemy's batteries. As soon as they opened fire the infantry moved across to be ready for the charge, when Lieutenant Vaughan had beaten down the fire from the village. The cavalry and horse artillery after considerable difficulty crossed to the further side of the rickety suspension bridge that had been hastily and very inadequately repaired. The passage of the river had been done in gallant style, but not without loss, for one gun of the enemy was particularly well manned and never failed to find the mark. On one occasion a shot from it killed and wounded no fewer than eight men on the bridge, but the men of the Column were experienced veterans—men from Delhi and Cawnpore and Lucknow, and it would be a fierce fire indeed that could make their hearts sink. At length Vaughan had silenced the most dangerous gun, and the entire fire of the enemy had been so well beaten down that the soldiers began to feel for their bayonets in expectation of the command to charge. Sir Colin Campbell and Sir Hope Grant, with whom

Roberts was, had been watching the engagement from a distance; not so far off, however, but that the enemy could reach them, for both commanders were hit by spent bullets and one member of their staff was dangerously wounded.

They saw that it was time to end the struggle, and were about to give orders to form for the charge when to their amazement they heard the "charge" sounded, and a wild yell from the Irishmen of the 53rd told them that their orders had been anticipated.

It was a magnificent sight, that wild charge up the slopes of the village. The position was taken in fine style, and in the finish, infantry, cavalry and artillery played their part. Roberts was in the thick of the fight. He had galloped forward with the cavalry to within 300 yards of the enemy's guns when the charge fired the spirits of men and horses alike. Among the rebels they rushed, and were soon in an exciting hand to hand contest with the sepoys. The fight was but a brief one; the cowering natives, unable to resist the dashing charge, turned and fled, leaving many dead about their guns, seven of which fell into the hands of the British. The enemy who were not struck down fled pell-mell from the village, and after them went the gallant cavalry.

Roberts was in the hunt, and graphically relates the events of that day, which was to prove the proudest of his life. Every now and then he and his comrades would come upon stragglers of the fleeing army, and these they struck down without the slightest compunction. At times groups would be overtaken, and in many cases the natives seeing that the avengers had reached them, turned and fired into the advancing British or fixed bayonets and thus received the charge of their pursuers. But for the most part their firing was wild, and their bayonet attack futile. While daylight lasted the pursuit went on, but with gathering darkness the pursuers were forced to desist.

They were about to form up to return to the main army, when a crowd of rebels, apparently the advance of the fleeing force, turned on them and poured a volley into their ranks at close range. It was the most disastrous volley of the day, for it struck down with a mortal wound, one of the most

gallant soldiers and most dashing cavalry leaders in India, Younghusband, a man who had on many occasions won renown, and who had experienced many hair-breadth escapes, and several such miraculous ones that he seemed to bear a charmed life.

Roberts saw him fall from his horse, but he was so hotly engaged himself that he could not run to his side. One of Younghusband's *sowars* was having a fierce hand to hand conflict with a sepoy, who, with fixed bayonet, was endeavoring to kill yet another British soldier before he himself would be struck down. Roberts took the situation in at a glance, saw the inevitable fate of the *sowar*, dashed to his side, and with one swift stroke of his sword smote down the mutineer. As he turned to look for more work, he saw two other rebels rushing from the field with a standard. His blood was up in an instant. After the two rebels he galloped, seized with one hand the standard, and with the other slashed fiercely at the sepoy holding it and the rebel fell dead in his tracks. As Roberts recovered from the blow he turned, and saw the other sepoy a few feet away with his musket pointed at his body. He was too near to miss, and the young lieutenant felt that death had at length found him out. The trigger fell with an ominous click, but the musket missed fire; and he was able to chronicle another miraculous escape. He was reserved for greater things; Britain and the world needed his services. Who knows but some power may have intervened to save the life of the greatest and most humane soldier of these latter days.

He succeeded in carrying off the standard for which he had risked so much. It was a case of "death or glory;" death passed him by, and glory reached out her arms to him. For his conduct on this exciting day he received the thing he values before his Earldom—the "pennyworth of bronzo" his gallant son died in winning forty-two years later—the Victoria Cross.

When he rejoined his troops he found that the doctor had no hope of Younghusband's life. This news greatly saddened him. He had seen much of Younghusband since the days when they had fought together on the Ridge, and they had grown to be warm friends. He felt that there would

soon be none of the men he loved left. Nicholson, Mayne, Younghusband—every one his heart clung to was being taken from him. It was with very mixed feelings that he rode back to the village where the main army was resting after the hot fight. The Infantry and artillery bore witness to the splendid work done by the cavalry in pursuit, and they rode up to him with the wildest enthusiasm. None came in for a greater share of the praise and congratulations than Roberts, who bore in triumph the standard he had captured at such risk.

There was no further work to do in this region and the force marched back to Fatehgarh, where they found that the bridge over the Ganges had not been destroyed as they feared. It was the cool season and they hoped that the expected advance on Lucknow would begin at once, but they were to be disappointed. Here they were to stay a whole month, and bitter were the complaints that rose from officers and men against Sir Colin for the seemingly needless delay. But Sir Colin knew what he was doing. The delay was as necessary as was the delay Roberts made at Bloemfontein before the great march on Pretoria. It is the halting time that tries a general. Fighting is easy; but waiting tries the spirit of troops and generals alike. But commanders like Wellington and Sir Colin Campbell and Roberts have learned how to wait until they can be sure that the blow they intend to give will get home.

All this time Sir James Outram at the Alambagh with a small force had been holding the Lucknow rebels at bay. While Colin Campbell was marching on the city the famous Moulvie, who was in Lucknow, endeavoring to stir up the fanatics of the place against the heroic defender of the Residency, decided to go out against him himself. He led force after force against the troops in the Alambagh, but Outram was never caught napping, and the rebels suffered such loss that towards the end of February they concluded that they might as well attempt to drain the Ganges as to crush the force under Outram.

Malleon thus speaks of the situation just before Sir Colin arrived on the scene:—

\* "Thus did that illustrious man," (Outram) "aided by his capable officers, by Berkeley, his chief of staff, by Vincent Eyre, by Olpherts, by Maude, by Dodgson, by MacBean, by Moorsom, by Gould Weston, by Chamier, by Hargood, by Barron, by Wale, and by that excellent officer of the engineers, Nicholson, by Brasyer, and by many others, for the list is a long one, maintain with a comparatively small force, the position assigned to him by the commander-in-chief. Towards the end of February his force had been increased, but it never equalled 5,000 men. It was computed, on the other hand, that the rebels had at their disposal no fewer than 120,000 men. Of these 27,550 were trained sepoy, and 7,100 trained cavalry soldiers. Of the remainder, 5,400 were new levies, 55,150 were najibs, or men drilled and armed in the native fashion, some 4,000 gunners, 800 belonged to the camel corps they had organized, whilst the armed followers of the talukdars numbered 20,000."

It is little wonder that Sir Colin calmly hid his time. He had no fear for Outram at the Alambagh, but he had great fear of failure in his attempt to capture the city against such a horde of men. For the task, his hard worked troops must be thoroughly rested and reinforced. At the beginning of February he felt himself ready for his difficult task, and his strong column moved from its tedious camping ground towards the city through which many of the soldiers had already twice fought their way.

Meanwhile Roberts' commander, Hope Grant, had been promoted. He was now a major-general, and was placed in command of the cavalry division. He thought too much of Roberts, however, to lose him, and had him appointed his deputy-assistant-quartermaster-general.

Early in February the column marched through Cawnpore about which, during the past eight months, war and death had raged so fiercely. There was no need to halt here, for they had done their work so thoroughly that the country round about was comparatively free from rebels. The Nana, however, was reported to be in the vicinity, and at their next camping place an effort was made to locate and capture him. Many conflicting rumors as to his hiding places were brought in, but at length Unjar Tiwari, a Hindu

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\*Malleon: The Indian Mutiny.

interpreter and spy—a man whom Roberts had attracted to himself, and who, to the end of his life proved, through good report and evil report, a most faithful British subject—brought in word that the Nana was hiding in a fort only twenty-five miles away.

Hope Grant determined to do all in his power to capture this arch-rebel and fiend in human form. If he could but succeed he would have performed a bit of work that would go more towards terminating the mutiny than would the capture of the rebel city. Off he galloped with a strong force, which Roberts accompanied, but the wily Nana had kept himself well informed about the movements of the troops, and did not wait to be captured. General Grant found the fort deserted, and learned that Unjur Tiwari had not been mistaken, the Nana had been there, but on account of the nearness of the British column had fled from the place on the previous day, and his whereabouts was known to no man.

After this experience the march on Lucknow once more began; but the troops were not to reach their destination unopposed. It was soon discovered that the rebels were about to make an effort to check the advance, and when the column reached the town of Mianganj they found some 2,000 of the enemy ensconced behind the strong walls of the place. As the British approached the village they were met by round shot and volleys of musketry, and a halt was necessary in order to plan an attack. The enemy had a considerable force of cavalry, and their horsemen could be seen here and there endeavoring to cut off stragglers from the main army.

No time was lost however. The heavy guns were at once brought into position, and immediately they were thundering against the thick walls, behind which the rebels, remembering Delhi and Cawnpore and the Sikandarbagh, were already in a state of terror. Shot after shot directed with splendid accuracy soon made a wide breach in the wall, and through this the British troops recklessly dashed. A fight not unlike the one in the Sikandarbagh ensued, a hand to hand fight in which every soldier engaged did deeds worthy of the Victoria Cross. The place became a shambles, and in the streets lay 500 dead natives. Many threw down their weapons and tried to escape by leaping over the walls, but the cavalry were awaiting them,

and when they alighted they were struck down. Over 500 prisoners were taken. These men claimed that they had been forced to fight. They fully expected death, however, as they knew that the English were not burdening themselves with prisoners, but Sir Colin took compassion on them, and allowed them to go free.

It was necessary to destroy the strong walls lest another rebel force should find shelter behind them. This work was entrusted to Roberts and while superintending the operations an incident occurred which showed that, despite all the fighting and slaughter he had been through, his heart was in no way changed. War and its horrors had left him the same humane and tender-hearted Christian soldier he was when he landed in India.

"Next day," he writes, "we halted while the walls were being destroyed and the place rendered indefensible. As I was superintending the work of destruction, the horrors of war were once more brought very forcibly before me by the appearance of an infirm old man, who besought me to spare his house, saying: 'Yesterday I was the happy father of five sons; three of them lie there' (pointing to a group of dead bodies) 'where the other two are, God only knows. I am old and a cripple, and if my house is burned there is nothing left for me but to die.' Of course I took care that his house and property were left untouched."

It is the same milk of human kindness that has caused him to receive, in certain quarters, severe censure for his leniency towards the Boers in South Africa. Such generosity is never wasted. A loyal India is due largely to men like Roberts; and in time a loyal Africa will grow from the deeds of kindness done there, and not from the strength of the destructive force sent against the Republics and the rebel sympathizers.

Preparations had not been completed for the storming of Lucknow, and so the column rested at Mohan till all the details of the enterprise could be arranged, and the various forces necessary for its success could be massed simultaneously before the rebel stronghold.

While at this place Roberts and his friend Watson had a humorous adventure which he relates on himself. They had frightened an antelope from cover and started in pursuit of the swift-footed animal. The chase led



**EARL DERBY**  
Prime Minister of England.





**EARL ABERDEEN**  
Prime Minister of England.

them far from camp, and when it was at its height, to their consternation they saw a strong force of the enemy's cavalry riding down upon them. Their horses were "nearly dead-beat." They attempted flight, but all hope left them as they saw the enemy drawing ever nearer, and knew that their camp was still miles away. "We thought our last hour was come. We bade each other good-bye, agreeing that each must do his best to escape and that neither was to wait for the other." But suddenly the earth swallowed their pursuers, as mysteriously as the witches vanished before the amazed vision of Macbeth and Banquo; and they could but say, "The air hath bubbles as the water hath, and these are of them." They had been chased by a mirage, "scared by a phantom enemy." It was, however, a relief to get back to camp. They could not shake off the feeling that they had just had a narrow escape for their lives.

On the first of March the column made a hard and trying march to Bhanjira, where the engineers, naval brigade, and other forces were collecting, and on the following morning the final stage of the march to Lucknow was begun. When they reached the Alambagh they found that the force under Outram had not been idle. They had fought battle after battle during the past three weeks, but Outram's engineers had likewise been busy preparing for the siege, and everything was ready to begin operations at once when Sir Colin Campbell's force arrived.

As has already been stated there were within and about the city 120,000 rebels while Sir Colin had under him, of all arms, only 30,588 men with 164 guns. Captain Peel was, however, better equipped now for hammering down the walls than when he came to the relief of the Residency. Instead of 24-pounders his brigade was now in charge of 64-pounders, before which the strongest fortifications about Lucknow would be but as the walls of a hut.

The rebels had been making great preparations for a siege. They had strengthened every important position, and had protected their defences with one hundred guns. According to Malleon, "All the main streets were protected by bastions and barricades, and every building of importance besides being loop-holed, had an outer work protecting the entrance to it."

Sir Colin observed, however, that the enemy had left the northern side

of the city weak, and he determined to force the surrender of the city by a movement against that side, while the main attack was being made on the east.

Fighting began on the 6th of March, and each day until March 21, when the Moulvie of Fyzabad was driven from his strong position in the centre of the city, the column experienced continuous warfare. Position after position was taken, army after army of the rebels was cut to pieces with but small loss to the British. Unfortunately, however, the majority of the rebels escaped through an oversight on the part of the commander-in-chief.

Roberts had been in the thick of the struggle. He was constantly engaged in arduous duties, and was beginning to feel the effects of continuous work without proper rest. He had stood Delhi and Cawnpore and the relief of the Residency, but the capture of the city was to be too much for even his iron constitution. He had as he says for some time been feeling the ill effects of exposure to the climate and hard work. He was forced to go on the sick list. He hoped that a few weeks among the hills would restore him to health and make him fit to get back to the army in time to help wind up the war. It was not to be. His will could no longer keep his body from breaking down, and a long rest with change of climate was an absolute necessity; so, much to his chagrin, he was ordered to take a trip to England.

He longed to see the fields and streams of his boyhood, but he hated to leave India while there was a blow to be struck at England's enemies; but it had to be, and he made preparations to depart from his native land after six years of arduous and distinguished service.

## CHAPTER XV.

### HOME ON SICK-LEAVE AND MARRIAGE.

Roberts' Feelings on Leaving India—Laments the Loss of Many Friends—His Splendid Career in India—Death of His Travelling Companion, Captain Sir William Peel—His Thoughts on Board Ship—England at Last—Meeting with His Father and Friends—Finds a Life-Companion—The Noble Character of His Wife—His Marriage—Receives the V.C. from the Hand of His Queen—Hurried Call to India—A Hard and Rough Passage—Arrival at Calcutta—Ordered "Up Country"—Recalled to Calcutta to Organize Lord Canning's Triumphant March—The Objects of this March—The March Begins at Cawnpore.

**I**T was with strangely mixed feelings that Roberts began to make preparations for leaving India. There was still much work for the troops to do in that country. The great centres, Delhi, Cawnpore and Lucknow, were in the hands of the British, but throughout wide regions, especially the district of which Lucknow was the Capital, large bands of rebels were still operating. Moreover the majority of the ablest mutineer leaders were still in the field, and until they were captured or slain the war could not be said to be closed. Roberts' ardent nature desired to be in at the finish; he did not want to leave India while there was a sepoy in arms. On the other hand his life in the army was becoming a very lonely one. He had made many noble and true friends, but for the most part war had worked its will with them; and some, such as Nicholson, Mayne, and Younghusband had been killed, while others had, like himself, succumbed to the terrible strain of the past year. Of the situation he says; "It was a heavy blow to me to have to leave while there was still work to be done, but I had less hesitation than I should have had if most of my own immediate friends had not already gone. Several had been killed, others had left sick or wounded; Watson had gone to Lahore, busily engaged in raising a regiment of cavalry; Probyn was on his way home invalided; Hugh Gough had gone to the hills to recover from his wounds; and Norman and

Stewart were about to leave Lucknow with army headquarters."

The absence of these friends took away something of the sting of being forced to leave a field where he was so rapidly winning fame and rising in the estimation of his commander as a brave and wise soldier. On April 1, six years to a day since he landed in India, he handed over his office as Deputy-Assistant-Quartermaster-General to Major Wolseley (now Field-Marshal Viscount Wolseley, late Commander-in-Chief), and by the middle of the month he was able to leave Lucknow. Before he left that historic spot Sir Colin Campbell had him a most affectionate farewell. The Commander-in-Chief had learned to love the soldierly, energetic young lieutenant, whom he had trusted so much in trying circumstances, and whom he had never found wanting. He wished to gladden him on his homeward way and so when bidding him God-speed promised to recommend him for the rank of Brevet Major as soon as he qualified by becoming a regimental Captain, and further that he would give him the first permanent vacancy occurring in the Quartermaster-General's department.

After this meeting with Sir Colin he set out for Cawnpore, the first stage of his homeward journey, with a very light heart. And no wonder! Here he was, but twenty-six years old, and yet if his health would only hold out a bright career would inevitably be his. Rapid promotion, honors could not fail to come to him. In the meantime he had much to show for his six years of service. Already he had won the Victoria Cross, the most coveted gift in the power of his Queen to bestow, and later he was to be awarded a medal with three clasps, each of which proved him a veteran. The names engraved on them, Delhi, Cawnpore, and Lucknow, told that he was a soldier proved in the most trying events of the Great Mutiny.

He was, he thought, to have a congenial comrade on his homeward journey. Captain Sir William Peel, son of the great Peel, who had done such gallant and useful service with his Naval Brigade and who had been severely wounded at the capture of Lucknow, was to accompany him to England. Roberts had seen much of Peel in the field, and had grown to esteem him greatly. His agreeable disposition, his resources in time of need, his daring in the presence of danger, had all attracted him as they fought

side by side at Cawnpore and Lucknow, and he anticipated having the monotony of the voyage westward relieved by the genial companionship of this "soldier and sailor too." But once more he was to lose a friend. When Peel, who was still suffering from his wound, reached Cawnpore, Roberts saw that he was seriously ill, and when he called in an army surgeon he discovered that his friend was stricken with small-pox. Eight days later the gallant soldier was laid to rest in the dusty soil of Cawnpore, and Roberts proceeded on his way to Calcutta with a heavy heart. When he reached that celebrated city he found the P. and O. steamer "Nubia" ready for sea; and on May 4 he boarded her, and began his journey southward across the blue stretches of the Bay of Bengal.

Croser in his excellent little life of Lord Roberts thus speaks of his departure from India:—

"As the Nubia plowed its way southward across the sunlit waters, the young subaltern on board must have contrasted this pleasant home going with that which he had secretly longed for six years before.

"Then he was a lonely, home-sick, inexperienced boy, disappointed at the apparent hopelessness of the outlook, eating his heart out in a round of monotonous duties. Now he was a man, proved and tried. He had a record behind him, and one that was full of credit and honor. He could look back on a period of service the last year of which had been crammed with excitement and studded with military events of vast importance. He had taken his share, and played his part, in combating an overwhelming peril, and had set his hand with the best to what was truly a gigantic task. He had been in India when the British power in that dependency seemed as if it was rocking to its fall, and he had lived to see it established more firmly than it had ever been before. He had witnessed the sudden passing away of a false and delusive peace, a peace which was replaced for twelve months by a reign of violence and terror, in which the fire tried every man's work, and all weakness and unreadiness in the ruling race stood nakedly revealed. In that fierce hour of stress mediocrity lost its head and wrung its hands; and the strong man came to his own. It was a time when striplings were made men; when men, who were men indeed, stood forth as heroes.

"The world will never know a tithe, a hundredth part, of the deeds that were done in the battle-smoke of that tremendous struggle, nor of the pains that so cheerfully were borne by those who fell to bullet, or slashing tulwar or disease. Many a man who survived found himself tracked by the fever fiend, and never saw the white-island cliffs again. But among those who passed through it all, and whom the home-coming to beloved friends and fair green meadows and cloud-haunted skies brought quickly back to health and vigor stolen by climate and war, was the brilliant young staff officer who had been nominated for the Victoria Cross."

As the young soldier sat on the decks of the Nubia drinking in the refreshing sea breezes he went over in his mind the scenes he had been through since he first joined the movable column in the spring of 1857. While in the heat of the struggle; while constantly in the saddle fighting or attending to the needs of the camp, he had had no time to think; but now as the succession of tragedies he had been through crowded before him, he could but wonder that he was alive and on his way back to Merry England. There was not the same rush in going home that there had been in coming out six years before, and he had an opportunity of seeing something of Europe. On his journey he touched at such historic and picturesque spots as Corfu, Trieste, Venice, and Switzerland. But neither Venice nor Switzerland were to his eyes as beautiful as the fields and streams of England which he looked upon once more towards the end of June.

Of the old familiar scenes he says: \* "Every English tree and flower one comes across on first landing is a distinct and lively pleasure, while the greenness and freshness are a delicious rest to the eye, wearied with the deadly, whity-brown saltness of dried-up sandy plains, or the all-too-gorgeous coloring of eastern cities and pageants."

He was not to stay long in England. His soldier father was living in Ireland and his heart yearned to see the man who had been so much to him in the home-sick days in India. He wanted to stand before him, and grasp his hand, with the consciousness that he had lived his life in the army as his father would have had him live it. After a brief sojourn in London he set

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\*Roberts: Forty-One Years in India.

out for the county of Waterford, where he was to spend a most happy year recovering from his Indian experiences and storing up strength for the still greater work that was before him in the land of his birth. His letters had told his father something of his life in India, and the old man, now in his 74th year, was no doubt daily dipping into them to keep his mind fresh about his boy's deeds and experiences, when his bronzed young soldier son came into the quiet country home.

Neither was in a sense changed. The old soldier was stronger than when Roberts had seen him last. He had completely recovered from his long service in the most trying of British possessions, and he seemed if anything younger than when he was instructing his son in frontier ways at Peshawar. On the other hand the experiences of his boy had matured both body and mind. He was no longer a boy, but a man in every sense of the word, ripe in his profession and in his knowledge of men. One other being in that household welcomed him even more eagerly than his father—his little sister, an invalid unable to move of herself, yet, as he says, "perfectly happy in the many resources she had within herself, and the good she was able to do in devoting those resources to the benefit of others." How eagerly and often would his veteran father, his beautiful and still young mother, and his worshipping little sister listen to his stories of that tragic year, modestly told.

He very soon found another being eager to listen to his stories of the Mutiny, willing to drink in tales of "moving accidents by flood and field." Nora Henrietta Bews, the daughter of Captain Bews of the 73rd Regiment, was living not far from the residence of Roberts' father, and a friendship that soon ripened into love sprang up between the two young people.

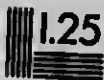
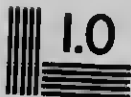
All through Roberts' life he has craved for companionship, the confidence, the trust, the sympathy of someone. No man ever required love more. He needed it as much as a flower needs sunlight, and he has never been without it. Nicholson, Mayne, Watson, Sir Hope Grant, old Sir Colin Campbell all in a way loved the young soldier. War could not change his nature; in the midst of death his heart ever looked about for love; and he was as ready to give as he was to receive. His grief at the death of





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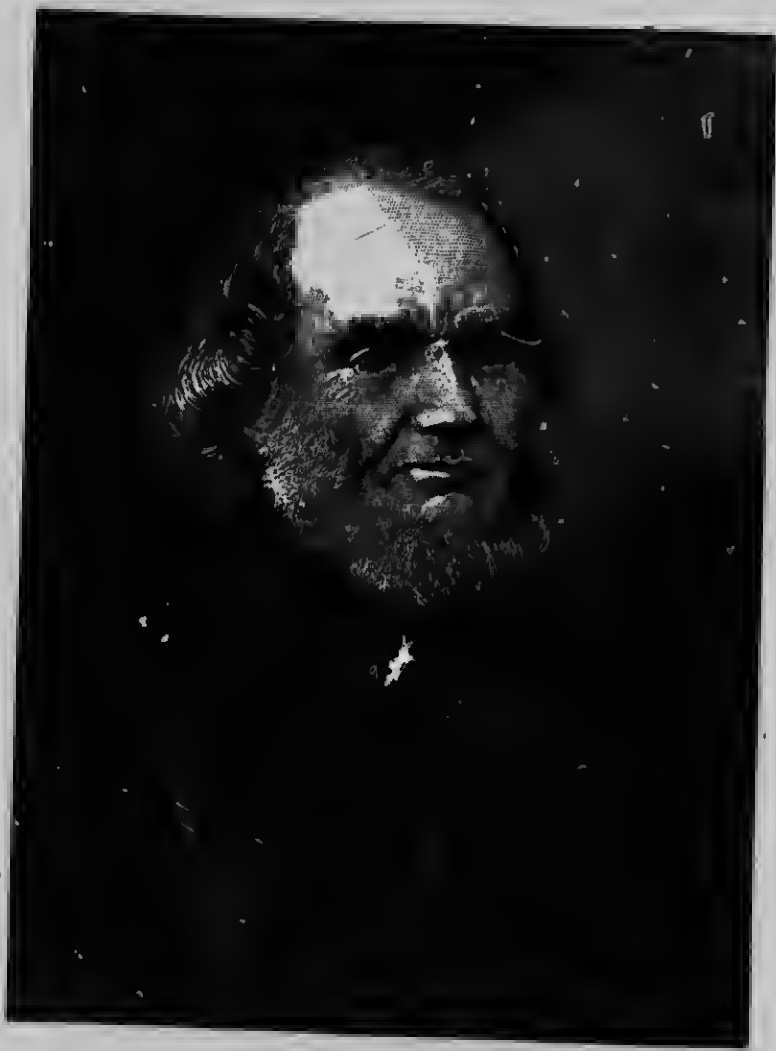
Nicholson was but a manifestation of the first great love of his life; his sad search for Mayno's body, and his tender thoughtfulness as he laid his comrade-in-arms to rest, were further evidences of his need of love.

So far his active life in barrack and field had kept him from entertaining thoughts of marriage, but his long furlough gave him an opportunity of obtaining the one thing that he needed to make his life complete—the love of a noble, true-hearted, self-sacrificing woman. She was a soldier's daughter; and no soldier ever won a truer wife. They were married on May 17, 1850, and forty-one years later, love was still prompting her husband's acts. Roberts planned to relieve the heroic little town of Mafeking on the anniversary of their wedding day as a fitting gift for his wife. And she was not resting comfortably in England while he was enduring heat and cold in distant Africa. She was by his side in the field, and with her own hand worked the flag that was to be run up over the capitals of the Republics. But as Kipling says, that is another story, and will have to be dealt with in a future chapter.

During Roberts' stay in Ireland he was much in the saddle, and followed the hounds in many a good hunt. However, his decision to marry brought his life in Ireland to an end. One of the most interesting paragraphs in his autobiography is the one describing his courtship. It is as *naive* as a schoolboy's composition, and all the more genuine for that. He no doubt felt it too sacred a thing to give to the public; but this paragraph is well worth reading.

"There" (at Waterford), "too, I found my fate, in the shape of Nora Bews, a young lady living with a married sister not far from my father's place, who a few months later consented to accompany me on my return to India. The greater part of my leave was, therefore, spent in Ireland."

The right life companion this for a soldier! The heat, the fever of India, the horrors suffered by the women and children in Cawnpore, were no deterrent to her spirit. She had learned the first great law of love, sacrifice. Comforts, friends, country, she was ready to leave for her husband. They were married on May 17, as has been already stated, and at once started for Scotland where they intended to spend some weeks; but they had just begun



**EARL RUSSELL**  
Prime Minister of England.



**EARL BEACONSFIELD**  
Prime Minister of England.

their tour through that picturesque country when Roberts received an official document which, while it put an end to their trip through the lakes and hills famous in song and romance, made their hearts leap with joy. It was a command to the young bridegroom to be present on June 8 at Buckingham Palace, when the Queen had decided to decorate with her own hand the brave soldiers who had won the Victoria Cross in the great and costly war just brought to a conclusion.

His year at home had been a happy one in every way, but his furlough ended on June 27, and he looked forward with considerable dread to the long hot voyage through the Red Sea in July. His health had received a severe shaking up in the last twelve months he had been in India, and the doctors urged on him the necessity of a still longer rest. Besides there was his young wife to be considered; she would have enough to endure when they reached India without adding to it the Red Sea in the worst month of the year. He applied to the War Office for a three month's extension of his leave, and his distinguished services made his application receive favorable consideration. It was granted to him; but at the same time he was told that if he took it he would lose the promised post in the quartermaster-general's department.

Ever since Sir Colin, on that April morning at Lucknow on the field where he had proved himself a hero a hundred times, had told him that he would be recommended for the first vacancy that occurred in the department in which he had so much experience and had acquitted himself so well, he had been looking forward to his return to India and promotion. Furlough was not to be thought of. Nora Bews was not the woman to stand in the way of her husband's career, and so the happy young couple decided to brave the hot journey, and hurried over to Ireland to say good-by to their friends, and to make final preparations for their long and trying voyage.

Roberts was not mistaken; the Red Sea proved the nightmare he had anticipated. They entered it at an unusually hot time in an unusually hot season. Many of the passengers were almost suffocated with the heat, and the captain twice turned the vessel's head to the wind to revive them. At length Aden was reached, and the torturing heat was at an end. The rest

of the trip, however, was not to be a pleasant one. Heat changed to storm. A south-west monsoon caught them in its grip, and dashed them about on the tossing seas. Nor was this to be the end of their disagreeable experiences. When they entered the Bay of Bengal the gale changed to a cyclone and grave fears were entertained for the safety of the vessel. Waves crashed over her; the rudder was broken; coal was running low, and they feared that they would not have sufficient to carry them to Calcutta. Worse still, the storm had made havoc along the coast and the light-ships from which the pilots kept an outlook for vessels were all blown out to sea, and for days their steamer had "to remain at the mercy of the winds and the waves." At length the authorities grew anxious for the fate of the vessel and passengers, and sent a brig out with a pilot on board to find them if possible. She succeeded, and on July 30 a very much battered boat, bearing a thoroughly worn out lot of passengers, steamed slowly up the Hugli till Calcutta was reached.

All needed a rest, but Roberts and his wife were to have none. On his arrival he found orders awaiting him which were far from pleasant. He was commanded to proceed to Morar to join Brigadier-General Sir Robert Napier, who was in command of the Gwalior district, but he never shirked duty; and though Morar was in the month of August almost as hot as the Red Sea, he made preparations to obey the orders.

After all he was not loath to get away from Calcutta. Ever since his first experience as a cadet in that city he had disliked the place, and something of the old homesickness haunted him as he moved among the motley crowd or lounged about the gloomy hotel. There was another reason why he was glad to get "up country." His old strength, despite the long rest he had had in Ireland, had not completely returned to him; and he had scarcely arrived in Calcutta before the Peshawar fever, from which he had suffered so much during his first years in India, returned, and he feared that he might be unfit for the duties of his new office. His wife was far from strong at this time. The heat of the Red Sea and the storm of the latter part of the voyage out had been too much for her, and she needed a rest; but

she was a brave woman, and knowing how much her husband required her companionship she decided to accompany him to Morar.

The journey from Calcutta by railway, and "dak-ghari," and doolie, till Hazarihagh was reached was a tiring one, and here they decided to rest for a few days with some relations of Roberts'. While at this place Roberts received a message ordering him back to Calcutta. He was not displeased with the message. He dreaded Morar; and now that his young wife had the companionship of thoroughly kind friends he had not the same reluctance to leave her for a time that he had had in the gloomy hotel at Calcutta. Besides he had a soldier's hope that this unexpected recall to headquarters meant more active service. A war cloud was rising over China, and preparations were even then being made for the expedition which set out for that country early in the following year. He saw but little chance of active service in India. The thoroughness with which the troops had put down the mutiny left the British with no cause for alarm. But China presented an excellent field for the soldier, and he went to Calcutta, as he says, with considerable elation of spirits, believing that he was once more to have an opportunity of drawing the sword.

He was to be disappointed however. When he reached Calcutta he found that Lord Canning intended to make a triumphal march through the territories that had so lately been swept by war. There were many feudatory chiefs in Oudh, in the North-West Provinces, and in the Punjab; some of these had been loyal to England under great temptation during the fierce and bloody struggle of 1857 and 1858; others had been in arms endeavoring to drive the British out of India. So Lord Canning intended to pass through the country, rewarding the faithful, and impressing the rebellious with the might and majesty of England.

There was another reason for the step about to be taken by Lord Canning. India was now being ruled under new conditions. The power that had been in the hands of the Honorable East India Company was now taken over by the Queen; and it was, as Roberts says, with the object of emphasizing the proclamation announcing to the people of India this important change, and impressing the native mind with the reality of



Queen Victoria's power and authority, that Lord Canning decided on undertaking this grand tour.

Roberts had won an enviable reputation as an organizer of camps while with Hope Grant and Sir Colin Campbell, and he was selected for the heavy task of looking after the equipment of the pageant that was to accompany Lord Canning in his extensive journey through the late mutinous districts. No better man could have been chosen. He had been over most of the territory, and knew thoroughly just what places would suit the army of attendants that were to go with the viceroy.

At this time he was once more tempted to leave the quartermaster-general's department, but refused an excellent offer to enter the revenue survey department. To do so would have greatly increased his income, but would have ended his career as a soldier in the field, and action he dearly loved.

The tents which were to be used on the great journey about to be undertaken were at Allahabad, and as the camp which Lord Canning was to make his starting point on his "triumphal progress" had to be prepared at Cawnpore by October 15, Roberts had no time to lose. He set out for Allahabad, calling at Hazaribagh for his wife, and after a somewhat unpleasant journey on account of the rain, and an exceedingly dangerous trip across the Jumna, they reached the fort at Allahabad where Roberts at once began his work of inspecting the stores he was to use.

The tents he found were, for the most part, rotten and mil-dewed, and new ones had to be procured; but despite the delay on this account everything was ready by the 15th of October when Lord and Lady Canning reached Cawnpore.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### WITH LORD CANNING THROUGH INDIA.

*The Imposing Nature of Lord Canning's Triumphal March—Roberts Stops Looting—At Lucknow—A Grand Durbar—The Column Returns to Cawnpore—A Magnificent Spectacle at Agra—Roberts' Wife Entranced with the Taj—Viewing the Memorable "Ridge"—The War-Cloud in China—Roberts Disappointed at Not Being Sent with the Chinese Expedition—The Durbars Continue till April 9—Roberts a Happy Father—Lila at Simla Begun.*

**T**HE triumphal march of the Viceroy of India began on October 18. The procession marched along the road over which Roberts had twice before fought his way to Lucknow. He had now a much heavier undertaking on his hands than the duty of Deputy-Assistant-Quartermaster-General for a comparatively small column; but on this occasion there was no danger of his life, and he could have ample rest.

The gigantic procession was one of the most imposing ever seen in India. Lord Canning was accompanied by a strong escort of artillery, cavalry, and infantry. This was, however, but a small part of the great pageant. A long line of camels, bullocks, and elephants extended for miles along the dusty road. An endless throng of coolies toiled among them, carrying portions of the camp equipment. Where native soldiers or servants went their families had to go too, and women and children trod through the dust, or were borne on the baggage accompanying Lord Canning's procession. At least 20,000 people were in the column on this peaceful march on the shot-scarred city that had made so many heroes. For all this vast crowd Frederick Roberts had to make provision. It was hard work, but it was an excellent training for the career he was entering on. Every detail of army life was being opened up to him, and to be a successful commander-in-chief and administrator, this wide knowledge was a very necessary thing.

As the camp followers marched along they, as Roberts says, "spread

themselves over the country like a flight of locusts." They had at first little hesitation in robbing the peasants, but Roberts soon put a stop to their looting. He could be kindly and he could be severe; and this was the time for severity. He had several of the boldest plunderers properly punished, and for the remainder of the long and slow journey with Lord Canning he had no further trouble on this account.

When the column reached Lucknow he found that his old friend and commander, Sir Hope Grant, who had charge of the Lucknow division, had his headquarters at the beautiful park of the Dilkusha, to which two years before he had guided the British troops in their advance to the relief of the Residency. Sir Hope had not forgotten his brave and trustworthy young staff officer. He had lost none of his affection for him, and had already written to him bidding him bring his wife to the Dilkusha and requesting him to let her rest there while the Viceroy was busy with the native chiefs about Lucknow.

On the 22nd of October Roberts led the procession into the famous rebel city. How different was this march from the one he had made over the same ground with Sir Colin Campbell. Now he went to the accompaniment of drum and trumpet, pealing joyful notes; then he marched with round shot and bullets falling about him, with cannon speaking from every important position, and with the curses of the populace. That rebellion was still in the hearts of many of the inhabitants was evident, for in the crowded streets many "looked on in sullen defiance, very few showing any sign of respect for the Viceroy."

Although Roberts was the busiest man in the camp which he had pitched in the park of the famous Martiniere, he still found time to take his wife about the city and its surroundings. It was a great pleasure to be able to show her the strong positions he had helped win with his sword, and it was a greater delight for her to see the buildings, scarred with shot and bullet, about which she had heard so much from his lips in distant Ireland. The Sikandarbagh, the Shah Najaf, the Mess-house, the Residency had all before this something unreal about them, they seemed like bits from a tragedy, but there they were still bearing the marks of war, and here by her

side was a man whose heart she possessed, who had fought forward step by step till the women and children in the care of Outram and Havelock were on the road to safety. A proud moment this for the young wife!

A grand durbar was held at Lucknow, at which 160 talukdars were present. Many of these chiefs of Oudh had come to Lucknow in fear and trembling. They knew in their black hearts that they had been gully of the vilest of deeds during the mutiny, and if they got their deserts they would be blown from the cannon's mouth as some of the comrades of their crimes had been. Not a few expected such a fate; but the friendly greeting of Lord Canning, and the promises bestowed on them put their fears at rest. Many of these rebel chiefs vowed in their hearts on this day to remain faithful to the great Queen over the far seas, and they kept their vow. After a few days of balls and dinners the Lucknow camp was broken up, and the viceroy marched back to Cawnpore where a second durbar was held.

From Cawnpore the column proceeded to Fatehgarh and then on to Agra. Here Roberts had no difficulty in selecting a camp ground. A little over two years before he had examined every spot about this picturesque city, and had pitched the tents of the column, then under Greathed, on the best possible site. He had not forgotten this, or how nearly, on that October morning, the column, through the carelessness of the Agra officials, had come to being smashed to pieces. He put up the tents on the now historic battle-ground, and made ready for one of the most imposing pageants ever seen in India. Roberts' description of this durbar is interesting for two reasons; first, because it shows how minutely he noted the details of what passed before his eyes; and, secondly, because such pageants are things of the past, and an account of them lets us into a world which no living man will ever again see.

"The chief of highest rank on this occasion," he says, "was the Maharaja of Gwalior, who, as I have already stated, influenced by his courageous minister, Dinkar Rao, had remained faithful to us. Like most Mahratta princes of that time, he was very imperfectly educated. Moreover, he was possessed of a most wayward disposition, frequently threatening,

when thwarted in any way, to throw up the reins of government, and take refuge in the jungle; manners he had none.

"Next came the enlightened head of the princely house Jalpur, the second in importance of the great chiefs of Rajputana.

"He was succeeded by the Karaoli Raja, whose following was the most quaint of all. Amongst the curious signs of his dignity, he had on his escort four tigers, each chained on a separate car, and guarded by strange looking men in brass helmets.

"The Maharao Raja of Ulwar was the next to arrive, seated on a superb elephant, eleven feet high, magnificently caparisoned with cloth-of-gold coverings, and chains and breast-plates of gold. He was a promising-looking lad who had succeeded to his estate only two years before; but he soon fell into the hands of low intriguers, who plundered his dominions and so oppressed his people that the British government had to take over the management of the estate.

"After Ulwar came the Nawab of Tonk, the descendant of an adventurer from Swat, on the Peshawar borders, who had become possessed of considerable territory in Rajputana. The Nawab stood by us in the mutiny, when his capital was plundered by Tantia Topi.

"The sixth in rank was the Jat ruler of Dholpur, a bluff, coarse-looking man, and a very rude specimen of his race.

"Last of all arrived the Nawab of Jaora, a handsome, perfectly-dressed man of considerable refinement of manner, and with all the courtesy of a well-bred Mahomedan. Though a foudatory of the rebellious Holcar of Indore, he kept aloof from all Mabratta intrigues and behaved well to us."

It was a gorgeous spectacle, and both Roberts and his wife felt that they were being well repaid for having to cut short their honeymoon trip through Scotland, and for all they had endured from the furnace-like heat of the Red Sea and the violent cyclone of the Bay of Bengal.

There were other things to interest his wife in Agra besides the splendid pageants; the Taj was there, and the Pearl Mosque. Of the Taj it will be remembered Roberts has said, "Go to India. The Taj alone is well worth the journey." He took his wife to see those wonderful works of human skill,



**RT. HON. WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE**  
Prime Minister of England.



**MARQUIS OF SALISBURY**  
Prime Minister of England.

and she was moved by them as he had been when he first looked upon them. The Taj interested her most. It was a mark of undying love, and as she looked upon it she felt that by her side was a man that would yet build for her an undying monument, the monument that a true woman most longs for—an imperishable reputation for brave and noble deeds. That monument is now hers; and her constant and untiring love and sympathy have done much to build it up.

From Agra the column proceeded to Meerut, where the first flames of mutiny had gathered head, and then on to Delhi. Here Roberts had an opportunity to introduce his wife to many of the friends of his battle days. Gallant "Jemmy Hills" was there; and there, too, were the veteran soldiers who had done so much to mould his character—Norman and Stewart and Becher. Delhi still bore traces of the fierce fight that had raged around its walls, but for the most part the natives had calmly acquiesced in the restored British rule, and had forgotten with true eastern stoicism, all about the heaps of dead which two years before had blocked their streets and lay in piles about the bastions and walls. The Ridge of course was the spot of greatest interest; and Roberts pointed out to his wife the notable places on that celebrated battle-ground where day by day he had helped press back the hordes of rebels.

Despite the responsibility of his present position, however, and the varied scenes through which he was passing, the work he was doing was irksome to him. Pitching tents, looking at native chiefs gorgeously apparelled, attending dinners and balls and entertainments, were not to his liking. He desired active service. His nature craved battle and the glory that accompanies the roar of cannon and the clashing of sword against sword.

The war cloud in China was growing ever thicker. In the previous June an attack had been made on the Taku forts and eleven ships of the English fleet had recklessly sailed within striking distance of the Chinese guns. A surprise awaited them. The Celestials poured upon them a heavy fire. Three gun-boats were lost, three hundred men were slain, and the force was compelled to retreat leaving the Chinese with the impression that they could repulse any army England and France was able to send against them.



Unless this reverse was retrieved England's influence in China would be at an end, and so Hope Grant was ordered to proceed to that country to act in co-operation with the French.

Roberts hoped that he would be ordered to join this expedition, but he was to be disappointed. Lord Clyde (Sir Colin Campbell) had his old affection for the young soldier, and of course thought of him; but he remembered how short a time he had been married, and deeming that it would be a cruelty to separate the young couple, sent Lumsden and Allgood as A. Q. M. G's. Roberts was very much disgusted, and his wife shared his disappointment with him. The kind of helpmate she was is very well brought out by her feeling about this incident. Roberts writes of it as follows in his autobiography:—

"A day or two afterward" (referring to the appointment of Lumsden and Allgood) "we dined with the Cannings, and Lord Clyde took my wife in to dinner. His first remark to her was: 'I think I have earned your gratitude, if I have not managed to satisfy everyone by these China appointments.' On my wife asking for what she was expected to be grateful, he said: 'Why, for not sending your husband with the expedition; of course, I suppose you would rather not be left in a foreign country alone a few months after your marriage? If Roberts had not been a newly-married man, I would have sent him.' This was too much for my wife who sympathized greatly with my disappointment, and she could not help retorting: 'I am afraid I cannot be very grateful to you for making my husband feel I am ruining his career by standing in the way of his being sent on service. You have done your best to make him regret his marriage!' The poor old chief was greatly astonished, and burst out in his not too-refined way: "Well, I'll be hanged if I can understand you women! I have done the very thing I thought you would like, and have only succeeded in making you angry. I will never try to help a woman again.' My wife saw that he had meant to be kind, and that it was, as he said, only because he did not 'understand women' that he had made the mistake. She was soon appeased, and in the end she and Lord Clyde became great friends."

So while many of Roberts' friends were on their way to China to add

lustre to their arms in the battle-smoke, he had to remain in India to perform the duties of the manager of a gigantic circus. No Barnum ever had his work done more thoroughly, but he was not happy in it; he longed for the sleepless nights, for the continuous days in the saddle, for the dangers and adventures he had experienced in the year that had almost shattered his young strength.

As the pageant approached the great Afghan frontier the spectacle became if anything more picturesque than it had been in the region along the Ganges and Jumna. At Lahore, Lord Canning was welcomed by a concourse of chiefs who had remained faithful to England in her hour of peril—faithful through the work done among them by John Nicholson and Edwardes and old General Abraham Roberts. The picture given of them by Roberts is like a page from an eastern romance. "A brilliant assemblage they formed, Sikh Sirdars, stately Hill Rajputs, wildly picturesque Multanis and Baluchis with their flowing locks floating behind them, sturdy Tawanas from the Salt range, all gorgeously arrayed in every color of the rainbow, their jewels glittering in the morning sun, while their horses, magnificently caparisoned in cloth-of-gold saddle cloths, and gold and silver trappings, pranced and corvetted under pressure of their severe bits."

This was on February 10; but the triumphal march had not yet closed. For two more months Roberts was kept busy locating camps, pitching tents, and striking tents. Meanwhile he left his wife at Mian Mir with his old friend Dr. Tyrrell Ross, who so gallantly rode into action side by side with him on the day Lieutenant Younghusband received his mortal wound, and he himself won the Victoria Cross. That day at Khudaganj had bound the surgeon and soldier into an undying friendship.

Now that Roberts' wife was no longer with him he seemed to have lost all interest in the durbars. He gives no further glowing descriptions of pageants and scenery, and very briefly notes that Lord Canning's march terminated at Kalka at the foot of the hills on April 9 "after a six months' march of over a thousand miles—a march never likely to be undertaken again by any other viceroy of India, now that railway trains run from

Calcutta to Peshawar, and saloon carriages have taken the place of good tents."

All this had been a fine experience for Roberts. The necessity of daily considering the wants and comforts of such a large and unique force sharpened his already keen intellect, and gave him an insight into the needs of a big army and the best way to supply them which, perhaps, no other soldier of his time possessed to the same degree. This knowledge was to stand him in good stead later, when he made his hurried dash on Kandahar, and still later, when he led the largest army his country ever placed in the field on its victorious march to Pretoria.

The effect of Lord Canning's march had been beyond even his expectations. Many of the chiefs had doubted England's power, but the magnificence of the viceroy's suite and equipment deeply impressed them, and his generous words and rewards to the faithful, and his leniency with the rebels, many of whom had joined the mutiny through the influence of subtle schemers and religious fanatics, extinguished the few embers of rebellion that were still smouldering in the land.

Roberts, however, had no regret that it was all over, and as soon as he was free from his arduous duties he rushed off to Mian Mir to see his wife and little daughter who was just a month old. Mian Mir was hot and dangerous at this season and he had made arrangements to remove both mother and child to Simla. Here they spent the remainder of the year and the greater part of the next, both getting a much needed rest. The gorgeous scenery, the eternal hills, the sublime sunsets, were a relief after the monotonous levels of the region drained by the Ganges.

Despite the beauty of nature and the power of being almost constantly with his young wife and child Roberts was far from happy. Only action could satisfy his spirit; and the heat of Simla and its surroundings could not make up for the dull routine of the dreary office in which he spent his days. But he had taken to his heart Touchstone's illustrious words, "Travellers must be content," and his work was done faithfully and well.

In a way he was glad to be at Simla. Since he had not been ordered to accompany the Chinese expedition it had been Calcutta or Simla; and he

infinitely preferred the cool shades of the beautiful hill resort to the crowded streets of the city of the Hugli. He even then began to look upon his house, "Mount Pleasant," situated on the top of the hill, as home; and home it was to be to him and his wife for a great part of the forty-one years he spent in India.

This privilege of living among majestic hills, in the sight of peaks where the "everlasting snows glistened in the morning sun," was a blessed privilege. It is well to be forced to look up. Hillmen have ever been noble men, and doubtless much of the strength of Roberts' character came from contemplating the beauty and majesty of the Simla hills.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### A TIME OF PEACE.

Rest After Battle—The Beauties of Simla—Captain Thomas' Description of Simla—Roberts Gazetted a *Prevet Major*—Accompanied Lord Canning on Another Triumphant March—Kills a Tiger—Returns to Simla—Death of Daughter—Death of Lady Canning—Roberts Wins the Esteem of Sir Hugh Rose—Pig-Sticking—A Tempting Offer—Life at Simla Growing Monotonous.

THE next three years of Roberts' life are comparatively uneventful. It is probably well that they were; a rest is an excellent thing, and doubtless if he had been plunged into active campaigning soon after the severe shaking up his constitution had received during the Great Mutiny, he would have become a physical wreck. No doubt during these three years he frequently felt that his life was being wasted, that he was going back, or at least merely marking time—a most distasteful performance for a soldier. However, such was not the case. He was having probably the best experience ever given to a young soldier in India. Brought constantly in contact with the Viceroy, and being indeed his trusted servant; living on intimate terms with commanders-in-chief, he could not but grow. Besides the routine work he had to do in the Quartermaster-General's department was in itself a splendid training. He was during these years gaining a knowledge of his profession, getting an insight into the characters of men, learning thoroughly the nature of the country and the peculiarities of its inhabitants, and storing up strength. Had he been, as he evidently desired to be, continuously in the field, he would, no doubt, had his strength held out, been as great a leader as he is to-day; but would hardly have had the same breadth of knowledge as he now possesses.

A time for quiet building up of character is needed in every man's life; and the Simla days did doubtless quite as much for Roberts as the fighting he went through before Delhi and Cawnpore and Lucknow. And what a

place Simla was to rest in and to grow in. So interesting has this region become through Kipling's racy and strong sketches of life there that it deserves more than a passing word.

Long before Roberts went to live in Simla it had been a favorite resort for Europeans living in India, and its sanitary influences, its beauty and sublimity all tended to make it the great resting place of the east. The residences in Simla are for the most part nearly 7,000 feet above the level of the sea; and here among pine and larch and cedar and evergreen oak and rhododendron, the fever haunted one, the wounded, the sufferer from ennui can regain strength of body and strength of spirit. Nor are its inhabitants without amusements; and even in Roberts' day it had a fine race-course and theatres and assembly rooms, and a hazaar which would delight the greatest epicures. One Captain Thomas in the early part of this century felt its charms, and in his "Descriptive Views of Simla," gives a splendid impression of this spot, which during a great part of the year is an earthly paradise.

"From the foot of a ghaut, or pass," he writes, "which begins its upward course beside the river, the ascent to Simla is steep and tedious: at length, emerging from the barren hills, you are suddenly in the midst of forests of oak and walnut, and every variety of pine; and with these, as you proceed, are mingled masses of crimson rhododendron. Advancing still further, you are again surrounded by pines and cork intermingled with lesser trees covered with the blossom of the wild cherry, the pear, the apple, the apricot, the wild rose, and, lastly, to remind you still more forcibly of home, the *may*; while violets cast their perfume around your feet at every step; and in the midst of this profusion of natural loveliness the first full view of Simla bursts upon the delighted traveller. From March, when the sleet and snow may be said to have passed away, to the middle of July, the climate is heavenly. There is nothing like it on earth! Nothing! Nothing in Italy! Nothing in France! Nothing anywhere that I know of. Recall the fairest day, nay hour, of sunshine you have ever known in an English spring, and conceive the beauty and gladness of that sunshine, brightened by continuing without a storm, almost without a shower, daily, for months together, and

deck the fruit trees and bushes in a thousand English blossoms, and spread violets and daisies, and strawberry blossoms and wild roses, and anemones, thickly over the bright, close, emerald turf; over crags, amid the pine roots, and far away down amid the ferns beside the 'runnels' and you may fancy something of what our Simla spring and too brief summer are. And then alas, come the rains! From the middle of July till the middle of September you have healthy weather still, but no end of rain; in short a climate as perfectly English as England in nearly three parts of the year. From early in September till the end of December, you have dry, clear, frosty weather very delicious and bracing; and from that time till spring again you may count upon living like 'the ancient mariner,' in a land of mist and snow; very healthy, certainly, but not agreeable."

Yet so ardent a soldier was Roberts that his spirit could not rest contented even in this Eden. Though he was not content, in all of this rich beauty and these invigorating surroundings, his discontent could not keep him from becoming a very strong man physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Meanwhile he was rising in the estimation of the authorities; and rising, too, rapidly in rank in the army. A complete change in the government of India had taken place after the mutiny was suppressed. So far as the ruling of India was concerned the Honorable East India Company became a thing of the past. The powers that were vested in the Company were taken over by the Crown, and among many of the sweeping changes that took place was the amalgamation of the local European forces with the Royal army. Through all these changes Roberts' luck stood by him, and on account of the last mentioned change he found himself, in October, 1860, promoted to the rank of Captain. It was only for a day, however, that he enjoyed this rank, as on the following day he was gazetted a brevet major. He was still, it must be remembered, under thirty; and for the days when seniority and length of service counted for so much his rapid advancement must have amazed even himself.

He was shortly to have a little relief from the monotonous duty of Simla. The viceroy, Lord Canning, realising what a very great success his triumphal march had been, decided to make a similar one through Central India, and



VISCOUNT WOLSELEY





EARL OF CUFFERIN



MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE

TWO VICEROYS OF INDIA

as Roberts had so thoroughly proved himself an ideal manager of a large camp he was once more called upon to take charge of the viceroy's journey on this occasion, the first camp of which was to be located at the Holy City of the Brahmas, Benares.

As his wife at this time was not in good health, and his child needed all her strength, he set out alone for Benares and went to work industriously, and early in November had everything ready to receive Lord and Lady Canning. Although he speaks disparagingly of this march, deeming it a trivial affair compared with the previous one, it was nevertheless large enough to tax the energies of any man. The viceroy went through the country with what was a very respectable army. He was accompanied by 10,000 men, 1,000 horses, 2,000 camels, 2,000 bullocks, and 120 elephants. It was Roberts' duty to see to every detail of this considerable force.

On the march more durbars were held, chiefs and begums were interviewed and entertained, and a little hunting done to vary the march. An English officer is never thoroughly initiated into East India life, is not of the elect, until he has brought down his tiger. On this occasion Roberts was to win an entrance to the circle of the chosen.

One of the camping spots was Juhbulpur. While here news was brought in that a tiger was prowling about the vicinity. All hearts beat a little faster, and all hands were eager to pull a trigger on the man-eater. On the hunt Roberts' modesty showed itself. He did not consider himself a first rate shot, and so was content to join the beaters; while at this work the tiger "as good luck," he says, "would have it, broke from the jungle within a few yards from my elephant." Good shot or not no Anglo-Indian could resist such an opportunity. Quick as thought his rifle leaped to his shoulder. His calm nerve did not fail him, and the next instant the beautiful beast, hated of men in India as no other beast is hated, lay dead, and Roberts was the hero of the hunting party, and went back to camp feeling much more capable of conducting affairs in India than when he set forth in the morning.

Not long after this the viceroy's march ended, and Roberts hastened back to his wife and child and to his work in the quartermaster-general's office at Simla. The beautiful mountains were robed in snow, forming a

striking contrast to the heat of the region he had been travelling through for the past three months. He was rejoiced to get back to his wife and little daughter, and rejoiced still more when he found them both "pictures of health." But how uncertain is human life! Even while he was rejoicing at finding them so well and strong the angel of death was hovering over his beautiful and quiet Simla home. His little one was snatched from them, and they bowed their young heads in grief. In touching on this loss Roberts shows that even in his old age the memory of his sweet first child was with him still. There is a simple grandeur in the four words with which he gives expression to his grief, or rather their grief—"Our first great sorrow" is one of the strongest and most touching expressions in his "Forty-One Years in India."

They remained at their home in Simla till October, when Roberts was called to Allahabad to prepare a camp for the viceroy, who had still more Eastern powers and potentates to interview and entertain; but of the beautiful spring and summer of the year 1861 he makes no mention. No doubt the loss of the child, in whom they were both wrapped up, had taken all the beauty out of the Simla hills.

Shortly after this he and his wife were to experience another great sorrow. On the first march with the viceroy both had seen much of Lady Canning and through her kindness to them had become greatly attached to her. No nobler woman ever aided her husband in a difficult task than did she in helping Lord Canning by her sympathy and wisdom to carry India through the greatest crisis of its history. She was a brilliant, scholarly, kindly woman, with a great love of beauty, an unselfish love that made her desire that others should be able to share with her in the beauties that came under her observation. She had done much sketching while accompanying her husband, and at length, in her desire to pursue her work, risked travelling into a fever-haunted region and as a result met her death. The news of this calamity came to the Roberts like the loss of a near relative.

Roberts was soon to be brought into contact with the new commander-in-chief of the forces in India, Sir Hugh Rose. He was at the head-quarters camp at Jullundur when this distinguished old warrior arrived, and with the

other officers of the camp went out to meet him. According to Roberts, Sir Hugh was attracted to him on account of his mount, a "spirited nut-meg grey Arah," but it was no doubt due to the reputation he had made as a trustworthy officer and unequalled organizer of camps, that caused the commander-in-chief to invite him to accompany him on the trips he intended to make among the widely scattered troops over which he had command.

The secret of Sir Hugh's liking for Roberts is not hard to find. It was a case of noble and sincere mind meeting noble and sincere mind. To speak with Roberts was to recognize the nascent greatness of the man, and the first impression was firmly established by a knowledge of all the young soldier had accomplished. Roberts' work with Chamberlain and Nicholson with the flying column, his energy and bravery before Delhi; his good judgment and untiring zeal under Sir Colin Campbell on the march to the relief of the Residency; the trust that was confided in him during the long march from the time the Residency was relieved until the city of Lucknow was captured, and he was forced to return to England to recuperate his exhausted strength; the wisdom he had displayed in managing the triumphal processions of Lord Canning through India,—were all known to Sir Hugh, and these achievements, and not the "nut-meg grey Arah," drew the old soldier to Roberts as Sir Colin Campbell had been drawn to him—although doubtless a perfect horse and a perfect horseman pleased the old lover of a good mount mightily.

In this piping time of peace Roberts was to have a still further chance of gaining useful military experience. However, while on Sir Hugh's staff, all was not work. The commander-in-chief visited many stations, but likewise managed to vary the time with a good deal of amusement. Among other things his staff did some "pig-sticking," according to Roberts the finest sport in the world; and he seems never to have lost this opinion, for in almost the closing words of his autobiography dealing with a period thirty years after his first outing with Sir Hugh, he writes: "We travelled to Bomhay via Jeypur and Jodhpur. At both places we were loyally entertained by the rulers of those states, and my staff and I were given excellent sport amongst the wild boar, which was much enjoyed by all, particularly by my son, who,

having joined the King's Royal Rifles at Rawal Pindi, was attached to me as A. D. C. during my last six months in India, and had not before had an opportunity of tasting the joys of pig-sticking." That this sport could be dangerous as well as exciting was evidenced from an accident that befell Sir Hugh on one occasion. A wounded bear turned on him, knocked over his horse which was hadly ripped up, and Sir Hugh himself was carried away unconscious.

Roberts' journey with his commander-in-chief, however, was to be interrupted. The Indian climate seemed to be playing havoc with his wife's health, and he was forced to remain behind with her at Lahore. Roberts had at several times been made tempting offers to leave the quartermaster-general's department, and here he was once more to be tempted. His old friend Adjutant-General Norman was at that time secretary to the government of India in the military department, and wrote to Lahore offering him a post in his department. To a married man with a sick wife a permanent appointment with good pay was of necessity a thing not to be cast lightly aside. He hesitated; he weighed the offer most carefully, but decided to decline it, much as he would have enjoyed being with General Norman. To accept he would be practically sheathing his sword forever, whereas the department he was in gave him the best possible opportunity of seeing active service. His instincts were guiding him aright. Had he accepted any of the good offers he had been made England would have lost the great general who was to save her reputation first in Afghanistan and afterwards in South Africa.

His wife's strength of will carried her safely through her serious illness, and her husband was luckily able to overtake the commander-in-chief at his old hill station Peshawar, and to accompany him on his visit to the frontier posts. No doubt the experience he gained at this time did much to make him capable of performing the great ride from Kabul to Kandahar, for on this journey Sir Hugh, old as he was, made his staff and escort cover from twenty-five to forty miles each day.

At length the tour of inspection was over, and he hurried away to join his wife at Umballa, where he learned that Earl Canning, with a heart

broken by the loss of his noble partner, with health shattered in the service of the Empires, had left India. In three short months this first great viceroy of India died, a martyr to his country.

During the spring and summer Roberts and his wife were back in Simla enjoying the gay life of that hill station, and in the autumn Roberts once more joined Sir Hugh on a trip over the now historical battle grounds along the Jumna and Ganges. He was not to go through this without mishap, for on January 13, 1863, he had a sun-stroke which apparently affected him for years; and he was not sorry when spring came and he could once more rest among the pines and rhododendrons of Simla.

He was to remain here until Sir Hugh would be ready to make another tour of inspection in the autumn. He was now growing thoroughly weary of this office work and inspection. The pig-sticking, hanquets, and fireworks during the tours; the dinners and balls and hunting of the Simla days,—wers poor compensation for one who craved the bivouac and the sounds of battle. It was now four years since he had returned to India, and war still seemed very remote. However, trouble was brewing among the frontier tribes, and he was soon to have an opportunity of showing that he had not forgotten the art of war.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE UMBREYLA EXPEDITION.

▲ War Cloud Gathering on the Afghan Frontier—The Hindustani Fanatics in Arms—Headquarters Staff Expecting to be Sent to the Front—The Enemy in a Strong Position at Sitana and Mulka—The British in a Dangerous Situation—Col. John Adye and Roberts Sent Forward to Investigate—Chamberlain Wounded—General Garvoek in Command of Troops—The Fanatics Beaten Back—A Sharp Fight with the Ghazis—An Adventurous Journey to Mulka—Back from the Jaws of Death.

**T**HE troops in India had now known peace for five years, but they recognized that this state of things could not last much longer.

Central India had been effectually beaten into submission, and was never likely to cause further trouble; but there was the great Northern Frontier. Those gloomy hills said to the British troops, "thue far and no farther;" and from their fastnesses fierce robbers were continually rushing forth to plunder and murder. In the year 1863 affairs reached a climax. Toward the end of this year the Commander-in-Chief was with Lord Elgin, who had succeeded Earl Canning as Viceroy of India, and who was sick unto death after but a brief sojourn in the trying climate of India; and Roberts was busy making preparations to go on the regular tour of inspection to the various military stations when a telegram from Sir Hugh Rose reached the Headquarters Staff, commanding their immediate presence at Mian Mir.

Ever since the Mutiny the Hindustani fanatics had been at work among the hill tribes, encouraging them to aid them in their attacks on the British, and with a considerable measure of success. Friendly natives were constantly being plundered and murdered; British outposts had been attacked—and so far the authorities had felt that it would be unwise to go against the savage mountaineers. The attacks were unpleasant, but they had to be endured, as only a strong force need hope to penetrate those hills, punish the enemy, and make a safe retreat—not by any means the least

dangerous part of the enterprise. At length, however, the situation became most critical; large armies were taking the place of the small predatory bands, and it was rumoured that the enemies of England at Kabul were inciting the frontier tribes to attack the comparatively weak British force guarding the frontier. The Punjab Government became alarmed; it awoke from its lethargy, and acted with a good deal of energy. It decided to push forward two columns; the main one under the brilliant and experienced general Sir Neville Chamberlain who had first taken command of the famous Flying Column at the outbreak of the Mutiny. This column was to have as its base Peshawar and was to move forward through the Umheylya Pass.

While these preparations were being made Roberts was at Simla with the Headquarters Staff, wondering if the monotonous round of the Simla summer and the autumn tour of inspection would ever end, when Sir Hugh's unexpected telegram ordering the staff to hasten to Mian Mir, arrived. He was filled with a lively hope. It was known that the frontier troubles were somewhat serious, and the telegram coming at such a time and from near the scene of conflict, made the Staff believe that they were wanted in the field. When they reached Mian Mir, they discovered their conjectures were true, and that probably every available soldier would be needed to put down the tribes which were threatening to swarm down from the hills, and were even then endeavoring to annihilate the comparatively small force under Sir Neville Chamberlain. The situation was an intensely interesting one from a military point of view, and there was grave danger that it might end disastrously as had previous expeditions into the hills.

The soul of the movement were the Hindustani fanatics, who had located in the settlement of Sitana early in the century. They were fierce and tried warriors, Mahomedans who in the strength of their faith could recklessly throw themselves on the British bayonets. Their fugitive brethren from Bengal had joined them from time to time, and in no district was England so intensely hated as in the mountainous settlement of Sitana only forty miles from the Peshawar valley. If the enemy was a difficult one to battle against, their country added great strength to their reckless courage and fanaticism. Every part of it was a natural fortress and they felt secure from



attack. In 1858 Sir Sydney Cotton had attacked them in force and had driven them over the Mahabun mountain, but they had taken up their abode in the strong hill town of Mulka, and when his force was removed they returned to their old homes and once more began harassing the British. To put an end to these annoying attacks Sir Neville Chamberlain was directed against both Sitana and Mulka with a force of about 6,000 men and nineteen guns. To reach Mulka he selected the difficult route of the Umbeyla pass trusting that, apart from the Hindustani fanatics, the tribes, who had no grievance against the English, would assist him or at least remain neutral.

The difficulties he had to contend with are thus presented by Wheeler in his "India:" "While, however, one side of the Umboyla pass was formed by the Mahabun mountain, the other side was formed by another steep height, known as the Geru mountain; and beyond the Geru mountain were many strong tribes, known as the Bonairs and Swatis; and above all there was a certain warrior priest, known as the Akhoond of Swat, who exercised a powerful influence as Prince and Pontiff over many of the tribes far and wide. Then again the Umbeyla pass was outside the British frontier, and really belonged to the Bonairs. It was, however, imagined that the Afghan mountaineers could have no sympathy with the Hindustani fanatics; especially as the Akhoond of Swat had fulminated his spiritual thunder against the Hindustani fanatics at Mulka and Sitana in a way which betokened a deadly sectarian hostility. Moreover as the Umbeyla pass was only nine miles long, it was possible to reach Mulka and destroy the village before Bonairs or Swatis could know what was going on."

Amid these dangers and with these hopes Chamberlain pushed forward towards the country of the Bonairs, but had scarcely got into the pass before he discovered that he was to meet with opposition not from the Hindustanis alone but from the hill tribes in general. The Geru mountain was alive with men. A reconnoitring party was sent forward to investigate the ground, and the hill men swarmed down upon them from their strongholds. A fight and a sharp one was inevitable. Two thousand fierce warriors threw themselves against the British advance guard, effectually checking the advance and almost as effectually cutting off its retreat. For the most part



**IN AFGHANISTAN. AN ATTACK ON THE PEIWAR KOTAL**  
The fight with which Lord Roberts began his career as a General.



**ROBERTS' ADVANCE TO THE SHUTAROARDAN PASS**

Near this pass an ambushed party of Afghans fired a volley at Roberts, but he escaped death or wounds although members of his staff were severely wounded.

the attacking force was made up of friendly Bonairs, and it was difficult for the British to understand what had made this change in their attitude.

The reason was soon known. The Hindustani fanatics had been aware of the advance of the column and a copy of a letter was brought by a spy to the British showing that they were in communication with the Bonairs, and that they had incited them to believe that the column was on an expedition of aggression, and that it was the intention of the English to annex Chamla, Bonair, and Swat. The British in their advance had not consulted the Bonairs, and this slight greatly aided the Hindustanis in stirring up the tribes against the invading army.

From all sides the hill warriors hurried to the Geru mountain; and here, too, came the Akhoond of Swat with 15,000 warriors. "General Chamberlain," Wheeler says, "was threatened by swarms of Matchlock men on his two flanks, while his rear was blocked up by mules, camels, and other impedimenta."

On either side of the pass was a strong natural position. On the left was a rocky fortress, known as the "Eagle's Nest," and on the right a larger and almost equally strong spot, the "Crag Piquet." In the "Eagle's Nest" Chamberlain posted one hundred and ten men, all there was room for, and at its base one hundred and twenty men. The hillmen imagining that this small force would fall an easy prey came against it 2,000 strong. A fierce fight followed in which for a time it looked as though the British might be annihilated, but at length the mountaineers turned and fled, leaving many dead scattered over the field, and many wounded to be cared for in the English hospital tents. Although beaten the tribesmen were evidently bent on giving Chamberlain a severe drubbing, and as the English force was a small one and the possibility of either an advance or a retreat remote, the leader made up his mind to stay where he was and await developments.

His strongest position was the "Crag Piquet," and for three weeks a swarm after swarm of the enemy endeavored to drive him from it, and on two occasions succeeded. But to lose this position would mean ultimate disaster, and so on each occasion the British fought gallantly until they had once more won it back. Chamberlain, however, was severely wounded and

everything looked very black for the small army penned up in the narrow defile.

It was when affairs were in this state that Sir Hugh Rose arrived at Lahore, and it was due to this that he had despatched the telegram to Simla ordering the headquarters staff to join him at once.

There was considerable excitement in military and government circles over the critical situation, and not a little difference of opinion as to what course should be pursued. Both the government of India and the government of the Punjab thought the wisest course would be to withdraw the troops altogether; but fortunately those more intimately acquainted with the country and the situation were opposed to such a course. Among the strongest opponents of the retreat was Sir Hugh Rose, who in the words of Roberts, "pointed out to the government that the loss of prestige and power we must sustain by retiring from the Umheylya pass would be more disastrous both from a military and political point of view, than anything that could happen save the destruction of the force itself, and that General Chamberlain, on whose sound judgment he could rely, was quite sure that a retirement was unnecessary."

In order to make himself thoroughly familiar with the situation the commander-in-chief sent Colonel John Adye, deputy-adjutant-general of the Royal Artillery, and Roberts to the scene of conflict. They reached Umheylya pass on November 25, and found that the force under Chamberlain which had been practically in a state of siege for several weeks was having some lively fighting. It was a war of outposts, and the Pathans and hardy little Gurkhas were proving themselves worthy rivals of the hill men. "Sniping," to use a modern term, was much practised, and if a head showed itself above the sheltering rocks a bullet would be almost sure to find it out.

Just about this time Lord Elgin died, and Sir Hugh had to act very much on his own responsibility until Sir William Denison, governor of Madras, who was to be temporary viceroy of India, should arrive.

Sir Hugh was fortunate in the men he sent to look into the situation about Umheylya Pass. They examined the ground thoroughly, got full

information of the strength of the enemy and the loyalty of the native troops serving under the British flag, and concluded that not only was a retirement totally unnecessary, but that as soon as General Garvock, who was to succeed Sir Neville Chamberlain in command of the Umbeyla column, should arrive, that the forward movement on Mulka should recommence at once.

Sir Hugh was of the opinion that to finish the campaign successfully and thoroughly a much larger force than the one at present in the field would be needed. He had asked the government to allow him personally to take charge of the expedition marching against the fanatics, and expecting a favorable answer delegated Roberts to select the camping ground for 10,000 men between Attock and Rawal Pindi. While Roberts was engaged in this work he was once more to be reminded of what a force John Nicholson had been among the frontier tribes.

"The people of the country," he says, "were very helpful to me; indeed, when they heard I had been a friend of John Nicholson, they seemed to think they could not do enough for me, and delighted in talking of their old leader, whom they declared to be the greatest man they had ever known."

Meanwhile diplomacy had been doing its work. Commissioner James had succeeded in winning over the Bonairs, who now agreed to help drive the Hindustani fanatics out of their country. Sir Hugh Rose, however, had sent word to General Garvock, who was now with the force, "not to attempt any operations until further orders." But the situation demanded a different course and, under pressure from the commissioner, General Garvock decided to advance against the enemy contrary to Sir Hugh's orders. He had now under him between 8,000 and 9,000 men, and was besides thoroughly acquainted with the strength and weakness of the foe that he had to brush aside. Heavy fighting was expected, and the men marched out of "Crag Piquet" without haggage or tents, and with two days' rations.

The enemy's outposts were soon driven back and no serious opposition was experienced until the height overlooking the valley on their flank was reached. In this valley was a "conical hill." "This hill, which was

crowded with Hindustani fanatics and their Pathan allies, was a most formidable position; the sides were precipitous, and the summit was strengthened by *sangars*" (stone breastworks).

To advance it was necessary to clear the enemy from this hill. The mountain-guns and the infantry got into position and beat down the fire of the foe, while the 101st Fusiliers made ready to carry the difficult hill at the hayonet point. The rest of the force kept up a brisk fire while the Fusiliers fearlessly advanced up the steep slope until they were near the entrenched position of the enemy. The work had been hot and trying, and while the fire from their friends played over their heads, and the fire from the enemy fell among them, they rested a brief breathing space; then with a wild cheer they dashed from cover, and "amidst a shower of bullets and huge stones" stormed the highest point and sent the enemy who were not slain flying down the hill sides. It was a gallant charge; it had seemed as if it would be impossible for the Fusiliers to perform the task allotted to them successfully, and Aclay and Roberts as they watched it from Hugh's battery were much delighted when they heard the exulting shouts of their countrymen from the hill-top they had just won.

The enemy were sharply pursued and very soon the road through the valley was completely cleared. Simultaneously with this struggle a sharp fight had taken place on the left, and there, too, the British were victorious. Despite the difficulties of the country passed over and the position stormed, the loss to the invading army was small,—only sixteen killed and wounded while no fewer than 400 of the enemy were placed *hors de combat*.

The troops bivouacked after this hard day of fighting and marching, and on the morrow the advance again began. As they passed Umbeyla village gloomy clouds of smoke and darting tongues of flame told them that their cavalry had already entered the place. But this day was not to pass without fighting. The fierce *ghazis* had chosen an excellent ambush and as the advance of the British force marched confidently forward they poured into them a telling fire and then madly dashed among them. The pioneers were thrown into confusion, but Wright, the assistant-adjutant-general, and

Roberts took in the situation, rushed among the broken ranks, rallied the men, and as the *ghazis* thronged down the hill slopes, met them so steadily that the wild tribesmen were beaten back with great loss.

The repulse of the *ghazis* thoroughly disheartened the tribes in arms against the British, and established the Bonairs in their friendly alliance. Despite the suddenness of the attack in this last struggle the English lost but eight killed and eighty wounded, while on the field where the fight was waged no fewer than 200 of the enemy lay dead.

The last two days had been trying ones on the troops, and they were glad to bivouac near the now desolated village of Umbeyla. Mulka was still held by the fanatics, and unless that stronghold was destroyed and its defenders put to the sword or scattered among the hills, the punitive force would have had its march and suffering and loss to no purpose, for as soon as it was withdrawn the fanatics would once more press down on the frontier. It was absolutely necessary then that Mulka should be destroyed; all were agreed on that: but there was some doubt as to what course should be followed in performing the work. Some were for fitting out a brigade and advancing in strength against the last stronghold of the Hindustani fanatics; but to do this there would have to be delay, and Commissioner James, who knew the country and its inhabitants well, felt that at all hazards delay was to be avoided. Better to trust the work of destruction to the friendly Bonairs. His advice was followed, and on December 19 a small party of British officers, among whom was Roberts, with their escort accompanied a mere handful of Bonairs towards the fated town which clung like an eagle's nest to the lofty side of the Mahahun mountain.

It was a dangerous undertaking, and at each step on the road towards Mulka every British soldier felt that at any moment the savage hill men who pressed about them from all sides with scowls and curses might annihilate their little force. The Amazais, in whose country they were, clamoured loudly against the advance, and even threatened their lives; but at length Mulka was reached, and soon the smoke of the village rolled over the highest



peak of the mountain, and the fanatics were thoroughly scattered and rendered more harmless than they had been since they first migrated from Bengal.

The work done, the return journey had to be made; and this was a perilous undertaking. The hillmen blocked the road, and fiercely cried out for the blood of the *Feringhi*, and hut for the calmness of Reynell Taylor, in command of the party, and the steadfastness of the Bonairs, all would surely have been slain. How critical was the situation can be gathered from the following passage from Roberts' account of the retreat from Mulka :

"The most influential of the tribe, a grey-bearded warrior, who had lost an eye and an arm in some tribal contest, forced his way through the rapidly increasing crowd to Taylor's side, and, raising his one arm to enjoin silence, delivered himself as follows: 'You are hesitating whether you will allow these English to return unmolested. You can, of course, murder them and their escort, hut if you do, you must kill us Bunerwale' (Bonairs) 'first, for we have sworn to protect them, and we will do so with our lives.' This plucky speech produced a quieting effect, and taking advantage of a lull in the storm, we set out on our return journey; hut evidently the tribesmen did not consider the question finally or satisfactorily settled, for they followed us the whole way to Kuria. The slopes of the hills on both sides were covered with men. Several times we were stopped while stormy discussions took place, and once, as we were passing through a narrow defile, an armed Amzal, waving a standard above his head, rushed down towards us. Fortunately for us, he was stopped by some of those less inimically disposed; for if he had succeeded in inciting anyone to fire a single shot, the desire for blood would quickly have spread, and in all probability not one of our party would have escaped."

It was with a great sense of relief that the Mulka party, on December 23, reached Umbeyla pass, where they found the army under General Garvoek awaiting them in a state of great uneasiness. The whole force then retreated to the plains, having broken the power of the fanatics, and leaving the hillmen to continue the tribal struggle which was the breath of their life.

When Sir Hugh heard of the action of Garvock and Commissioner James in sending this small force to Mulka he was very much enraged, and knowing the hillmen thoroughly he was convinced that he would never again see any member of the gallant company. In his anger he exclaimed, "It was madness, and not one of them will ever come back alive." Unfortunately Roberts' wife was in the camp and overheard the words, and naturally enough she was very much alarmed until at length her daring young husband returned literally out of the jaws of death.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### ANOTHER SEASON OF PEACE.

Roberts for His Part in the Umbeyla Expedition Recommended for a Brevet Lieut.-Colonelcy—Ordered to Return to England on Sick-Leave—Sails Home by way of Cape of Good Hope—Experiences with Small-Pox and Scurvy—At St. Helena—Arrives in England—Ten Months in England—Back in India—Visiting Cholera Camps—Prospects of War.

**A**FTER the Umbeyla expedition had been wound up so successfully, the Headquarters Staff remained at Peshawar for several months, and Roberts had another opportunity of refreshing his memory with the scenes which had been so familiar to him ten years before. Peshawar was, however, but a temporary halting place, and towards the end of February the Staff moved to the healthier and more congenial region of Simla.

Roberts speaks modestly of the part he played in the Umbeyla affair, but that he must have shown more than ordinary judgment and bravery was quite evident, for when the Commander-in-Chief came to consider those worthy of honor for the part they had played in putting down the troublesome fanatics, he requested that Roberts might be given the rank of a Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel; but the Viceroy could not see his way clear to forward the recommendation as Roberts was "too junior to be made a Lieutenant-Colonel." In his autobiography, with regard to this refusal to confirm the Commander-in-Chief's recommendation, Roberts indignantly exclaims, "I was then thirty-two!" When it is remembered that some of the greatest military geniuses of the world had at an even earlier age swept their armies over the known world, the absurdity of the seniority farce must be evident to all. But it had to be endured, and indeed has still to be endured. So Roberts had to settle down to the office work at Simla, and wait patiently for the years, that would alone permit of his promotion, to pass by.

However office work did not agree with him. He was essentially an



ROBERTS READING THE PROCLAMATION OF MARTIAL LAW AT KABUL,  
OCTOBER 12, 1879



**ROBERTS ON HIS ARAB "VONOLEL," THE HORSE WHICH CARRIED HIM  
TO KANOAHAR**  
The medal hanging on the breast of the charger was a special decoration awarded by the Queen.

open air soldier. When he first came to Peshawar the confinement to the cantonment was too much for him, and his exhausted strength permitted the fever to lay a strong hold upon him; when he arrived in Calcutta, too, after his sea voyage, the inactivity in the great city seemed to sap his energy. In the field it was otherwise. During the long march of the Flying Column, during the trying work on the "Ridge," through the exhausting days and sleepless nights while he marched on the Residency, through the heavy work assigned to him in the capture of Lucknow,—he seemed to enjoy perfect health; and it was only when he had gone through weeks of privations that would have broken a constitution of steel, that he collapsed. He was never in a sense strong, and it was only by constant physical exertion and by living very close to Mother Earth that he could maintain what strength he had. At any rate the Simla office was too much for him, and before the end of the year he found himself in the doctor's hands.

He was pretty well used up, and was ordered to go home to England for a rest. He did not make preparations to leave India this time with the same reluctance as on the previous occasion. Then a great work was left unfinished, now throughout the length and breadth of India there was peace, and even the hill tribes were not likely to give much trouble for some years. On his first trip home he went by way of Europe, but this time it was deemed wise to have him take the longer but healthier voyage by way of the Cape of Good Hope. He was not to go at once, but with his wife spent three months in Calcutta until the ship *Renown* was ready for sea.

Three hundred "time expired" men were to be sent home on board this vessel, and Roberts was placed in command of them. They were a reckless lot of hardened warriors, and on their way down to the coast had given their officers a good deal of trouble. A number of them were brought before Roberts for punishment just before the ship sailed, but he was not in a punishing humour. These bronzed and grizzled warriors had seen much service; some of them had proved themselves heroes in the Crimean War, and had fought with him at Delhi and Lucknow. He knew how to handle such men, and, to the amazement of the martinetes who had reported them for punishment, he pardoned them all. There was a long four months'

voyage before him. It would never do to earn the dislike, possibly the hatred, of these reckless, good-hearted fellows even before the ship left Calcutta. As he says none of the misdemeanors appeared very serious, and with these men punishment at such a time for a trivial offense would only do harm.

A long voyage is for most men a very tedious affair: the weary expanse of sky, the unending waters, the monotonous cry of "A sail in sight!" or "a whale in the distance!" palls on the most enthusiastic sailor. On a troop-ship, the narrow decks, the crowded quarters make life after the first week or two particularly unpleasant. On this voyage the dull monotony was to be broken by several things that were far from welcome.

The good ship *Renown* had been plowing her way over the calm stretches of the Indian ocean for six weeks, when one of the crew was attacked by smallpox. Smallpox is at any time a pest more hated of men than any other disease, not even the cholera is held in such abhorrence. The feelings of the troops on board the *Renown* can therefore be better imagined than described. Within the narrow walls of the vessel it was expected that the loathsome disease would find many victims, and men who had thrown themselves into the deadly breach, expecting death, trembled in the presence of this dreaded destroyer. However, prompt action was taken. Fortunately the skies remained blue and the waters calm, and it was possible to institute a quarantine. A boat "was hung over the ship's side, and a cabin boy, the marks on whose face plainly showed that he had already suffered badly from the disease, was told off to look after" the victim. Needless to say the boat was shunned, and so close a guard was kept that no other case showed itself on board; and in good time the sailor, who had had but a mild attack, recovered, and the minds of all on board were more or less at ease.

The vessel plowed steadily on her homeward way, and soon the bald, misty, coffin-like shape of Table Mountain with the then peaceful, homely, lazy settlement of Cape Town at its base was left behind, and although 6,000 miles had still to be travelled before England would be reached, it was felt

that the journey was nearing its end. A few brief weeks and they would be at home among their friends!

All, however, was not to be cakes and ale to them. The voyage was a long one even for those days, and the lack of fresh meat and vegetables began to tell on passengers and crew alike. Scurvy, dreaded of all sailors and soldiers, broke out among the troops. They were fortunately at no great distance from St. Helena when the disease first made its appearance, and it was hoped that the supply of vegetable food they would be able to take on board there would put an end to the malady. In the meantime the regulation preventative, which has been in use in the British navy since 1795, lime-juice, was issued to the men and the scurvy never became very serious; but until the black rock of St. Helena showed itself high out of the Atlantic, gaunt, hollow-eyed, haggard men dragged themselves about the hot decks of the *Renown*.

Never was land more welcome to any crew than the sheer cliffs of the little volcanic island which has played such an important part in modern history. They were still 4,000 miles from England, but this spot of land worn by the ocean, told them that the end of their journey was drawing ever nearer. While plunging through the blue ocean, under the hot blue sky out of sight of land, it had seemed as if there would be no end to this voyage. St. Helena was to them an oasis in the desert of waters. A bleak island for the most part, with its huge black rocks culminating in Diana's Peak, and High Peak nearly 3,000 feet above the sea level. Firs and chinchona trees struggled for a footing among the rocks, and the innumerable brooks that threaded their way over the little island gave many places a restful green to the eyes weary with the glimmer of the waves and the intense glare of the unclouded skies.

It was an English dependency with a garrison of about 2,000 men, and here they could halt for a short time and lay in a supply of food that would help to clear the enervating scurvy from the blood of the troops. They managed to catch a passing glimpse of Longwood where Napoleon died in 1821, and Roberts no doubt wondered what must have been the feelings of the Little Corporal during his confinement in his narrow island prison. A



man who had brought Europe to his feet, and who had had designs on conquering the world, at length forced to spend his days on a bleak rock in the midst of the turbulent ocean! It was a thought that could not but make a deep impression on the young and ambitious soldier. If he could only have seen into the future, on that same island he would have beheld another man, in his way a great general, no "vulgar conqueror" like Napoleon, but a true patriot; and that he was there was due to Roberts' own superb generalship. "The Lion of the Transvaal," General Cronje, was to find, thirty-five years after Roberts' first visit to St. Helens, a melancholy abiding place among the hills and streams where the great world-conqueror ended his days.

But the *Renown* had to hurry on her way, not, however, before great quantities of water-cress, which grew in abundance on this little island, were laid on board for the exhausted troops and crew; and this vegetable food, along with the lime-juice, and no doubt the gradual approach to a more temperate climate, soon banished scurvy from the ship.

Towards the end of May they came in sight of England, and on the 30th of the month landed at Portsmouth. Great events had been taking place within the last two years. In America in particular a fierce struggle had been going on with a loss of life unparalleled in modern war, and it was with a sense of relief that Roberts, who knew the horrors of war, learned on his arrival in England that this bloody strife had ended. It would be interesting to know his opinion of such a struggle, but with regard to it he is as dumb as the proverbial oyster. He is not much given to reflection, and with the majority of Englishmen of his day, had doubtless little or no conception of the momentous results of this struggle. He did not realize that a union and solidarity was given to the English speaking people on the southern half of the North American continent that was in time to make the United States of America the great rival of England in trade and arms. The war which was reported ended as the *Renown* drew near England was but the clearing of the air before the great industrial achievements of the end of this century; a war greater and more far reaching than any other of this century.

A little bit of personal news, however, pleased him much. His father had just been made a K. C. B.; a late reward for a lifetime of most wise and arduous service on behalf of the Empire.

Roberts stayed in England recuperating for ten months. It was a thoroughly uneventful time. No wars were stirring the pulse of the nation, no great national reforms were being discussed, and the young soldier who had been greatly strengthened by the long sea voyage had a delightful rest with his father, mother, and sister. How little interest he takes in the peace periods of his life can be gathered from his account of his sojourn at this time in England. One sentence is sufficient, or rather a part of a sentence: "I remained in England till March 1866," is all he has to say about the pleasant sojourn in the land of his schoolboy days.

After his rest he hastened back to India alone. No doubt remembering the experience on his trip after his marriage, he dreaded having his wife undertake the Red Sea voyage during the spring months. Mrs. Roberts followed him in autumn and he met her in October at Calcutta.

He needed her sympathy and womanly tenderness. He found on his return to India that the cholera was making one of its periodical visits to the crowded population of that country, and likewise that many of the soldiers were falling victims to the disease. The troops had to be placed in cholera camps, and it was his duty to make regular visits to these camps. He seems to have had no fear of this much dreaded disease. Indeed Roberts seems to be one of the few men who have been born without a sense of fear. Only once during his residence in India does he seem to have been thoroughly afraid, and that was when he and his friend Watson were chased back to camp by the phantom mutineers. The state of affairs gave his wife an opportunity of showing her true nobility and courage. A sword she could not wield, but her husband needed her in this trying time, and instead of taking up her abode in some safe corner of India, where the disease was not likely to penetrate, she fearlessly accompanied him on his visits to the cholera camps, helping to entertain the soldiers, to cheer those who had lost friends, and to close the eyes of the victims of the plague. This was

thoroughly unpleasant work for both, but they went about it with a calmness that showed how completely they were inspired by a stern sense of duty.

It is not surprising, after the experience with cholera in the autumn of 1866 and the spring and summer of 1867, that Roberts was elated when news reached India that at last the audacity of Theodore, king of Abyssinia, had so thoroughly roused England that a strong expedition was to be sent into his country, and that a part of the India force would be required for this expedition. He had just escaped death from cholera which had now been stamped out; but he was eager to tempt it once again on the field of battle.

## CHAPTER XX.

### WITH NAPIER IN ABYSSINIA.

Roberts Anxious to go to Abyssinia—The Character of King Theodore—The Cause of the War—Theodore Imprisons Europeans—Sir Robert Napier Commander-in-Chief of Abyssinian Expedition—Roberts Sent as Assistant-Quartermaster-General with Colonel Donald Stewart in Command of Bengal Brigade—Busy with Transport—A Fierce Cyclone—Kept at Base at Zula—A Hot Four Months—The March to Magdala—Theodore in Despair—Commits Suicide—Roberts Beare Napierr' Despatches to the Government—Rewarded with a Brevet Lieut.-Colonelcy—A Sad Voyage to India.

**W**HEN news reached India that a force would probably be sent from that country to punish Theodore, Roberts was at Allahabad. He was afraid of missing this chance of active service, and as the cholera which had kept him busy was no longer to be dreaded, he returned to Headquarters at Simla to join the Mountain Battery to which he properly belonged. He had grasped the situation at once. Abyssinia was a mountainous region, and if any troops were sent his battery would doubtless be among the first selected, and he was determined to leave no stone unturned to once more get into the field.

From a soldier's point of view the situation was a most interesting one. The country where the battles were likely to take place was just the country where a man experienced in Afghan wars was likely to win fame; while the man defying England was a most picturesque character. He was a usurper, like almost every other chief or king who during the last century has swayed the fanatical tribes from the pyramids of the Nile to the great unknown land that separates the British possessions in South Africa from the battlefields of Abyssinia and the Soudan. Among all the men who have controlled the war-loving peoples of the region bordering on the Red Sea, no one has a more striking personality, no one was better fitted to sway large bodies of the sons of Ishmael than Lij Kassa, who after years of desperate fighting was crowned King of Ethiopia as Theodore III.

He was "the best shot, the best spearman, the best runner, and the best horseman in Abyssinia." Besides the physical qualities that go far to give soldiers confidence in the leader whose banner they follow into the thick of the fight, he had others which, had he but had ballast, might have gone far to make him an inspiring ruler. He was a man of exceptional intelligence; a man who at times could lay aside the spear and sword and rifle to cultivate his mind. No potentate along the Nile or among the great hills of Abyssinia had ever approached as nearly to the European idea of an educated man as Theodore. He was, moreover, a large-hearted, impulsively-generous king; but unfortunately under his skin was the savage, and it needed very little scratching to find it. At different periods during his checkered career he had won for himself very great power, at times having a standing army of from 100,000 to 150,000 men. It was no easy task to maintain such an army, and his people groaned under the heavy taxes he was forced to levy upon them. Fortunately for England his oppression and savagery had, at the time of the Abyssinian trouble, left him with a comparatively small following.

The cause of the difficulties between England and Theodore is of great interest to the student of history. Massowah is an island in the Red Sea fronting Abyssinia. It is an island owned by the Turks, and on it a British consul was stationed "for the protection of British trade with Abyssinia and with the countries adjacent thereto." Theodore was at first much attracted to the English, and particularly to the Consul Mr. Plowden, who seemed to be equally attracted by the magnetic personality of the Abyssinian king. The consul was not supposed to cultivate friendly relationship with Theodore, but in 1861 he made a lengthy visit that could be easily interpreted by the enemies of Theodore to mean that England through her official representative was entering into a friendly alliance with the king. Their interpretation was not without grounds, for Mr. Plowden aided Theodore in crushing a rebellion among his subjects. The home government became alarmed, as it was not prepared to become embroiled in a war with the tribes along the Red Sea. It took prompt action, and ordered Mr. Plowden to return to Massowah and attend strictly to his consular business. Unfortunately on his way back he



LORO ROBERTS'S COAT OF ARMS



**KANDAHAR**  
From which Roberts derives his title.



EARL ROBERTS AND HIS WIFE AND ELDER DAUGHTER

was attacked by one Garred, a notorious rebel, and in the fight which followed was mortally wounded and taken prisoner. Theodore, deeply grieved at the loss of his friend, went out in force against the rebels to avenge Mr. Plowden's death. Mr. Bell, a companion and friend of Mr. Plowden's, in a fight succeeded in slaying Garred, and scarcely had he avenged his comrade's death when he saw Theodore sorely pressed. He rushed to the rescue, saved the king's life, but lost his own. The loss of his two friends maddened Theodore, and he took a savage revenge for their death. He had captured some 2,000 of the enemy, and these he either put to death with cruel torture, or brutally mutilated them to satisfy the *manes* of his English friends.

It would not have been a difficult matter to have kept the man who could act thus a faithful friend and ally of England. All it required was a little wisdom on the part of the government; but this wisdom was sadly lacking. Captain Cameron was sent to Massowah to succeed Mr. Plowden as consul, and while he waited on the king and presented him with a rifle, a pair of pistols, and a letter in the Queen's name, he showed none of the enthusiastic friendship which Theodore had so much appreciated in his predecessor. The fact is, Captain Cameron had "received positive instructions to take no part in the quarrels between Theodore and his subjects, and was reminded by Lord John Russell that he held 'no representative character in Abyssinia!'" However, Theodore was anxious to maintain his old friendship with such a powerful country as England, and when Captain Cameron left him he gave him a letter addressed to the Queen. This letter prayed that England might give him aid against the Turks, but the government was not anxious to get mixed up in an eastern war, and so the letter was laid aside and Theodore watched in vain for a reply. Meanwhile Theodore had become suspicious of Captain Cameron and thought that he was intriguing with Egypt against Abyssinia; and when about a year later despatches were received from England, but not the slightest notice taken of the letter from which he had hoped so much, he became greatly incensed, and cast Captain Cameron and his suite, with Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal, into prison. At this time Theodore had a fairly large and well equipped army, and England was anxious to avoid war. The government



now made haste to answer the letter, and decided to send the answer to Theodore by Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, a Syrian Christian, assistant British Resident at Aden.

Mr. Rassam reached Massowah in July 1865, but it was not till January 1866 that he arrived at Theodore's headquarters. Theodore at first seemed willing to accede to the demands of England, and in April the captives were liberated and started for the Red Sea. But Theodore was a most capricious monarch, and they had not gone very many miles on their journey when he had them brought back once more and confined in prison. He added to the prisoners he had already been holding for two years Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, Lieutenant Pridaux and Dr. Blanc. He had now in all some sixty prisoners, including some German missionaries, a few women and children, several teachers, and a number of artists and workmen.

In the meantime Theodore was playing with England. He sent a letter to the Queen requesting some European workmen and machinery. An attempt was made to conciliate him; his request was granted and in addition a letter was sent him from the Queen.

Meanwhile the prisoners were in a most uncomfortable position; according to Justin McCarthy, "the king oscillated between caprices of kindness and impulses of cruelty. He sometimes strolled in upon the prisoners in careless dress; perhaps in European shirt and trousers, without a coat; and he cheerily brought with him a bottle of wine, which he insisted on the captives sharing with him. At other times he visited them in the mood of one who loved to feast his eyes on the anticipatory terrors of the victims he had determined to destroy."

At last it became evident to England that she would lose her self-respect if she permitted this state of things to continue. As a preliminary step towards bringing things to a climax Colonel Merewether, the political agent at Aden was sent to Massowah to make a last effort to obtain the release of the prisoners. He failed in his mission, and discovered that Theodore, no doubt owing to the slowness with which England had acted since the imprisonment of Captain Cameron, believed that England was afraid to send an army against him. War was therefore declared and Sir Robert Napier

was appointed commander-in-chief of the expedition which was to be sent to Abyssinia. Colonel Merewether did a good deal more than merely attempt to obtain the release of the prisoners. The country was to the English government almost a *terra incognita*, and a reconnoitring party under him did work that was to make the task of Napier a comparatively easy one. He first of all selected good anchoreges for the ships that would transport the forces to Abyssinia, and located suitable places for landing the army. There was, too, a long stretch of difficult country between Massowah and Magdala, and this region he thoroughly explored. But what was of more importance he entered into friendly relations with the chiefs between the Red Sea and Theodore's mountain fortress, and so arranged matters that Sir Robert Napier had practically nothing to do when he landed, but march straight on Magdala.

Such was the state of affairs when news reached India that Colonel Merewether had urged on the government "the advisability of immediate measures being taken to prepare a force in India for the punishment of Theodore and the rescue of the prisoners." Roberts' good fortune was to stand by him. He had hoped that he might go on the strength of the mountain battery, but when in September it was "announced that Colonel Donald Stewart was to have command of the Bengal brigade with the Abyssinian force," he found that he was to be his assistant-quartermaster-general.

His next two months were to be busy ones. A force had to be thoroughly equipped for a severe campaign in a country with extremes of tropic heat in the plains and almost arctic cold on some of the higher hills. Transportation had to be prepared, and he was now to have the new experience of fitting out ships to carry a large body of men, together with their horses and guns on a long sea voyage. In all he required no fewer than twenty-seven ships and nine tugs. He was not wholly unprepared for the work. His interest in military affairs had made him a thoughtful student of the work done by previous officers in preparing to transport troops over seas. The costly blunders made by many of these officers in the Crimea and the Peninsular wars were familiar to him. Their mistakes he

could avoid; as a result his work was done in such a way as to elicit the highest encomiums from his commanding officers and the government. Never in England's foreign wars, up to this time, was a large body of men shipped over seas in better condition to march at once to the scene of conflict. As he says, "I arranged that each detachment should embark complete in every detail, which resulted in the troops being landed and being marched off without the least delay as each vessel reached its destination."

The two months in Calcutta while he was busy with the transports were not to pass without mishap. It will be remembered that on Roberts' first sojourn in that crowded city he was caught out in a furious storm that came near ending his career. He was now to have a very similar experience. Western America could not produce a more violent cyclone than the one that swept over Calcutta on November 1, 1867, just when Roberts was in the midst of getting his transports ready for sea. Houses were unroofed, trees were torn up by the roots, and buildings of the lighter sort were levelled to the ground. When the storm abated Roberts, who had been having a most exciting experience while it was at its height, hurried to the harbor to see what had been the effect of the fierce wind on his fleet of transports. Fortunately only two were damaged and that but slightly; but many of the cargo boats were sunk and the departure of the troops was somewhat delayed. It was not until early in January that the last of the transports were ready for sea; and nearly a month later the P. and O. steamer *Golconda*, on which was Colonel Stewart and his staff, anchored in Annesley Bay.

The troops were at once landed at Zula and officers and men alike anxiously awaited orders. The sixty prisoners were still in the hands of Theodore, and Sir Robert Napier, who had arrived at Zula shortly after the new year, was already on his march inland, and was then at Senafe, the first station among the hills.

The force sent to Abyssinia was a large one, larger probably than the authorities thought necessary, but it is well to err on the safe side in such cases. Napier had in his command about 16,000 fighting men, 12,640 in the transport service, and these with the followers of the army made up a

total of probably not fewer than 32,000. The region through which this army was to pass was not an easy one. Magdala is 9,150 feet above the sea, and is about 400 miles from the coast; and this large force with its extensive transports had to be marched over steep mountains, through deep passes, across wide plains; enduring heat and cold, sleet and rain, before the fortress of the now half-mad king of Abyssinia could be reached. Fortunately so thoroughly had Colonel Merewether done his work, that the intervening tribes were to prove friendly to the English, and no fighting was expected until the mountains surrounding Magdala were reached.

Roberts was anxious to follow in the wake of Sir Robert Napier, but in this he was to be disappointed. The Bengal brigade was not to remain a unit. The troops were to be sent forward, Colonel Stewart was to take command at Senafe, while, much to his disgust, Roberts was to remain at Zula with the transports.

A pleasant time in his enforced sojourn at the base of the army was out of the question. He had already had several experiences of Red Sea weather, and knew how thoroughly torturous it could be. His stay at Zula was to be no exception to the rule, and was but a repetition of the hot passage he had experienced, first, when he went to India as a cadet, and, again, when he took his young bride over the same route. The hot winds from the surrounding desert stretches were suffocating in the extreme, and in the day time there was no escape from the exhausting heat. While the sun was in the heavens—117 degrees in the daytime was the rule—and as he sweltered in the furnace-like atmosphere he could find no relief. Water was scarce, and for the most part procured by condensing sea-water. The only oasis in this desert of his life was his companionship with an old Eton friend, Captain George Tryon of the transport *Euphrates*, who was afterwards as Admiral Sir George Tryon, K.C.B., to go so heroically to his death when through a fatal mistake in the naval manoeuvres the splendid warship *Victoria* was sunk with so many of her brave mariners. Roberts roared at Zula for four months, doing his work well and enjoying occasional good dinners on the transport *Euphrates*.

Meanwhile Sir Robert Napier's march continued inland towards the

hills of Abyssinia. No opposition was met with and the march was not as difficult as had at first been expected. The nearer, however, they approached the stronghold of Theodore the difficult country, the change from the heat of the plains bordering the Red Sea to the cold atmosphere of the mountains, tried the men somewhat. They expected a brush with the enemy in the mountain passes. Magdala could not be reached, they felt, without a struggle in the narrow paths that threaded their way among the hills.

Theodore had shown great military skill in his march to Magdala, but he had no longer the confidence of the nation he was governing. He now found himself in his rock-built citadel with but a small following, and one that could not be relied upon. His oppression, his tyranny, his murders had done their work; and the man who had promised so much in his youth was hastening to his fall. His excesses, his brutality had affected his mind, and he moved among his troops and prisoners a half-mad monarch. Justin McCarthy has called him a barbaric Antony; but in his promise, his superstition, his brutality, he was more of an Ethiopian Macbeth.

At length the Abyssinians mustered up sufficient courage to try to stop the advance, and on April 10 some 3,000 of them poured down the hillsides on the English. They were beaten back as Gibraltar beats back the waves of the sea. Five hundred of the poor wretches were killed, and 1,500 wounded—two-thirds of their whole force—and so skilfully were they dealt with by the troops under Napier, that not a single British soldier lost his life, and only nineteen were wounded.

Theodore was in despair. He saw now the mistake he had made in irritating the English up to the fighting point, and at this critical juncture showed a readiness to sue for peace. On the day after this disastrous fight he sent Lieutenant Prideaux, one of his prisoners, and Mr. Flad to Sir Robert Napier's camp. He was ready to deliver up his prisoners and to submit to the Queen on condition of receiving honorable treatment. An understanding was arrived at, and the prisoners who had been in hourly dread of death or torture from the capricious and vacillating Theodore, were escorted in safety to the British lines. Along with them the Abyssinian king sent 1,000 cows and 500 sheep, and as the invaders appeared to accept this gift he concluded

that peace was meant, and that England would forgive and forget. But misunderstandings arose; the unconditional surrender of Theodore was demanded, and to these terms he would not submit.

Magdala would now have to be stormed, and this was likely to be no easy task. The strong fortress stood on a high, steep hill. So difficult was the ascent that from the valley it looked as though to reach the gates the army would need to be provided with wings. Several narrow paths, however, led to the gates; and up these the British troops forced their way. At length the walls were reached. A feeble resistance was made, and when the main gate was blown open the first object seen within the walls was the dead body of Theodore.

Deserted by his troops, his career ended, feeling in his imagination the galling chains on his wrists and ankles, he had committed suicide. "Nothing in his life became him like the leaving it." It is impossible not to admire that animal courage which enables a great conqueror, brought at length to bay, to free himself from the triumphant gaze and cowardly sneers of his enemies.

The inhabitants and troops were now sent away from Magdala, the fortifications were destroyed, and the town was burnt to the ground. The work was done thoroughly and quickly and without loss of life. Then the English began their march to the coast leaving a "blackened rock," a gloomy monument of their work.

It was the beginning of June before the troops who had made this celebrated march reached the coast. The heat was then at its worst and Roberts was kept busy night and day getting them on board the transports as quickly as possible. On June 10 the work was completed and Sir Robert Napier accompanied by Roberts, who was to be the bearer of his final despatches, set out for Suez on the steamer *Feroze*.

Roberts was very glad of the chance to return to England, especially on such an important mission. His strength had been sapped by the intense heat of Red Sea and the heavy labor he had to endure in getting the troops on board the transports, and he felt that he needed the strengthening air of England to build him up for future service in India. Besides, his wife was in

England, and he was anxious to be with her again. Out of her presence he was never perfectly happy. He reached England at the end of June, delivered his despatches to the authorities and then hurried to Clifton to join his wife and friends.

Six weeks later the rewards for the Abyssinian expedition were made public. Roberts, as he had not been with the column on its march to Magdala, did not expect much; but found that he had been given a brevet lieutenant-colonelcy. No man deserved honor more than he. The splendid health of the men on the march, the lack of suffering on the road to Magdala, were due almost entirely to the able officers who looked after the lines of communication, and among these no man had done his work with greater skill or to more purpose than Roberts.

At the beginning of the New Year he started with his wife on his return to India to accept the position of first assistant-quartermaster-general. The passage out was a most unpleasant one, and before they reached India their little six-months old daughter died and was buried at sea. Sad at heart they landed at Calcutta, and with aching hearts they journeyed to their pleasant Simla home at which they arrived while the hill country was beautiful with the snows of winter.



**A MADRAS LANCER**  
A type of one of India's best body of Troops.





MAJOR-GENERAL CHARLES GEORGE GORDON

## CHAPTER XXI.

### IN THE LAND OF THE LUSHAIS.

*Simla in Winter—An Expedition Against the Lushais Necessary—Roberts Appointed Senior Staff Officer—Busy in Calcutta Getting Columns Ready—A Difficult March—In Contact with the Enemy—Christmas Day in the Jungle—Roberts Appointed Deputy-Quartermaster-General—Proves Himself an Excellent Leader—The Lushais Conquered—Created a C. B. for His Part in this Campaign—Learns of the Death of His Father—Supervises the Manœuvres in Honor of Prince of Wales—The Queen Proclaimed Empress of India at Delhi—Roberts Wins the Confidence of Lord Lytton—War with Afghanistan Inevitable.*

**A**FTER their return to India Roberts and his wife spent a quiet year at Simla, which would have been an altogether happy one but for the memory of the little girl they had hurried at sea and the death of another child, a boy only three weeks old. They were now thoroughly familiar with the beautiful hill country, but never seemed to tire of its majestic scenery. A description of this region in its gorgeous summer beauty has already been given, but to know Simla in all its sublimity it must be seen in winter as well. Fortunately for the student of India who cannot make the far journey to see for himself the hills piled upon hills, to see their snowy summits glittering in the winter sun, Roberts has paused in his account of the incidents of his life to give the world an insight into the most interesting part of India from a scenic point of view. The description is so well done that it is impossible not to feel that the man who has become the first soldier in the Empire might, had he concentrated his mind on literature, have become one of the first literary men of his age. His details show him to have the eye of the true artist, and under the inspiration of nature his prose takes on a rhythm that reads like poetry.

"Simla in the winter," he says, "after a fresh fall of snow, is particularly beautiful. Range after range of hills clothed in their spotless garments stretch away as far as the eye can reach, relieved in the foreground

by masses of reddish-brown perpendicular cliffs and dark-green llex and deodar trees, each bearing a pure white burden, and decked with glistening fringes of icicles. Towards evening the scene changes, and the snow takes the most gorgeous coloring from the descending rays of the brilliant eastern sun—brilliant even in mid-winter—turning opal, pink, scarlet and crimson; gradually as the light wanes, fading into delicate lilacs and greys, which slowly mount upwards, till at last even the highest pinnacle loses the life-giving tints, and the whole snowy range itself turns cold and white and dead against a background of deepest sapphire blue."

Since he was forced to spend a great part of his life at Headquarters, it was well to live in a place so inspiring to eye and heart.

Yet another uneventful year was to pass by. England was at peace with the world, and her soldiers had to be content with the parade ground and the military offices. During this year Roberts imposed upon himself a task that admirably illustrates the character of the man. He was determined to make himself thoroughly familiar with every department of military life. There was nothing that might be of greater service to a commander in certain critical situations, than a knowledge of electric telegraphy, so through the Simla winter of 1870 he spent much of his time learning this most useful art.

He was soon, however, to be released from the monotony of office work at Headquarters. The comparatively small British force in India are the police of southern Asia. From Persia to Burma they have gradually been compelled to "take up the white man's burden," the task of civilizing or chastising the barbarous robber tribes that swarm down upon their boundaries for plunder and murder. For some years the Lushais who lived in the region between Bengal and Burma, a region but little known to Europeans and most difficult of access, had been making frequent raids on the tea planters; robbing, destroying property, and carrying off prisoners to their mountain retreats. England, ever slow to act, endured this annoying state of affairs, only sending out small forces to hold the raiders in check, until the Lushais, becoming bolder, made still more extensive and destructive raids. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal saw that there was only one way

to put an end to the evil. The Lushais must be chastised, severely chastised, and nothing less than a well-organized and strong force could do the work satisfactorily. This he declared was "absolutely necessary for the future security of the British subjects residing on the Cachar and Chittagong frontiers."

The government acted on his advice and decided to send two columns, "one having its base at Cachar, the other at Chittagong—commanded respectively by Brigadier-Generals Bouchier, C.B., and C. Brownlow, C.B."

Roberts was appointed senior staff-officer to the force, and to him fell the arduous duty of fitting out both columns. He was now recognized as probably the most efficient transport officer in India. His work through the Mutiny, his performances with Sir Hugh Rose during the Umbeyla affair, the machine-like skill with which he had performed the task allotted to him in the Abyssinian campaign, gave the government every confidence that he was the one man in India best able to make ready the columns for the journey to the land of the Lushais, through a trackless, jungle-covered, mountainous region, a land which Roberts says was to him a *terra incognita*; and such it was to nearly every officer in the east.

In September, Roberts, in company with his old friend, Major-General Donald Stewart, travelled from Simla to Calcutta, and at once began the work of getting the columns ready to be sent off to the scene of the trouble. His experiences in Calcutta from the time he landed there in '52 as a cadet seem always to have been exceedingly unpleasant, this one was to be no exception.

"I was kept," he says, "in Calcutta all October—not a pleasant month, the climate then being very muggy and unhealthy. Every one who could get away had gone to the hills or out to sea; and the offices being closed for the Hindu holidays of the *Durga Puja*, it was extremely difficult to get work done. Every thing for the Chittagong column had to be sent by sea. The shipping of the elephants was rather interesting; they clung desperately to the ground, trying hard to prevent themselves being lifted from it; and when at last, in spite of all their struggles, they were hoisted into the air, the helpless appearance of the huge animals and their

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\*Roberts: Forty-One Years in India.

despairing little cries and whines were quite pathetic. I found it trying work being on the river all day; my eyes suffered from the glare, and I became so reduced that before I left Calcutta I weighed scarcely over eight stone—rather too fine a condition in which to enter on a campaign in a mountainous country, so thickly covered with jungle as to make riding out of the question."

Despite his reduced condition he had to go to the front, and about the middle of November reached Cachar, where he enjoyed a few days of comparative rest before beginning one of the most unique and trying, though short, marches of his military career. From Cachar to the land of the Lushais lay no well known road; not even a track threaded its way through the thick jungles. No man in the column had ever been over the ground before; and it was necessary to study the country thoroughly before beginning the advance. Roberts with his usual tact managed to secure some fairly good native guides, and the advance began. It must have required Herculean will to face the difficulties of this march, but General Bouchier and his senior staff-officer were not men to be daunted by any obstacles.

Slowly but steadily the column crept forward boring its way into the rank, thick jungles; climbing steep, thickly-wooded hills, wading through mountain streams or throwing over them bridges sufficiently strong to carry the guns and elephants. It was a march that required infinite patience and infinite courage. To make it all the harder the dreaded scourge of the east, cholera, broke out among the natives. There were some 840 with the column and in a few days 251 died, many deserted, and the British troops, who depended greatly on these natives, moved forward with only a scant 387. There was a scarcity of elephants, and both officers and men were forced to discard every pound of baggage that was not absolutely necessary for their existence. Thus heavily handicapped they slowly advanced through the matted jungles lying between Cachar and the country of the Lushais, leaving behind them a well built road from six to eight feet wide.

Roberts, despite the fact that his Calcutta experiences had reduced him to eight stone, was the hardest worked man in the column. It was his duty to find halting places for the troops; and so after the day's work was done,

and the soldiers had thrown themselves down to rest as best they could in the hot, heavy heart of the jungle, he pushed on to find a camping spot for the following evening. How dishearteningly slow their progress must have been can be gathered from the fact that it took them over two months to cover 110 miles. Yet the work done by Roberts was quite as good as, and more trying than, either the march on Kandahar or on Pretoria; but it needs the spectacular to make a thing live in history.

For a month General Bouchler pushed forward without opposition until the Tuibum River was reached. On their way to this river messengers from some villages in that region came to them offering submission; but Britain's quarrel was not with these people. The column had as its objective point the country of one Lalbure, who had been the boldest of the robbers; and so after friendly greetings with the natives, they moved forward once more towards the Tuibum. They had not gone far before they came on several objects which told them resistance was to be expected. When a short distance from the river they found the road "blocked by a curious erection in the form of a gallows, from it hung two grotesque figures, made of bamboo." For fear this terrible warning might not have the desired effect, a tree was felled and lay in the path of the column, and from this tree protruded sharp splinters of bamboo dyed a blood tint. Death on the gallows or death from the knife awaited the small band of British soldiers if they dared advance further. Strange, as it no doubt seemed to the Lushais, the warning was unheeded; the advance continued, and that night the soldiers cleaned their rifles and polished their bayonets in expectation of an encounter on the morrow.

Hostile natives were living in some villages in the hills in front, and next morning the column moved forward in the direction of these. Up the steep and difficult ascent the troops laboriously toiled over a narrow path, and when they emerged from this they were met by a sudden volley from a hidden foe at close quarters; a second volley quickly followed the first; but bayonets were fixed, a charge was made, and the enemy fled. All day the march continued, and all day efforts were made by the Lushais to check the advance, but they were ever unable to withstand the British bayonets. The

climb up the steep hills had thoroughly exhausted the men who threw themselves down on the ground unmindful of the occasional shots that fell among them from the enemy concealed in the neighboring thickets.

All this exhausting work had been to little or no purpose. It is true they had captured the Kholel villages, but in the morning when day broke they found they were on the wrong road, and that in order to reach Lalbura's country it would be necessary to march back down the elopes they had ascended with such difficulty and at such risks.

The next day was Christmas and it was decided to give the men a rest. An effort was made to celebrate the day in a way that would remind them of the homeland. With true British foolhardiness they placed a big table in an exposed position in the open, and, while occasional shots dropped around them from the skulking sharpshooters, thoroughly enjoyed their Christmas dinner. After they had well eaten of such fare as they had been able to bring into this region, rousing songs of old England made the jungles of Asia re-echo with their unaccustomed notes. The Lushais must have imagined the feast and singing were parts of a truly religious ceremony, for while the music lasted, as if in superstitious dread, they ceased firing.

On the following day they began to retrace their steps pursued by the Lushais who were confident that they had beaten the English, and could now cut their slender column to pieces. The mob that followed on the tracks of the column might have succeeded in doing considerable damage, but the hardy little Gurkhas, those admirable eastern warriors, beat back their every attempt to strike a successful blow at the retreating force.

On January 1 Roberts received one of the most acceptable New Year's gifts of his life, the news that he had been appointed deputy-quartermaster general by Lord Napier. Soon after this he was to be gladdened in the jungles of the Lushais country by still better news. A man child had been born to him—the boy, who, two years ago, was to give his life so gallantly for his country endeavoring to rescue the guns at the Tugela.

As the expedition continued its march, the gravest difficulty Roberts had to contend with was the utter lack of information he had with regard to the country through which he was marching. Good guides he could not get, for

the natives who were not in arms did all they could to hamper the advance of the column by either refusing to direct it or by giving directions that led it miles from its proper course. On several occasions they sent the force in directions where it would surely have fallen into a trap, but for the eternal watchfulness of Roberts. He was ever in advance of the main army, with his keen and experienced eyes looking out for danger. Once at a place where the narrow road skirted a hill he saw before him a stockade, doubtless well manned. He has ever delighted in getting round the flank of an enemy, and so instead of hurling the column against the strong position of the tribes he made a wide circuit "entailing a long and weary drag up and down steep spurs, at one time attaining a height of 6,000 feet," till at last he struck the road again about a mile beyond the stockade. The village of Taikum was situated on a hill in his front, and to this place the Lushais hurriedly retired, but a couple of well placed shells made them flee from their stronghold in terror, and the British entered and gave the bamboo-built village to the flames.

The burning of Taikum practically closed the Lushais campaign. The Cachar column experienced no more fighting, and the Chittagong column had succeeded in forcing the Lushais to surrender their prisoners into General Brownlow's hands and to promise to cease from their raids. Lalhura, expecting to be severely punished for his many misdeeds, had fled, but his people expressed themselves as thoroughly penitent.

After a brief rest, the force, having accomplished the work it had been sent out to do, began the return march, leaving the Lushais much impressed with their prowess and generosity. The march back to Cachar was a hard one, and the troops reached that place thoroughly worn out, and all the time in dread of the cholera which was still carrying off an occasional native soldier.

There were no wondrous deeds performed on this expedition by either men or generals, but as General Bouchier said, "The history of the expedition from first to last was one of sheer hard work."

On April 1 Roberts found himself back in Simla. Worn out as he was with the arduous campaign he had just been through, he much needed a rest



among the beautiful hills and valleys gorgeous in the foliage and flowers of spring. His wife needed him to. She had had a narrow escape from death in his absence, and a nurse had, in the coldest blood, attempted to murder their boy. Just as the Simla summer closed the rewards for those who had done good work in the Lushai expedition were published, and Roberts found that he had been made a Companion of the Bath. He was now only forty, and yet through his bravery and energy he could write after his name V. C., C. B.

His last honor was evidently well deserved, for his general in his final despatch wrote thus of him: "Lieutenant-Colonel Roberts' untiring energy and capacity are beyond all praise; working without guides, even without map and geography, thwarted by the Lushais, whose game was to delay our progress, he seemed never at a loss. But not only in his own department was it that he exerted himself. Whether piloting the advance guard through the pathless forest, or solving a commissariat or transport difficulty, his powerful aid was willingly given."

The next few years were years of peace; a little travelling among the hills, an occasional bit of recreation at "pig-sticking" and much camp inspection with the commander-in-chief, relieved the monotony of the time.

Early in 1874 he received news of the death of his gallant father who had so much influenced his life, and whose advice and example had made him such an efficient soldier in dealing with the natives of India and with the frontier tribes. The old general had received his G. C. B. from Her Majesty's hands at Windsor, just twenty-two days before his death. He had spent his last twenty odd years in England; but his heart even in the last year of his life was in the country where he had fought so long and well, and where his son was rapidly making the name of Roberts even more illustrious than he had done.

Throughout the greater part of 1875 Lieutenant-Colonel Roberts acted as quartermaster-general, knowing that as soon as he had attained the rank of colonel he would be given the office for which ever since he landed in India he had been training himself.

During the latter part of this year and the opening months of 1876, he



**THE LOOK-OUT MAN; A HERO FROM INDIA.**

"From morning till night his eyes are fixed on Butwana 'Long Tom', and directly he sees the flash of a gun he calls out loudly in retired tones, 'Long Tom, Long Tom, Long Tom.' This warning gives the British soldiers time to take cover, and a half-second to come) though he himself never moves from his post."

*The Graphic.*



**ROBERTS IN STAINED GLASS**  
At The Royal Academy, Woolwich.



**LORD ROBERTS AND HIS STAFF IN INDIA**  
His only son who died on the Tugela is standing on his right hand.

was busy at Delhi making arrangements for the reception of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, then on a visit to India, and in supervising the manœuvres in the Prince's honor. During 1876 he was busy for the most part assisting in inspecting camps of exercise in hill stations, but at the close of the year he had to make arrangements for a magnificent ceremony at Delhi. The Queen was to be proclaimed Empress of India at the spot where the first great tragedies of the Mutiny had occurred twenty years before, and the young quartermaster-general was allotted the task of organizing the camp necessary for this imposing ceremony.

The following is an official account of this celebrated meeting: "The scene on the morning of the proclamation (January 1, 1877) assumed a varied and dazzling character. Every ruling chief, and every European governor and lieutenant-governor sat under his own banner, surrounded by native nobles and European officials. Every effort was made to mingle the ruling chiefs with the European officials, so as to avoid questions of precedence, which have excited bitterness and heart burning in India from the remotest antiquity. The result was such a display of Oriental costumes and insignia with British uniforms and banners as was never witnessed before. Sixty-three ruling chiefs of India were present in the amphitheatre. They and their retinues, all in gorgeous costumes of satin, velvet, or cloth-of-gold, were everywhere mixed up with European officials in their uniforms of red and dark blue."

Over all this assemblage Roberts presided as the organizing spirit, and, needless to say, his work was done with his usual skill and thoroughness.

In this same year the cloud that was for ever appearing over the frontier hills began to grow big and threatening. At this juncture Lord Lytton was meditating changes that would necessitate the appointment of a chief commissioner for the frontier provinces, "who would be responsible to the government of India alone for frontier administration and trans-frontier relations." Lord Lytton, in the short period in which he had an opportunity of studying Roberts' character concluded that his organizing power, his soldierly qualities, his knowledge of frontier men and frontier ways, would make him an ideal man for the position, and he told him that he was to

have the office when it was created. Roberts was delighted, not because it would give him an opportunity for more fighting, but because he would now have a chance to carry out the policy his father had initiated, a policy of conciliation and friendliness towards the frontier men, who, to use his own words, "with all their faults, are men, and grand men too."

He had now had three years of the quartermaster-generalship, he was to have a chance of going a step higher. As a preparatory move towards the chief commissionership he was now given command of the Punjab frontier force. In march 1878 he went to his new field of labor, inspected the posts held by the force now under his command, and towards the end of May returned to Simla to consult with Lord Lytton about the proposed chief commissionership.

But the cloud that had been gathering along the frontier grew thicker and thicker, and he was to remain at headquarters until called upon to proceed to Kohat to take charge of one of the three columns which were to force their way through the territory of the obstinate Afghans.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### ROBERTS' FIRST COMMAND.

**England's Blunders in Afghanistan—The Character of Shere Ali—Russia Extending Her Territory Southward—Russia Influential in Kabul—England's "Masterly Inactivity"—England Requires the Amir to Accept a Permanent Resident—Shere Ali Resists the Demand—Lord Lytton Forced to Make Preparations for War—The Plan of Operations—A Perilous Undertaking—The Afghan as a Warrior—Roberts in Command of Kuram Field Force—Meets the Enemy at Peiwar Kotal—A Finely Planned Fight—A Magnificent Victory—Congratulations from Her Majesty—A "Necessary but Most Unpleasant Duty"—Shere Ali in Despair—The Treaty of Gundamak—Major Cavagnari Appointed Resident at Kabul—Roberts' Farewell to Cavagnari—Roberts Thanked by Both Houses of Parliament and Made a Knight Commander of the Bath.**

**A**S has been said in a previous chapter, the history of England's early relationship with Afghanistan does not make pleasant reading.

In the events leading up to the First Afghan War there was one long series of blunders and crass stupidity which ended in humiliating disaster, that was in no way lessened by the heroic work done by the defenders of Jellalabad or the excellent generalship shown by Nott and Pollock in the final scenes of the war. But for the courage shown by the soldiers who advanced to Kahn, seeking retribution and endeavoring to rescue the hattered remnants of Elphinstone's army, all else is, as Archibald Forbes has said, "a sombre welter of misrepresentation and unscrupulousness, intrigue, moral deterioration, and dishonor unspeakable." In many ways the noblest man that emerged from this war was Dost Mahomed, who though outrageously used by the British, fully forgave them; and through the critical days of the Great Mutiny, by his staunch friendship, averted the interference of the Afghans in India affairs, and thus saved the Punjab.

His son Shere Ali, who succeeded to his father's throne, was, however, a very different type of man; a schemer, thoroughly unscrupulous and greedy,

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\*Forbes: The Afghan Wars.

his whole policy was to stand a spectator of the attitude of Russia on the north and England on the south, ever ready to use their antagonism to each other for his own ends.

England's whole aim had been to use Afghanistan as a "buffer state," to prevent Russia from approaching too close to her northern frontier. In 1878 she had reason to feel considerably alarmed. A half century before Russia's southern boundary had been one thousand miles from her border, but during the intervening years Russia had been slowly forcing her way south, year by year extending her territories until only a short four hundred miles separated the possessions of the two great powers. Early in the century Russia had secured the country between the Ural River and Sea of Aral: nor was she content with this; Tashkend, Khojend, Bokhara, and Samark and were one after another brought under her sway. At the same time she was continually endeavoring to ingratiate herself with Persia, hoping for an outlet to the sea in the south; nor had she failed to make her influence felt in Kabul itself. Her agents were at work in the court of Shere Ali, and the soldiers of the Amir were dressed in clothes of Russian cut, Russian money was freely circulated in commercial dealings, and in the bazaars Russian goods occupied the most prominent place.

All this time England was remaining in a position of, what the authorities termed, "masterly inactivity." She stood aloof from Afghanistan, but endeavored to keep the Amir and his people friendly by annual grants of money, and by sending them plentiful supplies of arms which were afterwards to be used against the English. But Shere Ali was without gratitude. He accepted the gifts but continued to play off Russia against England, with a decided leaning towards Russia. At length he went farther than merely showing friendly feeling towards England's enemy. He even began to enter into friendly negotiations with Russia, and Major Cavagnari, Deputy-Commissioner at Pesbawar, reported that the Russian Government was despatching an envoy to Kabul.

Lord Lytton arrived in India in 1876 as Viceroy, and came armed with authority to send a mission to Kabul, whose errand would be to require of the Amir the acceptance of a permanent Resident and free access to the

frontier position of Afghanistan on the part of British officers, who should have opportunity of conferring with the Amir on matters of common interest with 'becoming attention to the friendly councils.' "

This was a bold demand. To comply with it was to recognize England as practically Suzerain of Aghanistan. The presence of an English official in Kahul was a thing that would be hated by all Afghans. Shere Ali knew that he would be supported by his people if he resisted these demands. They had beaten the *Feringhis*, inflicting great loss on them; now with improved weapons, with excellent generals, with a full treasury, with Russia friendly, the Afghans could hope to beat back any attempt on the part of the British to force on them these demands. But the demands were to be pressed, and an opportunity was to be given England of wiping out the disgraces of the first Afghan war; and before the close of the struggle General Roberts was to prove himself the ablest soldier who had ever fought against the Afghans.

There were but two good things emanating from this costly struggle; first, the making of General Roberts a leader of men; and, secondly, the increased respect in which British arms were to be held by the Afghans, who up till this time had despised the English as poor soldiers and cowards. Otherwise the whole war was a useless affair, a piece of bad diplomacy on the part of Lord Salisbury and Lord Lytton, which cost much money and many noble men, and left things very much where they were before it was begun.

Russia was at the bottom of it all, and while England had been mobilizing her troops in the Mediterranean, fearing that she might be drawn into the war then proceeding between Russia and Turkey, the Russian government was adroitly using Afghanistan to draw her into an expensive struggle.

Shere Ali resisted the forcing of the English mission upon him, but at the same time received with the most friendly demonstrations a Russian embassy sent to Kahul. It was evident which way his sympathies leaned, and the authorities learned that the Amir was prepared to stop with his armies the British mission. Nevertheless the mission was sent forward, and



when Major Cavagnari, who was in charge of it, reached the Khyber Pass he found that the information received was correct, and that an Afghan officer was there to prevent his further advance. As a consequence he was forced to return to Pesbawar, and on reporting to the authorities the result of his attempt to reach Kabul, preparations for war began at once. An ultimatum was issued to the Amir giving him till November 20 to reconsider his attitude, but Shere Ali treated it with silent contempt. There was no drawing back now; Lord Lytton was forced to make preparations to send against the Amir a strong and well-equipped army.

Archibald Forbes in his "The Afghan Wars" gives the following as the scheme of operations: "Three columns of invasion were to move simultaneously, one through the Khyber Pass to Dakka, another through the Kuram valley, south of the Khyber, with the Peiwar Pass as its objective, and a third from Quetta into the Pisheen valley, to march forward to Kandahar after reinforcement by the division from Mooltan. To General Sir Sam Browne was assigned the command of the Khyber column, consisting of about 10,000 men, with thirty guns; to General Roberts the command of the Kuram valley column of about 5,500 men, with twenty-four guns; to General Biddulph the command of the Quetta force, numbering some 6,000 men, with eighteen guns. When General Donald Stewart should bring up from Mooltan the division which was being concentrated there, he was to command the whole southern force moving on Kandahar. The reserve division gathering at Hassan Abdul and commanded by General Maude, would support the Khyber force; another reserve division massing at Sukkur under General Primrose, would act in support of the Kandahar force; and a contingent contributed by the Sikh Feudatory States and commanded by Colonel Watson, was to do duty on the Kuram line of communication. The generals commanding columns were to act independently of each other, taking instruction direct from army and government headquarters."

On November 21 the Afghan frontier was crossed, and fighting began almost at once. The British columns were strong ones, the strongest and best equipped that ever attempted to force their way through the deep passes of the Afghan hills; but they had before them a resolute and confident of their

ability to beat back the invaders, and better equipped both in rifles and guns than any previous Afghan force had been—and for the latter fact they had to thank England, who in her desire to make them strong against Russian invasion had been giving them weapons to destroy her own soldiers. The soldiers of the three columns knew that they had no holiday trip before them; the marching would be difficult, and the past warned them that many of them would leave their bones to bleach among the hills where so many gallant soldiers had already fallen to so little purpose.

The character of the fanatical Mahomedans against whom they were marching is strongly depicted by an English officer who had experienced their fighting powers.

"An Afghan," he says, "never thinks of asking quarter, but fights with the ferocity of a tiger, and clings to life till his eyes glaze and his hands refuse to pull a pistol trigger or use a knife in a dying effort to kill or maim his enemy. The stern realities of war were more pronounced on the battle fields of Afghanistan than perhaps they have ever been in India, if we except the retribution days of the Mutiny. To spare a wounded man for a minute was probably to cause the death of the next soldier who unsuspectingly walked past him. . . . One thing our men certainly learned in Afghanistan, and that was to keep their wits about them when pursuing an enemy or passing over a hard-won field. There might be danger lurking in each seemingly inanimate form studding the ground, and unless care and caution were exercised, the wounded Afghan would steep his soul in bliss by killing a Kafir just when life was at its last ebb. This stubborn love of fighting *in extremis* is promoted, doubtless, by fanaticism, and we saw so much of it that our men at close quarters always drove their bayonets well home, so that there should be no mistake as to the deadliness of the wound. The physical courage which distinguished the untrained mobs who fought so resolutely against us was worthy of all admiration; the temerity with which men, badly armed, and lacking skilled leaders, clung to their positions was remarkable, to say nothing of the sullen doggedness they so often showed when retiring. But when the tide of the fight set in fully against them and they saw that further resistance would involve them more deeply, there was so sudden a

change always apparent that one could scarcely believe that the fugitives hurrying over the hills were the same men who had resisted so desperately but a few minutes before. They acted wisely; they knew their powers in scaling steep hills, or making their escape by fleetness of foot; and the hosts generally dissolved with a rapidity which no one but an eye witness can appreciate. If cavalry overtook them, they turned like wolves and fought with desperation, selling their lives as dearly as ever men sold them; but there was no rally in the true sense of the word, and but faint attempts at aiding each other. Their regular troops were but little amenable to discipline, by reason of deficient training, and they resorted to tactics they had pursued as tribesmen when once they were forced to retire."

It was against such an enemy that the British were now advancing, determined to erase the blot which rested upon the soldiers of England ever since the last great war among the hills.

No sooner had Sir Samuel Browne's column begun its advance through Afghan territory than it met with opposition. Brisk fighting began along the Khyber, but position after position held by the Afghans was taken and in one month after his march began he succeeded in reaching the plain of Jellalabad. The severe Afghan winter was upon the column and here they encamped till spring. Though they had beaten back the hillmen they were continually called upon to repulse sudden raids made by the Afghans who lurked in the fastnesses of the surrounding mountains, and never neglected an opportunity of inflicting loss upon the *Feringhis*.

However by far the greatest interest centres around the column under Major General Roberts. This was his first command. It is true he had skilfully led a force against the village of Taikum in the Lushai country, but that was a small affair and in it there was little hazard. Now he had a compact army of his own; he was thrown absolutely on his own resources, and in one short day he was to rise in the estimation of the empire from a careful, methodical, brave, and trustworthy officer to a brilliant and resourceful general. The army under him was ridiculously small, and as he set out on



**ROBERTS' WATERFORD RESIDENCE, NEWTON HOUSE**



**ROBERTS' CHIEF RESIDENCE WHILE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF  
IN IRELAND; THE ROYAL HOSPITAL, KILMAINNAM**



**THE HANDY MAN.**

By permission, Henry Grave & Co., Ltd. London.

his northward march on November 21 the people along the frontier who knew the strength of the force he would have to encounter in a few days, pitied the brave fellows who, they deemed, were going to their death. Roberts himself was not without considerable forebodings.

His column advanced without encountering the enemy for a few days until they were approaching the Peiwar Kotal, a natural position of great strength. A false report as to the location of the enemy was brought to Roberts, and it was not until he had attempted to rush the enemy's position that he discovered them in great numbers in an almost impregnable position along the broken ridge from the summit of Spingawai Mountain on the left to the Peiwar Kotal. The position occupied extended between three and four miles, and it was calculated that there were behind the entrenchments between 15,000 and 18,000 men, while to drive out this force Roberts had only between 3,000 and 4,000 men. It looked impossible; but will and skill combined can do much,—and Roberts had both. He studied the ground with the greatest care, and decided, despite the rough nature of the slopes up which he would have to march, to make a night attack.

Four days after reaching the enemy's position he felt that he knew the country sufficiently well to try to force them from their stockades. To carry out his plan he had to hazard everything; had any part of his movement failed his little army would doubtless have been smashed to pieces. His plan was a bold one; according to some military critics a foolhardy one; but the success of it was complete. A great general will at times risk everything for one brilliant stroke, and Roberts in this instance proved himself worthy of a place beside the world's greatest generals.

It will be remembered that during the Mutiny he displayed a wonderful genius for finding his way about in the dark. He now determined to march through the darkness by his right on the Spingawai Kotal for the purpose of turning the enemy's left; and having done this he could then press back their flank and help crush their centre. To do this effectually he needed the bulk of the army under him, and so selecting 2,263 men and taking with him eight guns he began his flank movement. Before leaving camp the fires were built high to deceive the enemy and the tents were left standing.

It was a clear, cold night, a moon was shining and the stars were gleaming from an unclouded sky. A chill winter wind blew down the hillside, penetrating the men to the marrow, as they stumbled over fallen trees, into dried-up water-courses, across rocks coated with ice. The 29th Native Infantry was leading, and as they advanced two shots suddenly broke the stillness of the night. The Pathans in their ranks were firing to warn their friends on the hill top of the impending danger. Fortunately the shots were not heard, or if heard were not heeded. Roberts promptly sent the unreliable regiment to the rear and called the little Gurkhas and the stalwart Highlanders forward to take the lead. About six in the morning, while it was yet dark, the column was at the foot of the ascent of Spingawai Kotal. It was necessary to act quickly, and the charge was at once sounded. The Highlanders and Gurkhas with a wild yell rushed the first stockade, then position after position was taken, and in less than an hour the Spingawai Kotal was in Roberts' possession, and the flank was being rapidly pressed back upon the centre.

Meanwhile Roberts had signalled to Brigadier Cobbe to assist him by beginning a frontal attack on the main force of the enemy on Peiwar Kotal. At the same time he made no pause, but continued to follow up the advantage gained. Soon, however, his force was brought to a standstill. The Afghans had recovered from the shock of the first swift attack, and had taken up a position from which neither artillery nor infantry could dislodge them. He was determined to shatter the strong force before him ere nightfall; and seeing that he could not do it by a direct attack he decided to try another turning movement which would bring him to the rear of the Afghan force and threaten their retreat.

Brigadier Cobbe with his handful of men was doing fine work on the Peiwar Kotal position. Slowly but steadily over fallen trees, over slippery rocks, through thick woods his men were forcing their way. For three hours the artillery played on the heights and the fire of the Afghans grew weak; then the infantry dashed forward. Brigadier Cobbe was wounded and compelled to relinquish the command, but gallant Colonel Drew led the force forward, poured in a hot rifle fire from 800 yards making the Afghan

gunners desert their guns, and then charged the position. Roberts' movement to the rear had greatly alarmed them. They saw themselves hemmed in between these two determined and well-handled forces, and when the final rush was made by Colonel Drew they fled in terror, leaving behind them their stores, their ammunition, and seventeen guns, besides many dead. Colonel Hugh Gough with the cavalry went after them in hot pursuit and succeeded in cutting off a number of fugitives and in capturing several guns. The fight had been a hard, all-day struggle; but the British loss was small, only twenty-one killed and seventy-two wounded.

Roberts had proved himself not only a brave soldier but a leader in Afghan warfare without a superior in India. His men knew the chances they were taking in this fight, but they had followed him without a murmur. From first to last he has been able to inspire his officers and soldiers alike with the utmost confidence, and where he has led, his men have never hesitated to follow. He had been in several tight corners during the day, and on one occasion was under a hail of lead for nearly half an hour, but escaped with nothing worse than a finger grazed by a bullet. He and his men were thoroughly worn out by the marching entailed in the two turning movements of the day and the sharp fighting they had experienced, and though the night was piercingly cold and they were without blankets they threw themselves down on the hard side of Spingawai mountain and slept, fearing no night attack from the Afghans who were now hurrying towards Kabul broken and disheartened.

Several days after the storming of Peiwar Kotal Roberts received the following message from the Queen, and he knew that his name was in every mouth in the nation: "I have received the news of the decisive victory of General Roberts and the splendid behavior of my brave soldiers with pride and satisfaction, though I must ever deplore the unavoidable loss of life. Pray inquire after the wounded in my name. May we continue to receive good news."

Roberts has frequently issued after victories orders congratulating his men on their bravery, but never any that gave him more pleasure than the one given forth after the storming of Peiwar Kotal, "Major General Roberts



congratulates the Kurram Field Force on the successful result of the operations of the 2nd December against Peiwar Kotal, a position of extraordinary strength, and held by an enemy resolute and well armed. Not only had the enemy the advantage of ground, but also of numbers, as they were largely reinforced from Kabul the evening previous to the attack. A position apparently impregnable has been gained. A considerable portion of the Afghan army has been completely routed, and seventeen guns, with large stores of ammunition and supplies, have been captured. The result is most honorable, and could only have been achieved by troops in a high state of discipline—capable of enduring hardships—and able to fight as soldiers of the British army have always fought. Major-General Roberts deeply regrets the brave men who have fallen in the gallant discharge of their duty, and feels for the suffering of the wounded."

There was one unpleasant duty he had to perform after this victory. There were traitors in the 29th Native Infantry, and these had to be dealt with. If he could be kind, he could be severe, and the soldier who fired the first shot intended to warn the Afghans of the British advance, was sentenced to death and two others to long terms of imprisonment.

After this "necessary but most unpleasant duty" he went forward as far as the Shutargardan Pass, a lofty position some 11,200 feet high, about fifty miles from Kabul. Later he saw considerable fighting while exploring the Khost valley but deemed it wise to retreat from this dangerous position and go into winter-quarters to await orders to advance on Kabul.

In March he was visited by the commander-in-chief of the forces in India, Sir Frederick Haines, who complimented him and his men on the gallant work they had done at Peiwar Kotal, in whose shadow they were even then resting. As he pointed out, the other columns had done well, but they had not had the same opportunity of doing illustrious deeds as was given to the Kurram Field Force.

The steady advance of the British column, and the decisive victory of Roberts had greatly disheartened Shere Ali, and when the Russians, from whom he had hoped so much, withdrew from Kabul early in December he was in despair. He had long had his son Yakub Khan in close imprison-

ment; he now released him, made him regent, and fled from Kabul. He directed his steps towards Tashkend; but Russia would not allow him to cross into her territory, and two months later the wretched man died at Balkh in northern Afghanistan. His death changed the whole aspect of affairs. His son, Yakub Khen, had at first shown a determination to hold out against the *Feringhi*, but after the death of his father he weakened, and seemed ready to negotiate terms of peace. His sirdars were leaving him, the British columns were within a couple of days' march of Kabul; and under the circumstances he thought it advisable to have a personal conference with Major Cavagneri at Gundamuk. It is worthy of note, as showing the influence of Russia at that time at Kabul, that the Amir and his general-in-chief, Deoud Shah, arrived at the meeting place clad in Russian uniforms. From May 8 till May 26 the terms of the treaty were discussed. By the terms of the Treaty of Gundamuk then formulated, the Amir practically, as Forbes points out, became a feudatory to England.

\* "The Amir," Forbes writes, "consented to the residence of British agents within his dominions, guaranteeing their safety and honorable treatment, while the British government undertook that its representatives should not interfere with the internal administration of the country. The districts of Pisheen, Kuram, and Sihi were ceded to the British government along with the permanent control of the Khyber and Michnai passes, and of the mountain tribes inhabiting the vicinity of those passes; and all other Afghan territory in British occupation was to be restored. The obligations to which the treaty committed the British government were that it should support the Amir against foreign aggression with arms, money, or troops at its discretion, and it should pay to him and his successor an annual subsidy of £60,000. Commercial relations between India and Afghanistan were to be protected and encouraged; a telegraph line between Kabul and the Kuram was forthwith to be constructed; and the Amir was to proclaim an amnesty relieving all and sundry of the subjects from punishment for services rendered to the British during the war."

All this seemed very favorable to the British, but it was to be short

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\* Forbes: *The Afghan Wars*.

lived indeed, and had been gained at great loss of both money and men. The column that had occupied Kandahar remained there till the autumn, but in the heat of midsummer Sir Samuel Browne's force marched from Gundamuk to Peshawar; and on the march suffered more from the heat and cholera than they had done from the swords and bullets of their enemies. Even after this victorious campaign Afghanistan remained a nightmare in the minds of the British soldiers, and the "Death March," as the march of Browne's column homeward was termed, made all hope that they would never again have to penetrate the hill region.

In accordance with the terms of the treaty of Gundamuk, in July, Major Cavagnari, a few officers, and an escort of seventy-five soldiers of the guides, entered Kahul. As they rode northward many of them had forebodings of evil, and those among their friends who knew the treacherous character of the Afghan felt that they were going into the jaws of death. Roberts accompanied Cavagnari and his party as far as Shutargardan Pass, and at a farewell dinner was asked to propose the health of the Major; but so sure was he that his comrade-in-arms was going to his death that he could not do it. Roberts was of the opinion, and rightly so, that the followers of the Amir should have had a little more cutting up before a treaty with them was signed.

After saying good-bye to Cavagnari, Roberts returned to Simla, where he was to learn that for his part with the Kuram Field Force he had been accorded the thanks of both houses of parliament and was made a Knight Commander of the Bath.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### SIR FREDERICK ROBERTS' MARCH TO KABUL.

Roberts Plans a Trip to England—The Critical Situation of Cavagnari in Kabul—His Hopeful Letters—His Last Telegram—The Residency Besieged—Its Heroic Defence—The Murder of Cavagnari and His Escort—The Government Decide to Occupy Kabul—The Operations Against Kabul Entrusted to Sir Frederick Roberts—The Plan of Campaign—Roberts Carefully Prepares for His Advance on Kabul—His Order to the Kabul Field Force—The Advance Begins—Roberts' Narrow Escape—Color-Sergeant Hector Macdonald Attracts Roberts' Notice—The Amir, Yakub Khan, Comes to the English Camp—Roberts' Opinion of the Man—Proclamation to the People of Kabul—A Hard Fight Before Kabul—A Great Victory—Within Sight of the City of Kabul.

**T**HOUGH Roberts had such forebodings of evil concerning Cavagnari and the little company that was on its way to Kabul, he did not deem it probable that, after the drubbing he had just given the Afghans, there would be an early occasion for again marching into their country. As there was no immediate prospect of war in the east he and his wife planned a trip to England where they intended to place their young son at school; but their plans were to be rudely shattered.

When Cavagnari bade good-bye to Roberts and his other friends he rode fearlessly forward towards the city of Kabul—a place already of tragic interest to the British soldier. He was accompanied by his secretary, Mr. William Jenkins, Dr. Amhrose Kelly, and Lieutenant W. R. P. Hamilton, V. C., who was in command of the escort of seventy-five soldiers of the Guides. It was a small company, but as the Amir by the Treaty of Gundamak had sworn to receive the Mission in his country, and to protect its members while there, it was deemed unwise to make the slightest show of force. If Cavagnari had any fear for himself, his calm, unmoved countenance gave no sign of it; and he advanced towards Kabul apparently absolutely confident that no harm would come to him or his men, and that his presence in Kabul would keep the Amir from plotting with Russia.

against the interests of England. He was, however, one of these utterly fearless men who can walk into the presence of death with a smile on their lips. A man of a less courageous nature would have realized from the moment he entered Kabul that his life and the life of every man in the Mission was in the most imminent danger. As they marched through the streets to the Residency in the Bala Hissar the natives cursed them, the soldiers of Ayub Khan cursed them and insulted them, and apparently no officers of the Amir who had pledged himself to see to their safety were on hand to check the mob. Cavagneri was warned of the graveness of the situation but he calmly met the warning with the words: "Well, they can only kill the handful of us here, and our death will be avenged."

There is one respect in which England has sinned grievously against many of her noblest men. She has too often permitted them to go, even sent them, to almost certain death, saying to herself, "Well if they are killed their slayers will pay the penalty." She has ever been over trustful, expecting semi-civilized and even savage races to show something of her own high sense of honor. It was a cruel blunder to allow such a noble gentleman and brilliant soldier as Cavagnari to lead his little band to the heart of a country where every man was known to be inspired with a rooted hatred of the *Feringhi*, and where the rulers were men notoriously treacherous and brutal.

If the government had acted unwisely in sending such a small body of men into the lion's den, the men themselves were blindly confident to the last. The British name, the renown of British arms, and the promise of the Amir were, they thought, sufficient safeguards. Cavagnari sent most hopeful and encouraging letters to the government, and even four short days before his death wrote as follows:

"I have nothing whatever to complain of on the part of the Amir or his ministers, though there are many matters I wish I could influence him about. There is no doubt that his authority was weak throughout the whole of Afghanistan. This is not to be wondered at after the years of misrule and oppression on Shere Ali Khan's part, but if he keeps straight he will do it. . . . His conduct of foreign affairs was all that could be desired. . . ."



**THE ABSENT-MINDED BEOGAR**  
By permission, Henry Grace & Co., Ltd, London



LORD ROBERTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

I have no doubt that when disaffected persons see that they get no encouragement from us things will settle down; and if Yakub Khen will only adopt a little more conciliation, and show his subjects that he is not going to use our safeguard as a means of grinding them down, all will go well."

Three days later this letter was followed by a telegram which closed with the buoyant words! "All well!"

Scarcely had this reassuring telegram been received than the political officer at Alikhel heard news that was to stir the heart of the Empire. He at once sent the following message to General Roberts at Simla:

"One Jeleladin Ghilzai, who says he is in Sir Louis Cavagnari's secret service, has arrived in hot haste from Kabul, and solemnly states that yesterday morning the Residency was attacked by three regiments, who had mutinied for their pay, they having guns and being joined by a portion of six other regiments. The Embassy and escort were defending themselves when he left about noon yesterday" (September 3). "I hope to receive further news."

This tragic telegram was only too true. Not only had the soldiers attacked the Residency, but the inhabitants of Kabul had rushed towards the fatal spot in thousands, eager for loot and thirsting for the blood of the *Feringhis*. Cavagnari, on the first outbreak, despatched a messenger to the Amir, but he took no active measures to quell the disturbance, and a fierce struggle went on for some hours about the Bala Hissar. The gallant little garrison made sally after sally into the fierce crowd that were besieging them, and bravely beat them back. But the crowd grew denser and the fight fiercer. At length only a few of the members of the mission remained alive, and these determined to fight to the death. The gates were burst open; the Residency was set on fire; but the few remaining soldiers took up a position on the roof and shot down many of their treacherous foes before fire and the sword put an end to their heroic efforts.

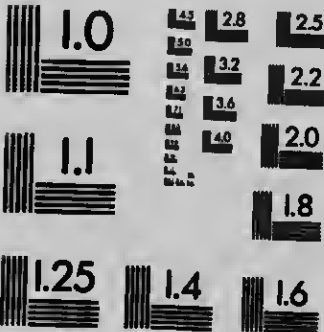
The story of this massacre thrilled India and England, and, indeed, the civilized world. There was but one course left England; Afghanistan must be punished. There was an element of justice in the destruction of the





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mission under Burnes and McNaughton; the government had acted unwisely in striking at Dost Mahomed; there was a feeling, too, after the Kuram Valley fight that it was wise to leave Afghanistan alone, making it nominally a dependency of England, now that the point first insisted upon, the recognition of the resident official in Kabul, had been gained. But there must be no turning back or leniency this time; the subjects of the Amir must be so severely punished that for the future there would be no chance of serious trouble from the direction of Kabul. The massacre was not the work of mutinous soldiers or a frenzied mob; leading officers of the Amir's army had taken part in it; civil officials of Kabul had had a brutal hand in the final scenes; and even the Amir was suspected of approving of the destruction of the Mission. The home government was thoroughly roused and at once telegraphed to the viceroy, that, "The occupation of Kabul is a necessity, and the advance upon it should be immediate."

Unfortunately at this time the military situation along the frontier was far from being a promising one. There had been no thought of such a sudden outbreak, and "Sir Samuel Browne's Force," according to Roberts, "had been broken up, Sir Donald Stewart was in far Kandahar, and his troops had, all but a small number, left on their return march to India; the Kuram force was, therefore, the one in a position to reach Kabul quickly." Besides this military weakness the officials had to face the fact that the Afghan winter was near at hand when it would be almost impossible to carry on military operations.

The situation, however, permitted of no delay. On September 5, when the council of war met at Simla, there were no more than 7,000 men immediately available; but a plan of campaign was at once mapped out, and the operations against Kabul entrusted to Sir Frederick Roberts.

He was an extremely young general to have such an important command, but Lord Lytton, the viceroy, and Sir F. Haines, the commander-in-chief, could not have made a more popular appointment. He was only forty-seven years old, but every officer and soldier who had served under him not only loved him, but had absolute confidence in his courage and leadership. He had in the battle of Peiwar Kotal proved himself the greatest of

generals who had yet faced the Afghans in their own hills. His long experience as quartermaster-general gave his troops confidence, too, that not only would they be led well, but that they would be well cared for during the difficult campaign on which they were about to enter.

The plan of campaign was, briefly, as follows: Sir Donald Stewart was to reoccupy Kandahar, General Massy was to seize the important position at the crest of Shutargardan Pass, to fortify himself there and await the arrival of General Roberts; a third force was to be held as a reserve between Peshawar and Rawal Pindi.

When Roberts took the command he found the small force totally unprepared for an advance into the enemy's country. Lack of transport and lack of provisions were the great hindrances to an immediate forward movement; but he went to work with a will and these difficulties were soon overcome.

When General Roberts had arranged with Sir F. Haines as to what reinforcements were to be sent after him he set out for the front on September 6. On September 11 General Massy had occupied Shutargardan Pass without opposition, and awaited the coming of his chief. Roberts was, however, in no hurry. He reached Alikhel, but made no haste to leave this place. He remained there to get his transport into shape, to collect supplies, and to deceive the Afghans as to his real intentions.

The orders he issued to his troops when he joined his command only increased the love and confidence in which he was already held by the Kabul Field Force.

"The government of India having decided that a force should proceed with all possible despatch to Kabul; in response to His Highness the Amirs' appeal for aid, and with the object of avenging the dastardly murder of the British representative and his escort, Sir Frederick Roberts feels sure that the troops under his command will respond to the call with a determination to prove themselves worthy of the high reputation they have maintained during the recent campaign.

"The major-general need address no words of exhortation to soldiers whose courage and fortitude have been so well proved. The Afghan tribes

are numerous, but without organization; the regular army is undisciplined, and whatever may be the disparity in numbers, such foes can never be formidable to British troops. The dictates of humanity require that distinction should be made between the peaceable inhabitants of Afghanistan and the treacherous murderers for whom a just retribution is in store, and Sir Frederick Roberts desires to impress upon all ranks the necessity for treating the unoffending population with justice, forbearance, and clemency.

"The future comfort and well being of the force depend largely on the friendliness of our relations with the districts from which supplies must be drawn; prompt payment is enjoined for all articles purchased by departments and individuals, and all disputes must be at once referred to the political officer for decision.

"The major-general confidently looks forward to the successful accomplishment of the expedition, and the establishment of order and a settled government in Afghanistan."

An order such as this shows why it is that Roberts is so thoroughly loved by his men. He treats them as men, takes them into his confidence, makes them co-workers with himself. How thoroughly, too, the death of Cavagnari has roused him. His words "avenging the dastardly murder," and a "just retribution" are the expression of the anger of a righteous man. The offense committed is one that cannot be forgiven, and his anger will not die down till the slayers of his friend have been slain.

On September 27 having his plans matured he set out for Kushi. The ground between Alikhel and Kushi was broken and rough, and he had been warned to expect opposition. It soon came, and the Afghans knowing the prowess of the little general in command of the force ambushed themselves and poured a volley upon him. Fortunately he escaped, but several about him were wounded. The enemy, although in a strong position and 2,000 in number, were beaten back and the road cleared to Shutargardan Pass. On this same day, when Roberts had such a narrow escape, in another brush with the Afghans, Color-Sergeant Hector Macdonald, now General Hector Macdonald, better known as "Fighting Mac," won the admiration of Roberts

for his bravery and the skilful manner in which he handled a party of Highlanders under his command.

All this time the treacherous Yakub Khan was trembling for his head. He feared that the English might find him guilty of being a silent partner in the massacre of the members of the Mission ; and he had not the courage to do as his eirdars desired, promote a religious war against the *Feringhis*. He seems to have been a wretched coward ; and, now that danger was approaching in the shape of English guns which in the Kuram Valley had proved so powerful against his large armies, he determined to save himself at all cost. Roberts had been in communication with him for some time, but when the English general arrived at Shutargardan Pass he found the Amir already at Kushi, where he had come with his eldest son and some of his sirdars, begging the English to protect him from his mutinous soldiers.

From the beginning Roberts had not trusted the man, and his description of him shows how carefully he studied him and how thoroughly he detested him.

\*"He was," he says, "an insignificant-looking man, about thirty-two years of age, with a receding forehead, a conical-shaped head, and no chin to speak of, and he gave me the idea of being entirely wanting in that force of character without which no one could hope to govern or hold in check the warlike and turbulent people of Afghanistan. He was possessed, moreover, of a very shifty eye, he could not look me straight in the face, and from the first I felt that his appearance tallied exactly with the double-dealing that had been imputed to him."

The Amir made an effort to get Roberts to delay his advance on Kabul ; but this only made the general the more determined to move forward without the delay of a single day. He saw, moreover, that the Amir was not pleased at his decision, and suspecting him of treachery decided to "keep him now that he had got him," and for this purpose placed a strong guard to keep an eye upon his movements. In the course of their first conversation the Amir had expressed a fear for the non-combatants in

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\*Roberts: *Forty-One Years in India*.

Kahul, and General Roberts in response issued the following proclamation to the people of Kabul:

"Be it known to all that the British army is advancing on Kabul to take possession of the city. If it be allowed to do so peacefully, well and good; if not, the city will be seized by force. Therefore, all well-disposed persons who have taken no part in the dastardly murder of the British Envoy, or in the plunder of the Residency, are warned that, if they are unable to prevent resistance being offered to the entrance of the British army, and the authority of His Highness the Amir, they should make immediate arrangements for their own safety, either by coming to the British camp, or by such other measures as may seem fit to them. And as the British government does not make war on women and children, warning is given that all women and children should be removed from the city beyond the reach of harm. The British government desires to treat all classes with justice, and to respect their religion, feelings, and customs, while exacting full retribution from offenders. Every effort will, therefore, be made to prevent the innocent suffering with the guilty, but it is necessary that the utmost precaution should be taken against useless opposition.

"After receipt of this proclamation, therefore, all persons found armed in or about Kahul will be treated as enemies of the British government; and further, it must be distinctly understood that, if the entry of the British force is resisted, I cannot hold myself responsible for any accidental injury which may be done to the persons or property of even well-disposed people, who may have neglected this warning."

On the 2nd of October Roberts with his small army marched from Kushi. To do this he was forced to cut loose from his base and to boldly beard a nation of fighting men in a strong position, well armed, and inspired by an undying hatred of the English. For three days the army moved forward meeting with just enough opposition to show that the hillmen of the district about Kabul were by no means friendly. On October 5 the village of Charasia about ten miles distant from the Amir's city was reached, and here the army halted to rest for a few hours and to prepare for a stern struggle. The enemy were known to be getting ready to give them a warm

reception, and it was necessary to make preparations to fight their way through a fierce and determined host that was gathering to stop their advance.

Meanwhile Yakub Khan was still in the British camp, but he was no longer the cringing suppliant; he expected that on the morrow the army under Roberts would be annihilated, and began to show a boldness of manner that greatly irritated the English general. He had been in communication with his troops in Kahul, and had no doubt kept them informed as to the numbers in the force, and the difficulties they had in advancing on the city with their limited transport arrangements.

The position in front of Kahul was a strong one, and as Roberts viewed it he must have trembled for his small army, on account of the inadequate transport, now reduced to about 4,000 men with eighteen guns. He felt, however, that it would not do to delay. In spite of his reduced numbers the advance on Kabul must be continued, and, for this purpose, on the morrow he was to take one of the greatest chances of his life, and to fight what was in many ways the most notable battle of his entire career as a general. He was anxious first of all to win the Sung-i-Nawishta Pass, and as a tentative effort toward this, sent forward a small force with two mountain guns. But it was soon discovered that the hills on either side of the pass were black with men; that Nek Mahomed, the Afghan commander, had placed his men to good advantage; and that every point commanding the valley and pass was well guarded with powerful guns. To force the position by a frontal attack would have been foolhardy, but the Afghans must be led to believe that such was the general's intention, and so he sent forward Major White to threaten the Afghan front. He had planned another great turning movement such as had won the day at Peiwar Kotal, and this flanking movement he entrusted to General Baker. Archibald Forbes, the greatest of modern war correspondents, has given the following vivid description of this brilliantly fought battle:

\*" Baker moved out towards his left front against the eminences held by the Afghan right wing, which Nek Mahomed, having discerned the character

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\* Forbes: *The Afghan Wars*.



of Roberts' tactics, was now reinforcing with great activity. The 72nd Highlanders led the attack, supported vigorously by the 5th Gurkhas and the 5th Punjab Infantry. The resistance of the Afghans was stubborn, especially opposite our extreme left, whence from behind their sunghas on a steep hill they poured a heavy fire on the assailants. A yet heavier fire came from a detached knoll on Baker's right, which the artillery fire gradually beat down. The Afghans continued to hold the advanced ridge constituting their first position until two o'clock, when a direct attack, accompanied by a double flanking fire, compelled their withdrawal. They, however, fell back only to an intermediate loftier position about 700 yards in rear of the ridge from which they had been driven. Approached by successive rushes under cover of artillery fire, they were then attacked vigorously and fell back in confusion. No rally was permitted them, and by three o'clock the whole Afghan right was shattered and in full flight along the edge of the Chardeh Valley. Baker unfortunately had no cavalry, else the fugitives would have suffered severely. But the route of the Afghan right had decided the fortune of the day. Its defenders were already dribbling away from the main position when Baker, wheeling to his right, marched along the lofty crest, rolling up and sweeping away the Afghan defense as he moved toward the Sung-i-Nawishta gorge. That defile had already been entered by the cavalry of White's detachment, supported by some infantry. While Baker had been turning the Afghan right, White and his little force had been distinguishing themselves not a little. After an artillery preparation the detached hill had been won as the result of a hand to hand struggle. Later had fallen into the hands of White's people all the Afghan guns, and the heights to the immediate right and left of the gorge had been carried, the defenders driven away and the pass opened up. But the progress through it of the cavalry was arrested by a strongly garrisoned fort completely commanding the road. On this fort Baker directed his artillery fire, at the same time sending down two infantry regiments to clear away the remnants of the Afghan army still lingering in the pass. This accomplished, the fighting ceased. It had been a satisfactory day. Less than half of Roberts' force had been engaged, and this mere brigade



LORD ROBERTS AND HIS INDIAN ORDERLY



**THE ARRIVAL OF THE NEW SOUTH WALES LANCERS AT CAPE TOWN**  
The first colonists from over seas in the field.

had routed the army of Kabul and captured the whole of the artillery it had brought into the field. The Afghan loss was estimated at about 300 killed. The British loss was twenty killed and sixty-seven wounded. On the night of the combat part of Baker's troops bivouacked beyond the Sung-l-Nawishta, and on the following day the whole division passed the defile and camped at Beni Hissar, within sight of the Bala Hissar and the lofty ridge overhanging "Kabul."

In this battle the Afghans had in all thirteen regiments of regular troops and from 8,000 to 9,000 irregulars, and yet a small army of 4,000 men, after a long and trying march, had scattered them to the wind. The fight removed the stain of cowardice which had rested on the British troops in Afghanistan since the days of Elphinstone, and created a respect for English military genius which still lives in Kabul. Roberts by his daring and good generalship had saved England's name among the hill tribes.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### IN POSSESSION OF KABUL.

*Kabul Conquered—The Entire Afghan Army Evacuates Kabul—Roberts Visits the Ruins of the Residency—The Formal Entry to Kabul—Roberts Reads Proclamation to the Assembled Chiefs at Kabul—Major-General James Hills, V.C., Appointed Governor of Kabul—The Bala Hissar Partially Destroyed by Terrific Explosions—The Troops Quartered in the Sberpur Cantonment—The Murderers of the Mission Punished—General Baker's Good Work About Kabul—Forbes' Description of the Sberpur Cantonment—Preparations Made for the Afghan Winter—The Aged Mulla of Ghazni, Mushk-i-Alam, Rousing the Tribesmen Against the English.*

**T**HE fight so gallantly fought by Baker and White under the direction of Sir Frederick Roberts had brought the British troops within sight of Kabul. It may be asked why was it that Roberts had been so signally successful against the vast hordes of Afghans with so small an army when former British generals had failed with stronger forces. The word "dash" explains it. He had caught the enemy off their guard. They had expected that this invading force would move with the usual British slowness; but the leader of the Kabul Field Force knew the foe he had to deal with. They were not ready for him. They hoped, too, no doubt that the Amir might be able to check the advance, and before they had time to concentrate or fully mature their plans of resistance he was upon them. It was this dash that enabled him to beat the numerically vastly superior forces at Peiwar Kotal; it was the same quality that afterwards enabled him to rush with incredible speed on Kandahar, and in the declining years of his military life to round up Cronje in the bed of the Modder at Paardeberg. It is this quality that is the finest of all traits in a great general, and no man that ever led British troops had it to a greater degree than Roberts. It brought him within sight of Kabul with scarcely any loss, and from his camp at Beni Hissar he was able to look down on the city and on the Bala Hissar feeling satisfied with his own work and the work of the men under him.

There lay Kabul before him with its 50,000 inhabitants and in a day or two he would make his ceremonial entrance into it. In the meantime everything about the place bore an aspect of peace. The Afghans were in a great state of alarm; many of them had fled, while others came out to the British camp to show their friendliness to the invaders and to trade with the soldiers.

There was much work to be done. The troops of the Amir and the citizens had to be disarmed; the safety of Yakub Khan had to be seen to; and a thorough investigation had to be made into the dastardly conduct of the murderers of the members of the Mission. This last duty was the most serious one Roberts had to perform. He had been told by the government that in regard to the punishment of individuals, it should be "swift, stern and impressive, without being indiscriminate or immoderate; its infliction must not be delegated to subordinate officers of minor responsibility acting independently of your instructions or supervision, and you cannot too vigorously maintain the discipline of the troops under your order, or superintend their treatment of the unarmed population, so long as your orders are obeyed and your authority is unresisted. You will deal summarily in the majority of cases with persons whose share in the murder of anyone belonging to the British Embassy shall have been proved by your investigations, but while the execution of justice should be as public and striking as possible, it should be completed with all possible expedition, since the indefinite prolongation of your proceedings might spread abroad unfounded alarm."

While the British troops were going into camp at Beni Hissar a loud explosion was heard from the direction of the Sherpur cantonment. It was evident from this that the entire city was being evacuated by the Afghan army, and that no resistance would be offered to Roberts' progress into Kabul.

Before leading his army within the walls of the city Roberts made several personal visits to Kabul, and on one of these occasions inspected the ruins of the Residency in the Bala Hissar. The marks of the struggle that had taken place six weeks previous were still discernable. The floors were

blood-stained, the wall scarred with many bullets, and blackened skulls were to be seen among the ruins. As Roberts gazed on the scene, and thought of the parting with his friend Cavagnari, of the gallant conduct of Lieutenant Hamilton and the men in his command, any pity he may have had for the fanatical murderers died in his heart. It was, as he says, "difficult to suppress feelings of hatred and animosity towards the perpetrators of such a dastardly crime." For this deed he would punish the Afghans as the mutineers had been punished for their unparalleled massacre of the women and children of Cawnpore. The authority was his, and he would teach the subjects of the Amir that England's arm was strong to avenge a cruel and cowardly deed perpetrated against her citizens.

So far Roberts seems never to have had the slightest difficulty in knowing how to act, except in regard to one thing. The wretched Amir, whom he could not trust, was still in his camp, professedly being protected by the invading army from his own rebel subjects. His presence was distasteful to the general, and yet he was afraid to let him leave the camp. Had he done so it was not improbable that the Amir would join with the mullas to stir up a religious war. In fact it had been reported to Roberts that such was his intention. However, the Amir solved the problem. He came to Roberts and offered to abdicate and begged the protection of the British force; and so it was decided to keep him in the camp until such time as he could be sent to India out of harm's way or the way of doing harm.

On October 11 Roberts marched to the Bala Hissar with his staff, the heir-apparent, the minister, and the chief sirdars of Kabul. A durbar was held, the British flag was run up over the ancient citadel, "God save the Queen" was played by the band, and a salute of thirty-one guns was fired. When Roberts reached the Hall of Audience he mounted the steps and read the following proclamation to the assembled chiefs of Kabul:

"In my proclamation dated the 3rd of October, I informed the people of Kabul that a British army was advancing to take possession of the city, and I warned them against offering any resistance to the entry of the troops and the authority of His Highness the Amir. That warning has been disregarded. The force under my command has now reached Kabul and

occupied the Bala Hissar, but its advance has been pertinaciously opposed, and the inhabitants of the city have taken a conspicuous part in the opposition offered. They have therefore become rebels against His Highness the Amir, and have added to the guilt already incurred by them in abetting the murder of the British Envoy and his companions—a treacherous and cowardly crime which has brought indelible disgrace upon the Afghan people. It would be but a just and fitting reward for such misdeeds if the city of Kabul were now totally destroyed and its very name blotted out; but the great British government ever desires to temper justice with mercy, and I now announce to the inhabitants of Kabul that the full retribution for their offences will not be exacted, and that the city will be spared.

“Nevertheless, it is necessary that they should not escape all penalty, and, further, that the punishment inflicted should be such as will be felt and remembered. Therefore, such portions of the city buildings as now interfere with the proper military occupation of the Bala Hissar, and the safety and comfort of the British troops to be quartered in it, will be at once leveled with the ground; and, further, a heavy fine, the amount of which will be notified hereafter, will be imposed upon the inhabitants of Kabul, to be paid according to their several capacities. I further give notice to all, that, in order to provide for the restoration and maintenance of order, the city of Kabul and the surrounding country, to a distance of ten miles, are placed under martial law. With the consent of His Highness the Amir, a military governor of Kabul will be appointed, to administer justice and punish with a strong hand all evil-doers. The inhabitants of Kabul and of the neighboring villages are hereby warned to submit to his authority.

“This punishment, inflicted upon the whole city, will not, of course, absolve from further penalties those whose individual guilt may be hereafter proved. A full and searching enquiry into the circumstances of the late outbreak will be held, and all persons convicted of having taken part in it will be dealt with according to their deserts.

“With the view of providing effectually for the prevention of crime and disorder, and the safety of all well-disposed persons in Kabul, it is hereby notified that for the future the carrying of dangerous weapons, whether



swords, knives, or firearms, within the streets of the city or within a distance of five miles from the city gates, is forbidden. After a week from the date of this proclamation, any person found armed within those limits will be liable to the penalty of death. Persons having in their possession any articles whatsoever which formerly belonged to members of the British Embassy are required to bring them forthwith to the British camp. Anyone neglecting this warning will, if found hereafter in possession of such articles, be subject to the severest penalties.

"Further, all persons who may have in their possession any firearms or ammunition formerly issued to or seized by the Afghan troops, are required to produce them. For every country-made rifle, whether breech or muzzle loading, the sum of Rs. 3 will be given on delivery, and for every rifle of European manufacture Rs. 5. Anyone found hereafter in possession of such weapons will be severely punished. Finally, I notify that I will give a reward of Rs. 50 for the surrender of any person, whether soldier or civilian, concerned in the attack on the British Embassy, or for such information as may lead directly to his capture. A similar sum will be given in the case of any person who may have fought against the British troops since the 3rd September (Shawal) last, and therefore become a rebel against His Highness the Amir. If any such persons so surrendered or captured be a captain or subaltern officer of the Afghan army, the reward will be increased to Rs. 75, and if a field officer to Rs. 120."

The proclamation was under the circumstances an exceedingly mild one, even more so than it seemed on the surface, for the "heavy fine" was never exacted. After the reading of the proclamation Roberts dismissed the chiefs, with the exception of the Mustaphi, Yahuja Khan, the Amir's father-in-law, and Zakariah Khan, the Amir's brother. These three men were made prisoners much to their consternation.

On the following day Roberts with his troops made his ceremonial entrance into Kabul; and the music of English bands, the ekirr of the inspiring bagpipes of the Highlanders sounded through the narrow streets of the conquered city. The Afghans stood silently by as the triumphant troops marched past, scowling it is true, but no voice was raised in insult, no hand

made threat. The little army, a mere handful of men, had thoroughly cowed them.

Roberts had still much work before him. Kabul had been conquered; it had now to be governed. After his formal entry he appointed his old and tried friend of the days of the "Ridge," "Jemmy Hills," now Major-General James Hills, V. C. to be Governor of Kabul, and instituted two courts, the one political and the other military; and the city was ruled as if Roberts had been accustomed to governing conquered nations all the days of his life. That the government had placed such unlimited power in his hands, trusted him so absolutely, is the best evidence of the genius of the man. This was but his second command, and he was not yet fifty; and yet the most important duty in the English military world was placed in his hands.

After taking possession of the city Roberts looked about him to see what would be the best course to pursue for wintering his troops, for he even then realized that he would have to spend the winter in Kabul. There were really but two places to consider as suitable for a military camp, the Bala Hissar and the Sherpur cantonment. The Gurkhas were already quartered in the upper Bala Hissar and the 67th in the Amir's garden in the same citadel. Roberts hesitated about concentrating his troops in this position, as he felt that it was not particularly strong. While he hesitated between the two forts the difficulty was solved for him in a most unhappy manner.

In the Bala Hissar were millions of cartridges and 150,000 pounds of gunpowder. On the morning of the 16th a terrific explosion was heard, a mighty cloud of grey smoke rose above the citadel and explosion after explosion followed in rapid succession. Roberts at once ordered the Gurkhas and the 67th to evacuate the position, ordering them not even to attempt to bring off their tents—and they were not slow to obey the order. They had already suffered heavily; Captain Shafto, a private of the 67th, and nineteen natives were killed. It was well that the Bala Hissar was promptly vacated, for two and a half hours later another explosion shook Kabul and scattered debris in all directions. So violent was this second explosion that four Afghans, a quarter of a mile from the fort, were killed by falling stones.

This practically settled the question of the quartering of the troops, and it was decided to occupy the Sherpur cantonment.

Meanwhile news of Roberts' excellent work had reached India and congratulations from the Queen and from the Viceroy of India were extended to him. The commander-in-chief saw that he had made no mistake in appointing him to so important a command, and now recommended that he be made a lieutenant-general and placed at the head of all the troops in Eastern Afghanistan. This gave him command of an army of 20,000 men with forty-six guns, a large force for so young a general.

When the Kabul Field Force began its northward march Roberts had been given instructions that the punishment of the murderers of Cavagnari should be swift, stern, and impressive. As soon as he was firmly settled in Kabul the work of investigating the crime that had brought him to Afghanistan began, and a number of those guilty of taking part in the attack on the Residency were hanged—among them no less a person than the Kotwal or Mayor of Kabul. Executions continued for some days about the city, and, as many of the villages near the place were said to be harboring Afghan sepoys who had assisted in the destruction of the Mission, Roberts sent General Baker out to bring as many of these rebels and murderers as possible into Kabul. A number of prisoners were captured; forty-nine of them were found guilty and promptly hanged. Some of these were executed on account of treason against the Amir, and Roberts grew weary of seeing men hanged for treason against such a treacherous creature as Yakub Khan, and on November 12 proclaimed an amnesty in favor of all who fought against the British troops, excepting those who had taken part in the murder of the Embassy.

The wretched Amir was held a close prisoner in Roberts' camp until December 1, when much to the relief of everybody, he was hurried to India.

After deciding to occupy Sherpur Roberts, despite the fact that the inhabitants of Kabul were quiet and the tribes were giving but little trouble, had no easy task before him. It was evident that he would have to winter in Kabul, and for this purpose large supplies of grain and forage were necessary. General Baker was sent out to collect supplies, and found in



**A PLICKY AUSTRALIAN: RIDING FOR A FALL**  
A white fence led the advance of the Australians and one of their number rode full speed against it, making a clear path for his comrades.



ONE OF THE NEW SOUTH WALES MOUNTED RIFLES

most cases that the people were willing enough to sell their produce, but his needs demanded that he should requisition the stock they had laid by for their own use as well. In one instance a chief, Bahadur Khan, refused to sell any grain to the English, and a strong force proceeded from the camp to punish him. The Afghans fled at the approach of the English for whom they had now a wholesome dread. It was necessary, however, to punish this chief, and so his villages were burnt to the ground. In several other instances Baker met with opposition, but succeeded in chastising all who raised hand or voice against their new rulers. He succeeded, too, in the end in bringing in a goodly supply of grain, and Roberts felt hopeful of being able to hold out during the long and severe winter months.

His position in the Sherpur cantonment was a strong one, and much healthier for the troops than the crowded quarters of the Bala Hissar would have been.

Archibald Forbes in his "The Afghan Wars" writes as follows with regard to the position where the Kabul Field Force was now located :

"The Sherpur cantonment as found by Roberts consisted of a fortified enciente, enclosing on two sides a great open space in the shape of parallelogram lying along the southern base of the Behmaroo heights. When the British troops took possession, only the west and south faces of the enciente were completed; although not long built these were already in bad repair, and the explosion of the great magazine when the Afghan troops abandoned the cantonment had wrecked a section of the western face. The eastern face had been little more than traced, and the northern side had no artificial protection, but was closed in by the Behmaroo heights, whose centre was cleft by a broad and deep gorge. The design of the enciente was peculiar. There was a thick and high exterior wall of mud with a banquette for infantry protected by a parapet. Inside this wall was a dry ditch forty feet wide, on the inner brink of which was a long range of barrack-rooms. Along the interior of the front of the barrack-rooms was a verandah faced with arches supported by pillars, its continuity broken occasionally by broad stair-cases conducting to the roof of the barracks, which afforded a second line of defense. The closing in of the verandah would of course give additional

barrack accommodation, but there were quarters in the barrack-rooms for at least all the European troops. In the southern face of the enclosure were three gateways, and in the centre of the western side there was a fourth, each gate covered adequately by a curtain. Between each gate were semi-circular bastions for guns. In the interior there was space to manoeuvre a division of all arms. There was a copious supply of water, and if the aspect of the great cantonment was grim because of the absence of trees and the utter barrenness of the enclosed space, this aesthetic consideration went for little against its manifest advantages as snug and defensible winter-quarters."

To make this cantonment a safe fortress the weak points were strengthened, supplies were stored, and abundant firewood brought from the Bala Hissar, much to the chagrin of the Afghans, who saw their ancient citadel dismantled and laid waste by the enemies they had on former occasions so soundly beaten. Hatred grew in their hearts, and although Roberts had not the means of getting reliable information he felt that when the Afghans realized the small size of his army, when they knew how difficult it was for him to keep his line of communications open with India, they would press round his camp in countless numbers, and he would have no easy task to defend his position till winter would have vanished and the pass leading from India would admit of the pushing forward of reinforcements.

The Afghans had hoped that after a little hanging and some destruction of their principal buildings, as in the days of the punitive expedition of General Pollock, Roberts would return to India and leave them to themselves. To their dismay, however, they saw him calmly settling down in their territory and ruling over them with a high hand. It was not to be endured. All they needed was a head, a force that would rouse them to a religious war against the detested *Feringhis*, and this they were to find in the aged Mushk-i-Alam, the fanatic Chief Mulla of Ghazni. Up and down the land this enthusiastic old patriot went, and wherever he could find an audience his fiery words roused the hearts of the tribesmen and the disbanded soldiers of the Amir's army; and Roberts soon became aware that a large force was gathering among the hills with the intention of crushing his little army or driving him back through the difficult passes to India.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE STRUGGLE AT SHERPUR.

▲ **Storm Cloud Gathering**—At the Beginning of December Roberts Recognized that a Strong Force was Gathering in Afghan—An Able Leader in Mahomed Jan—From North, South and West, Hillmen Swarming Towards Kabul—A Strong Force Sent from Sherpur to Crush the Enemy in Detail—Mir Butcha, Leader of the Northern Army, Defeated—Massy's Blunder Fatal to Roberts' Plan—The English in Grave Danger—A Skillful Retreat—A Heroic Charge—Roberts Narrowly Escapes Death—The Troops Safe in Sherpur—Fierce Fighting Around Kabul—The Entire Army Within and About Kabul Withdrawn to Sherpur—Preparations Made to Stand a Long Siege—Sharp Fighting—A Determined Assault—Steadiness and Good Generalship Beat Back Mahomed Jan's Army of 100,000 Men—Once More in Possession of Kabul—A Conciliating Proclamation—On May 5 Roberts Reluctantly Surrenders Command to His Senior Officer, Sir Donald Stewart.

**O**CTOBER and November were comparatively quiet months; the storm cloud was gathering, but it was still on the far horizon, and it was not until December that the situation became decidedly critical. The mullas had succeeded in uniting the tribes, and information reached Roberts of the large forces that were gathering in various parts of Afghanistan to march against his little army at Kabul. Whatever he or his officers may have feared, they showed no signs of alarm. They busily strengthened the Sherpur cantonment, relieving their duties with a little amusement. On December 6 the general gave a large picnic, which wound up with a paper chase—an exciting affair, as the hare led the hounds over such rough ground that half the field were unhorsed, either through their mounts stumbling in the ditches, or by being swept from their saddles by the branches of the willows and poplars. Roberts himself, good horsemen though he was, went down with the rest.

On the following day the general sent a despatch to the authorities that shewed he was dwelling in no state of false security: "Affairs around Kabul less satisfactory of late. In Maidan Sirdar Mahomed Hussain Khan has



been murdered, apparently by men of the Mushk-i-Alam's rising. Sirdar Abdullah Khan has been attacked by armed bands in Logar, and for a time besieged in a fort. Some Kohietani Maliks have come in, but the leading man sends excuses, and the country is reported very unquiet. . . . Anxious as I am to avoid further expeditions at present, I may be forced, if this spreads, to send out troops again."

The day after sending this despatch he held a review of all the troops, ostensibly to present the 72nd Highlanders with distinguished-conduct medals, but really to impress upon the inhabitants of Kabul, who were growing excited as the rumours of the rising reached them, with the strength of the fine, though small, army of picked men in their midst.

As the days passed the situation grew more serious. Muehk-i-Alam was doing his work well. He had in his hands the boy heir of Yakub Khan, Musa Khan, and this gave a national importance to his mission; he was not merely preaching a religious war, but was endeavoring to recover Kabul from the hands of the usurpers and to restore it to the rightful rulers. He had stirred up the female relatives of the Amir, and these joined him in his work, appealing to the sympathies of the chiefs and their soldiers, and by bribing them freely. But what was of more importance, a leader of considerable power had come to the front. Mahomed Jan was a man who could not only lead troops with courage and dash, but could organize the vast crowds that were rapidly gathering about his standard. The combination that was rising against the English must have filled their commander with a good deal of misgiving. He had every confidence that one Englishman was as good as ten Afghans, but the force which was rising at the fiery words of Mushk-i-Alam, and rushing to the standard of Mahomed Jan was increasing so rapidly that it looked as if he might yet be crushed by the mere mass of the gathering tribes.

From the country south of Kabul, from Logar, Zurmat, and the Mangal and Jadram districts they came; in the Kohistan and Kohdaman region in the north they assembled; and from the Maidan and Warduk territories they rushed to arms. To Kabul! was the cry. They would first seize the city, and then they would swarm round the fortifications of Sherpur and

annihilate the army of Roberts & they had annihilated the Embassy.

During the gathering of the tribes Roberts had received information from friendly Afghans, but it was so inadequate or false that he was practically in ignorance with regard to the strength of the combination that was forming against him. That it was powerful and widespread he knew, and in order to lessen its effectiveness he decided to take the different divisions of the enemy's forces in detail. The gravest danger appeared to be from the western force, which was some 5,000 strong, so he had heard, and led by Mahomed Jan in person. If this section could be smashed the southern and northern forces would cause him but little further uneasiness.

On the 8th of the month he dispatched General Macpherson towards the west with a column consisting of four guns Royal Horse Artillery, four guns Mountain Battery, one squadron 9th Lancers, two squadrons 14th Bengal Lancers, 401 rifles 67th Foot, 509 rifles 3rd Sikhs, 393 Rifles 5th Gurkhas. This force was to march westward until Arghandeh was reached. It was expected that at this place they would come in contact with the enemy, whom they were to attack vigorously, and if possible crush them or at least drive them back to Maidan. Next morning General Baker marched southward with a smaller column consisting of four guns Mountain Battery three troops 5th Punjab Cavalry, twenty-five sappers and miners, 450 rifles 92nd Highlanders, 450 rifles 5th Punjab Infantry. This little column was to take the offensive against the tribes collecting in the Logar valley, and after chastising them was to turn sharply in the direction of the Maidan valley, and wait for the retreat of Mahomed Jan's force, after it had been put to flight by Macpherson's column. It was hoped that this movement would get the Afghan leader into a trap, and that he might receive such a cutting up as to crush the rising before the different sections could be brought together in front of Kabul. To give Baker time to do the work assigned him in the south, General Macpherson halted for a day at the village of Kila Aushar at the north-western extremity of the Asmai heights. While at this place reconnoitring parties discovered that the northern section of the enemy was in force at Karz-i-Mir ten miles away. This discovery spoiled the excellently planned movement against Mahomed Jan. It was

deemed necessary to send General Macpherson after the Kohistani levies before proceeding against the western force.

On the morning of the 10th a column proceeded from Aushar leaving the artillery and cavalry behind. When the troops reached the Surkh Kotal they saw the whole region about Karez-i-Mir crowded with armed men. The Afghans were commanded by Mir Butcha, and though numerically much stronger than Macpherson's force they were utterly without discipline or organization. A few shells from the mountain guns frightened them; then the force divided into three columns, and a dashing charge sent the men of Mir Butcha flying in all directions. The Kohistanis had been beaten in a sharp, swift fight, and the column was now free to continue the original plan of operations.

Macpherson was ordered to proceed west on the morning of the 11th, and Brigadier-General Massy, who had been left in command of the cavalry and horse-artillery at Aushar was to cross the Chardeh valley by the Arghandeh road, and form a junction with Macpherson.

Roberts left Sherpur in the morning believing that nothing could prevent the union of the forces, and was about to take command of them in person with the intention of giving the tribesmen from Maidan and Warduk a thorough beating. He had ordered Massy "to advance from Aushar by the road leading directly from the city of Kabul toward Arghandeh and the Ghazni road; to proceed cautiously and quietly, feeling for the enemy; to communicate with General Macpherson, and to act in conformity with that officer's movements, but on no account to commit himself to an action until General Macpherson had engaged the enemy."

Unfortunately Massy did not follow the course mapped out for him by Roberts, but took a short cut across the country. He gained time by this movement, but came upon the enemy in a strong position on the hills on either side of the Ghazni road long before it was possible for Macpherson's column to form a junction with him.

Massy had under him a body of but little over 300 men with four horse-artillery guns, and as he advanced along the Ghazni road it suddenly became

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\*Roberts: Forty-One Years in India,

apparent that not hundreds, but thousands of Afghans were prepared to dispute his advance, and each moment the mass of men in his front grew larger. A fight or a hasty retreat was the order of the day. Massy bravely decided to fight, and began the engagement by sending a few shells against the army of Mahomed Jan. But the Afghans, usually terrified by shell-fire, paid no attention to it on this occasion, and pressed ever nearer to the little army. Roberts heard the firing, and galloped to the scene of action. For a moment he was appalled by the sight that met him. It was a case of 300 against 10,000. It would be foolhardy for Massy's men to attempt to hold their ground against the Afghans who were drawing nearer every moment, saving their fire, and biding their time until they could use their knives on the English.

Roberts took in the situation in an instant. There was nothing for it but a retreat, even if the guns had to be left behind. Massy's unfortunate march, taken with the best intentions, had spoiled all his plans, and if he was not careful Kabul would soon be in the hands of Mahomed Jan and the Sherpur cantonment itself in danger. He at once ordered General Hillis \* "to gallop to Sherpur, explain to Brigadier-General Hugh Gough, who had been placed in temporary command of that place, how matters stood and order 200 of the 72nd Highlanders to come to Deh-i-Mazang with the least possible delay. I directed Hillis after having delivered this message, to make for the city, shut the gates, and do all in his power to keep the people quiet, while warning the Kizilbashies to be prepared to defend their quarter. I then despatched my nephew and A. D. C., Lieutenant John Sherston, to Macpherson to inform him of what had happened, and desire him to push on with the utmost speed."

Massy was now in a most critical position. He could no longer keep back the enemy, and Roberts ordered the retirement of the guns. In order to cover their withdrawal it was deemed necessary to have the cavalry charge the enemy. Lieutenant-Colonel Cleland and Captain Neville dashed gallantly forward at the head of their 200 troopers. Over the broken and difficult ground this brave little force swept, and into the midst of the

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\*Roberts: Forty-One Years in India.

10,000 they charged. It was "worthy of the best traditions of our British and India cavalry"—as gallant as the charge of the Light Brigade—but of necessity it failed. In the rush and the hand to hand fight eighteen men had been killed and seven wounded, and it was with difficulty that Captain Stewart Mackenzie brought the regiment out of action. One gun was already lost, and the Afghans were pressing ever nearer. Roberts ordered Smyth-Windham to retreat with the three remaining guns to the village of Bhagwana. The retirement was made in good order and fire opened on the Afghans from the village; but still they came on, and it was necessary to continue the retreat. At the further side of the village the guns had to be abandoned. Their successes greatly encouraged the enemy. The retreat of the guns reminded them of the days of Elphinstone when they had driven the *Feringhis* before them and slaughtered them like sheep. With wild yells the horde followed hard after Massy's force. They were almost at the walls of Bhagwana and it seemed as if the little army would be annihilated. To add to the British misfortunes the villagers, from the roofs of their houses, began to fire upon them.

Roberts was in the thick of this fight, and almost lost his life while endeavoring to help his men. At the further side of the village was a ditch twelve feet deep, and into this men and horses had tumbled. The general was engaged in helping to extricate some of his soldiers from their perilous situation when the headman of the village saw him. It would win him undying fame if he could strike down the general, who had, by his occupation of Kabul, brought such disgrace on Afghanistan. With uplifted knife he rushed upon him, but a Mahomedan of the 1st Bengal Cavalry, who, like most of the cavalry in this engagement, had had his horse shot under him, was near by, and leaped to the protection of his commander. He was a muscular fellow, and seizing the headman in his arms hurled him into the ditch among the struggling horses. This was another narrow escape for Roberts. He was entirely unprepared to meet the rush of the Afghan, and, but for the courage and presence of mind of the cavalryman, would doubtless have been killed.

The force was now clear of Bhagwana, and retreating in good order



**A WARRIOR'S REFRESHMENT: LORO ROBERTS AND STAFF  
AT LUNCHEON IN THE FIELD**



**TWO IRISH SOLDIERS OF TO-DAY**

Lord Roberts and Prince Patrick, H. H. R. The Duke of Connaught, Commander-in-Chief of the forces in Ireland.

towards Deb-i-Mazang. Meanwhile the pursuit began to slacken; Macpherson's advance had got in touch with the rear of Mahomed Jan's army, and, about the same time, the Highlanders whom Roberts had ordered up from Sherpur came on the scene and from the roofs of the village of Deh-i-Mazang beat back the pursuers with their breech-loaders. Massy's force was saved, and for a time at least Kabul was free from danger. The Afghans had had enough fighting for one day, and contented themselves with occupying "The Takht-i-Shah summit, the slopes of the Sher Drewza heights, and the villages in the south-eastern section of the Chardeh valley."

Roberts had now a difficult situation to face. His plan had completely failed; the enemy were upon him, flushed with success; thousands of villagers who had been maintaining a neutral attitude were throwing in their lot with the followers of Mahomed Jan, and the forces of the Afghans were surrounding his little army of less than 7,000 men all told, while from the Takht-i-Shah they were able to threaten the Bala Hissar. He trembled for Macpherson's force, and ordered him to fall back on Deh-i-Mazang, and in his anxiety waited until he was with the soldiers already in that village. Roberts then galloped back through the darkness to Sherpur where he found that Hugh Gough, despite the alarming reports which had been brought into the cantonment from time to time during the day, had everything in readiness to resist an attack and his troops calm and expectant.

There was but one happy incident for the British in this day of misfortunes. The guns that were abandoned in the water-courses were rescued later in the day by Colonel Macgregor and brought into Sherpur.

It had been a day of fierce fighting, and yet so skilfully had the troops been handled that the loss was light—according to Roberts twenty-nine were killed and thirty-five wounded. The force had lost heavily in horses, however, and about sixty of Massy's cavalry had to go into camp without mounts.

On the 12th the fighting continued. While the enemy held the Takht-i-Shah the position of the troops was a critical one. From this mountain peak they must be driven at all hazards. This would be no easy task.



According to Archibald Forbes \* "The steep faces of the mountain were strewn with great smooth boulders and masses of rocks; the ascent, everywhere laborious, was complicated in places by sheer scarps, and those formidable impediments were made still more difficult by frequent cunghs, strong stone curtains behind which the defenders lay safe or fired with a minimum of exposure. On the summit was a great natural cavity which had been made bomb proof by art, and further cover was afforded by caves and lines of rocks."

Roberts sent Macpherson against the position, and after a hard fight a hill in front of the Takht-i-Shah, on which the enemy had taken up ground, was won, but the fire of the Afghans from the steep and difficult mountain showed how impossible it would be to assault the main force, and so the attack had to be deferred.

Next morning General Baker saw that the enemy on the height was being rapidly reinforced from the villages of the plains. He was sent against them and by a skilful and daring movement succeeded in cutting the Afghan force in two, and driving large masses of the tribesmen down the slopes and back to their villages. Some two thousand of the enemy were thus cut off by the gallant conduct of the Highlanders and Guides led by such men as Major White and Lieutenant Dick-Cunyngham. Success encouraged them, and they swept along to the right with the determination of driving the Afghans from the Takht-i-Shah. The enemy saw their forces being scattered and crushed; the Highlanders and Guides were coming at them from the rear, while Macpherson's troops were assailing them in front. They saw themselves between these two fires, and in terror left their strong position on the Takht-i-Shah and fled to the valley. Macpherson's and Baker's men raced for the summit, and gallant color-sergeant Yule of the 72nd, one of Macpherson's men who was to fall in battle on the following day, was the first to win the peak where the Afghan standards still flew.

While this fight was in progress Roberts was anxiously watching it from Sherpur, and was greatly elated when he saw the Highlanders and Jenkin's Guides on the mountain top. His original plan to break the combination

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\*Forbes: *The Afghan Wars.*

that was forming against him had failed, but the courage of his soldiers was likely, in the end to put to flight the hordes that were steadily converging on Kabul. So he thought; but as he thus mused with himself news came to him that in the villages around Kabul many of the Afghans were casting in their lot with the tribesmen, and that the inhabitants of the city itself were flocking out to join their kindred on the hill slopes.

All this day sharp fighting went on, and several important positions were won by the British, but it was found necessary to order Macpherson to evacuate Deh-i-Mazang, and to retreat to the Bala Hissar heights. Fourteen gallant fellows were killed during the course of the struggle and forty-five wounded. The success that the tribesmen had had in concentrating their forces about Kabul, and the fact that they had won several minor victories, greatly encouraged those who were remaining neutral only through fear of what the English might do if they succeeded in dispersing their enemies. As a consequence the country far and near was in a state of great excitement, and swarms of men marched over the hill slopes and through the deep valleys to form about the standard of Mahomed Jan.

On the 14th of the month another effort was made to stem the rising tide which threatened to overwhelm the troops in Sherpur. General Baker, who throughout all these days of fierce fighting had been doing gallant service, was again in the thick of the struggle, and with an inferior force managed to win several important positions from the enemy. It looked as if all the heights about Kabul might soon be in the possession of the British, but unfortunately the small forces they were able to spare to garrison the places won were not able to defend them against the swarms that grew ever denser and denser. In one instance Lieutenant-Colonel Clark left in charge of a conical hill seized by Baker was forced to retire somewhat in confusion and with the loss of two guns. This misfortune, for which he was in no way to blame, literally broke Clark's heart and he died shortly afterwards.

Roberts was now convinced that all positions outside of the cantonments would have to be abandoned, and when he received word from a sporty young Lieutenant in charge of the signal station on the hills that "the crowds of Afghans in the Chardah valley remind me of Epsom on the Derby

Day," he concluded that it was a useless waste of men to continue throwing them against the surrounding hills.

"Up to this time," Roberts wrote, "I had no reason to apprehend that the Afghans were in sufficient force to cope with disciplined troops, but the resolute and determined manner in which the conical hill had been recaptured, and the information sent to me by Brigadier-General Macpherson that large masses of the enemy were still advancing from the north, south, and west, made it evident that the numbers combined against us were too overwhelming to admit of my comparatively small force meeting them. I therefore determined to withdraw from all isolated positions, and to concentrate the whole force at Sherpur, thus securing the safety of our large cantonment, and avoiding what had now become a useless sacrifice of life."

All troops on the hills were ordered to retire to Sherpur at once, and with splendid steadiness the soldiers slowly withdrew into the cantonment, harrassed by the exultant Afghans. When night fell all the troops from the city, from the Bala Hissar, from the Asmai Heights were within the defenses, and the positions they had won with such daring were in the hands of the enemy.

This day had been the most serious one since the fighting began on the 11th. According to Roberts nineteen men were killed and eighty-eight wounded.

As soon as the last of the troops were within the defenses of Sherpur, Roberts at once telegraphed to the viceroy and the commander-in-chief requesting that reinforcements should be sent forward without delay, and informing them that he felt in no immediate danger and that he had food for four months, forage for six weeks, plenty of ammunition, and a good stock of medicine and hospital comforts.

While the Afghans were busy looting in the city of Kabul the little garrison of about 5,000 fighting men went industriously to work to strengthen the defenses. The army had been kept busy since entering the Sherpur cantonment in making punitive expeditions, and in collecting fuel and food; as a result there was now much to be done to make their position a safe one. Fortunately the enemy gave them a respite for a few days, and during this

time almost the entire force was engaged in making the walls strong enough to resist any army the Afghans might send against them.

The old Mulla Mushk-i-Alam was now in charge of Kabul. He was ninety years old, but despite his years was still the inspiring force among the fanatics who were swarming to the standard of Mahomed Jan. Until the 22nd sharp fighting went on, and the Afghans suffered considerable loss, but no determined attempt was made to rush the Sherpur position. During this period Mahomed Jan offered to allow the British army to march unmolested back to India. At the same time he added: "We have a lakh of men; they are like wolves eager to rush on their prey! We cannot much longer control them!" How long would he have been able to control them had they once got the British outside of the cantonment? Had Roberts accepted this proposal the fate that befell Elphinstone's army would have befallen the Kabul Field Force. Roberts smiled at the proposal, and hoped that an assault would be made. His wish was soon to be granted.

He received word on the 22nd that Mahomed Jan had decided to assault the cantonment on the following day, which was the last day of the Moharram—the great Mahomedan religious festival. Scaling ladders were ready, a false attack was to be made, and the Mushk-i-Alam, who had reared his countrymen to a tremendous pitch of religious enthusiasm, was to kindle the beacon fire, the signal of assault, on the highest point of the Asmai Ridge. All that night the troops within Sherpur were expectant, but everything was quiet. The songs and cries of the Afghans who were stationed near the walls alone broke the stillness. During the darkest hours of the night the soldiers were stationed at their places along the line of defenses, and all watched the hills for the signal of the Mulla. Just as the first faint streaks of dawn began to dispel the darkness, "a long tongue of flame shot up into the air, blazed brilliantly for a few moments, and then waned." On the instant a rattle of musketry was heard, and a thin shower of bullets flew against the eastern and southern faces and over the heads of the defenders. But little heed was paid to this. It was the false attack; and every man braced himself for the great assault that Mahomed Jan had planned.

They had not long to wait. "From behind Behmaroo on the eastern trenches and walls," writes Mr. Hensman, "came a roar of voices so loud and menacing that it seemed as if an army of 50,000 strong was charging down on our thin line of men. Led by their *ghazis*, the main body of Afghans hidden in the villages and orchards on the east side of Sherpur had rushed out in one dense mob, and were filling the air with their shouts of 'Allah-il-Allah.' The roar surged forward as their line advanced, but it was answered by such a roll of musketry that it was drowned for the moment, and then merged into a general din which told us that our men with martins and sniders were holding their own against the attacking force."

Until ten o'clock attack after attack was made on Sherpur, but the resolute soldiers, inspired by their undaunted commander, waited calmly the order to fire; and each time the enemy came to close quarters—and several times they reached the abattis—they were mowed down by the steady and well-directed fire, and forced to fall back leaving the field thickly strewn with dead. An hour later, however, a still more determined attack was attempted, and, as it seemed impossible to beat back the seemingly endless army that was pressing forward on his position, the English commander determined to smite the Afghan on the flank. Four field guns were sent out, and at once opened a telling fire on the enemy from an unexpected quarter. The ruse succeeded. Panic spread among the followers of Mahomed Jan, and when darkness fell the army of 100,000 men that had flocked to his standard at the cry of the *Mushk-i-Alem* had vanished. Kabul and the surrounding villages were free of the enemy who had been taught a lesson they would not soon forget. They had come with the largest army ever gathered together in Afghanistan to annihilate the small force which had dared to settle down in their midst, and they had made but little impression upon it even in the open. In the siege of the cantonment they had lost in all over 3,000 men, while in the nine days Roberts' army was on the defensive it had lost but eighteen killed and sixty-eight wounded.

Roberts has ever taken much pride in this resistance; and with good reason. Of it he says: "All night and every night, the ground covered with snow, and the thermometer marking sixteen degrees of frost, officers and

men were at their posts, and each day every available man had to be hard at work strengthening the defenses. Native and European soldiers alike bore the hardships and exposure with the utmost cheerfulness, and in perfect confidence that, when the assault should take place, victory would be ours."

The day after the final assault the Bala Hissar was reoccupied, and General Hill was once more established in Kabul which had been pretty thoroughly plundered by the tribesmen.

Roberts was anxious to be on as friendly a footing as possible with the Afghans, still adhering to the policy adopted by his father so many years before, and soon after he had so triumphantly scattered the army of Mahomed Jan, he issued the following proclamation:

"At the instigation of some seditious men, the ignorant people generally, not considering the result, raised a rebellion. Now many of the insurgents have received their reward, and as subjects are a trust from God, the British government, which is just and merciful, as well as strong, has forgiven their guilt. It has been proclaimed that all who come in without delay will be pardoned, excepting only Mahomed Jan of Wardak, Mir Bacha of Kohistan, Samandar Khan of Logar, Ghulam Hyder of Chardeh, and the murderers of Sirdar Mahomed Hassan Khan. Come and make your submission without fear, of whatsoever tribe you may be. You can then remain in your houses with safety, and no harm will befall you. The British government has no enmity towards the people. Anyone who rebels again will, of course, be punished. This condition is necessary. But all who come in without delay need have no fear or suspicion. The British government speaks only that which is in its heart."

This proclamation had the effect of conciliating the majority of the Afghans near Kabul, and at a durbar held on January 9, 1880, two hundred sirdars, chiefs, and head men from the Kohistan, Logar, and the Ghilzai districts were present to meet the English general and to do him homage.

Roberts remained at Kabul in command of the force, which in March was increased by reinforcement to the number of 11,500 men and twenty-six guns, until May 5. On that day Sir Donald Stewart arrived at Kabul. As

he was Roberts' senior officer the command was handed over to him, but not without considerable regret. Roberts had made the Kabul Field Force what it was, the best army of British troops that ever fought their way among the difficult hills north of India; and as he says, "It is not in human nature to feel absolute satisfaction in yielding up the supreme command I had so greatly delighted in, into the hands of another," even though that other was a life-long friend and a brilliant and tried leader.



THE VICTORIAN MOUNTED RIFLES CONTINGENT.





THE BUSHMEN'S CORPS  
VICTORIA'S 3rd C...STINGENT

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE GREAT MARCH.

**Sir Donald Stewart at Kandahar—Leading a Column to Kabul—Henaman's Description of Battle of Ahmedkhel—A Great Victory—Sir Donald Stewart Reaches Kabul—Making Preparations to Evacuate Kabul—Hunting for an Amir—Abdur Rahman the Choice of the British—The Maiwand Disaster—Kandahar Besieged by Ayub Khan—Roberts Proposes to Lead a Force to Relief of Kandahar—Appointed to the Command of the Kabul-Kandahar Field Force.**

**I**T will be necessary, for the purpose of getting a connected story of the life of Earl Roberts and his operations in Afghanistan, to go back and give something of Sir Donald Stewart's operations in Kandahar and on his march to Kabul.

Stewart had had a comparatively easy time of it during the autumn and winter while Roberts was enduring so much from the tribesmen about Kabul. The only chief to be feared was Ayub Khan, the son of Shere Ali and brother of Yakub Khan, but he was in far Herat, and the chiefs about Kandahar gave the garrison no trouble. He, as well as every soldier under his command, had grown weary of Afghanistan. It had not been the intention of the government to take permanent possession of the country, and the troops had now been in it for a much longer time than was at first intended.

The cause of the necessity of this sojourn in Afghanistan was the stubborn enmity of the tribes about Kabul. It would not do to leave the country until these were either induced to be friendly to the English or beaten into submission. As a step toward the final evacuation of the country the government decided to despatch a force under Sir Donald Stewart to Kabul. This would enable Sir Donald to keep a firm and sure hand on Kabul while sending strong columns out to operate against the irreconcilable Ghilzais and into the turbulent district of Kohistan.

During March preparations were made to send this force to Kabul and

by the end of the month everything was ready. A body strong enough to keep the country about Kandahar thoroughly quiet was left behind under the command of Major-General Primrose.

Sir Donald Stewart and his little column marched forward day by day during the early part of April, keeping a careful lookout for danger, but meeting none. Past Rohat, past Shahr-i-Safa, past Jaidak, past Kalat-i-Ghilzai, through the open plains along the Tarnak River they marched; and it was not until they left Shahjui on the border of the province of Kandahar that they fully realized they were in the enemy's country. It was now almost impossible to get supplies from the natives, and if anyone fell behind in the march an Afghan knife or bullet would in all probability find him out. The column pressed onward, ever threatened by the enemy who seemed only to be waiting a good opportunity to surround and cut it to pieces. Each day the swarms on the hills grew denser and each day the mullas strove more vigorously to inspire their followers with that religious frenzy which makes the Afghan such a formidable foe, especially at close quarters. They were not unsuccessful, and when the column reached Mushaki, about thirty miles from Ghazni, word was brought to General Stewart that he might expect strong resistance to his advance on the morrow.

The report was a true one, and when, at break of day on the morning of April the 19th, the troops moved forward towards Ghazni the hills in front and on either hand seemed alive with armed men. The Afghans evidently considered themselves numerically strong enough to give battle to the experienced and well equipped army under Stewart; and they evidently hoped, from the way they had disposed their troops, to surround the English force and crush it by mere weight of numbers. Stewart saw their intention, and, like a wise soldier in Afghan wars, did not wait for them to begin the fight but at once opened on them with his guns.

Usually a few well placed round shot or shell had a dispiriting effect on Asiatics; but these hillmen were not of the usual type, for as soon as the firing commenced the swarms in front and on the flanks grew denser and began to close the circle about Stewart's army. Horse-battery and field-battery poured shot into the advancing mass of *ghazis*, but save for

momentary gaps that opened when the shot plowed their way through the ranks no impression was made upon them.

The following description by Hensman of the opening of this fight at Ahmedkhel gives an excellent idea of the kind of enemies England has had to contend with in her wars in Afghanistan:—

“Suddenly a commotion was observed in the most advanced lines of the opposing army; the mullas could be seen haranguing the regular host with frantic energy, the beating of the tomtoms was redoubled, and then, as if by magic, waves on waves of men—*ghazis* of the most desperate type—poured down upon the plain, and rushed upon General Stewart's force. The main body of the Afghan army remained upon the hill to watch the *ghazis* in their reckless onslaught, and take advantage of any success they might gain. The fanaticism of the 3,000 or 4,000 men who made this desperate charge has perhaps never been equalled; they had five hundred or six hundred yards to cover before they could come to close quarters, and yet they made nothing of the distance. Nearly all were well armed with tulwars, knives, and pistols. Some carried rifles and matchlocks while a few—and those must have been resolute fanatics indeed—had simply pikes made of hayonets, or pieces of sharpened iron fastened on long shafts. Their attack broke with great violence on our flanks. On our left flank the 19th Bengal Lancers were still moving into position when the *ghazis* rushed in among them. In an instant they were hidden in the cloud of dust and smoke, and then they galloped toward the right rear, and struck into the reserve in rear of the lieutenant-general and his staff. All was confusion for a moment; ammunition-mules were stampeded, and with the riderless horses of the lancers killed or wounded in the *melee*, dashed into the headquarter's staff. The *ghazis* had continued their onward rush, and were engaged in hand-to-hand fighting with our infantry. Some of them penetrated to within twenty yards of the knoll on which the staff were watching the action, and so critical was the moment that Sir Donald Stewart and every man of his staff drew their swords and prepared for self-defense.”

Native and British soldiers were alike beaten back, and it seemed as if another disaster would have to be chronicled against the army of England

in Afghanistan. The horse-battery had to be retired, and it looked black indeed for the column. The reserves were called up and a last determined effort was made to beat back the angry sea of men which was surging up to the very muzzles of the guns. The officers commanding the different regiments were of the right stuff, and passed from company to company fearlessly exposing themselves to the infuriated rushes of the *ghazis*. In one quarter of the field could be seen men engaged in hand-to-hand encounters, bayonet and butt of rifle playing vigorously and effectively against knife and tulwar; in another the black mass was pressing hard on the guns which steadily poured shells into it leaving the ground almost at their muzzles thick with the dead and dying; there, too, the gallant 2nd Punjab cavalry were making charge after charge into the ranks of the *ghazis* who were endeavoring to seize the horse-artillery guns. For a long time the fight stood doubtful, but at length discipline and courage won against fanaticism and numbers; and after an hour of this desperate conflict at close quarters the tide of battle turned in favor of Stewart's column, and the heated Afghans were hurrying to the shelter of the hills with the cavalry at their heels.

This battle of Ahmedkhol had been a most desperate conflict. Never in the history of the Afghan wars had the tribesmen made a more determined or such a long stand as on this occasion. They paid heavily for their boldness. A thousand dead lay on the field in front of the British army, and fully one-fifth of their entire force of from 12,000 to 15,000 men were killed or wounded. Despite the reverses the column had met with at the beginning of the struggle, the British loss was comparatively light—only seventeen killed and one hundred and twenty-four wounded. How hot the fight was can be gathered from the fact that nearly every man wounded suffered from thrust of knife or slash of tulwar. It was well that Stewart had with him on this day tried soldiers; an army of raw levies would have broken and fled before the "whirlwind charges" of the fanatical *ghazis*.

Though the column had just passed through such a hard fight there was no time given to rest. The dead were reverently buried, and then the march was resumed towards Ghazni where a much-needed rest of three days was given the tired troops.

The force was not yet out of danger. The ancient mulla, Mushk-i-Alam who had made such efforts to crush the army under Roberts in December, was once more preaching a religious war against the *Feringhis*, and instead of the severe beating just given to his countrymen disheartening him, it only roused him to greater efforts to have revenge. Several thousands flocked to his standard, but the reverse they had met with at Amedkhel made them timid about rushing once more on the British guns and the British bayonets. They took up a position in strongly fortified villages on the road over which the column would have to advance, but the infantry rushed the villages and drove the enemy back to their hill fastnesses inflicting on them severe loss. This was the last attempt made to check the progress of the column on its road to Kahul, and on April 28 at Sheikahad Sir Donald Stewart left it, and hurried forward to take command of the forces in North-Eastern Afghanistan which had been handled with such courage and skill by Roberts.

The force in and about Kahul was now about 18,000; no army that the Afghans could muster could make any impression on it, and it merely waited the time when Afghanistan would be permanently evacuated—and for both officers and men this evacuation could not come too soon; all were heartily tired of Afghanistan.

Before the evacuation could take place, however, affairs in Afghanistan had to be settled on a permanent basis. An Amir who would be acceptable to the army and the chiefs had to be left in charge of the country. To make a good selection in a nation where nearly all men were notoriously false and treacherous was not an easy task, and matters were somewhat complicated by the friends of Yakuh Khan and many of the leading sirdars and chiefs clamoring for his return; but the officers in charge of the negotiations stiffened their necks against any such demands. He was out of Afghanistan, and out of Afghanistan he would remain; no protestations that his friends could make would convince the British that he was not to blame, at least passively, for the massacre of Cavagnari and his escort.

The most desirable individual for Amir from a British point of view seemed to be Abdur Rahman, who had been living for some time on the bounty of Russia. Roberts favored him, and Mr. Lepel Griffin, a member of

the political department of the India Civil Service, who arrived in Kabul towards the end of March, likewise selected Abdur Rahman as a fit and suitable person to reign in Kabul. Mr. Griffin had been sent to Kabul "to further the selection and acceptance of a capable ruler to be left in possession" after the British troops had evacuated the country. As a consequence negotiations began with Abdur Rahman early in April and continued until the end of July. At first the British were a little nervous about Abdur on account of his intimacy with the Russians and endeavored to find out his feelings towards Russia; but to his credit he showed the British officers that while he was prepared to be friendly towards England he was not without gratitude. When questioned with regard to Russia he said: "I should never like to be obliged to fight them. I have eaten their salt, and was for twelve years dependent upon their hospitality."

However, despite his friendly attitude towards England's ancient enemy, he seemed on the whole honest, and negotiations with him had so far progressed by the end of July that the authorities determined to have a grand durbar at the Sherpur cantonment where the sirdars, chiefs, and maliks would have an opportunity of acknowledging their new Amir. At this durbar Mr. Griffin as the official representative of the British government announced the recognition of Abdur Rahman by "the Viceroy of India and the government of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen-Empress," and added; "Sirdars, chiefs, and gentlemen, it is to the government a source of satisfaction that the tribes and chiefs have preferred as Amir a distinguished member of the Barakzai family, who is a renowned soldier, wise and experienced. His sentiments towards the British government are most friendly; and so long as his rule shows that he is animated by these sentiments, he cannot fail to receive the support of the British government."

Sir Donald Stewart had, under orders from headquarters, decided to leave Afghanistan early in August, and the intention of the approaching evacuation was intimated by Mr. Griffin at the close of his address.

"We trust and firmly believe," he added, "that your remembrance of the English will not be unkindly. We have fought you in the field

whenever you have opposed us; but your religion has in no way been interfered with; the honor of your women has been respected and every one has been secure in possession of his property. Whatever has been necessary for the support of the army has been liberally paid for. Since I came to Kabul I have been in daily intercourse with you, but I have never heard an Afghan make a complaint of the conduct of any soldier, English or native, belonging to Her Majesty's army."

The durbar over and the chiefs apparently satisfied to accept the new Amir (they would have accepted anyone to get the hated English out of their country) orders were issued to the different army leaders to make ready for an immediate march to India.

Roberts was to lead his column back by the Kuram valley, a route with which he was thoroughly familiar. He was desirous of knowing more of the Afghan country, and as it might be some years before he would again see Kabul, he decided to go on a tour of investigation as far as the Khyber pass; but for some unaccountable reason he retraced his footsteps towards Kabul, having gone no further than Jalalabad.

Of this sudden change in his plans he writes; \* "Suddenly a presentiment which I have never been able to explain to myself made me retrace my steps and hurry back toward Kabul—a presentiment of coming trouble which I can only characterize as instinctive." Before he reached Kabul Sir Donald Stewart met him with news of the tragic fate of the army under Burrows at Maiwand.

The above incident is one which well shows Roberts' mental attitude. He does not say that he was guided in his action by some higher power, but at the same time, he does not put his action down to mere chance. His attitude toward his change of plan on this occasion recalls an early paragraph in his autobiography dealing with the death of a half-sister.

\*"Shortly before his (Roberts' father's) "departure, an incident occurred which I will relate for the benefit of psychological students; they may, perhaps, be able to explain it, I never could. My father had some time before issued invitations for a dance which was to take place in two days'

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\*Roberts: Forty-One Years in India.



time—on Monday, the 17th October, 1853. On the Saturday morning he appeared disturbed and unhappy and during breakfast he was silent and despondent—very different from his usual bright and cheery self. On my questioning him as to the cause, he told me he had had an unpleasant dream—one which he had dreamt several times before, and which had always been followed by the death of a near relation. As the day advanced, in spite of my efforts to cheer him he became more and more depressed, and even said he should like to put off the dance. I dissuaded him from taking this step for the time being; but that night he had the same dream again, and the next morning he insisted on the dance being postponed. It seemed to me rather absurd to disappoint our friends because of a dream; there was, however, nothing for it but to carry out my father's wishes, and intimation was accordingly sent to the invited guests. The following morning the post brought news of the sudden death of the half-sister at Lahore with whom I had stayed on my way to Peshawar."

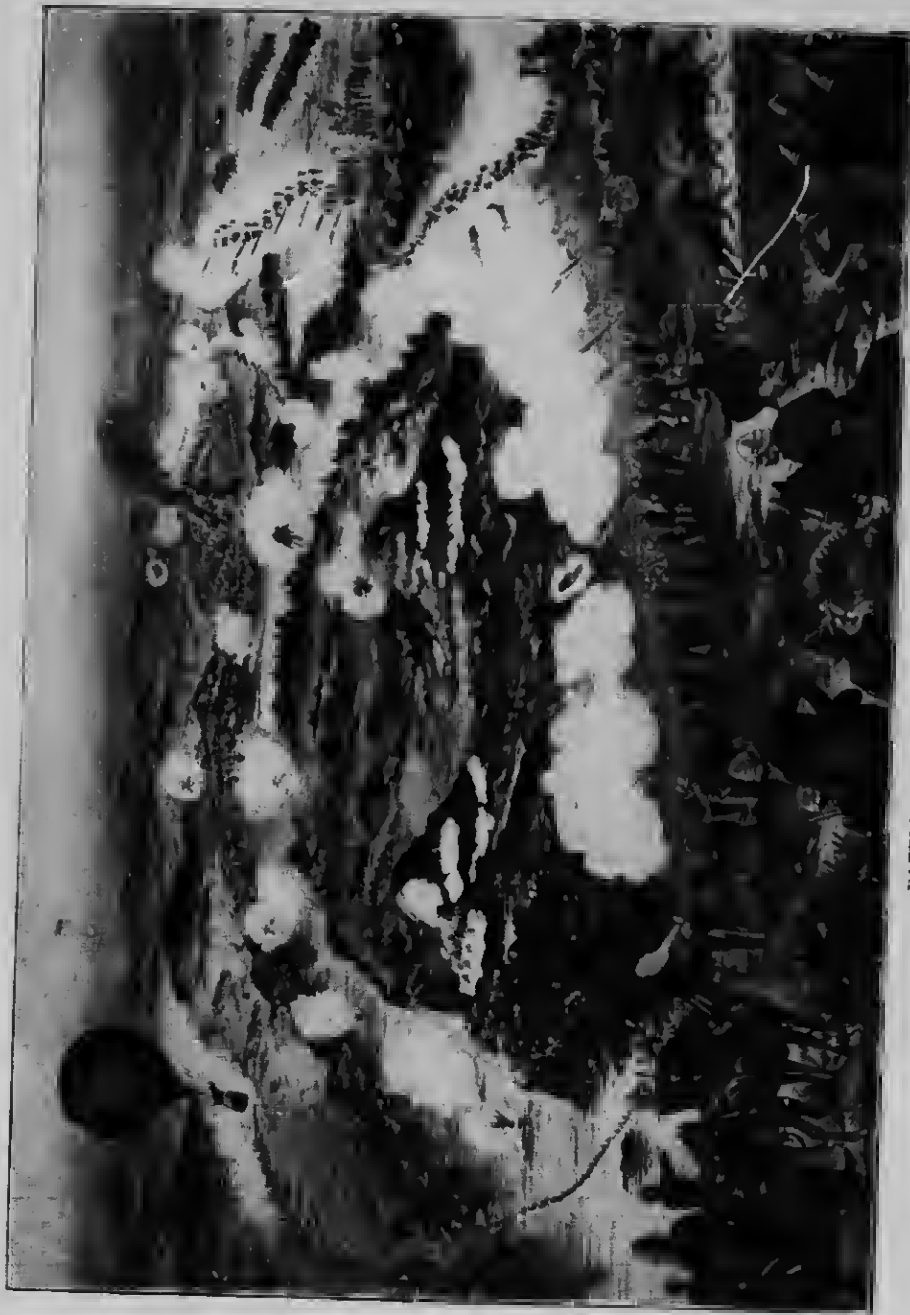
Both of these incidents show what a thoroughly fair mind Roberts has; in no way dogmatic, he, at the same time, is ready to recognize that we may be influenced by spiritual forces outside of ourselves.

It will now be necessary to go briefly into the cause of the Maiwand disaster. While Sir Donald Stewart was in Kandahar Shere Ali Khan had been the recognized governor of the place, and on the departure of Stewart was nominated hereditary ruler of the province with the title of Wali. When Stewart set out for Kabul he left behind in Kandahar between 4,000 and 5,000 troops of all arms under General Primrose. It was a small garrison for such an important station, but the long immunity from danger had given the British a feeling of oversecurity. It was soon rumored that Ayub Khan was collecting an army at Herat, and later that he was marching towards Kandahar with 7,500 men and ten guns. It was found, too, that the Wali's troops were not to be trusted, and it was strongly suspected that if they should once get in touch with Ayub's forces they would probably desert in a body. As Ayub drew nearer the city it was deemed necessary to take the offensive, otherwise his force would be greatly augmented by the disaffected tribes in the vicinity of Kandahar; so Major-General Burrows



**FORDING THE MODDER**

The Royal Canadian Infantry crossing by the aid of a life-line.



**BATTLE OF PAARDEBERG, SOUTH AFRICA, 1900**  
The Canadian Troops are crossing the Modder River at the left. For their bravery at this battle a message of thanks was sent by the Queen to the Canadian Government.

was sent out with "a brigade consisting of a troop of horse-artillery, six companies of the 60th, two Bombay native infantry regiments, and 500 native troopers, in all about 2,300 strong." This force reached the banks of Helmund on July 11.

As was expected the Wali's force deserted him, and took with them several smooth-bore guns. Burrows, however, was able to capture the guns and to punish the mutineers somewhat severely. He could not maintain his position on the Helmund, and was forced to fall back to Khushk-i-Nakhud, where he remained for eleven days awaiting the approach of Ayub.

On July 22 General Primrose received the following despatch from headquarters at Simla: "You will understand that you have full liberty to attack Ayub, if you consider you are strong enough to do so. Government considers it of the highest political importance that his force should be dispersed, and prevented by all possible means from passing on to Ghazni."

Burrows was awaiting his opportunity to strike. The enemy were in force at Maiwand and, on July 27, the little column marched against them, and was soon experiencing one of the most desperate fights in the annals of British warfare.

The force under Ayub was a large one—from 15,000 to 25,000 men—and this force gradually surrounded the army led by Burrows. It was impossible to repel the attack of the *ghazis* who recklessly rushed up to the very muzzles of the guns. A desperate hand to hand encounter followed, and about the doomed guns the sappers and gunners fought fiercely with handspikes and rammers. The guns were captured, the charges of the cavalry were futile against the dense masses that rolled up about the guns, and the infantry were beaten and slaughtered with an appalling slaughter. All who could fled in confusion from the field; and all day long on the 28th the battered and broken remnants of the column dragged themselves into Kandahar. Among the last to enter the gates was Brigadier-General Burrows, who had had two horses shot under him in the battle of the previous day. According to Archibald Forbes, \* "Out of a total of 2,476 engaged no fewer than 964 were killed. The wounded numbered 167; 331

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\* Forbes: The Afghan Wars.

followers and 201 horses were killed and 7 followers and 68 horses wounded. Since Chillianwallah the British arms in Asia had not suffered loss so severe."

It was the news of this disaster that was brought to Roberts on his return journey to Kabul, and with Sir Donald Stewart he concluded that there was but one course open to England. The little garrison in Kandahar would have to be relieved with all possible speed, and the forces of Ayub Khan must be scattered; otherwise the respect that the Afghans were beginning to have for the English would perish, and the old attitude of hatred and scorn would be born again amongst the tribesmen. Indeed news of the Maiwand disaster had already done its work, and throughout the hills from Kabul to the borders of the province of Kandahar there was a feeling of unrest bordering on insurrection.

Roberts at once proposed to Sir Donald Stewart that he be given command of a column to go to the relief of Kandahar and Sir Donald as promptly granted his request. They suggested to the authorities at Simla that such a course should be followed; but it was several days before headquarters could make up its mind. First, they were afraid that if they weakened Kabul it would only complicate matters, and they would have another war on their hands in North-Eastern Afghanistan; again the defeat of Burrows had given great heart to the disaffected, and the column would probably have to fight its way from Kabul to Kandahar; and, lastly, to make such a journey it would be necessary to cut loose from the base at Kabul. Headquarters shook its head and looked towards Quetta; but the men of the Bombay Presidency then doing service in Baluchistan under Major-General Phayre were such a poor lot that there was no hope from that direction.

While the government was weighing matters Roberts had made up his mind as to what course should be pursued, and with the approval of Sir Donald Stewart sent the following message to Major-General Greaves, Adjutant-General in India:

"Personal and secret. I strongly recommend that a force be sent from this to Kandahar. Stewart has organized a very complete one, consisting of

nine regiments of infantry, three of cavalry and three mountain batteries. This will suffice to overcome all opposition *en route*; it will have the best possible effect on the country, and will be ready to go anywhere on reaching Kandahar, being fully equipped in all respects. He proposes sending me in command.

"I am sure that but few Bombay regiments are able to cope with Afghans, and once the Kabul Field Force leaves this country, the chance of sending a thoroughly reliable and well-equipped column will be lost. The movement of the remainder of the Kabul troops towards India should be simultaneous with the advance of my division towards Kandahar, it being most desirable to limit the area of our responsibilities as soon as possible; at the same time, it is imperative that we should now show our strength throughout Afghanistan. The withdrawal under existing circumstances, of the whole force from Kabul to India would certainly be misunderstood, both in Afghanistan and elsewhere. You need have no fears about my division, it can take care of itself, and will reach Kandahar under the month. I will answer for the loyalty and good feeling of the native portion, and would propose to inform them that, as soon as matters have been satisfactorily settled at Kandahar, they will be sent straight back to India. Show this to Lyall."

This message had the desired effect. It was sent on July 30, and on August 3 Lord Ripon sent a telegram to Kabul authorizing the formation of a force to proceed to Kandahar and placing Roberts at its head. An opportunity such as has been given few men was his, and never was an opportunity given to a better man.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE GREAT MARCH FROM KABUL TO KANDAHAR.

*Ayub Khan has an Enthusiastic Following—Abdur Rahman Helps Roberts in His Advance on Kandahar—The Character of the Column—The Great March—The Siege of Kandahar—Ayub Khan's Forces Raise Siege at Roberts' Approach—In Kandahar—The Effect of the March on the Men.*

IT was a fortunate thing for the British troops in Afghanistan that the durbar at which Abdur Rahman was recognized as Amir was held before the Maiwand disaster. Had it been delayed serious complications might have arisen, and many of the sirdars and chiefs who accepted England's nominee would doubtless have stayed away from the meeting. But Abdur was now Amir, and, as it was due to the friendliness of his English allies that he held the exalted position, it was quite natural that he should be ready to remain friends with a nation which had shown itself strong enough to defeat, with small forces, such hordes as swarmed about Peiwar Kotal, at the Sherpur cantonments, and at Ahmedkhel. He was no doubt wise enough to recognize that the success of Ayub Khan at Maiwand would in time be avenged. He likewise feared Ayub. Yakub Khan was an impossibility for the Amirship, but the success won by his brother in the field had created considerable enthusiasm for Ayub throughout the length and breadth of Afghanistan, and another like success would cause an army such as flocked to the standard of Mahomed Jan to join his victorious forces.

During all the negotiations up to this time Abdur Rahman had made no effort to meet the British authorities, but cautiously held himself aloof; but Mr. Griffin was now most urgent for a meeting, and, as the time was ripe, the politic Abdur consented to a conference at Zimna, sixteen miles from Kabul. The conference was a happy one. According to Mr. Griffin Abdur "appeared animated by a sincere desire to be on cordial terms with the

British Government, and although his expectations were larger than the Government was prepared to satisfy, yet he did not press them with any discourteous insistence, and the result of the interview may be considered on the whole to be highly satisfactory."

The new Amir went farther than merely expressing satisfaction with his English friends. He gave a ready consent to the column under Roberts marching through his territory towards Kandahar; and as the great difficulty on such a march would be to supply the column with food he sent some of his most pronounced adherents ahead of Roberts to influence the chiefs along the line of march to have supplies ready so that the advance might not be impeded. The complete success of Roberts' great enterprise was in no small measure due to Amir Abdur Rahman, who was at once animated by a friendly feeling toward his English benefactors and by a dread of the rising power of Ayuh Khan.

Meanwhile Roberts was making preparations for the task which was to be the most renowned achievement of his illustrious career, the great march to Kandahar. His Chief helped him in every possible way in the formation of his column. The force he was to take was to be about ten thousand strong, and Sir Donald Stewart placed the entire strength in north-eastern Afghanistan under his command (some 18,000 men), at his disposal. He could pick and choose, and, as he says, he would have had only himself to blame "if every unit had not been as efficiently equipped as circumstances would admit."

Circumstances would admit! There was the rub. The force in Kahul had seen much service in a hard country, and several of the best regiments, such as the 67th, were in no condition to undertake such a trying march. General Chapman writes thus with regard to the formation of the column:

"It was not with eager desire that the honor of marching to Kandahar was sought for, and some commanding officers of experience judged rightly the tempers of their men when they represented for the General's consideration the claims of the regiments they commanded to be relieved as soon as possible from field service. . . . The enthusiasm which carried Sir Frederick Roberts' force with such exceptional rapidity to Kandahar was an after-growth evolved



by the enterpriss itself, and came as a response to tbs unfailing spirit which animated the leader himself."

At length all tbs regiments to go wvrs selected, and then Roberts had all the weaklings who wvrs likely to break down under tbs strain of ovvr three weeks forced marching "weeded out," and wvsn the column was completed none but experienced and strong msn wvrs to bs found in tbs ranks.

The force was a mixed one, ten thousand strong, with but 2,835 Europeans, but tress wvrs principally Higblanders, who, according to Archibald Forbes, had already "dons an infinity of fighting and marching," but "wvrs not to be bindersd from following tbs chisf, whom, though not of their northsrn blood, tbs stalwart sons of tbs mist swors by as ons man." Tbs factor next in importance to the Highlanders wvrs the littls Gurkhas, sworn brothers to tbs stalwart sons of Scotland, Bengal cavalry, Punjab cavalry, Sikh infantry, and Punjab natives infantry, cavalry from Central India, natives pioneers, and an artillery division of 600 men with 18 guns, mads up the balancs of the forcs. It was as representativs an East Indian army as sver followed a leader into battls.

The column was to travel light; "tbs scals of tents and baggags and impedimenta was reduced to a minimum." Supplies, for tbs most part, wvrs to be collected along tbe lins of march; and at tbs sams tims nothing was to be dons to rouse the animosity of tbs inhabitants of tbs districts through which tbsy passed.

Tbs following paragraph will givs a good idea of tbs method adopted to provids for the Kabul-Kandabar Field Forcs on its cclebrated march :

\* "Ons day's corn was carrisd by each animal in addition to bis ordinary load, and as far as Ghazni grain was tolerably plentiful; bsyond that we had to depend for forage on tbs crops still standing. At tbs end of tbs day's march, certain fields wvrs told off to tbs sevrsal brigades; from tress ail that was required was cut and carried away, tbs fields wvrs then measured and assessed, and compensation was awarded by tbs political officer, who also adjusted all claims on account of wreckcd houses" (torn down for fuel for cooking purposes), "and fruit, vegetables, etc., brought in for tbs troops."

\*Roberts: Forty-Over Years in India.

The 8th of August had been already decided on as the day for starting, and to the hour everything was prepared, and the brigades moved into camp at Charasia, about eight miles from the Bala Hissar, and the eighteen thousand men, including camp followers, with their eleven thousand transport animals rested over night to begin in earnest on the morrow the march of the century.

The troops began the march with mixed feelings and with but little idea of what they were to meet on the way. Dr. Duke, a member of the column with the cavalry brigades, very well voices the feelings of the members of the Kabul-Kandahar Field Force in the following paragraph:

\* "At the mess table, the battle of Maiwand, with the terrible slaughter of our troops was, of course, much discussed, as well as its consequences. Would the diminished garrison of Kandahar be able to hold its own until our arrival? Ayub Khan's great strength in artillery and the way he had used it, made him seem a dangerous foe. The rumor that Russian guidance was with them was duly weighed; while the report that his army was accompanied by three thousand Turcoman Horse, as they were called, raised the hope that at least our cavalry might meet a foe worthy of its steel. What lay before us could not be foretold. At least the tiring monotony of ordinary camp-life, for most of us hated Kabul, Afghanistan, and Afghans generally—was now to be changed and war was in the air."

Roberts remembered that "to climb steep hills requires slow pace at first," and during the early days of the march averaged but little over ten miles. On the 11th of August the general who had delayed his departure until the column was well on its way received his "last communication from the outside world," a telegram from his wife, who, with their children, was at a little village in Somersetshire. It was just the one thing he needed on the eve of his great venture, and he left Kabul with a light heart and with a determination to win.

The methodical manner in which this march was carried out is very concisely given by Roberts in his "Forty-One Years in India."

"On the march," he says, "and in the formation of the camps the same

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\*Recollections of the Kabul Campaign, 1879 and 1880 by Dr. Joshua Duke.

principles were, as far as possible, applied each day. The "rouse" sounded at 2:45 a. m., and by 4 o'clock tents had been struck, baggage loaded up; and everything was ready for a start.

"As a general rule, the cavalry covered the movement at a distance of about five miles, two of the four regiments being in front, with the other two on either flank. Two of the infantry brigades came next, each accompanied by a mountain battery; then followed the field hospitals, ordnance and engineer parks, treasure, and the baggage, massed according to the order in which the brigades were moving. The third infantry brigade with its mountain battery and one or two troops of cavalry formed the rear guard.

"A halt of ten minutes was made at the end of each hour, which at eight o'clock was prolonged to twenty minutes to give time for a hasty breakfast. Being able to sleep on the shortest notice, I usually took advantage of these intervals to get a nap, awaking greatly refreshed after a few minutes sound sleep. On arrival at the resting place for the night, the front face of the camp was told off to the brigade on rear guard, and this became the leading brigade of the column on the next day's march. Thus every brigade had its turn of rear guard duty, which was very arduous, more particularly after leaving Ghazni, the troops so employed seldom reaching the halting-ground before six or seven o'clock in the evening, and sometimes even later."

While this routine was being performed with such precision each day the leader's name was on every lip in the civilized world. Two days after the column had started from Kabul Sir Donald Stewart evacuated the Sherpur cantonments and began his march to India. Roberts had therefore burnt his ships behind him; there was now no retreat; he was completely cut off from any base, and if a combination of tribes was formed against him he would have to cut his way through them, as advance would be easier under the circumstances than retreat. An army of ten thousand men, "the flower of the British regiments in India as well as the crack regiments of the native army," had suddenly vanished from the ken of the world as completely as a ship passes from knowledge when it sinks beneath the horizon on



CRONJE SURRENDERS TO LORD ROBERTS ON MAJUUBA DAY

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**MARTHINUS THEUNIS STEYN**

*The late Presidents of the South African Republic.*



**PAUL KRUGER**

the great ocean; and this army was beset with more perils than ever threatened the destruction of any bark.

For several weeks at least its whereabouts, its very existence, could only be a matter of speculation. There was, too, a variety of opinion about the enterprise. Some called it foolhardy; others, who knew the man at the head of the column and his methods, admired the wisdom and the courage he had shown in undertaking the march; and realized that it was the one thing needful under the circumstances to make British influence lasting in Afghanistan, and believed that the success which had crowned Roberts' previous efforts would again be his. Kandahar would be relieved and Ayub Khan's army would be scattered or destroyed.

Meanwhile the soldiers were trudging along throughout day with the temperature frequently "at freezing point at dawn and one hundred and ten degrees at mid-day," suffering from cold and thirst and frequently having to endure blinding sand-storms. Lieutenant O. G. Robertson, an officer with the force gives, with a strong pen, some of the hardships endured by officers and men on this march.

"The dead pull," he says, "did not itself felt till we left Saidabad in the Maidan valley. From this point we said good-bye to all trees and verdure of all kinds. Time seemed to resolve itself into an endless, scorching day. Man and beast struggled on as if driven by an implacable fate. Under foot were stone and sand and choking dust; on either hand a barren mountain-wall neither closing in nor opening out; and above and below and all around the dead, mid-day glare, seeming to dry up the marrow in your bones and make your soul faint within you. If shadows could have been made saleable and rolled up in a commodious fashion they would have fetched any price. Even the patch of shade under a horse's girth would have been a marketable object. I remember one day coming upon a ravine, where it was just possible to get a little shelter by sitting holt upright against a bank of moist clay. An English officer, a little donkey, and a low-caste native had taken refuge there. I took my place among them with satisfaction. The amount of dirt it was possible to carry about on your

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\*Quoted in Lord Roberts of Kandahar, V. C. by Walter Jerrard.

person was positively startling. Getting into camp, I have a distinct recollection of often staring with wild, blood-shot eyes at myself, and finding my features covered with dust past recognition. But the worst torment that pursued us was unquenchable thirst. Lips and throat were parched beyond the power of beakers of water to cool; and Tantalus-like dreams of impossible draughts of ruby-colored claret-cup or amber cider used to haunt my imagination till I thought I must drink something or perish."

Meantime in Kandahar the siege was going on. The first guns were brought to bear on the garrison on the very day on which Roberts' force set out from Kabul, and from day to day they pounded at the walls, making but little impression. A position outside the citadel and near the Kabul Gate, known as Deh Khoja was considered particularly dangerous, and after the garrison had endured the hot fire from this village for eight days, it was decided to make a sortie to endeavor to drive the Afghans from their guns. A body of eight hundred men under Brigadier-General Brooke went out under cover of the artillery from the walls of Kandahar; but there was so strong a force in Deh Khoja that the sortie failed, and in the fight and retirement to Kandahar no fewer than 108 men were killed and 117 wounded, among the former two brave and capable officers, General Brooke and Captain Cruickshank.

All this time the relief column was drawing ever nearer; over the difficult Zamburak Kotal (8,100 feet high) it passed, and on to Ghazni where forty-one years before Roberts' father had gallantly fought; then on through Ahmedkhel where but four months previously Sir Donald Stewart had so nearly suffered defeat, but had, in the end, scattered the hillmen with terrible slaughter. At Chardeh they received a message from Kandahar,—a hopeful message: the place could hold out for two months; but a little later they learned of the unsuccessful sortie of the 16th, and many in the force began to tremble for the little army so sorely pressed by Ayub Khan. But the general was hopeful, and on the 23rd when Kelat-i-Ghilzai was reached, sent to Simla the following message which reached headquarters on August 30—the first word which was received from the column since it cut loose from its base:

"KELAT-I-GHILZAI,

23rd August, 1890.

"The force under my command arrived here this morning. The authorities at Kandahar having stated on the 17th inst. that they had abundant supplies and can make forage last until 1st September, I halt to-morrow to rest the troops, and more especially the transport animals and camp-followers. The force left Ghazni on the 16th, and have marched 136 miles during the last eight days; the troops are in good health and spirits. From this I purpose moving by regular stages, so that the men may arrive fresh at Kandahar. I hope to be in heliographic communication with Kandahar from Robat, distant twenty miles, on the 29th. If General Phayre reaches Takht-i-Pul, I should also hope to communicate with him and arrange a combined movement on Kandahar. I am taking the Kelat-i-Ghilzai garrison with me, making the fort over to Mahomed Sadik Khan, a Toki chief, who had charge of the place when we arrived in 1879; the present governor, Sirdar Sherindil Khan, refuses to remain. We have met with no opposition during the march, and have been able to make satisfactory arrangements for supplies, especially forage, which at this season is plentiful. The cavalry horses and artillery mules are in excellent order; our casualties to date are, one soldier 72nd Highlanders, one sepoy 23rd Pioneers, one 2nd Sikhs, two sepoy, 3rd Sikhs, dead; one sepoy, 4th Gurkhas, two sepoy 24th Punjab Native Infantry, one Duffadar 3rd Punjab Cavalry missing; six camp-followers dead, five missing. The missing men have, I fear, been murdered. I telegraphed from Ghazni on the 15th, and from Oba Karez on the 18th August."

The march had not been without its hardships, and a number of the followers and several of the native soldiers dropped behind and died by the road side or were killed by the Afghans who followed in the wake of the column. But the march was drawing near its close and the force would either join battle with Ayub's army before the date (September 2) on which Roberts had planned to reach the garrison, or would have made its way unmolested into Kandahar.

On the 27th of the month diemay spread through the ranks; on that



day the leader was found to be so ill that he was unable to mount his horse. There could be no halt; however, and he was borne along in a doolie, a mode of march he disliked very much, and which he terms "a most ignominious conveyance for a general on service." On this day he reached Sharh-i-Safa and sent another message to Simla.

"SHARH-I-SAPA,  
"27th August, 1880.

"My force arrived here to-day. I received a letter yesterday dated 25th from Colonel St. John. He writes: 'The rumors of the approach of your force have been sufficient to relieve the city from investment. On Monday night the villages on the east and south were abandoned by their mixed garrisons of *ghazis* and regulars. Yesterday morning Ayuh struck his camp, and marched to a position on the Arghandah, between Baha Wali and Sheikh Chela, due north of the city, and separated from it by a range of rocky hills. He has about 4,000 infantry regulars, six 12-pounders and two 9-pounders rifled, four 6-pounder smooth-bore batteries, and one 4-pounder battery, 2,000 sowars and perhaps twice that number of *ghazis*, of whom a third have fire-arms. The Kizilbashes and Kohistanis in his army, about 1,200 infantry and 300 cavalry, offered to desert and join us directly we made a show of attack. They are at least aware of Abdur Rahman's succession, but I think Ayuh will remain unmolested until the arrival of the Kahul force, provided he waits, which is unlikely. He will, I expect, strike away north into Khakrez, on which line vigorous pursuit will give us his guns. Maclaine, Royal Horse Artillery, is still a prisoner, I am making every effort to obtain his release, but I am not very hopeful of success. This morning, the 25th, I went to the field of the unlucky sortie of the 16th, and found the bodies of the poor fellows who fell there, some forty in number; they will be buried this afternoon. All the wounded are doing well. No sign or tidings of Phayre.' General Gough with two regiments of cavalry, is at Rohat; they are in heliographic communication with Kandahar. General Primrose heliographs that Ayuh Khan has entrenched his camp at Baha Wali. The force marches for Rohat to-morrow, seventeen miles distant from Kandahar."

Two days later he gave his men a rest—the second day on this march that such a luxury had been enjoyed. A battle or a pursuit might be awaiting the column at the end of the journey and it was needful to have his soldiers finish as fresh as possible.

Ayub was not prepared to risk his force, and on the 31st when the column reached Kandahar having marched in all about 320 miles in twenty-three days, he was found to have withdrawn his troops to the shelter of the hills near by.

Roberts was somewhat disgusted with the condition of the garrison. The men were demoralized, and ever since the sortie of the 16th had been in despair. It was a very different body of men from the soldiers who had followed him from Kabul. Jerrold in his "Lord Roberts of Kandahar" quotes from Dr. Duke's account of the march a passage which shows what it was that constituted the difference between the Kandahar garrison and Roberts' force.

"While it must be allowed that the whole force, men and officers had done their duty nobly, and had accomplished a march which had seldom been surpassed, still the key of the movement was the firm determination of the general commanding. Few commanders have been more personally liked by all, from the drummer to the colonel, than was General Roberts; and the national and universal admiration which this march and subsequent complete victory inspired, has stamped it as one of the greatest achievements of the British army."

The march had been a hard one, a "unique achievement" in the history of war, and while the column had been free from attack the soldiers were daily forced to endure hardships, specially after leaving Ghazni, that were enough to break the spirits of most men. One officer who "footed" the whole of the 320 miles gives the following description of what he and the other members of the infantry corps had to endure.

"As one who took part in the march and actually walked the whole distance, I can safely say it was extremely hard work, and could not possibly have been done except under a general like Sir Frederick Roberts, who was believed in and trusted by all ranks, and who inspired a determination to

fall down rather than give in. The hardest marches were from Ghazni to Yarghat, the last three hours of which were through a blinding dust-storm; from Mukur to Punjak (nineteen miles), a march without any water, except one muddy stream, the whole distance, and from Khel-i-Akhund to Robat, the weather on this day being like an Indian hot-weather day. There were few serious cases of illness amongst the European troops, but much footsoreness; donkeys were bought in large numbers, on which the footsore men were placed. After Kelat-i-Ghilzai every one suffered from diarrhoea. This, added to poor food, reduced the men so that I do not think the force could have marched much further than it did. Amongst the native soldiers were a few deaths, and the mortality amongst the camp-followers was much greater than was generally known. The work on the ranks was excessive. Every man in my batta was, if not on 'piquet,' on some 'fatigue' every day, either before starting in the morning or after arrival in camp. The chief cause of fatigue, however, was want of sleep. The force generally marched so early in the morning, and rear-guards got in so late, that men on this latter duty obtained very few hours' rest. I consider it was simply the pluck of the men, inspired by the general's presence and encouragement, that pulled the force through."

But it was all over, and the world was soon ringing with the praises of the general who had accomplished one of the greatest and most spectacular marching feats of modern war. There was still much work to be done. Ayub Khan's army had to be broken and dispersed, and then the brave men who had endured so much in Afghanistan might return to India with honor.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### SCATTERING AYUB KHAN'S ARMY.

Roberts ill with fever—His Welcome by the Garrison—Preparations to Smash Ayub Khan's Army—A Reconnaissance in Force—Ayub's Position One of Great Strength—The Babi Wali Kotai—The Afghana Confident—Turning the Flank of the Enemy—Brilliant Work of the Highlanders and Gurkhas—The Afghana Beaten—The Flight of Ayub Khan—The Murdered Body of Lieutenant MacLaine Discovered—Robert's Enters Ayub's Camp—Repairs to Quetta to Recruit His Shattered Health—Forced to go to England—His Description of the Farewell to His Regiments in the Bolan Pass—Why the Rank and File of the British Army Love Him.

**R**OBERTS had been ill with fever for three days, but the sight of Kandahar which he had relieved had a tonic effect on him, and he left the dhoolie by which he had been travelling, and once more got into the saddle.

There were many sick men in his column. As was to be expected, numbers had succumbed to the trying march; and the intense heat of the day and the severe cold of the night left many strong men as weak as children. Every spare animal fit to carry a burden followed the column into Kandahar bearing some exhausted camp-follower or worn out soldier. The general's first care was for his sick, and while his men breakfasted and rested he went to the citadel to see what could be done for the sick men in his force. He had in all nearly a thousand out of his army and followers who were totally unfit for work.

During the morning Roberts rested as best he could for a few brief hours in the city, while his column went into camp near the destroyed cantonments on the north-west side of Kandahar. The position was a good one as they had plenty of water, and were "within striking distance of Ayub Khan's camp."

When he had seen to the sick, and given heart to the despondent garrison, who gave him a most enthusiastic welcome—a welcome as to one

who had saved them from death—and sent out two Royal Artillery guns, the 3rd Bengal Cavalry, the 15th Sikhs under the command of Brigadier-General Hugh Gough to reconnoitre the enemy's position, he despatched with considerable pride the following telegram to Headquarters at Simla :

“KANDAHAR, 31st August, 1880.

“The force under my command arrived here this morning without opposition. Enemy are said to be in considerable strength at Mazra, but the ridge of hills which divides Kandahar from the Arghandah completely covers their position, and at present I have only been able to ascertain that the Baba Wali Kotal and one or two other points on this ridge are held in great strength, and that the enemy are busily engaged in defensive works. Reconnaissances are now being conducted, and I too shall soon, I hope, be sufficiently acquainted with affairs generally to enable me to arrange for an attack. The Kandahar garrison are in good health; the horses and transport animals appear to be in good condition. Major Vandeleur, 7th Fusiliers, has died of his wounds; the remainder of the wounded, both officers and men, are generally doing well. The troops from Kahul are in famous health and spirits. The assurance of the safety of this garrison enabled comparatively short marches to be made from Kelat-i-Ghilzai, which much benefited both men and animals, the cavalry horses and artillery mules are in excellent condition, and the transport animals are, as a rule, in very fair order. General Primrose has arranged for the sick of the force from Kahul being accommodated inside the city; many of the cases are sore feet; none are serious. To-morrow the telegraph line toward India will commence to be re-constructed, and as General Phayre is probably on this side of the Kohjak to-day through communication should soon be restored.”

The enemy were evidently in very great force all along the high ridge of which the Bahi Wali Kotal or Pass was the strongest point. They had made their presence felt as the Kahul force marched into camp by rolling a few round shot among them, but without doing any harm.

Ayuh Khan had a position of almost impregnable strength; he had chosen a spot for his own camp near the village of Mazra behind the long



**ON THE ROAD TO PRETORIA.**  
1701 Kuhn's and Staff starting out for a reconnaissance from his Headquarters at Smaldeal.

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LORD ROBERTS WRITING DESPATCHES ON THE WAY TO BLOEMFONTEIN

ridge. The ground was naturally easily defended in his front, and a small body of well-armed and steady riflemen might have kept hack an army. In addition to the natural strength of his position his best guns were posted in such a way as to effectively guard his camp from a frontal attack. He felt perfectly secure in the ground he had selected and determined to wait the attack of the British, and, if possible, inflict severe loss upon them. There was just one thing to be feared: his right flank might be turned, and to guard against this he had thrown up strong outrenchments on Pir Paimal, a hill on his extreme right and had placed on this hill several powerful and well-manned guns. Behind the Pir Paimal hill, and at no great distance from it, rose high the Kharoti hill, and on this, too, troops were placed and guns posted. To reach his camp the British would have to pass between these two positions, over rough and broken ground, where they would be swept by a savage cross-fire. Under the circumstances it is not to be wondered at that Ayub Khan had such a sense of security in his well-chosen camp.

It did not take Roberts long to size up the situation. A frontal attack on the Baha Wali Kotal was out of the question, as impossible as it would have been to carry the Peiwar Kotal without first having rolled up the flank of the enemy. He had no doubt but that the men who had followed him from Kahul could carry even the Baha Wali Kotal at the hayonet point; but the loss of life would be tremendous, and he was not prepared to sacrifice his soldiers. A turning movement, a thing he dearly loved, on the enemy's right would have to be tried. It was with this movement in view that he sent General Hugh Gough out to make a reconnoissance in force.

General Gough was accompanied by Lieutenant-Colonel Chapman, an officer thoroughly familiar with Kandahar and its surroundings, and under his guidance the reconnoitring party succeeded in taking up a good position above the villages of Gundigan and Murghian. From this point the cavalry moved forward until within close range of the Pir Paimal battery, gathering information as they went forward that was to be invaluable for the manoeuvres of the following day. They succeeded in unmasking the guns at



the entrenched position, and having done so began a retirement without suffering loss.

The Afghans thought that this force which they had apparently repulsed was the vanguard of Roberts' army. They imagined that a turning movement had been attempted, and that their prompt action had saved the day for Ayub Khan. They hastened in pursuit of the retiring force in great numbers and with great persistency. The cavalry and artillery and infantry with all possible speed got within the line of piquets, but so close were they pressed that the gallant 15th Sikhs, under Lieutenant-Colonel Hennessy, were forced to turn and cover the retirement. Still the *ghazis* came on, believing that they had once more beaten a British army; and so critical did the situation become that Roberts ordered the entire 3rd Brigade and part of the 1st Brigade under arms. The Sikhs, however, checked the advance, although till sunset firing went on.

The day had been a most profitable one. The Afghans were rendered over-confident by beating back, as they supposed, the reconnoitring party, and the weak spots in their position were now thoroughly known to the British commander. This had not been accomplished without loss; during the operations of the day five men were killed and fifteen wounded.

Roberts consulted with Gongb and Chapman as soon as they returned to camp, and they concluded that a successful attack could be made by way of the village of Pir Paimal on the following morning. He felt that it was imperative to make the attack at once, as any delay would be attributed to fear. The beating back of the reconnoitring party was looked upon by the *ghazis* as a victory, and would doubtless attract to the standard of Ayub Khan many of the Afghans who were holding aloof from fear of the renowned little British general who had beaten them at Peiwar Kotal, had driven them out of Kabul, and had, with a small army, defended the Sherpur cantonments against the largest force ever gathered together in Afghanistan, and in the end had broken and scattered the 100,000 men under Mahomed Jan. He had seemed to them, as he neared Kandahar, unconquerable; but had not his army been beaten back? Ayub Khan was his match! So they were

beginning to think, and Roberts, recognizing this, decided that the army of Ayub Khan must be crushed on the morrow.

That night he issued orders "for the troops to breakfast at 7 a. m., and for one day's cooked rations to be carried by the infantry and two day's by the cavalry and horse artillery. The brigades were to be in position by 8 o'clock, tents being previously struck and the baggage stored in a walled enclosure."

Evidently he expected that one day's fighting would be sufficient to break the army of Ayub Khan. The two day's rations for the cavalry and horse artillery was significant. The army that had brought such disaster to the force under General Burrows at Maiwand, and had for a month threatened and terrified the garrison at Kandahar would be scattered in flight and hotly pursued. Having issued his orders the exhausted leader went to rest, his slumbers being disturbed during the night by the wild firing of the confident Afghans from the villages they had occupied between the camp of the British army and the Pir Paimal hill.

At daybreak Roberts was up, and while the troops were getting ready for battle he outlined to his generals his plan of attack. His heaviest artillery was to play on Baba Wali Kotal, and both infantry and cavalry were to make a feint against that strong position while the real attack was to be made on the enemy's right. The following is his own account of the disposition of his troops on that eventful September morning, and is of peculiar interest as it was to be the last great fight he was to be in for nearly twenty years.

"The infantry belonging to the Kahul column upon whom devolved the duty of carrying the enemy's position, were formed up in rear of the low hills which covered the front of our camp, their right being at Picquet hill and their left resting on Chitral Zina. The cavalry of the Kahul column were drawn up in rear at the left, ready to operate by Gundigan towards the head of Arghandah, so as to threaten the rear of Ayub Khan's camp and his line of retreat in the direction of Girishk. Four guns of E Battery Royal Horse Artillery, two companies of the 2—7th Fusiliers, and four companies of the 28th Bombay Infantry were placed at the disposal of Brigadier-General Hugh Gough, whose orders were to occupy with these troops the position

above Gundigan, which had been so useful during the previous day's reconnaissance, and to push his cavalry on to the Arghandab.

"Guards having been detailed for the protection of the city, the remainder of Lieutenant-General Primrose's troops were ordered to be disposed as follows: Brigadier-General Daubeny's brigade to occupy the ground between Piquet Hill and Chitral Zina as soon as the infantry of the Kahul-Kandahar Field Force advanced to the attack. The remnant of Brigadier-General Burrows' brigade with No. 5 Battery, 11th Brigade Royal Artillery under Captain Hornsby, and the cavalry under Brigadier-General Nuttall, to take up a position north of the cantonment, from which the 40-pounders could be brought to bear on the Baha Wali Kotal, while the cavalry could watch the pass, called Kotal-i-Murcha, and cover the city."

The Baha Wali Kotal was black with Afghans and the 11th Brigade Royal Artillery opened a well-directed fire upon them. Meanwhile the 1st and 2nd Brigades advanced in the direction of Pir Paimal hill. Before they could reach this position considerable fighting would have to be done. Large bodies of the *ghazis* had, inspired by the successes of the previous day, penetrated far into the plain in front of the long ridge and taken up strong positions in the villages between Pir Paimal hill and Kandahar. The villages of Gundigan and Gundi Mulla Sahidad would have to be taken at the bayonet point before there could be any hope of turning the right flank of Ayub's army. As Brigadier-General Baker and Brigadier-General Macpherson advanced towards Gundi Mulla Sahidad they were met with a steady fire from the villages and enclosures and orchards in their front; but a heavy shell-fire directed against Sahidad heat down the Afghan fire, and under cover of this Macpherson's Brigade advanced almost to the walls of the village without opposition. The 92nd Highlanders and the 2nd Gurkhas were the leading regiments, and wavered not under the heavy fire that met them when they came to close quarters. The command to fix bayonets was given, and though the *ghazis* resisted to the death, they were swept aside, killed, or driven out of the village. Two hundred of them lay dead, principally from bayonet thrusts, in the streets, showing how stubborn and reckless had been their resistance. Even after the streets had been cleared

skulking *ghazis* fired upon the British troops until they were rooted out or shot down.

Brigadier-General Baker meanwhile was leading his brigade over a difficult road to Gundigan. The position of the Afghans in this village was even stronger than in Sahidad. They were behind loopholed walls, and felt themselves strong enough to take the offensive, at times making savage rushes with their tulwars and pikes against the Highlanders, Sikhs and Gurkhas; but at last under the inspiring leadership of gallant Colonel Brownlow, who fell mortally wounded immediately after giving his regiment the order to charge, the Highlanders and Gurkhas swept into the streets of Gundigan and drove off the *ghazis* at the hayonet point.

The villages were cleared of the enemy, and the next duty of the two brigades was to scatter the force at the extreme right of the ridge, and to silence the guns that had been placed there to prevent a turning movement.

Each moment the situation at this point grew more difficult. Ayub Khan saw his men beaten out of the villages, and sent forward a large body of *ghazis* to strengthen the force with the guns at the Pir Paimal hill. But Macpherson pressed gallantly forward, and after a dashing charge the village of Pir Paimal was in his possession.

Though the main position on the right flank had been won it was going to be no easy matter to roll up the right wing of Ayub's army. He had sent forward ever increasing numbers of troops to support his right, and recognizing that the frontal attack on the Baha Wali Kotal was a mere feint, reversed the guns at that place and brought them to bear on the 1st and 2nd Brigades. These guns had to be taken at once. Major White was in command of the 92nd Highlanders and cheering his men on to one charge more "to close the business" he rushed forward.

Forbes thus graphically describes the last great charge in this memorable battle: \* "Springing out of a water course at the challenge of their leader the Highlanders rushed across the open ground. The Afghans sheltered by high banks, fired steadily and well; their riflemen from the Pir Paimal slopes poured in a sharp cross-fire; their guns were well served. But the

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\* Forbes: The Afghan Wars.

Scottish soldiers were not to be denied. Their losses were severe, but they took the guns at the point of the bayonet, and valiantly supported by the Gurkhas and Pioneers, shattered and dispersed the mass of Afghans, which was reckoned to have numbered some 8,000 men. No chance was given the enemy to rally. They were headed off from the Pir Paimal slopes by Macpherson. Baker hustled them out of cover in the water-courses in the basin on the left, and while one stream of fugitives poured away across the river, another rolled backward into and through Ayub's camp at Mazra."

Major White was the first man to reach the guns, but a native soldier of the gallant Gurkhas was not far behind him. Among the men especially mentioned after this fight for bravery was sepoy Inderhir Lama, who made a strong second to White in the race for the guns, and who very dramatically laid his rifle across one of them saying, "Captured, in the name of the 2nd Gurkhas!"

General Baker and Colonel Money were doing equally good work in other parts of the field, scattering *ghazis* and capturing guns. Before noon Ayub recognised that he was hopelessly beaten, and when the British entered his empty camp at 1 o'clock everywhere was to be seen evidence of the precipitate nature of his flight. His great tent was intact and the rich carpets and furnishings were all left behind, and "all the rude equipage of a half barbarous army had been abandoned, the meat in the cooking pots, the bread half kneaded in the earthen vessels, the hazaar with its *ghee* pots, dried fruits, flour, and corn."

One incident marred this victory. Ayub had as a prisoner in his camp an English officer, Lieutenant Maclaine, who, on the fatal day at Maiwand, had been captured with the two guns he commanded and would not desert, though the black mass of *ghazis* were swarming about them. On account of his heroic conduct he had excited a good deal of interest, and strong efforts had been made by the commander at Kandahar to obtain his release. The first thoughts of the victorious troops on entering Ayub's camp were about Maclaine, and to their horror they found him with his throat cut a few yards from Ayub's tent.

The resistance to the advance of the British had been stubborn, but

while their loss was light the Afghans suffered heevily, 600 of them were found dead on the ground over which the 1st and 2nd Brigades had fought their way to Pir Paimal hill. By 9 o'clock on the night of the battle of Kandahar all the troops, excepting the 1st Brigade, left to protect the stores and guns captured from Ayuh Khan, were back in their camp, enjoying a well-earned rest. Roberts himself had been "utterly exhausted" by this day's hard work, and the cheers of his gallant soldiers as he entered the deserted camp nearly broke him down, and when he saw the bodies of his soldiers who had fallen in winning him this victory, "it was," he says, "with a very big lump in my throat that I managed to say a few words of thanks to each corps in turn." But after a brief rest, with a great deal of very pardonable pride, he sent off to headquarters the following telegram, which he says was anxiously looked forward to both in England and in India.

"KANDAHAR,

"1st September, 1880, (8 p. m).

"Ayuh Khan's army was to-day defeated and completely dispersed with, I hope, comparatively slight loss on our side; his camp was captured, the two lost guns of E Battery, B Brigade Royal Horse Artillery were recovered, and several wheeled guns of various calibre fell to the splendid infantry of this force, the cavalry are still in pursuit. Our casualties are 22nd Foot Captain Stratton, killed; 72nd Highlanders, Lieutenant Brownlow, Captain Frome killed, Captain Murray and Lieutenant Monro, wounded,—7 men killed, 18 wounded; 92nd Highlanders, Lieutenants Menzies and Donald Stewart wounded,—11 men killed and 39 wounded; 2nd Gurkhas, Lieutenant Battye, and 2nd Sikhs, Major Slater wounded. It is at present impossible to ascertain the casualties amongst the native troops, but I have no reason to believe they are excessive; full details will be telegraphed to-morrow. The quite recently murdered remains of Lieutenant Maclaine, Royal Horse Artillery, were found on the arrival of the British troops in Ayuh Khan's camp. Ayuh Khan is supposed to have fled toward Herat."

The battle of Kandahar or Baha Wali, as it is sometimes called, was a splendid ending to a great campaign. Roberts had done the work allotted to

him to perfection; it would be many years before England would again have serious trouble from the tribes on her northern frontier. Roberts had given her arms a renown among the hillmen that would not soon be forgotten.

The campaign was now over, and he was glad to be able to send back the regiments, which had done so much by their bravery and confidence to win him his fame, to the peaceful region along the Ganges where they could be reunited with their families and friends, whom, for the most part, they had not seen for several years. He himself was thoroughly played out and needed a rest; and so he went to Quetta, where he hoped to have his health restored. On the way to this station he was to learn how much his services had been esteemed by his Queen who had honored him with a G. C. B., and made him commander-in-chief of the Madras army. But Quetta was not a sufficient change. He needed the mists and green fields of England, and so he applied for leave of absence, and early in October started for India *en route* for England.

At the Bolan pass he met most of the regiments who had stood by him in so many fierce fights and through so many days of hard marching, and no general ever gave a finer appreciation of his soldiers than he did when in writing his great autobiography he recalls the welcome he received from them on this occasion.

\*"Riding through the Bolan pass I overtook," he says, "most of the regiments of the Kabul-Kandahar Field Force marching towards Sibi, thence to disperse to their respective destinations. As I parted with each corps in turn its band played 'Anld Lang Syne,' and I have never since heard that memory-stirring air without its bringing before my mind's eye the last view I had of the Kabul-Kandahar Field Force. I fancy myself crossing and re-crossing the river which winds through the pass; I hear the martial beat of drums and plaintive music of the pipes; and I see Riflemen and Gurkhas, Highlanders and Sikhs, guns and horses, camels and mules, with the endless following of an Indian army, winding through the narrow gorges, or over the interminable boulders which made the passage of the Bolan so difficult and wearisome to man and beast.

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\*Roberts: *Forty-One Years in India.*



COL. DRURY, C.B.



MAJOR S. DENISON, C.B.



CDL. W. D. OTTER, C.B.

CANADIAN OFFICERS WITH LORD ROBERTS IN SOUTH AFRICA



COL. LESSARD, C.B.



COL. BUCHAN, C.B.





**COL. CRADDOCK,**  
Commander of Second South African Contingent.



**COL. ROBIN**  
Commander of First South African Contingent.



**COL. OTTER**  
of Victorian Contingent,  
Brother to Col. Otter, C. R., Canada.  
(By permission, "The Melbourne Age".)



**COL. PRICE**  
Commander Second Victorian Contingent.  
(By permission, "The Melbourne Age".)

**FOUR COLONIAL COLONELS WITH LORD ROBERTS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

"I shall never forget the feeling of sadness with which I said good-bye to the men who had done so much for me. I looked upon them all, native as well as British, as my valued friends, and well I might, for never had a commander been better served. From first to last a grand spirit of *camaraderie* pervaded all ranks. At the Peiwer Kotal, at Charasia, and during the fighting around Kabul all were eager to close with the enemy, no matter how great the odds against them. Throughout the march from Kabul all seemed to be animated with but one desire, to effect, cost what it might in personal risk, fatigue or discomfort, the speedy release of their beleaguered fellow-soldiers in Kandahar; and the unflagging energy and perseverance of my splendid troops seemed to reach their full height, when they realized they were about to put forth their strength against a hitherto successful enemy. Their exemplary conduct, too, under circumstances often of the most trying nature, cannot be praised in terms too strong or too full. Notwithstanding the provocation caused by the cruel murder of any stragglers who fell into the hands of the Afghans, not one act infringing the rules of civilized warfare was committed by my troops. The persons and property of the natives were respected, and full compensation for supplies was everywhere given. In short, the inhabitants of the district through which we passed could not have been treated with greater consideration or with a lighter hand had they proved themselves friendly allies, and the conduct of the troops will ever be to me as pleasing a memory as are the results which they achieved."

What a powerful pen we have here! The heart is writing, and the strong rhythm of the splendid periods magnificently reproduce the inner feelings of the man. As these sentences are read it is not hard to understand why the rank and file of the British army are ready to follow Roberts anywhere with enthusiasm, and will stand by him through good report and evil report.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### HOME AND THE FIRST BOER WAR.

Roberts Congratulated by Queen Victoria for his Work in Afghanistan—His Return to England—Enthusiasm Over the Great March—Roberts a Critic of the Short-Service System—Honored by Cities and Universities—His Speech at the Mansion House on the Army—The Outbreak of the Boer War of 1881—Majuba Hill—Roberts Sent to South Africa as Commander-in-Chief—A "Peace Without Honor"—Indignation in South Africa—Roberts Returns to England—Appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army.

ON his way to Calcutta, Roberts at the request of Lord Ripon, the viceroy, turned aside to pay a visit to Headquarters at Simla. Here he received a letter from Her Majesty, thanking him and his brave followers for the magnificent work they had done in Afghanistan for the Empire. Of this letter he says: "A gracious letter, truly! And to me a deeply appreciated reward for what I have been able to do."

After this break in his homeward journey he hurried on his way, and on November 17 the cliffs of his island home, backed by the fertile green fields of England, loomed up before him restful and beautiful. Circumstances had forced him to make an uninterrupted stay in India much longer than he had intended. It was twelve years since he had seen the broad fields, the well-kept hedges, and the peaceful groves of the land of his boyhood days. In the meantime many changes had taken place; but what he felt most was "the two vacant places" in the family circle. The father who had so eagerly watched his splendid career was no more, and his invalid sister, chief among his worshippers, was likewise dead. He was not given much time to brood over the losses death had brought to his life, and the changee he found in England. He found himself the hero of the hour, and as he says was "feted and feasted to almost an alarming extent."

He was much surprised at the amount of enthusiasm he found in Eng-

land over his march from Kahul to Kandahar. He by no means reckoned it as his greatest achievement, and considered both his work with the Kuram Field Force at the Peiwar Kotal, and his advance on Kahul, while the treacherous Amir Yakub Khan was in his camp, far and more hazardous performances. This enthusiasm was, as he says in considering the public attitude towards his great march, no doubt due to the glamour of a lance thrown around an army of 10,000 men, lost to view as it were, for nearly a month, about the fate of which uninformed spectators with idle and pessimistic rumors were spread, until the tension became extreme and the corresponding relief proportionately great when that army reappeared to dispose at once of Ayuh and his hitherto victorious troops."

It must be remembered in considering Roberts' depreciation of his famous fight at the close of his march, that in the battle of Kandahar the issue could not for a moment be in doubt. As Archibald Forbes says in speaking of this battle: "Numerical disparity was non-existent, and Ayuh had immensely the disadvantage as regarded trained strength." Roberts who had been accustomed to winning victories against strong positions when the numbers were ten to one in his opponents' favor, could not but wonder at the unstinted praise that was given to his final work in Afghanistan.

He was, twenty-one years later, to be the controlling spirit of an even greater march—his rush to Bloemfontein, and then to Pretoria. To colonials with military aspirations part of a speech he delivered in England during his sojourn after Kandahar should be of special interest as it explains to some extent the reason of the misfortunes that befell the first contingents sent to South Africa. He is in this speech a critic of the "short-service system." The colonial soldiers in South Africa were practically all short-service men; many of them indeed mere boys, and when, for example, the parade state of the Royal Canadians at Pretoria is examined, the truth of his words in connection with the great march will be readily understood.

"The 72nd Highlanders," he says, "continued with me throughout the campaign, and was one of the three battalions of British infantry I selected to accompany me on the march from Kahul to Kandahar. During the early part of last spring the regiment had received a draft from England of about

170 men. While on the march to Kandahar I made it my business to find out every day how many men of each corps had fallen out on the way. This information was necessary to enable me to judge whether the troops were being taxed beyond their powers. I discovered that the 72nd Highlanders had more casualties in proportion to their numbers than either the 60th Rifles or 92nd Highlanders; and, on further inquiry, I ascertained that the majority of the cases occurred among the men of the last draft—in fact, among the young soldiers. The average service of the 72nd Highlanders, on our leaving Kahul, was; sergeants, thirteen and a half years; corporals, twelve and a half years; privates, seven years; and of the 92nd Highlanders: sergeants, fifteen years; corporals, eleven years; privates, nine years . . . . Such a return as this it may be quite impossible ever to prepare again if our system of short-service is persisted in; and let me add something more, it will be impossible for a British force ever again to perform such a march as those magnificent troops I had the honor and pride to command made from Kahul to Kandahar. No commander would venture to undertake such a service except with soldiers on whose discipline, spirit, and endurance, he could thoroughly rely. I never for a moment had a doubt as to the result; but then I had tried men, not untried and untrained boys, to depend upon."

Cities and educational institutions hastened to do him honor. Dublin University conferred on him the degree of LL.D.; Oxford, the degree of D. C. L.; and the city of Bristol gave him a service of plate. But probably what he valued most was the sword given him by the enthusiastic boys of Eton, his old school. The city of London presented him with the freedom of the city and a sword of honor, "in recognition of his valuable services in Afghanistan, where supported by brave soldiers, he so well and nobly upheld the prestige and reputation of the British army." The city chamberlain made the presentation in words of high praise. Roberts' reply on this occasion is strongly characteristic of the man.

"Believe me," he said, "that I use language in no conventional manner when I say that I cannot in adequate terms express my sense of the great honor which has this day been awarded to me. Excepting the distinctions which our Sovereign has been graciously pleased to bestow on me, none of

the generous testimonies which I have received has more deeply stirred my feelings of gratitude. The honors which have been paid to me in this historical hall are considerably enhanced by the very gratifying manner in which you have referred first to the memory of my honored father, whose counsels and examples have stimulated my exertions in the path of duty; then, to the circumstances of my earlier career; and, lastly, to the services which in recent years I have been enabled to render to my Queen and country. In the honorable grant of the freedom of this city, and of the sword of honor to a soldier like myself, I recognize, not only the approval of the most important municipal corporation in these realms, but also your appreciation of the fact that arms are necessary to the protection of commerce and to the secure enjoyment of peace. When I call to mind the list of illustrious commanders on whom this much-coveted distinction has from time to time been bestowed, I cannot but feel that the addition of my name to the list is owing rather to your favor than to my own merit. Permit me to accept the honor as paid, not to myself alone, but also to the able officers and to the brave and enduring troops who served under my directions, and whom I am so proud to represent. Your chamberlain has paid me and the force which I commanded, a high compliment indeed in comparing our march from Kabul to Kandahar with the famous 'retreat of the ten thousand' from the plains of Babylon to the shores of the Euxine. To a certain extent, we may, perhaps, be permitted to accept this comparison. Both operations were carried out amidst numerous enemies and through difficult countries, and in both cases the object in view was successfully attained. Honor is the proper reward for the soldier's services, and 'dangers,' according to no mean authority 'ask to be paid in pleasure.' I need not assure you of the pleasure with which I have this day received the highest tokens of your approbation."

On the evening of the day on which this sword was presented to him, the first men of England assembled at the Mansion House at a banquet given in his honor. Jerrold in his "Lord Roberts of Kandahar," speaks of his speech on this occasion in reply to the toast of his health, as one "full of interest not only to all following his life-story, but also to all concerned in the welfare of the British army."

\* "After acknowledging the compliments which had been paid to him, Sir Frederick Roberts went on to say: 'I have so often of late borne testimony to the admirable work which the troops under my command performed in Afghanistan, that I think it is quite unnecessary to dwell to-night on this, to me, most congenial subject. But on such an occasion as the present, when the services of those troops have been so signally recognized in my person, I think I shall best show my gratitude by giving to this illustrious and most representative assembly the result of my experience as a soldier, who has had opportunities, in more than one campaign, of testing the merits of our past and present systems of army organization . . . . I am actuated simply by a sincere and honest desire to place my countrymen in possession of the truth about their army, and to do what I can for the army which has done so much for me. I would ask you . . . . to remember two essential points about our army. First, that it is England's boast that her army is a volunteer one; next, that the objects for which it is maintained are widely different from the conditions and objects which govern the requirements of a continental army. I understand by a volunteer army *versus* one raised by conscription, that the soldiers belonging to it should, so far as the exigencies of the service will admit, be treated as volunteers throughout their whole career . . . . Every soldier experienced in war will tell you that we should do all in our power to uphold the regimental system, and to foster and encourage that sensitive plant, *esprit de corps*, which, like other sentiments having their roots in our common nature, plays as large and influential a part in life as the dictates of reason itself . . . . We must never forget that our army is a small one, almost absurdly small, to meet the many demands made upon it. Above all things, then, it is necessary that the spirit and tone of that army should compensate for its numerical weakness. . . . What is it that has enabled a comparatively small number of British troops over and over again to face tremendous odds and win battles against vastly superior numbers? The glorious annals of our regiments give the answer—discipline, *esprit de corps*, and power of endurance—the three essentials which are absolutely wanting in the young soldier. Discipline

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\* Lord Roberts of Kandahar, V.C., by Walter Jerrold.

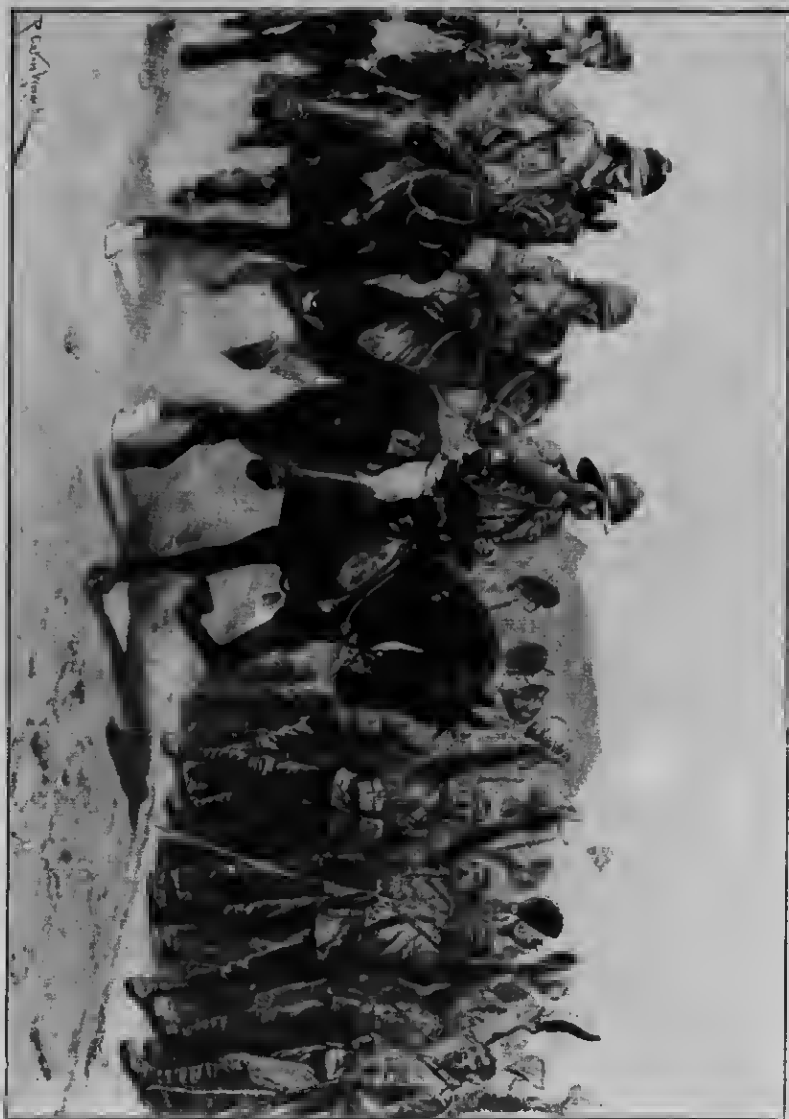
enables a man to obey his leaders implicitly, and to rely as implicitly on his comrades, but it cannot be instilled into a young soldier in a few months, and the more short service men there are in the regiment, the longer the process takes. *Esprit de corps* is, as I have said on a former occasion, the backbone of the British army. It is this feeling which teaches our soldiers to take an interest in the traditions of their regiment, and consequently to take pride in helping to keep up its good name. It must be remembered that fighting is not the only demand made upon our soldiers. It is, of course, the main object to be kept in view in any system of training, but all, especially British soldiers, must possess great powers of endurance. Without them they are really worth nothing. What is it which causes the long casualty roll during a campaign? Not the losses in battle, but the steady, never-ceasing disease brought about by insufficient and badly cooked food, hard work, night duties, and by exposure to extremes of heat and cold. Against such trials only the strongest can bear up, and unless our regiments are composed of men full grown and of prime stamina, our armies, in point of numbers weak enough at the best for the work they have to do, must dwindle away very rapidly when they take the field . . . . Depend upon it, the more men and the fewer boys there are in our army the more efficient will our regiments be; and the more the feeling of *esprit de corps* is encouraged the better will duty be carried on. Soldiers have hearts and imaginations like other men. Therefore it is that regiments are proud of their traditions. Therefore it is that the men are proud of a regiment that has made a conspicuous name, and look forward to adding to its reputation. This is *esprit de corps* . . . . With such interests at stake, it is surely worth your while to maintain an army on whose services you can always depend. A wealthy and defenceless country is merely a temptation to the cupidity of other nations. But setting all this aside, on the score of economy alone, it is of the first importance that our soldiers should be healthy and strong enough to bear the strain of foreign service. . . . . While giving my experience of British soldiers, it may, perhaps, be expected of me to say something of Her Majesty's native soldiers, with whom I have had so much to do, and of whose many valuable qualities I can speak



with some authority. During the war in Afghanistan I had the honor to command troops belonging to the Presidencies, and I can bear testimony to the loyalty, devotion, and endurance of all, whether they came from Bengal, Madras, or Bombay. From the experience I gained, I am satisfied that it only requires a careful study of the peculiarities and requirements of the individuals and the localities from which our recruits are drawn, to insure the full development of that material which already possesses such admirable qualities. To my mind it is impossible that any one system should be applied successfully to the organization of any army whose recruiting ground is an empire as large as that of India, and whose units comprise so many different elements . . . . The question of our Indian army, though surrounded by difficulties, is one that must be faced, and I am glad to think that the authorities are alive to the importance of the task they have before them . . . . It has long been in my heart to say to my countrymen what I have said to-night. These are trying times—times in which it behoves every Englishman to think of what is best for the country and the state. We have enemies without and within, and we must not hope to maintain the place we hold in the world unless we are prepared to maintain it alike by the wisdom of our counsels and by the strength and valor of our arms. At such a time it were little less than treason to know, or to believe, that there was a flaw in our army, and not to call attention clearly and earnestly to the fact. This must be my apology. I have spoken warmly and strongly, because, had I not seized this great opportunity to do so, I feel that I should have failed in my duty, not only to the noble service to which I have the great privilege to belong, but also to my country and my Queen."

In this sojourn in England, Roberts was proving to the authorities and the public that he was something more than a mere leader of men in battle. His utterances, such as those just quoted, showed him to be a man of the keenest observation, and one who had ideas of his own that he was not afraid to express. In two years campaigning he had proved himself England's best general in India; he was now proving himself capable of coping with the best military thinkers in England.

His round of entertainments and honore was, however, for the time



LORD ROBERTS RECEPTION AT THE MODDER RIVER CAMP



LORD ROBERTS AND HIS STAFF WATCHING THE BATTLE OF DRIEFONTEIN

being, to be of short duration. War had broken out in South Africa and the Boers were making an effort to throw off what they considered the British yoke. Even while the meetings already mentioned were being held in honor of Roberts, stories of humiliating disasters to the small bodies of British soldiers operating against the farmers and hunters of the Transvaal reached England from the southern seas.

Sir Theophilus Shepstone had "rushed" the annexation of the Transvaal in 1877, contrary to the wishes of many influential Boers, and the war with Cetewayo, largely on behalf of the Transvaal, necessitated the taxing of the hurchers. But the Boers could not understand why they should pay taxes; and this gave the enemies of England their opportunity. The hurchers rose in arms at the call of such men as Kruger, Pretorius, and Jonbert. On December 20 the first serious blow was struck at Bronkhorst Spruit where a brief battle was fought and the English defeated with great loss. It was, according to some historians, a success due to a treacherous act on the part of the Boers; but, whether this be true or not, they proved themselves skilled warriors and marvellous marksmen. Down into Natal their commandoes swept, and continued to operate with unvarying success, beating our soldiers "when they were on the top of the hill and we were at the bottom, and when we were on the top of the hill and they were at the bottom." When they entered Natal they first came into contact with the English at Laing's Nek. On January 28, Sir George Colley with a mounted force of 70 men, and 500 men of the 58th Regiment endeavored to drive the Boers from the strong position they had taken up; disaster followed, the troops under Colley were hopelessly beaten, and 90 were killed and 100 wounded. Eleven days later General Colley once more met the Boers at Ingogo Heights. Some British historians have been in the habit of calling this a drawn fight. It was in a way as great a disaster as was Laing's Nek. Out of his force of 338 men Colley lost 76 killed and 69 wounded. This fight hopelessly weakened his column and paved the way for the crowning disaster of Majuba Hill. The reverses Colley met with at the hands of the Boers preyed upon him, and he determined to come to battle with them once more, even before the reinforcements he had sent Sir Evelyn Wood to bring to the

front could arrive. He marched his men to the top of Majnba from which he could command the Boer position at Laing's Nek.

Fitzpatrick's account of this celebrated fight is well worth reading in connection with this struggle, especially as Fitzpatrick is not likely to give one word of praise to the Boers which is not deserved:

"On February 27," writes Fitzpatrick, "came Majuba, when Sir George Colley designed to retrieve his fortunes and strike an effective blow without the aid of his second in command, Sir Evelyn Wood, whom he had sent to hurry up reinforcements. The scaling of the mountain at night was a fine performance. The neglect to take the rocket apparatus or mountain guns, or to fortify the position in any way, or even to acquaint the members of the force with the nature of the position which they had taken up in the dark, and the failure to use the bayonet, were the principal causes of disaster. The Boers attacked in force a position which should have been absolutely impregnable, held as it was by a force of 554 soldiers. The Boer force is not known, but probably consisted of upwards of one thousand men, since Christaan Joubert after the fight offered to take a portion of the men, numbering, as he said, some 500, to attack a small British laager on one of the spurs of the mountain. The splendid feat of taking the hilltop, however, was accomplished by a small storming party of less than 200 men, the balance of the Boer forces covering the approach of their comrades by an accurate and incessant long-range fire. The result, as is known, was terrible disaster: 92 killed and 134 wounded and a number taken prisoners represented the British loss, while the Boers lost one killed and five wounded. No attempt had been made to occupy positions below the crown of the hill which commanded the approaches, and the Boers were able to creep up under good cover from place to place by the exercise of their admirable tactics. It is impossible to detract from the performance of the Boers, and a glance at the position leaves one more astonished than ever that a successful attack could ever have been made upon it. The Boers displayed on this day the finest fighting qualities. The generalship of their fighting commandant, Nikolas Smit, was of the highest order. The cleverness of the attack, and the personal bravery and audacity of the storming party are beyond praise."

Before this defeat negotiations had been going on between the belligerent powers—if the Transvaal could be called a power—but the death of Colley and his men checked the negotiations and the British government felt that it must do something to retrieve the honor of England on the field of battle. The man best able to handle troops in South Africa was at that moment in England, the idol of the people, Sir Frederick Roberts. His experiences with the Umbeyia expedition, as leader of the Kuram Field Force, and at Kabul and Kandahar, peculiarly fitted him for conducting operations among the kopjes and mountain ranges of South Africa against the sturdy farmers and hunters of the Transvaal. Government recognized this and despatched him with a strong force to Natal. But scarcely was his ship out of sight of land, when England came to terms with the Boer leaders.

Sir Evelyn Wood felt that, considering the disasters the British had sustained, he should first engage the Boers, whip them soundly, and then England could afford to be magnanimous. However Sir Evelyn was forced by his position to be the medium of communication between the Gladstone government and the Boers, and on March 21 a preliminary peace was concluded "which under certain conditions, guaranteed the restoration of the country within six months, and left all other points to be decided by a royal commission."

A howl of indignation went up from the British subjects in South Africa. Mr. Rider Haggard who was in that country at the time, thus writes of the intensity of the feeling roused by this "peace without honor," to use the words of Roberts in speaking of these same terms:

"Newcastle was a curious sight the night after the peace was declared. Every hotel and bar was crowded with refugees who were trying to relieve their feelings by cursing the name of Gladstone, with a vigor, originality, and earnestness that I have never heard equalled; and declaring in ironical terms how proud they were to be citizens of England—a country that always kept its word. Then they set to work with many demonstrations of contempt to burn the effigy of the right honorable gentleman at the head of Her

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\*The Last Boer War by H. Rider Haggard.

Majesty's government, an example, by the way, that was followed throughout South Africa.

"Even Sir Evelyn Wood, who is very popular in the colony, was hissed as he walked through the town, and great surprise was expressed that a soldier who came out expressly to fight the Boers should consent to become the medium of communication in such a dirty business. And, indeed, there was some excuse for all this bitterness, for the news meant ruin to very many.

"But if people in Natal and the Cape received the news with astonishment, how shall I describe its effect upon the unfortunate loyal inhabitants in the Transvaal, upon whom it hurst like a thunderbolt?

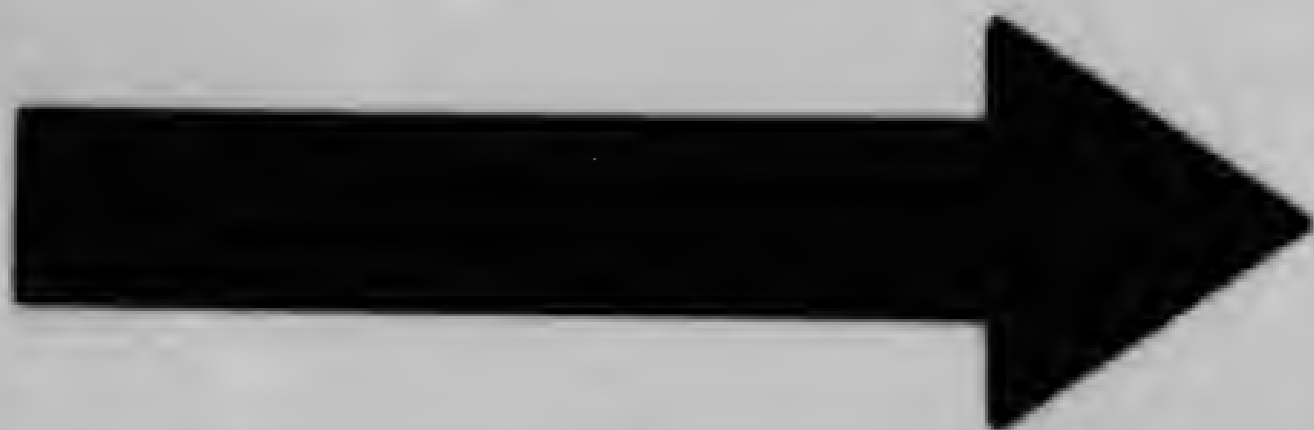
"They did not say much, however, and indeed there was nothing to be said. They simply began to pack up such things as they could carry with them and to leave the country, which they well knew from henceforth would be utterly untenable for Englishmen or English sympathizers. In a few weeks they came pouring down through Newcastle by hundreds; it was the most melancholy exodus that can be imagined. There were people of all classes—officials, gentlefolk, work-people, and loyal Boers; but they had a connecting link, they had all been loyal, and they were all ruined."

So when Roberts reached South Africa he found that the campaign his busy brain had planned as his vessel ploughed its way over the six thousand miles of ocean between England and Cape Town was not to be realized. His stay at the Cape was to prove a short one—only twenty-four hours; then he was hurried back to England, cogitating over what he had learned of the state of affairs and the feeling in South Africa, and with forebodings of future serious difficulties for England in the land of veldt and kopje.

This "wild goose chase" in South Africa spoiled six weeks out of the "precious months of leave" he was enjoying. On his return to England honors continued to be heaped upon him. In June he was gazetted a G.C.B. and a baronet for the work he had done in Afghanistan. In August he had a pleasant break in his visit to England by three weeks' attendance at the military manœuvres at Hanover in Schleswig-Holstein, where he was the guest of the emperor of Germany. In the autumn he was offered the post of

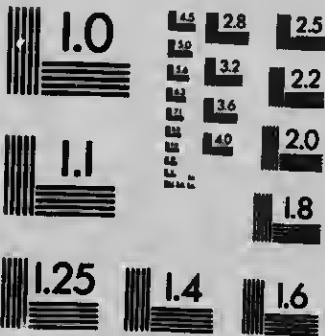
quartermaster-general of the Horse Guards, but before the offer came he had made all his arrangements to sail to India to take up his duties as commander-in-chief of the Madras army, and was therefore constrained to refuse it. Shortly after this, with his wife and two daughters, he left England and sailed for the land where he had already spent nearly thirty years of his life.





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## CHAPTER XXX.

### RETURN TO INDIA AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE INDIAN ARMY.

In the Madras Presidency—A Trip to Rangoon—Resting in Ootacamund, "The Queen of Hill Stations"—Enthusiastic About Rifle-Shooting—Reforming Army Discipline—The Periodical Russian War-Cloud—Getting Ready for War—Russia a Power for Good in Asia—A Russian Force Attacks the Garrison at Pandjeb—England and Abdur Rahman—The War-Cloud Passes Over—Roberts Appointed Commander-in-Chief in India—A Trip to England—In India Once More—Reforming the Army—Securing the Northern Frontier Against Russia—Lady Roberts' Noble Work for the Sick in India—Her "Homes in the Hills"—The Dacoits of Burmah—Roberts' Army Temperance Work.

ROBERTS had now work to do that was quite as important as even the command of such a column as he had victoriously marched from Kahul to Kandahar. He was commander-in-chief of one of the most important districts in India, the Madras Presidency, and had an opportunity of putting in practice many of the theories he had long held with regard to the needs of the army. He made his headquarters at Ootacamund, a delightful hill station, and after a brief rest there and an enjoyable Christmas, he, accompanied by his wife, paid a visit to Burmah. On the road to Rangoon cholera broke out on the ship, but Roberts' judgment and the precautions he took kept it from becoming a very serious affair.

At Rangoon Roberts' time was occupied in seeing to the defenses of the place. His report on the condition of affairs in Burmah, and the fortifications necessary to make the country a secure one and easy to protect, is marked by the excellent good sense which has been the leading trait of his character throughout his entire career. His work in Burmah completed, he returned to India and went to "Ooty," as he calls Ootacamund, which was to him, "The Queen of Hill Stations," and where he seems to have enjoyed life quite as much as at Simla.

He was to have several years of "peace and repose" in this charming resort; and he needed them. Few generals had ever endured more than the

commander-in-chief of Madras. In the beginning of his Indian career Peshawar fever had sapped his strength, and scarcely had he recovered from that disease, which had driven him twice to the fair vale of Kashmir, before he was plunged into the Great Mutiny. Then followed a year of incredible hardships; days and nights in the saddle; improper and irregular meals; sleep, when he could snatch a few brief minutes—his iron constitution collapsed. After a long rest he returned to the trying climate of India, and although it was some years before he was to see campaigning he still felt the evil effects of his early experiences. The Umbeyla expedition and the Lushai affair were both trying on his constitution, but his two years in Afgharistan had left him a physical wreck, and his too brief sojourn in England had not completely restored him to health. It is little wonder, then, that "Ooty," with its charming scenery and cool breezes, seemed to him an earthly paradise. Still he was not idle; his nervous, energetic temperament would not permit of that, and much of his time was spent in hunting and riding; and during the short cold season of each year he visited the wide region throughout which the Madras army was scattered.

The men of the Madras army he found to be no longer a sturdy fighting race. Through "long years of peace," as he says, "and the security and prosperity attending it," they had become enervated, and much inferior to the hardy little Gurkhas and the noble Sikhs with whom he had been associated in arms for so many years. But there was one respect in which they might excel. Good marksmen require intelligence, and this the men of the Madras army had to a greater extent than perhaps any other soldiers in India. Up to this time in the Indian army there had been but little enthusiasm in regard to musketry instruction. As Roberts points out, the officers generally did not recognize the fact that the rifle was rapidly becoming the great weapon in modern war. Their lack of interest was natural. Their war experiences had been in the Mutiny and against the hill tribes, and for winning victories against such enemies artillery fire and the bayonet charge had been found most useful. A short, sharp fight at close quarters, a wild charge, and the enemy had ever been scattered. Volley firing was useful, but individual firing was looked upon as a useless waste of good ammunition.

But between his Afghan experiences of 1879-80, and his return to India in 1881 he had been taught a lesson that English officers as a whole have been slow to learn even to the present day. The Boer War of 1881 had in the meantime been fought, and although but small bodies of troops were engaged, England had suffered the most humiliating reverses in the history of her military career. Her disciplined soldiers, under able leaders, had been beaten by a race of men who had never studied military tactics or strategy, and who went into the fight without bayonet or sword. Marksmanship had been largely responsible for the disasters of Laing's Nek and Majuba Hill. The steady arm and sure eye of the Boer had broken the solid ranks of the British infantry. Roberts, quick to learn from his own experiences or the experiences of others, saw the need of devoting quite as much attention to musketry training as to artillery manœuvres. He was beginning to realize, what the majority of English soldiers have not yet realized; that a boy who can shoot straight is worth more than a giant who does not understand the weapon placed in his hands. The commander-in-chief of the Madras army recognized this fact, and not only encouraged rifle-practice, but, with his staff, enthusiastically took up rifle-shooting.

This was not by any means the most important of his reforms. To every department of the service he gave his attention, and the army under him became more efficient and the soldiers happier for these reforms. Perhaps the noblest work he did at this time was in connection with the punishment of soldiers. To his Bayard-like nature the vice, and crime, and suffering among soldiers had ever been painful; and from the earliest days of his connection with the army he had looked forward to elevating its moral tone. He was convinced, ever since his experience at the flogging parade at Peshawar, that the punishment meted out to the soldiers had a great deal to do with the prevalence of crime, and so he determined to make radical changes in the methods of treating offenders, especially where the offenders were young men. His own words with regard to this matter are of the greatest interest.

\*"I had been," he writes, "unpleasantly struck by the frequent courts-

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\*Roberts: *Forty-One Years in India*.



HOLES WHERE TWO BRITISH OFFICERS WERE CONFINED BY THE BOERS AT PAARDEBERG



**BOER TRENCHES AT PAARDEBERG**  
In Cronje's Lager at Paardeberg: the whole river bank on both sides was honeycombed with trenches.

martial on the younger soldiers, and by the disproportionate number of these lads to be met with in the military prisons. Even when the prisoners happened to be of some length of service, I usually found that they had undergone previous imprisonment, and had been severely punished within a short time of their enlistment. I urged that, in the first two or three years of a soldier's service, every allowance should be made for youth and inexperience, and that during that time faults should, whenever practicable, be dealt with summarily, and not visited with the heavier punishment which a court-martial sentence necessarily carries with it, and I pointed out that this procedure might receive a wider application, and become a guiding principle in the treatment of soldiers generally. I suggested that all men in possession of a good conduct badge, or who had had no entry in their company defaulter sheets for one year, should be granted certain privileges, such as receiving the fullest indulgence in the grant of passes, consistent with the requirements of health, duty and discipline; and being excused attendance at all roll calls (including meals), except perhaps at tattoo. I had often remarked that those corps in which indulgences were most freely given contained the largest number of well-behaved men, and I have been assured that such indulgences were seldom abused; and that, while they were greatly appreciated by those who received them, they acted as an incentive to less well-conducted men to try and redeem their characters.

"The reports of commanding officers, on the results of these small ameliorations, after a six months' trial, were so favorable that I was able to authorize still further concessions as a premium for good behavior."

It is not hard to understand why Roberts has a place in the heart of the British soldier such as no other general ever had. He looked upon them and treated them as men, not as mere parts of a great fighting machine. They were intelligent, moral beings with feelings such as their officers had. This was something new to the soldier of the British army. Even the great Wellington, although he was admired by his men, and although they would follow him with absolute trust into the most forlorn positions, never won the love of his soldiers. He made no effort to win their affections: there were given punishments for given offences, and if they broke the laws of the army



It was only just that they should be punished with imprisonment or with the "cat." Roberts was a degree higher in the estimation of the army than the Iron Duke; he had the admiration and trust of his men, and likewise their love. General improvement was manifested in the army, due partly, no doubt, to the rapid advance being made, through education, in general civilization, but in no small degree due to the considerate treatment meted out to offenders by Roberts and his officers, who were not slow to imitate his example.

Until 1885 his time, when not resting quietly in his home in "Ooty," was taken up with rifle meetings, camps of exercise, his efforts at reform, and, with his wife, in visiting the places of historical interest or those renowned for their beauty in the Madras Presidency; and although none of the spots were quite as magnificent as glimpses of the Simla region, and none of the shrines visited equal in delicate beauty to the Taj Mahal of Agra, they saw much that made them marvel at the skill and intelligence of the early inhabitants of the country in which they were playing such an important part. The current of their life continued to run in this smooth channel until the spring of 1885.

In the latter part of February of that year, England was stirred to a considerable pitch of excitement by a rumor that Russia was advancing on Afghanistan. Questions on the subject were put in the House, and the reply of Lord Granville did little to allay the excitement.

"According to the latest reports," he said, "the Russian outposts have occupied the Zulfikar pass, about twenty miles to the south of Pul-i-Khatum, Akrobat, between Zulfikar and the river Khushk and Sari-Yazi. Representations were being made to the Russian government, earnestly pressing them to give stringent orders to their military commander to refrain from any further forward movements, which would bring about a collision between the Afghan and Russian outposts. The Russian government, in reply to the remonstrance from Her Majesty's government, declined, on February 24, to withdraw their advance posts at Sari-Yazi and the Zulfikar pass, but gave assurances that their officers had been ordered carefully to avoid conflicts

with the Afghans, and that complications were only to be feared in the event of the Afghans attacking the Russian posts."

Several weeks later, however, the aspect of things looked less serious, when Mr. Gladstone announced in the House of Commons that, "It has been agreed between Russia and England that no further advances are to be made on either side." In the meantime in India, Lord Dufferin, the viceroy, had arranged a meeting with the Amir Abdur Rahman "to arrange for the defence and demarcation of His Highness' frontier." The late Sir Donald Stewart, then commander-in-chief in India, sent a telegram to Roberts, which reached him at Multan while on his way with Lord Dufferin to the conference with Abdur Rahman, saying that it was his intention to mobilize two army corps, and that Roberts was to have command of the first. This was good news for Roberts. He had grown somewhat weary of the routine of the past five years, and the war-cloud that was now threatening seemed to offer him a greater field of operations than he had had in either the Mutiny or in Afghanistan. Russia coveted India, so thought Roberts, and so thought the majority of Englishmen of his day; and even yet the slightest lowering of the war thermometer directs the attention of many minds towards India's northern frontier. If it is true that she does covet India or Afghanistan she has certainly made no effort, at a time when England's resources were severely taxed, in the Great Boer war, to strike her at this very vulnerable spot.

England's attitude towards Russia in the past, while no doubt tending to give the Empire a greater feeling of security in her Asiatic possessions, has done not a little to retard civilization. Roberts himself deploras the Russian advance on Merv, and when this place became a Russian possession he said with considerable feeling that "Turkestan was in direct communication by rail and steamer with St. Petersburg."

Towards the end of March of this critical year the Duke of Argyll in dealing with the situation spoke as follows: "As far as I understand the position of affairs, they are entirely altered from what they were. I am still of opinion that it was highly inexpedient to remonstrate with Russia on what were called her advances in Central Asia, which were in reality inevitable. I was always of opinion that up to the point of the possession of Merv the

progress of Russia in that country was inevitable; and, on the whole, was not undesirable, for the result of my enquiries went to show that Merv was a nest of robbers, and that there was no possibility of any peace or any progress or any commerce in Central Asia until the Turkomans had been subdued under some civilized power. But from the moment that Russia arrived at Merv and put one step forward towards Herat the whole political situation became altered. I must express the pleasure with which I have heard the assurance of my noble friend that Her Majesty's government will not be accused of any finching or weakness in this matter, and that they are determined to hold to what they believe to be the policy of this country in regard to Afghanistan, and that they are resolved to support the Afghan kingdom in the defense to the utmost extent of its ancient territory."

The country into which Russia had advanced was one of the most barbarous and turbulent in the world. The Turkomans lived by murder and robbery and slave dealing, they were broken by the power of Russia and peace and prosperity reigned in the region they had so long terrorized. It is true the Russians were somewhat brutal, as Russians have ever been, in the treatment of their enemies; but the heart of Asia would be far better controlled by a nation that can produce a Tolstoi and a Turgenieff than by hands of brutal slave-dealers and robbers. So far as the occupation of Merv was concerned the Russian advance southward had been an excellent thing. But it looked as if they would not stop there. The objective of the Russian force under General-in-Chief Komaroff seemed to be Herat—and that was another story. There was a strong Afghan garrison at Pandjeh near Herat, and Komaroff found a pretext to attack it, and although losing heavily himself scattered the Afghans, killing over 500 men out of a force of about four thousand.

The result of the fight at Pandjeh reached the Amir while at the conference with Lord Dufferin, and, as a result of this news, the situation became more interesting to the soldiers in India. But the Amir himself treated it lightly, and returned to Kahul swearing eternal friendship to the British and richer by "ten lakhs of rupees, 20,000 breech-loading rifles, a heavy battery of four guns and two bowitzers, a mountain battery, and a

liberal supply of ammunition for both guns and rifles." He had reason to be pleased with the British; but these were dangerous gifts to bestow on an Afghan; the howitzers and breech-loaders were more likely to be used against the English than against the Russians; such generosity in the past had cost England many gallant officers and men.

The attack on Pandjeh had increased the excitement in both England and India. At home the financial panic occasioned by the threatening war spread, and its effects were felt in Europe. "Rates for insurance had been enormously increased; much of the Manchester cotton trade had come to a deadlock in consequence of the total cessation of buying or export; and the prices of corn all over the country had rapidly gone up."

In India the greatest enthusiasm over the war prevailed, and the various military camps were crowded with old soldiers eager to march against the Russian army. But fortunately for humanity the war cloud blew over. Roberts attributed the altered state of affairs to a change of government and the determined attitude of Lord Salisbury. No doubt the lesson taught Russia in the Crimea, where she was fighting on her own soil, made her think twice before attempting to invade a foreign country strong in men and arms and assisted by such an ally as England. Whatever the reasons were the war cloud did not break, and Roberts was permitted to spend three more restful months at "Ooty." As a humanitarian he was no doubt rejoiced that the danger which had threatened India was passed, but as a soldier he would have appreciated meeting some of the Russian strategists; so far his campaigning had been against men of inferior races.

Whatever feelings of disappointment he may have had vanished when, on July 8, he received a telegram from Lord Dufferin informing him that he had been appointed commander-in-chief in India in succession to his old friend and comrade in arms, Sir Donald Stewart. Along with the announcement he was told he had leave to visit England; it was evident that the Russian scare was effectually at an end.

He left Bombay early in August, and, after leisurely journeying through Europe, spending some pleasant holidays with his family in Italy and

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<sup>1</sup>"India's Danger and England's Duty," by Richard Russell.

Switzerland, arrived safely in England, where he spent a brief six weeks, and then returned to India as commander-in-chief of the forces there. Slowly, but surely, by his energy, perseverance, intelligence, and nobility of character, he had risen from cadet to commander-in-chief in the land of his birth. There was still much work before him; more rungs left in the ladder of fame which he was climbing; he could still mount upwards.

He at once went to work to reform and improve the Indian army. He had long since learned that the weak point in the army was the commissariat and the transport department. On account of defective transport, delays had occurred in his own experience that permitted a beaten enemy to escape; thus, to a great extent, causing the victors to lose the advantage gained by a well-fought battle. He recollected, too, how much more hazardous his advance on Kabul, and particularly the final struggle before entering the city of the Amir, had been on account of inadequate transport. His long experiences as quartermaster-general made him fully cognizant of the weaknesses in the army and the remedies; and as soon as he was placed at the head of military affairs in India a marked improvement took place.

He was a great believer in camps of exercise and in reviews, and in January of '86 arranged for a review on a monster scale near Delhi. Thirty-five thousand soldiers were in line, and Lord Dufferin and the twelve foreign officers who were present commented favorably on the soldierly bearing and the intelligence of the troops. The foreigners were of course critical, and believed that the native army would be greatly improved by a larger proportion of European officers than they had on this occasion. They likewise agreed that the fire-control was defective. This last evil Roberts, as we have seen, had already, with the experiences of the army in South Africa before him, been endeavoring to improve while commander-in-chief of the army in Madras, and he was to continue the work throughout the entire army of India with the help of such a brilliant soldier as Ian Hamilton.

But the work in which he probably took the most interest while commander-in-chief of the forces in India was that which he did along the northern frontier with a view to moving an army to the front to prevent a Russian advance into India, and in so fortifying the boundary as to make it

easy to defend. He first made a thorough inspection of the frontier and reported to the government on the defenses he deemed necessary. The government had absolute confidence in the man at the head of the army in the east and ably carried out his suggestions; so much so that, when he resigned the position of commander-in-chief and bade a permanent farewell to India, he felt that his efforts had made a Russian advance across the Afghan hills an impossibility.

While he was thus carefully studying the northern frontier he was at the same time doing a work that was even better for the peace of India than building forts and ramparts. From his first days in India he had had great admiration for the hillmen. His father's example and the example of his beau ideal of a man and a soldier, John Nicholson, in their dealings with the tribesmen were ever before him; and his aim was always to make them friendly toward England. He succeeded in no small measure, and there was little danger of a repetition of the early Afghan wars while Roberts remained in India. His personality inspired affection. Everyone knows how Roberts is loved by the rank and file of the army. He had an equally good effect on the native races in India; Pathan, Gurkha, Sikh alike came under the spell of the little general whose courage they could rely on, and who treated all races over whom he held power with the same considerate tenderness. To the hillmen with whom he came in contact he was another John Nicholson, and his insight into their characters and his attitude towards them was worth more to England in keeping peace in the region between Peshawar and Kabul than several brigades would have been. His generous treatment of the races he had subdued with the sword created a love that did much to make this peace abiding; although, no doubt, the hillmen had still visibly in mind the way he had brushed them aside and crumpled them up when he advanced through their country to avenge the death of Cavagnari and to relieve Kandahar.

While he was doing this good work, Lady Roberts was equally busy. She had seen much sickness and suffering in India, much that was unnecessary. More soldiers had succumbed to disease through lack of proper nursing than ever fell victims to sword or bullet. As her husband

says, she had had a scheme for supplying skilled nursing to the military hospitals in India, "very much at heart for many years." The opportunity of doing good work for the army she loved quite as much as did Lord Roberts was hers, and she was not slow to take advantage of it. She laid her scheme before the authorities, and so wisely did she do it that the government in England and India were swift to act on her suggestions. In making her appeal she showed excellent common sense. She knew the English government and public well. England is essentially a commercial nation, a business nation. Even the soldiers who fight her battles are to some extent commodities to be valued in pounds, shillings and pence. A tender appeal would no doubt affect many, but Lady Roberts recognized that a dispassionate business statement of the case would be more likely to make the government see the need of adopting her suggestions, and she drove her appeal home by the following telling words: "When one considers what an expensive article the British soldier is, costing, as he does, one hundred pounds before landing in India, it seems certain that on the score of economy alone, altogether setting aside the humane aspect of the question, it is well worth the state's while to provide him with skilled nursing care." Her appeal was granted, and without ostentation work had been done that was to make India a country where the sick and wounded and worn out could receive as good care as they could in the hospitals of England.

Her husband had been ennobled for slaying his thousands. Is there no reward for those such as Florence Nightingale and Lady Roberts who save their tens of thousands? It is now many years since Gibbon wrote as follows: "As long as mankind shall continue to bestow more liberal applause on their destroyers than on their benefactors, the thirst of military glory will ever be the vice of the most exalted characters." This is unfortunately as true now as it ever was. The army leaders return from battle amid the acclamations of an enthusiastic people, and have riches and honors bestowed upon them, while the surgeons who have in many cases risked more in the field, and the nurses who have endured more in the hospitals, are alike to fortune and to fame unknown.

One part of Lady Roberts' scheme was the establishment of "Homes in



THE SECOND CONTINGENT CAMP, NEWTON PARK, WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND.





NEW ZEALAND BOYS WHO DIED FOR QUEEN AND EMPIRE

the Hills" for the nursing sisters as "health resorts, and to prevent the expense to the government of their having to be sent home on sick leave when worn out by their trying work in the plains." This was too far to ask the government to go. The soldiers had their commercial value, but the nurses—that was another matter; and while the secretary of state saw the wisdom of such establishments he did not deem it a part of the government's duty to maintain them. They could, however, be established and maintained by private subscription. This was all Lady Roberts desired. Homes were soon established at Murree, Kasauli, at Quetta in Bengal, and at Wellington in Madras. For the support of these homes Lady Roberts appealed to the army and all the money she required was quickly raised. Generals gave their pounds, drummer boys and buglers their pence; all ranks and races were eager to help on the scheme that meant so much to them.

In the first year of Roberts' occupation of the commander-in-chief's position, Burmah was found to be in a most disturbed condition. Bands of dacoits were raiding and robbing, and there was no peace in the land. Roberts made a hurried trip to Rangoon, took in the situation and soon had the country quiet, and the leaders of the dacoits either slain or captured. This work satisfactorily accomplished he hurried back to the peace and beauty of his Simla home.

He went on industriously with his army reforms. He had long deplored the excessive drinking that was practised by the soldiers of the Indian army, and put forth much of his energy to stamp out the evil. In his reforms he shows the same common sense that marked his military reforms. The evil was not drinking, but excessive and unwise drinking. Just as the saloon is the curse of the modern city, so the canteen, that "relic of barbarism," he saw to be the curse of the army. In 1887 he had bestowed on him the Grand Cross of the India Empire, but this was not the Jubilee reward which pleased him most. That the government was prepared to accept his suggestions with regard to army reform gave him greater joy. His own words on his temperance efforts for the army are quite as interesting to the student of his life as anything he has written about his military achievements.

"My name appeared," he writes, "in the Jubilee Gazette as having been given the Grand Cross of the Indian Empire, but what I valued still more was the acceptance by the government of India of my strong recommendation for the establishment of a club or institute in every British battery or regiment in India. In urging that this measure should be favorably considered, I had said that the British army in India could have no better or more generally beneficial memorial of the Queen's Jubilee than the abolition of that relic of barbarism, the canteen, and its supersession by an institute, in which the soldier would have under the same roof a reading room, a recreation room, and a decently managed refreshment room.

"Lord Dufferin's government met my views in the most liberal spirit, and with the sanction of Lord Cross 'The Regimental Institute' became a recognized establishment, a fact which my colleagues in council referred to as a second Jubilee honor for me.

"At a time when nearly every soldier could read and write, and when we hoped to attract to the army men of a better stamp and more respectable antecedents than those of which it was composed in 'the good old days,' it appeared to me a humiliating anachronism that the degrading system of the canteen should still prevail, and that it was impossible for any man to retain his self-respect if he were driven to take his glass of beer under the rules by which regimental canteens were governed. I believed, too, that the more the status of the rank and file could be raised, and the greater the efforts made to provide them with rational recreation and occupation in their leisure hours, the less there would be of drunkenness and consequently of crime, the less immorality and the greater the number of efficient soldiers in the army.

"Funds having been granted, a scheme was drawn up for the erection of buildings and for the management of the institutes. Canteens were reduced in size, and such attractions as musical instruments were removed to the recreation rooms; the name of 'liquor bar' was substituted for that of 'canteen,' and, that there should be no excuse for frequenting the 'liquor bar,' I authorized a moderate and limited amount of beer to be served, if required, with the men's suppers in the refreshment room—an arrangement which has been followed by the happiest results."

His efforts were crowned with success, and a general elevation of the whole moral tone of the army in India was the result. He had worked on the principle of creating as he destroyed. Men are gregarious and social animals; they must have meeting places and amusements, and if the unhealthy and destructive pleasures they have been accustomed to are abolished, healthy pleasures must be substituted.

He had expected considerable opposition in these reforms, but to the common soldier anything that "Bohs" did was right—and then they were still able to obtain a little beer. When he began his reforms there were a number of temperance associations in the army conducted by the various religious bodies, and he had expected that he would meet with some opposition from the extreme advocates of total abstinence. The co-operation of the clergy was essential to the success of his general Army Temperance Association. "With two exceptions," he says, "the clergymen to whom I appealed . . . expressed sympathy with my aims and efforts." In commenting on this he remarks—and it is about the only cutting thing in his autobiography—that he considered it "a proof of liberal mindedness on the part of the prelates which was extremely refreshing." But then no one could resist Roberts; Hindu and Mahomedan, Catholic and Protestant, officers and privates, and even the clergymen were ready to follow his lead. He had been tried and proved; and they had never detected a selfish motive in his long career in India.

His first two years as commander-in-chief were, as can be readily seen, busy ones; and were more productive of permanent good than the work of all the previous commanders-in-chief

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### FAREWELL TO INDIA.

General Roberts Strengthens the Coast of India—Lord Dufferin as Viceroy—Succeeded by Lord Lansdowne—The Amir Abdur Rahman Unfriendly—Afghanistan Still a Danger to India—Roberts Prepares to Return to England—Ordered to Remain in India Two Years Longer—Punitive Expeditions—The Indian Army Greatly Improved—Russian Intrigue Once More—The Hunza-Naga Campaign—Created Baron Roberts of Kandahar and Waterford—A Visit to Burmah and Nepal—Saying Farewell to India—Farewell Address of the Sikhs of the Punjab—A "Pig-Sticking" Adventure—Leaves Bombay for England—Recapitulation of Roberts' Work in India—Created a Field-Marshal—Appointed Commander-in-Chief in Ireland—"The Rise of Wellington"—His Masterly Autobiography—More Active Service Before Him.

**W**HILE Roberts was industriously raising the moral tone of the army he did not neglect the duties peculiarly entailed on him as commander-in-chief. He made frequent visits to the frontier, the part of India to which he was most attached, and likewise devoted much of his time to coast defense. Since the days of Trafalgar England's pre-eminence on the seas was so great that there was literally no danger of any foreign power attempting to attack the rich cities in her far colony of India; but Russia was rapidly growing in power and influence, and if she should once succeed in getting a port in the east or the south, the gravest danger to England's rule in Asia might not be from the direction of Afghanistan but from the ocean. The long coast line and the populous cities would without doubt tempt Russian aggression, if Russia ever succeeded in placing a strong fleet in the eastern seas. Roberts recognized this, and keeping ever before him the thought that the best way to maintain peace is to be ready for war, put forth much of his energy in making the great military centres on the coast safe from foreign invasion. Rangoon, in Burmah; Calcutta, at the mouth of the Hugli; Madras, on the south-east of the peninsula; Bombay, on the west; and Karachi, on the extreme west towards Beluchistan, were all put in a state of excellent defense at a cost of less than £4,000,000.

During the early part of his career as commander-in-chief, Roberts had the able assistance of the viceroy, Lord Dufferin, in his reforms and the work he was doing for the safety of England; but Lord Dufferin went to England in 1888, much to the regret of all classes and particularly to the regret of Roberts. He had proved himself the same patient, industrious, wise ruler in the east that he had been during his term of office as governor-general of Canada. He was fortunately succeeded by Lord Lansdowne, who had had his training for India in the less complicated vice-regal position of governor-general of Canada.

The new viceroy worked along the lines of his great predecessor, and to Roberts' delight showed himself anxious to aid in the task of making India as impregnable as possible against Russia, and of cultivating the most friendly relations with the frontier tribes. He visited, along with the commander-in-chief, some of the more important districts on the frontier, and together they did their best to spread British influence. But they both feared for the future; that most unreliable quantity, the Afghan, was showing signs of dissatisfaction. The Amir Abdur Rahman owed everything to the British troops; his position he had received from their hands, and that he had so long dwelt secure in Kabul was due to their friendship. Guns, rifles, ammunition, money, had been bestowed on him in no scant measure; but he was not satisfied, and assumed an attitude towards the British that was far from friendly. This was most deplorable, as another invasion of Afghanistan would mean the loss of many men, much suffering, and nothing could be gained by a war among those wretched hills. However, although Abdur maintained his sulky, stubborn attitude towards all attempts of the viceroy and commander-in-chief to be friendly with him, a call to arms was not found necessary; but until the present day Afghanistan looms black and threatening, and from its hills a thunderbolt may yet be hurled with destructive force into the British possessions of India. Had the Afghans but the leaders and the guns (and the British have done much to provide them with the weapons) a repetition of the deplorable war which has been horrifying the world for the past two years in South Africa might occur north of Peshawar. Their country is even more difficult of access than the Transvaal, and had they but Creusots

and Krupps and the ammunition, a guerilla warfare might be carried on for years among their hills; a warfare that would keep thousands of England's best soldiers tied up on the northern frontier of India; and if it should so happen that an outbreak should occur at a time when England was embroiled with such a power as France or Russia, the most disastrous results would be apt to follow.

For five years Roberts went on with his good work in India, and as his schemes of reform were for the most part being carried out according to his wishes, and the chances of war, despite the attitude of Abdur Rahman, seemed very remote, he began to long for England and a rest. It was therefore with a great deal of pleasure that he received word from Mr. Edward Stanhope, secretary-of-state for war, that, if he would accept it, the government was prepared to appoint him adjutant-general in succession to Lord Wolseley. He had already had thirty-eight years in India, and was, despite the splendid career he had had, somewhat tired of the east, and had begun to long for the quiet and repose of his English home. He was very glad indeed to accept the offer, and word came to him to get ready to return to England in the autumn; but he was to receive a disappointment. Scarcely had he begun to make his preparations when another message came from the government telling him that it was impossible to find a successor to the post of commander-in-chief in India and ordering him to remain in the east for another two years. It was a bitter disappointment; no doubt felt all the more because his military career had been one remarkably free from disappointments.

However he was needed in India. Some of the frontier tribes had grown weary of the long peace, and had been doing a little murdering and plundering just to keep their hands in practice. Several punitive expeditions were sent against them and swift punishment meted out to the frontier rebels, who were not slow to recognize that the hero of Peiwar Kotal and Kandahar was still in India. About this time, too, Mr. Quinton, the chief commissioner of Assam, and four British officers had been murdered, and it was necessary to punish the Raja of Manipur in whose domain this brutal murder had occurred. The country was a difficult one to reach, as difficult as was the

land of the Lushais, but the British columns succeeded in reaching Manipur and inflicting severe punishment on the murderers.

All this time Roberts went on with his reforms. It has already been pointed out that he did much to bring rifle shooting to a high standard in the army in India; but the other arms of the service were not neglected. Under him both the artillery and cavalry received attention, and marked improvement took place in these divisions of the army. A general's strength is not as a mere leader; it lies more in his wisdom in selecting good officers for subordinate positions. The improvement that took place in the army was due very largely to his excellent choice of officers; the soldiers in India could not but become more efficient with Lieutenant-Colonel Ian Hamilton as assistant-adjutant of musketry, with Major-General Nairne as inspector-general of artillery, and Major-General Luck as inspector-general of cavalry.

Before leaving India Roberts was to have one more period of alarm through Russian intrigue. Russia, with her land hunger, began again to creep southward—this time towards the northern boundary of Kashmir. It was necessary to send an expedition against the chief of Hunza, and as a result "the brilliant little Hunza-Naga campaign" was fought, and Russia was shown that so long as Roberts was in India southward she could not go; and the tribes in the vicinity of Kashmir were made to realize, as the tribes north of Peshawar had been made to realize, that any attempt to do the British injury in Asia would only mean calamity to themselves.

Roberts was not without rewards for the good work he was doing for England. Honors continued to be bestowed upon him: in 1890 he was made a full general, and in the honor list on New Year's day, '92, it was seen that the Queen had elevated him to the peerage with the title of Baron Roberts of Kandahar and Waterford. He was offered a further extension of his term as commander-in-chief in India; but the desire he had in 1890 to see England had increased; and as he could not, if he accepted the offer of the government, even take a brief holiday to the motherland, he begged leave to resign his position in the spring of 1893.

For the balance of his sojourn in India he was not idle. He paid a hurried visit to Burmah, and in Nepal was present at a great review of the



troops. An incident which occurred at this review well illustrates the military spirit. General Schandra Shamsher, the executive commander-in-chief of the Nepal army, "a red hat soldier," was conversing with Lady Roberts when he remarked: "Lady Roberts, when are the Russians coming? I wish they would make haste. We have 40,000 soldiers in Nepal ready for war, and there is no one to fight." Create an army, arm the nation, and war, "the vice of the most exalted minds," will be eagerly sought after. Militarism is a curse to any nation, and though out of the bleeding chaos wrought by the hand of war some splendid figures have risen, they are not sufficient to compensate for the loss, the suffering, the hatred produced by the savage hurling of man against man in bloody conflict.

Roberts continued to work in India until 1893 when, with the beginning of the year, he was made to realize that he was about to leave the east forever. Addresses and gifts were showered upon him and Lady Roberts, and he was now to learn how genuinely he was esteemed by all races. Sikhs of the Punjab, Hindus of the Punjab, Mahomedans of the Punjab, Europeans in the Punjab, the Talukdars of Oudh, the residents of Calcutta, all presented him with addresses characteristic of the different peoples, but all filled with gratitude and love. Roberts gives in the appendix to his *Forty-One Years in India* these addresses, and, as they were in every case genuine expressions of the people who presented them, a perusal of any one of them will show how highly he was esteemed, and how his work in India and Afghanistan was valued by the peoples most concerned in it. Take for example the following address by the Sikhs of the Punjab, which was presented in the town hall at Lahore before an audience made up of a motley crowd of the different races and creeds in India:

\*"TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HON. FREDERICK BARON ROBERTS OF KANDAHAR AND WATERFORD, BART., V. C., G. C. B., G. C. I. E., R. A.,  
*Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's Forces in India:*

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

"We, the undersigned, representing the Sikhs of the Punjab, most respectfully beg to approach Your Excellency with this humble address of

\*Roberts; *Forty-One Years in India*.



THE NOBLE DEAD



THE LATE MR. G.W. STEEVENS.

MAJOR H. SCOTT TURNER

LIEUT. THE HON. T.H.S. ROBERTS R.C.

THE LATE LIEUT. F.G. EGERTON R.N.

THE LATE EARL OF AVA.

THE NOBLE DEAD

farewell on Your Lordship's approaching departure from this country. We cannot give adequate expression to the various ideas which are agitating our minds at this juncture, relating as they do to the past, present, and future, making us feel, at one and the same time, grateful, happy, and sorrowful. The success which Your Excellency has achieved in Asia is such as makes India and England proud of it. The history of the British Empire in India has not, at least for the last thirty years, produced a hero like Your Lordship, whose soldier-like qualities are fully known to the world. The country which had been the cradle of Indian invasion came to realize the extent of your power and recognized your generalship. The victories gained by Sale, Nott, and Pollock in the plains of Afghanistan, have been shadowed by those gained by Your Excellency. The occupation of Kabul and the glorious battle of Kandahar are among the brightest jewels in the diadem of Your Lordship's Baronage. Your Excellency's achievements checked the aggressive advance of the Great Northern Bear, whose ambitious progress received a check from the roar of the lion in the person of Your Lordship; and a zone of neutral ground has now been fixed, and a line of peace marked by the Boundary Commission. The strong defences which Your Excellency has provided on the frontier add another bright stone to the building of your fame, and constitute in themselves a lasting memorial of Your Excellency's martial skill. Never had any British general to face more arduous tasks, and none has proved more completely successful in overcoming them than Your Lordship. The result is that India has been rendered safe from the fear of invasion from without. Your Excellency is not only adorned with heroic qualifications, but the love and affection with which the people of India regard Your Lordship show what admirable qualities are exhibited in the person of Your Excellency. Terrible in war and merciful in peace, Your Excellency's name has become a dread to the enemies of England and lovely to your friends. The interest which Your Lordship has always taken in the welfare of those with whom you have worked in India is well known to everybody. The Sikhs in particular are, more than any other community in India, indebted to Your Lordship. We find in Your Excellency a true friend of the Sikh community—a community which is always devoted heart and

soul to the service of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Empress of India. No one understands better than Your Excellency the value of a Sikh soldier, and we feel very grateful that the military authorities recognized the necessity of requiring every Sikh recruit to be baptized according to the Sikh religion before admission to the army—a practice which makes the Sikhs more true and faithful, and which preserves the existence of a very useful community. The Sikhs are said to be born soldiers, but they undoubtedly make very good citizens in time of peace also. Unfortunately, however, they have had no opportunity of fully developing their mental powers so as to enable them to advance with the spirit of the age. We thank God that Your Excellency was among those who most desired to see the Sikhs refined and educated by establishing a central college in the Punjab for the use of the Sikh people, and we confidently hope that the Sikhs, of whom a large portion is under Your Excellency's command, will give their mite in support of this national seminary. The subscriptions given by Your Lordship, His Excellency the viceroy, and His Honor the late lieutenant-governor, were very valuable to the institution, and the Sikhs are highly gratified by the honor Your Excellency has lately given to the Khalsa Diwan by becoming its honorary patron. In conclusion we beg only to repeat that it is quite beyond our power to state how much we are indebted to Your Excellency, and how much we are affected by the news that Your Lordship will shortly leave this land. The very idea of our separation from the direct contact of so strong and affectionate a leader as Your Excellency undoubtedly is, makes us feel very sorrowful; but as our hearts and prayers will always be with you and Lady Roberts, we shall be consoled if Your Excellency will only keep us in your memory, and on arrival in England assure Her Most Gracious Majesty, the Mother-Empress, that all Sikhs, whether high or low, strong or weak, old or young, are heartily devoted to her crown and her representatives in this country. Before retiring, we thank Your Excellency for the very great honor that has been done to the people of Lahore by Your Lordship's visit to this city."

Before leaving India he was to have one more day's delightful and exciting sport "pig-sticking" with his friend Maharaja Sir Pertap Sing. His sixty-one years were sitting lightly upon him despite the hardships he had

endured in the trying climate of India. In this, his last hunt in India, he succeeded in killing a fierce boar and in saving Sir Pertap's life—a most satisfactory ending to his last day's sport in the east.

His farewell to the land of his birth was made in Bomhay, and the thought of parting forever from a land which had been so much to him, and for which he had done so much, weighed heavily on his spirit, and he almost broke down when he attempted to reply to the toast to his health at a dinner given to him by the members of the Byculla Club. But at last he got away from the shores of India, and was eagerly expectant of the years of peace and repose, and useful, if not exciting, work he was to spend in England.

In a way he left India without regret; he had the consciousness of having done his work there well; and India and the army were the better for his sojourn.

It would be well in dealing with the events at the close of his illustrious career in India to recapitulate his work there. Even during the Mutiny days, when but a very young man, he had done much to improve the transport department of the army, and after the Mutiny his work with the various viceroys, and particularly with Lord Canning, was of a character to give respect for British arms among the conquered peoples. But his first great achievements were in Afghanistan. His work in that country cannot be properly estimated. When he entered those northern hills as the leader of a column the *Feringhis* were a hated and despised people; after his victorious work at Peiwar Kotal, at Kabul and Kandahar, they were still a hated, but a greatly feared nation, and England was safe for many years from serious conflict in the northwest provinces. As commander-in-chief in Madras and in India he had greatly increased the efficiency of every arm of the service, and had inspired all races in the army with a love of British rule and had created an *esprit de corps* that goes farther than anything else, as he pointed out in his Mansion House speech, to make the different regiments efficient factors in a great army. He had likewise raised the moral tone of the army. Largely due to his influence there was less drunkenness, less brutality, less crime among the soldiers in India during his term of office than ever before. He had brought the frontier tribes both through fear of

his great name and through love for himself into more friendly relationship with the English in India, and had effectually checked the progress of Russia southward. During the years of peace that followed the Afghan War he had been able to make the northern frontier practically impregnable from foreign invasion, and had likewise done much to make the great cities of India safe from attack by sea. He had been able to do his work so well; first, by his untiring energy and good sense; and, secondly, by the love with which he inspired all men. It was a pleasure to work for such a man, and natives and Europeans alike endeavored to do his bidding in such a way as to gain his approval. Much of his success was due to his magnetic personality. As a young man Neville Chamberlain, John Nicholson, Hope Grant, Sir Colin Campbell (Lord Clyde) were all drawn to him affectionately, and trusted him much beyond other officers of his years. Later in life the commanders-in-chief and viceroys all seemed to be inspired by love for the brave and industrious officer who worked unceasingly, uncomplainingly. There is no better evidence of the affection he inspired in those in authority over him than the action of that fine old soldier, the late Sir Donald Stewart, at the time when it was deemed necessary to send a column to the relief of Kandahar. Roberts had been severely criticised in both England and India for the disaster which befell the British about Kabul immediately before the siege of the Sherpur cantonments, and much of the glory he had gained with the Knram Field Force and through his march to Kabul had, to say the least, a faded lustre. Sir Donald Stewart had just come over the road from Kandahar and knew it thoroughly; he had made quite as brilliant a march as the one which is termed the great march; and had likewise cut his way through a horde of desperate fanatics. Had he desired he could have assumed command of the Kabul-Kandahar column; but seeing how anxious his second-in-command was for the opportunity, and desiring to give him a chance of showing the world the stuff he was made of, he not only allowed him to take command of the column, but aided him in every possible way to make his enterprise a success; and as the world knows his confidence was not misplaced. When everything is considered, it is within the mark to say that Roberts did far more for the stability of English rule in India than any

other soldier who has occupied the chief command of England's army in that difficult country.

When he returned to England he had a season of rest, and in 1895 was created a field-marshal, and likewise commander-in-chief of the forces in Ireland. He was, however, too active a man to remain idle, and now that the opportunities for using the sword seemed to be at an end for him, he took up the pen, no doubt for recreation, but the same earnest purpose distinguishes his literary work that was evident at every stage of his military career in India. His first literary venture was fittingly a study of a great soldier's career, "The Rise of Wellington." In this book the student of Roberts' life will find wherein much of his success as a general lay. The strength and the weakness of the careers of Wellington and Napoleon are familiar to him, and he shows himself conversant with every detail of the great wars through which the English nation has passed. There is perhaps no calmer, more judicial criticism of Wellington's life and work than is to be found in the closing pages of this cold, dispassionate, unrhetoical study.

Two years later a monumental work appeared from his pen—one of the few books at the close of the nineteenth century that stands a chance of living. His "Forty-One Years in India," which has of necessity been extensively quoted from and referred to in this book, is not only the plain, blunt story of a brave soldier, but gives an insight into the political characters and the great questions of the time of the writer from a soldier's point of view, and the great questions of the time of the writer from a soldier's point of view, makes India an open book, reveals the character of the native, be he Sikh, Hindu, or Mahomedan, and presents a succinct account of every war in the east within his experience. The style is strong and the glimpses of the landscape that relieve the account of moving accidents by flood and field, make it a production of great artistic value—an ideal autobiography of an almost ideal man. When it appeared it was thought it would be the last distinguished achievement of a life crowded with work; but he was soon to have a trumpet call to the most difficult task of his career, and was yet to perform a march greater than the march from Kahul to Kandahar, and to plan battles that required a more commanding genius than any of the fights he had been through in the east.



## CHAPTER XXXII.

### THE GREAT BOER WAR.

The Nineteenth Century Closing With Hopes of Universal Peace—The Spanish-American and Great Boer Wars—The Causes of the War in South Africa—The Character of the Boer—The Mistakes of England—The Tyranny of the Boer—The Iniquitous Jameson Raid—Sir Alfred Milner in South Africa—The Orange Free State Throws in Its Lot With the Transvaal—Kruger's Ultimatum—The War Begins—No Great Difficulty Anticipated by England—Good Work of the Colonials in England's Hour of Need—The Battle of Dundee—Elandslaagte and Rietfontein—The Army of Natal Concentrated in Ladysmith—The Disaster of Nicholson's Nek—Ladysmith Besieged—The Handy Man on the Scene—The British Plan of Campaign—Lord Methuen's Success on the West—Buller's Struggle Along the Tugela—Lord Roberts and Kitchener Sent to South Africa.

**D**URING the last decade of the nineteenth century the world was beginning to think, despite the tremendous armaments of the European powers, that there would be no more serious wars. In darkest Africa and in the east it might still be necessary to sacrifice a few men and expend considerable sums of money in civilizing non-Christian peoples, but a war between Christian powers seemed very remote. Even while men thus theorized, and peace societies were organized, and peace meetings held—particularly the great conference at the Hague—two of the most costly wars that have taken place in the world were fought, with great loss of life in battle and from disease.

In a way neither of these wars should disappoint the theorists. Neither the Spanish-American War nor the Great Boer War were altogether the results of complications arising at the end of the century, but were the clearing up in each case of a century of bitterness and hate; and it was just as well that they came when they did so that the new century might open with a somewhat clean sheet, although unfortunately in South Africa much clearing up has still to be done.

The causes of the Great Boer War in which Lord Roberts played such an important part have been variously stated by men of many schools of thought

and feeling. The stubbornness of Kruger, the ignorance and stupidity of the Boer, the greed of the Chartered Company, the corruption in the Raad, the overbearing attitude of the Uitlanders of Johannesburg to the race that ruled them, etc., etc., have all been given as the reasons for the bloody struggle which is still being waged between the most religious people and the most Christian power of these latter days. The cause of a war is never one but many; and all the things mentioned have played their part in bringing about the deplorable state of affairs at present existing in South Africa. But just as it was race hatred that had most to do with the breaking out of the great mutiny in India, so it was race hatred that had most to do with bringing Briton and Boer to blows. Kruger's ultimatum was merely the bolt that came from the sky charged with the thunder of war. Both nations have suffered much in the conflict, and both have paid dearly for the sins of the past, and the one that has sinned most has suffered most. The Boer as a people are no more, and probably before another century has passed even the rude speech in which they take such pride will be forgotten.

The Boer, particularly the Boer of the Transvaal, has been intensely unprogressive; their homes are without refinement, their towns without advanced schools, their roads, rude paths across the veldt, and their rivers without bridges. They have deliberately set their faces against progress, and have remained children of the seventeenth century. They are without tolerance; people of other faiths being, to these modern children of Israel, Philistines; and they have ever looked upon the darker races, the children of Ham, as creatures foreordained to be their vassals. While they were able they practised slavery openly, and when they were bound by treaty to free their slaves they kept the law in the letter but broke it, even up to the present day, in the spirit. Despite their intense piety they have not been above untruth, and the history of their dealings with England from the earliest days of the last century is an almost inextricable tangle of lies, and chief among the prevaricators has been ex-President Kruger.

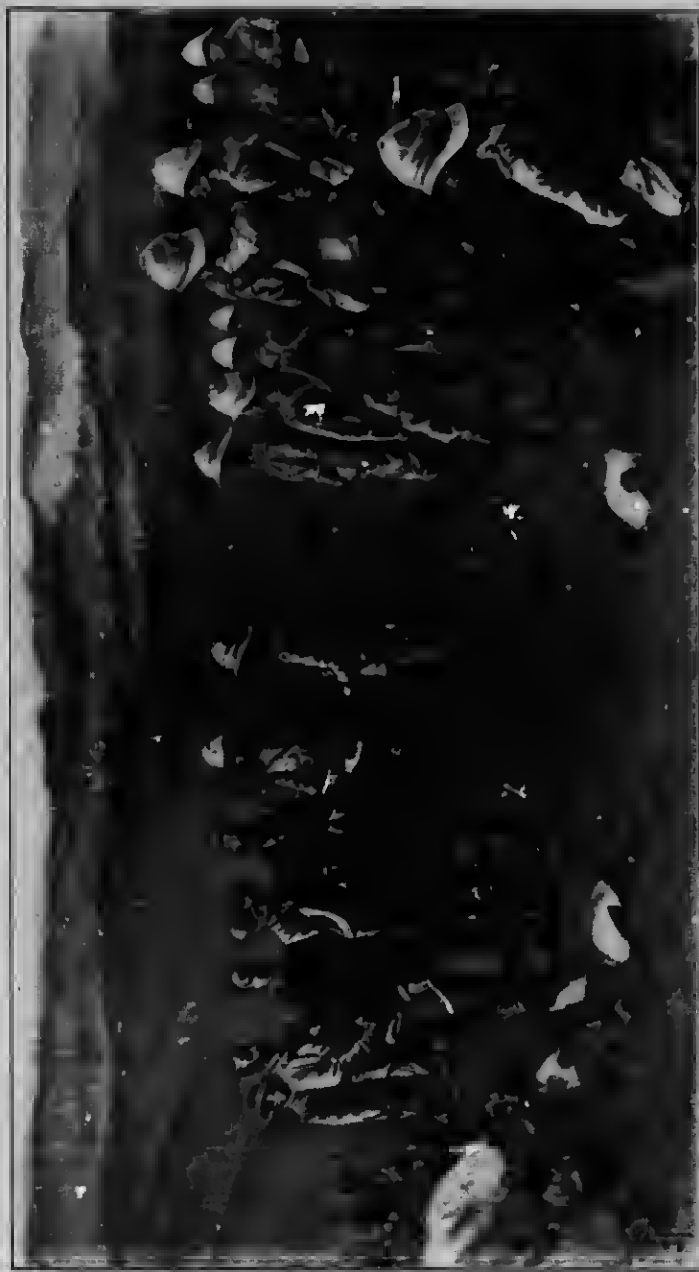
On the other hand the English have not been without their sins—sins largely due to stupidity and red tape. In freeing the slaves England did serious financial injury to the Boer slave-holder, injury that drove many of

the inhabitants of Cape Colony, sturdy and honest farmers and shepherds according to their light into the barren centre of South Africa, over almost impassable hills and through regions infested with savage beasts and more savage men. Untold hardships, unparalleled suffering, great loss of life were endured by the South African farmers on this first great trek. A people who could endure all the Boers endured in the early part of this century could not soon forget. Again the Transvaal was annexed by Sir Theophilus Shepstone with undue haste. Doubtless annexation would have come about in time, but his method of annexing the Transvaal gave the stiff-necked antagonists of England the opportunity they desired. The Home government, too, as in the early days of England's greatest colony, Canada, for the most part selected men who were to manage affairs in South Africa with very bad judgment. The officials were in most cases arrogant, overbearing, and did not make the slightest effort to understand the sturdy, uncultivated race they had to deal with. Then came the deplorable discovery of gold which has debauched the Boer, filled the Transvaal with that undesirable class of adventurers who flock to any region where the precious metal is discovered, and made this war possible: first, by placing in the hands of Kruger and his party funds sufficient to make their little republic an arsenal; and, secondly, by giving the Europeans who were soon numerically the stronger race in the Transvaal, a determination to rule the country, nine-tenths of whose revenue came from their speculations or industry.

With the influx of foreigners the difficulties, which it was thought the conventions of 1881 and 1884 had ended, began afresh. The Boers despised the English as a race they had beaten and would grant them no favors, and the more who came within the boundaries of the Transvaal, the harsher became the laws against them, harsh through hatred and through fear—a fear that by their numbers the Uitlander might yet drive the Boers from the soil they had won by so much hardship and bloodshed in the middle of the century. The franchise laws were changed from year to year, until it became practically impossible for an alien to obtain a voice in the affairs of the country to whose oxchequer he contributed so largely; and each petition sent to the Raad for redress of wrongs only made the burden of the Uitlander the



MR. A. BENNETT BURLEIGH BRINGING LORD ROBERTS NEWS THAT BLOEMFONTEIN HAD SURRENDERED



**THE FORMAL SURRENDER OF BLOEMFONTEIN**  
On the morning of March 13th an official deputation came from Bloemfontein and handed over the keys of the Government Buildings to Field-Marshal Lord Roberts.

heavier. Naturally in Johannesburg, the city of the Uitlander, the burgher was execrated with curses only such as can be invented in the congenial atmosphere of a mining town. They did more than curse. When President Kruger visited Johannesburg in 1890, he was practically mobbed, and the flag of the Transvaal torn down and trampled under foot. It is little wonder that this hardened and stubborn old tyrant feared to grant any favors to such a community. Things went from bad to worse, and although there was an ever-growing reform party in the Transvaal, it could make but little headway against the unprogressive iron will of Oom Paul. Just as Shepstone by rushing the annexation played into his hands, so the Jameson raiders did incalculable injury to the cause of freedom in South Africa. By means of it Kruger was able to make his burghers believe, and the enemies of England in foreign countries believe, that, as the Uitlanders had failed to gain control of the country through the Raad, they were endeavoring to seize it by force of arms, and were aiming at bringing the whole of South Africa under British control.

When the composition of the force led by Jameson into the Transvaal is examined, it will be readily seen that President Kruger had a good opportunity of making the Boers believe that not only the English in the Transvaal were in a conspiracy to seize their country, but that England was a partner in their plot. Almost every crack regiment had representatives in the force that gathered, with the sanction of Cecil Rhodes, and armed by men in his employment, at Pitsani camp on British territory to invade a country at peace with England, and over which England had doubtful suzerainty—the Royal Horse Guards, the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, the Royal Artillery, the Derbyshire Yeomanry, the First Life Guards, the Royal Scots Fusiliers, Scots Guards, the Grenadier Guards, and the Bechuanaland South African Constabulary and the Mashonaland Mounted Police, were all represented. The commanding officer was Lieutenant-Colonel Sir John Willoughby of the Royal Horse Guards, and his second in command, Major Robert White of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. The raid failed hopelessly; the farmers of the Transvaal surrounded the force and Jameson's men were compelled to surrender at Doornkop, after having lost eighteen killed and forty wounded.

In all British history there is not recorded a more foolish and disastrous undertaking. After the experience at Laing's Nek and Majuba, the danger to such a small force should have been evident to every soldier in the colony. But the defeat and capture of the column was not the worst part of the business. Kruger had now the opportunity he wanted. This raid was evidence that his eternal enemies, the English, were endeavoring to steal his country; to grant any of the concessions demanded would only be to cut off his own head. Nay more, he must arm against the Uitlanders, and the funds he compelled them to contribute to a government in which they had practically no voice, were lavishly expended in purchasing Creusots and Kruppe for his artillery, and in arming the burghers with Mausers. Warlike preparations had been going on before the raid, but they were now increased one hundred fold. Kruger had, too, after the raid in his resistance to the Uitlander's demands a great deal of sympathy from European powers and from the United States. So affairs went on from bad to worse; the burghers stubborn and overbearing, England vacillating and weak-kneed.

In 1899, however, affairs in South Africa began to take a different aspect. A strong man with a vigorous policy, in the person of Sir Alfred Milner, was sent to Cape Town, and an effort was made by diplomacy to get Kruger to treat the Uitlanders with greater consideration. A conference took place at Bloemfontein, but after sitting from May 30 to June 6, nothing was arrived at, and the air was heavy with signs of war. Kruger played with the British until the time was ripe for striking at England's forces in South Africa, and then launched the astounding ultimatum that was nothing more or less than a declaration of war.

Meanwhile the ideal little Republic of the Orange Free State, the best governed country in the world, had decided to aid its sister Republic in resisting the armies of England. There is in all history no sadder reading than the struggle in the Orange Free State. Without a grievance against the British the little Republic plunged into a bloody war, and indeed bore the brunt of it, and is to-day a desolate waste; its farmhouses in ruin, its fields without tillers, its flocks and herds destroyed, and lamentations for sons or husbands heard in almost every house left standing.

The ultimatum was issued on October 9, and reached London on the tenth of the month, and on the following day the British agent left Pretoria, and the high commissioner proclaimed that all persons who aided and abetted the enemy in a state of war with Great Britain would be guilty of high treason.

The Boers were not long in beginning operations. On October 12 a party of them, a short distance south of Mafeking, derailed and captured an armored train. This was the first blow struck in the Great Boer War. In England, despite the shouts of "remember Majube!" the sluggish public took matters very calmly, believing that in a few months at the outside the troops already in South Africa or on their way there, would have severely punished the impudent Boer republics which had the audacity to throw down the glove to the greatest empire the world has ever seen.

The public, the government, and the war-office had no conception of the task that was before them. During the years before the outbreak of the war, they had had plenty of warning notes, but they had been deaf to them. Proctor in his "Boers and Little Englanders," Hillegas in his "Oom Paul's People," FitzPatrick in his "The Transvaal from Within," and others, had pointed out the necessity of preparing for a struggle, and gave an excellent idea to those willing to pay attention to their warning words of the strength of the Boers in men, in guns, and in money. But the war-office remained unmoved, expecting, no doubt, that the great name of England would be sufficient to overawe the republics.

It was soon seen that the Boers were very much in earnest, and immediately after the report of the wreck of the armored train reached England, it was learned that the little town of Mafeking in which was a small body of troops under the command of S. S. Baden-Powell was in a state of siege. A large force, too, had crossed the Natal border, and there was uneasiness felt throughout the whole of Cape Colony. Even if the enemy were not numerically strong, it was soon realized that the campaign would be a costly one on account of the wide district over which the Boers were operating. But then it was thought that it was not going to be a very serious affair was evident from Chamberlain's attitude to the offers of Colonial aid.



He first signified that the aid was not really needed, but that the sending of contingents from Australia, New Zealand and Canada would be an excellent thing in cementing the wide-spread Empire into a united force.

The task of mobilizing the troops of England went on in a leisurely manner. At first, for economy's sake, slow-moving boats (considering the rate of speed steamships have now attained) were selected to transport the soldiers to South Africa. Even when the ships were ready for sea fatal delays occurred that might have ruined the British cause in South Africa had the Boers but swept their armies toward Durban and Cape Town, instead of settling down to besiege Ladysmith, Mafeking, and Kimberley. The war-office, too, stupidly underestimated the strength of their enemies and made preparations for the despatch of a force whose fighting strength was under 50,000 men. The great majority of the corps sent were infantry, whereas the Boers were mounted to a man; and one mounted soldier in South Africa, especially if he has a led-horse with him, is worth twenty slow-moving foot-soldiers. Indeed, if England had depended on her foot-soldiers and artillery in the Great Boer War she could not have beaten the enemy with 500,000 men. It was not until she placed a strong force of such mounted men as the New South Wales Lancers, The Imperial Light Horse, the Natal Carbiniers, the South African Light Horse, the Canadian Mounted Rifles, and the Strathconas in the field, that she began to have any considerable successes. It has ever been England's fault to underestimate the strength of her foes. Over confidence has cost her much money and many lives. It will be remembered how inadequate were the first forces sent against Delhi and Lucknow, and how hopeless the struggle was until strong reinforcements arrived. In South Africa it was to be the old story over again—"in the beginning of each war England has to eek in blood the knowledge necessary to ensure success; and like the fiend's progress through Eden, her conquering course is through chaos followed by death."

England was saved at the beginning of the war by the readiness with which Natal offered her sons—between four thousand and five thousand springing to arms in her behalf—by the brilliant feats of her soldiers in the opening days of the war, and by the lack of aggressiveness on the part of the

**Boers.** The first factor told the Transvaal generals that if they attempted to make their threatened march to Durban to drive the English into the sea, they would have to fight for every step of their way; the second did much to keep the majority of the Dutch in Cape Colony from throwing in their lot with the burghers of the Transvaal; and the third gave England, despite her slowness, time to transport the largest body of men ever sent overseas by any power to the scene of conflict.

The Boers were ready for war at the end of September, and might have struck then with deadly effect. In Natal there were only some 5,000 troops under Sir Wm. Penn Symons, and in the Cape a bare 2,000 under Sir F. Walker. Fortunately reinforcements arrived from India early in October, and when Sir George White took command of the troops in and about Ladysmith he had in all over 12,000 men. Sir W. Penn Symons who was stationed at Dundee with about 4,600 men and 18 guns was the first British General to come in contact with the Boer forces. The battle of Dundee was the opening fight of the war, and though in the early morning of October 20 the British were taken off their guard, they fought a glorious night, and like their sires at Waterloo and Inkerman, charged up the difficult slopes of Talana hill and routed the numerically stronger force of Boers under Lucas Meyer. Unfortunately in this fight some one blundered, and a part of the mounted force, so sorely needed, was captured. The battle was a British victory, and although about 500 of the Boers had been killed and wounded, the attacking force had suffered quite as heavy loss. Sir W. Penn Symons was mortally wounded, 47 brave fellows lay dead on the slopes of Talana hill, 221 were wounded and about 200 of the cavalry and mounted infantry were in the hands of the Boers. General Yule now held the command left vacant by General Symons, and as the position of the troops was very critical and they were in great danger of being cut to pieces, it seemed wise to have them retreat to Ladysmith. After Talana Hill followed Elandslaagte and Rietfontein, and though the British did splendid fighting, the hopelessness of the struggle against the large army that was swarming into Natal was evident to the English generals.

21 When the various regiments were concentrated at Ladysmith General

White had under him but 12,000 men with 48 guns, thirty-six of which were 15-pounders and twelve 7- and 9-pounders, but as these were completely outranged by several of the Boer guns they could do but little harm to the enemy, so long as the Boer commanders rested content with shelling the town from the heights surrounding the British camp.

The Boers now showed themselves excellent strategists and soon had occupied every post of advantage about the town. It is impossible to accurately estimate their numbers, but they had in the vicinity of Ladysmith at this time probably between 15,000 and 20,000 men, and as the garrison could expect no reinforcements for at least three weeks, and of this the Boer leaders were well aware, they quite expected to bring General White to terms in the course of a few days. An occasional shell from their "Long Toms," and a couple of days' hot work from their Schneider-Cannet quick-firers and Maxim one-pounders would be sufficient to cause the surrender of the wretchedly situated (from a military point of view) garrison. This work accomplished Pietermaritzburg and Durban would fall an easy prey. Although General White was forced to retire his troops within Ladysmith he was not going to allow the enemy to concentrate theirs about the town and seize all the best positions without opposition. On the 29th he had matured a plan by which he hoped to strike a vigorous blow at the forces rapidly surrounding him. That night he sent out a column under Colonel Carleton, composed of the 10th Mountain Battery, four and a half companies of the Gloucester Regiment and six companies of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, as a preparatory move toward a big fight on the morrow. But the Boers knew the direction the column was to take and ambushed it at Nicholson's Nek. A volley poured into the men toiling through the pitchy darkness, the rolling of rocks from the heights above, caused the mules to stampede and the force was left with only the cartridges they carried in their belts. They fought gallantly but hopelessly, and in the end, when the last cartridge was fired, were forced to surrender. Fifty-two were killed, twenty-nine officers and 898 men were captured, and four guns fell into the hands of the enemy. This was a dark day for England, not even Majuba Hill was quite so black, but darker ones were to follow. During the day the battle of Farquhar's Farm was

fought and though the British troops won some minor successes on this field of battle they were forced to retreat to Ladysmith, as it was impossible to make headway against the enemy who kept themselves invisible among the hills and kopjes. The retirement was a signal for the Boers to increase their fire, and it looked for a moment as though the infantry would be annihilated, but the artillery gallantly saved the day and the whole force succeeded in getting into Ladysmith. But they were in despair. The news of the disaster to Carleton's column had reached them, and they now knew beyond a doubt that the Boers with their long-range guns would be able to shell them without receiving any injury in return. While they thus trembled for fear of the siege they would have to face, help was at hand. The Handy Man had quickly come on the scene with his naval guns and Ladysmith was saved, and Sir George White was enabled to send hopeful messages to England despite the reverses of "Mournful Monday" as the soldiers termed the day of the battle of Farquhar's Farm.

On the 2nd of November the Boers began to bombard the town in earnest, and on that same day General French succeeded in making his way by train to Pietermaritzburg and then Ladysmith was isolated, railway communication and telegraph communication being cut, and despite the fact that the general from whom so much was hoped, Sir Redvers Buller, had arrived at Cape Town on the day following Farquhar's Farm, the Empire feared for Durban. What could hinder the Boers from carrying out their threat and marching to the sea. Some 2,500 colonials, a few seamen, and two regular regiments, the Dublin Fusiliers and the Borderers, were all the troops between the Boer position on the Tugela and Durban. It was a fortunate thing for England at this time that Ladysmith occupied the enemy's attention. Their lack of aggressiveness alone saved the English in Natal.

Meantime on the west Mafeking and Kimberley were in a state of siege; but the grit of Baden-Powell and the energy and genius of Cecil Rhodes, made the public hopeful with regard to both places. All through October the siege of these towns continued, and when Buller arrived he found the situation he had expected to meet was non-existent. Instead of White being

able to keep the Boers at bay he was shut up within Ladysmith and was in imminent danger of capture. General Buller was now forced to change his original plan of campaign.

The following was the original intention of the English commander: \**"The three British divisions under generals Lord Methuen, Clery and Gatacre were to land respectively at Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London. From each of these seaports a railway line leads inland: from Cape Town to Kimberley and Buluwayo on the line which will one day run throughout the length of Africa from the Cape to Cairo; from Port Elizabeth to Bloemfontein; and from East London to Springfontein on the Port Elizabeth and Bloemfontein railway. On nearing the Orange River these three lines converge on a front of about one hundred miles, the Cape Town and Kimberley line at Orange River Station, a distance of some five and seventy miles, that from Port Elizabeth at Norvals Pont, 328 miles by the railroad, and that from East London at Bethulie, a distance of 290 miles. The use of these lines of railway, which in any case would have been very much to our advantage, was the more desirable from the fact that the South African lines were single tracks with but scanty accommodation for returning trains, and few facilities for the transport of huge quantities of stores and war material. It was probably intended to effect the concentration a little south of the Orange River, or perhaps ultimately upon Orange River Station, where the Cape Town and Kimberley line crosses the river. The three divisions would then have advanced on Bloemfontein."* This plan was for the time very much upset by the turn affairs had taken in Natal, and General Buller had, on his arrival at Cape Town, to reconsider his plan of operation.

It would perhaps have been wise to let Ladysmith take care of itself, but the press and the people were clamoring for its relief, and for the punishment of the forces which had inflicted such signal loss on the British army. The people in England were forgetting Majuba Hill and were brooding over the reverse at Nicholson's Nek, and the fact that an army of 12,000 soldiers were surrounded by the farmers they had so long despised.

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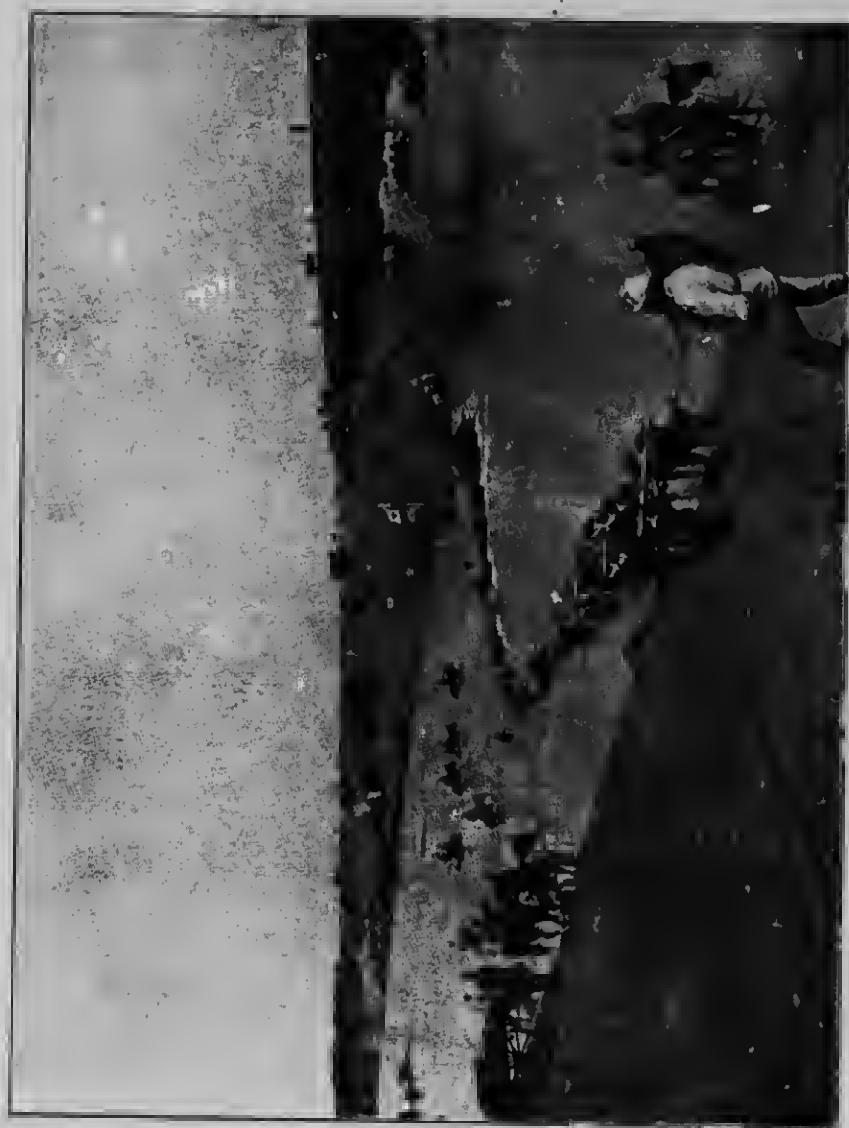
\**"With the Flag to Pretoria,"* by H. W. Wilson.



LORD ROBERTS CROSSING ZAND RIVER ON HIS FAMOUS MARCH TO PRETORIA



ON THE WAY TO PRETORIA · BRINGING HEAVY GUNS ACROSS A DRIFT



BRINGING IN SPOILS OF WAR

Things soon became more hopeful on the frontier of the Orange Free State. Lord Methuen was slowly winning his way northward; the battles of Belmont, Graspan or Enslin, and Modder River were gallant fights, and although the British sustained great loss they had pressed the enemy ever back, driving them from strongly entrenched positions. But the glory of it all was to be lost on that black December day when the military genius of Cronje cut the Highland Brigade to pieces at Magersfontein.

General Buller had in the meantime concentrated his attention on Natal. Ladysmith must be relieved at all costs, and as fast as the troops arrived they were despatched to Durban. He himself reached the seaport of Natal on November 27, and by December 2 had everything matured for a forward movement. He was strong in infantry but lamentably weak in mounted regiments and in artillery. On the 15th the battle of Colenso was fought, and despite as gallant deeds as ever were performed by the English army, Buller's troops met disastrous defeat. Again someone had blundered, and brave Colonel Long—perhaps the one who was to blame—moved his battery within the Boer fire-zone, and his gunners were mowed down. He himself was mortally wounded, and it was found necessary to abandon ten guns. A noble effort was made to save the guns, and in the attempt Lieut. Roberts, the only son of Field-Marshal Roberts, fell with five bullet wounds. He won the Victoria Cross in his effort to save England's guns, but it cost him his life.

Not only did Buller on this fatal day fail to force the passage of Tugela, but was compelled to retreat after sustaining a loss of 132 killed, 765 wounded, and 228 missing or prisoners, a total of 1,125.

The Boer force which had so effectually blocked the advance was a small one, but had selected its position so well that it was able to prevent the forward movement to the relief of Ladysmith without sustaining heavy loss.

The war-office now saw that it had seriously blundered in underestimating the strength and military skill of the Boers, and on receipt of the details of the battle of Colenso, decided that the greatest military genius of the Empire would be required to bring the war to a swift and successful termination. The man who had so skilfully led his army through the passes



and over the hills in Afghanistan was the best soldier in the Empire to battle on the veldt and among the kopjes of South Africa. At any rate the war-office would give him a chance to do the work he had hoped to do in 1881, and on December 17, the day on which his son died from his wounds, he was appointed commander-in-chief of the forces in South Africa. To make sure that the work would be well done, the king of organizers, the methodical and cold-blooded conqueror of the Khalifa, "the man of ice and iron," should go with him as his chief-of-staff; and eight days after the battle of Colenso, while the nation was still bleeding from the wounds inflicted by Magersfontein and by the reverses in Natal, and his own heart was breaking from the loss of his son, Roberts boarded the *Dunottar Castle* at Southampton. On the previous day Kitchener embarked on the swift sailing cruiser *Isis* at Alexandria, and at Malta boarded the warship *Dido*. At Gibraltar he joined his commander-in-chief, and as the *Dunottar Castle* steamed Southward the two ablest soldiers in the Empire spent days and nights in studying the critical situation and in planning a campaign.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### THE SURRENDER OF BLOEMFONTEIN.

Buller's Failure in Natal—Roberts Reaches Cape Town January 10—Studying the Situation—Main Cause of Buller's Failure Lack of Mobility—Much Expected of Roberts—Boer Victories After His Arrival in South Africa Make the Public Uneasy—Roberts Still Calmly Studies the Situation and Reorganises His Army—Moves Towards Kimberley Early in February—French's Cavalry Relieve Kimberley—In Pursuit of Cronje—De Wet, the Ubiquitous, on the Scene—Almost Saves Cronje—Robert's Dashing Advance With His Main Army—Cronje Besieged at Paardeberg—The Sunday Battle—The Canadians Force Cronje to Surrender on Majuba Day—The Significance of the Work of the Canadians in the Life of the Empire—Roberts an Empire-BUILDER—Expresses His Admiration for Cronje—Paardeberg the Turning Point in the Great Boer War—Lord Roberts' Army Marches on Bloemfontein—Triumphal Entry Into Bloemfontein—Ladysmith Relieved—Making Ready for Pretoria.

ENGLAND had hoped much from Sir Redvers Buller; all will be well, said the press and the public, when that tried soldier who has served with distinction in every quarter of the globe—in China, in North America, in Ashanti, in Zululand—is at the head of the army in South Africa. They had been bitterly disappointed. His presence in Natal only served to give the Boer leaders greater opportunities for proving that they were the equals, if not the superiors, of the British generals trained in tactics and strategy in the best military schools in the world. Another public idol was shattered; another great reputation was for the time being sunk in that "Grave of Reputations," South Africa.

The buoyant public was, however, recovering heart; Lord Roberts, with greatly increased forces, was on his way to the battlefields of Natal, of Northern Cape Colony, of the Western Frontier—they knew not which; he knew not himself at this time. But all had the utmost confidence in the general who had never known defeat. No doubt his very presence would cause the Boers to sue for terms of peace; and so gallant had been their

resistance, and so noble their conduct on the field of battle that England was prepared to be magnanimous.

On January 10 Roberts reached Cape Town and the Empire breathed easier. It was expected that the operations which had been brought to a standstill in every part of South Africa would be recommenced at once. However, much preparation had to be made, and the situation required the calmest study. Meanwhile the commander-in-chief could learn from the difficulties Buller had had to face and the blunders he had made, what he ought not to do. In the first place it was evident that before attempting a general advance it would be necessary to pour more troops into the country. Methuen's 10,000 and Buller's 25,000 had proved themselves totally inadequate to make headway against the Boers. Indeed they had been brought to a standstill and had begun to fear that they might yet be forced to take the defensive.

The main weakness in both forces was lack of mounted men. They lacked mobility, whereas the Boers possessed astonishing mobility, moving large bodies of troops and their big guns with incredible rapidity. What little mobility the British army might have had was, at the beginning of the campaign, destroyed by the excessive baggage the troops took with them on the line of march. They had tents and bedding and abundance of food, even luxuries. General Buller did not seem to have taken to heart the lesson taught by Wellington, Napoleon, and Grant, that great victories are won by dash, by the power of striking the foe when least expected; and for this dash troops must learn to travel light, to sleep on the bare veldt with the sky for a covering, and to live for a few days on quarter rations or even less. Roberts would never have reached Kandahar in record time had he carried along with him as extensive baggage as Buller's army brought with it to the Tugela. It is true that Buller, with the troops under him, was given an impossible task, but much of his losses and reverses can be attributed to the slowness with which he moved his army. The Boers had ample time to prepare for every attack on their positions, and could leisurely smoke their pipes behind their well-constructed entrenchments until the British soldiers came within range of their Mausers. While this was undoubtedly the case, General Buller

was hampered in many other ways. For years the most careful student of South African affairs had foreseen this war, and yet the Intelligence Department had not exerted itself to become intimately acquainted with the country through which they would have to fight in case of war. The English generals as a consequence went into the field without proper maps, and with but few officers who knew the territory of Northern Natal to say nothing of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. Again while he had as brave officers as ever went into battle, they had been trained either in wars with Asiatics or natives of Africa, or with the expectation of fighting against such people. The glitter of uniform, the gallant show made by standing boldly at the head of the company with drawn sword, the wild charge right at the heart of the enemy's force, were wont to make a deep impression on the tribes of Northern India and the fanatics along the Nile. But for these things the Boers cared nothing; the buttons and the gold lace of the uniform, the glitter of the flashing sword blade served as excellent targets to their marksmen, and they had confidence in being able to beat back any frontal attacks that might be made against them. True they had suffered at Talana Hill and Elandsplaagte; but they were unprepared for war then. The officers under Buller did not learn until they had paid a heavy price in blood that it was necessary to root out all their old prejudices. Fancy dress and fancy courage both had to go before they could fight the Boers on equal terms.

The things which hampered General Buller most were his lack of cavalry and long range guns. It would have been much better for his reputation, and the death roll would have been much smaller, had he refused to advance until he had a large force of mounted men and a number of guns capable of coping with the Boers' "Long Toms." At a time when he should have played a waiting game, his own eagerness to bring the war to a swift conclusion, and the clamor of the public for the relief of Ladysmith, forced his hand and he fearlessly hurled himself against a wall of adamant.

It is difficult to say what Roberts would have done had he been placed on the Tugela under similar circumstances. Another had faced difficulties and made blunders which he had escaped, but they would none the less be of service to him. His successes in Afghanistan had been due largely to the

care with which he had studied the reverses of the first Afghan war, and now he would turn to good purpose the disasters that had befallen Colley, and, to say the least, the misfortunes of Buller.

It was thought that immediately on his arrival in South Africa the situation would undergo change; but days went by, weeks passed, and still the troops sat tight along the Molder throwing their harmless shells into the Boer position at Magersfontein, and still on the Tugela every attempt to advance was thwarted. The public grew impatient, and when they read the record of that January week of battles with the heroes of Spion Kop to crown all, despair seized them. In one week nearly 2,000 men placed *hors de combat* by a nation of farmers—it was hard to realize! What was "Bobs" doing? Was the situation too much for him, and was his great reputation and the reputation of his illustrious chief-of-staff both to be sunk in the "grave of reputations?" The weeks passed and still Roberts made no move, and what he was planning no one could tell.

Meanwhile he was doing good work. He saw what a tremendous factor the colonial troops were in this war, and both he and Kitchener encouraged the enrolment of colonial volunteers. To help on the good work he made Colonel Brabant, a colonial, a brigadier-general and placed him at the head of a magnificent brigade composed entirely of colonials. He likewise selected his own bodyguard from the colonial troops. This naturally flattered the men from Natal, Cape Colony, Australia and Canada, and did much to allay the bitterness that was too frequently found among colonial soldiers against the overbearing manner of English officers to them. By infinite tact and a mind free from prejudice he won the enthusiastic admiration of the colonials and attracted many to the army.

For nearly a month after his arrival in Cape Town he was busy studying the country and the forces opposed to him, in organizing troops and rearranging the distribution of the army in South Africa. His chief-of-staff had his time fully occupied with the discipline of the army and with the transport. Both generals went on with their work unheeding the clamor of the public for them to do something. They would do their work when they were ready. Meantime it was necessary that the 30,000 men on their way to

South Africa should arrive before any great undertaking was entered upon. Roberts was in no hurry; "raw haste" has too often proved itself "half-sister to delay," and so while he gave Buller a free hand on the Tugela he ordered Lord Methuen not to bring the enemy in the Kimberley district to a decisive battle.

January passed with the situation unchanged; the Sunnyside affair was the only British success of any importance in that long month. But with the opening week of February there was a feeling in the army that something was going to happen. Up the great Karroo towards Kimberley trainload after trainload of stores and troops laboriously toiled, and it was evident that a battle was to be fought, or a dash in force made on Kimberley which was still sending out cheering messages, despite the fact that provisions were running low and disease was cutting off the garrison.

On February 6th Roberts and Kitchener stole out of Cape Town without interviewing the war correspondents, and moved northward to the Modder, where Cronje's men had for over two months been smoking their pipes, and from their magnificent (from a military point of view) and unspeakably filthy trenches been laughing at the British attempts to shell them out of their position. On the 9th Roberts had everything ready for the general advance. He would turn the Boer position, relieve Kimberley, and then endeavor to annihilate or capture Cronje's army. On the 10th the army of 40,000 men was making preparations for an early start on the following day. Roberts made ready for this, the greatest movement of the war, with the spirit of Napoleon and Grant. He knew no such word as failure. Success he told his troops was certain. There was stiff work before them, but the cavalry division had to reach Kimberley, even if it left half its number on the field. That is the spirit with which to win. Such language does not mean that the general looked upon his soldiers merely as a "*chair a canon*." In a decisive battle many soldiers may perish, but in the end such destruction often means economy of men.

On the 11th of the month one of the largest armies of the century and the largest cavalry division that ever worked together as a whole moved out of Modder camp. On the 15th General French had broken through the Boer

line and dashed forward towards Kimberley, sweeping from his path the few Boers who remained among the intervening hills to bar his progress. No time to save men or horses; troopers fell from the ranks, wounded and exhausted horses rolled over on the plain and gasped with stiffening limbs, but the whirlwind of war waited not till the green trees surrounding the Diamond City came into view. "The long, weary weeks of anxiety and hardships; the disappointment of Magersfontein, and the heart sickness of deferred hope were alike forgotten. Kimberley was relieved, and the remainder of the march might as well have been a review." Ten thousand men and forty-two guns had been rushed forward with a rapidity probably without a parallel in war.

The work had been done so quietly and quickly that Cronje was taken completely off his guard. He had thought that the large army that was assembling was about to hurl itself on his Magersfontein position, and he cared not how many came against his front. He could beat back any number of British soldiers. When he realized that a successful turning movement had been made, and that French was behind him he awoke to the fact that he had remained in his position a day too long and made hurried preparations to leave it. It was soon known that he was in full flight in the direction of Bloemfontein. Only a miracle could now save him and his 4,000 burghers; with 40,000 soldiers, who for the most part had been seasoned to South African conditions during the past two months, and the two ablest generals of the British army in hot pursuit.

The miracle was almost performed. On the day of the relief of Kimberley De Wet, the ubiquitous, made his first appearance on the scene. The chroniclers of the war vary in their accounts of his proceedings on this day; some have him coming from the east, others from the south, but it is very probable that he was detached from Cronje's force. Wherever he sprang from he was in luck. Two hundred wagons were toiling along after Lord Roberts' army. They had but a small escort. De Wet saw how weakly they were guarded, swooped down upon them as they were toiling across Waterval Drift and in the end succeeded in capturing or destroying 176 wagons. To attempt to regain these wagons would necessitate stopping the pursuit of Cronje;



LIEUT.-GENERAL LORD KITCHENER



LIEUT.-GENERAL R. S. BADEN-POWELL





**THE FIRST UNION JACK IN THE TRANSVAAL**

On Monday, May 14th, Sir A. Hunter, with the 5th Brigade and Fusilier Brigade invaded the Transvaal from Fourteen Streams and bivouacked eight miles across the front of on the banks of the Vaal. Over the Maxim gun bivouac of the 2nd Royal Fusiliers floated a Union Jack.

*The London News.*

to advance would be to run serious risk of starvation. A great general is the one who can at critical moments take risk. Forward was the word. The army would travel all the swifter unhampered by such a heavy transport, even if the soldiers had to be placed on quarter rations. Consummate military genius does not lie in leading men in actual battle, but in swiftness of action before the fight, and in being able, when occasion demands it, to hazard all on a single throw.

When French reached Kimberley his men and horses were sorely in need of a rest, but he had scarcely got within the gates of the shell-scarred town when a messenger came to him in hot haste with the tidings that Cronje was in full flight along the Modder, and that he must be headed off at Paardeberg Drifts. French must perform this task and keep Cronje back until the infantry and artillery could come up and surround him and capture his army. Tired as his men were they began a wild gallop eastward, and, despite a noble rear-guard fight on the part of Cronje, succeeded in running him to earth on the banks of the Modder. But he was not captured yet. He entrenched and waited. It was thought that it would be possible to force him to surrender at once, and so a fierce attack was made on his position; but with his 4,000 men he succeeded in keeping at bay over 15,000 who made a united attack on his hurriedly constructed entrenchments. In this first day's fighting at Paardeberg no fewer than 1,250 British soldiers were killed, wounded or taken prisoners.

It was a foolish attempt to storm an unknown position, as great a blunder as any that took place on the Tugela. Roberts, however, was not on the scene of battle on that first day. When he did arrive he found that the Boers had moved several miles farther up the Modder to a stronger position. New tactics were adopted; a siege was instituted and the British lines were worked ever nearer the Boer entrenchments. For nine days both forces endured great hardships, and although Cronje had little hope of escaping from the cordon of troops surrounding him, he made a resistance that gained for him the plaudits of the world. He hoped that a relieving force might come to his rescue, and although Louis Botha, in an effort to relieve him, had with 2,000 men seized Kitchener's Hill, it was retaken by the British.

and the commando driven off. A couple of days after this he returned with De Wet and made another effort to break through the British lines, but their attempt failed and Cronje was left to himself. Majuba day was at hand; the whole army was eager to celebrate the day with a great battle and victory. Roberts' generals were urgent to have the position stormed on that day and at last he consented. He determined that the attacking force should creep up to the Boer trenches in the darkness, entrench themselves, and with daylight search the Boer position with their rifles. The Canadians, who had behaved so heroically in the Sunday fight were just the men for a midnight adventure, and it was decided to advance them to within seventy-five yards of the Boer lines. This most memorable and important event in the Great Boer War is worthy of more than passing notice.

The attack was to begin at two in the morning. It was a beautiful night, the clear African sky shone with innumerable brilliantly gleaming stars, "the moon was on the wane, just a thin rim of it was left." The air was cool and bracing and stimulating. Six companies of the Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry lay in the trenches nervously awaiting the order to advance.

At two o'clock in the morning the Gordons occupied the trenches and the Canadians were ordered to move forward. Out of the trenches they "scrambled like monkeys" and began to advance in two ranks. The front rank was the firing-line, and moved forward through the uncanny darkness with rifles loaded and bayonets fixed ready either to drop on the plain and begin firing or to charge into the enemy's stronghold. They hoped for the latter; a bayonet charge has a terrible fascination for the young soldier.

Slowly the men advanced through the darkness at intervals of less than a yard each holding the coat sleeve of the man on his right. When they had advanced for about 500 yards through the small bushes that dotted the plain it was found that the flank had outstripped the main body, and so a brief halt was made to correct the alignment. Here several soldiers caught glimpses of stealthy figures moving in their front; no doubt Boer watchers who were hurrying to cover to warn their friends of the advancing line. Once more the advance began; this time with every effort to maintain absolute silence, but the crackling scrub and some empty meat tins that the Boers had strung

in front of their position served to alarm the enemy, if their sentries had not already done so.

Instantly a line of fire sputtered in their very faces. The firing-line was between fifty and seventy-five paces from the enemy, and the closeness and the suddenness of the fusilade stunned them for a moment. The cries and groans of their comrades brought them to themselves, flat on their faces they fell and began vigorously to return the close fire. Like a continuous hursting of gigantic fire-crackers the rifles snapped before them; no head was seen, but so close were they that the light from the flashing of the rifles revealed the polished weapons and at times the arms and hands that held them. For about fifteen minutes, and it seemed like fifteen hours, a stream of lead sang over them and tore the earth about them, occasionally finding a victim. They were not idle. Steadily, effectively, they sent hack bullet for bullet, and so well directed was their fire that the enemy's fusilade became less dangerous. They no longer thought of aiming at that brave line of prone figures on the open plain; they dare not show themselves in their trenches, but raising their rifles high over head fired at random. For the most part the hot fire prevented the rear rank from constructing trenches. About a mile away on the left the Canadians' old friends, the Shropshire Light Infantry, began to pour volleys into the Boer laager; and the crackling volleys, the whizzing of the bullets through the darkness, the spitting flashes from the rifles, the groans of the wounded, made the night a pandemonium.

In the midst of this uproar of battle, some one on the left gave the command, "Retire and bring in your wounded!" Along the line to the right the message sped and soon the whole of the regiment with the exception of G and H companies were speeding to the trenches they had left "making record time," to use the language of more than one in the retreat.

In the meantime G and H companies which had not heard the command to retire held their position, and, while the front rank blazed away through the bushes which gave them fair cover, the rear rank threw up an excellent trench. Into this trench the entire companies leaped. They were within sixty-five yards of the crackling Mausers. Their dead lay still nearer. How close they had come to charging the enemy in their very trenches; and how

narrowly they had escaped another Magersfontein! Only the darkness, the intervals, and the promptness with which they had thrown themselves on the ground saved them from having their entire line cut down. G and H companies did not know that their comrades had retired, and they wondered at the strange silence on their left. The guns on account of the position of the Canadians were unable to shell the Boers, and only the distant but effective volleys of the Shropshires joined with their steady and well directed fire. Till daylight the Canadians kept the Boers, now thoroughly alarmed, from showing themselves above their trenches, and the firing of the enemy which had been very wild, with dawn almost altogether ceased.

Cronje saw that the end had come. The trench of the Canadians was at right angles with his line of rifle pits, and the marksmen could from their shelter sweep his entire position. He might still hold out; but with the captive balloon directing the fire of the guns, with his trenches enfiladed by the splendid marksmen with the maple leaf on their helmets, it could only be with great loss of life. Unable to secure water, food running low, the stench of the dead animals permeating his camp, a hot fire sweeping through his ranks—all these things made him decide to surrender, and so he raised the white flag.

At first no attention was paid to this. The Boers had of late so frequently abused the white flag that the Canadians were not willing to be caught by the barbarous trick, and so they kept up their fire for another hour. At six o'clock the Boers began to pass into the British lines, and the attacking force saw that they did indeed intend to surrender; the "cease fire" rang out, and the Canadians on the dawn of Majuba day sent up a mighty cheer. The chance had been given them, and although through a cruel mistake four companies had retreated, the remaining two had done their work so well that to them was the honor of giving the final stroke to the nine days of battle that was the turning point in the Great Boer War.

This event has been dwelt on at considerable length not merely on account of its importance in the war, but for its importance in the Empire, and in the life of the hero of this story. It was a stroke of genius on the part

of Lord Roberts to give the Canadians the task of bringing about the surrender of Cronje. By his action he did more to consolidate the Empire than all the politicians have done. He knew when he sent the Royal Canadians against the entrenchments at Wolfeskraal that if no blunder occurred they were bound to be successful. The Boers were in desperate straits; surrounded, constantly shelled, compelled to sit close in their burrows, all possibility of relief cut off—all they needed to force them to surrender was a close and effective fire. His plan succeeded. The "Lion of the Transvaal" was captured with the best body of fighting men in the republics, and to the Canadians was the honor. At the dawn of Majuba Day a stain that had rested on the British arms for twenty years had been wiped out. England rang with the praises of the Canadian troops, and Canadians were understood as they never were before. The word colonial would no longer be a term designating inferiority. In Canada the boys who had died for the Empire drew the colony closer to the motherland; the future of Canada has been a vague thing in the minds of many of the best Canadian and English thinkers, but after Majuba Day its destiny must be as a nation within the Empire. Majuba Day, 1900, was a psychological moment in the growth of the Canadian people as well as of England, and much of the credit of its consequences is due to Lord Roberts.

Cronje conquered, Roberts could extend to him the hand of friendship and fellowship. Methuen had already paid him a tribute for his conduct of the war at Magersfontein, and Roberts as he gazed with admiration at the bent old farmer who was teaching him a new mode of warfare, could sincerely say, "I am glad to meet so brave a man."

As has been said the surrender was the turning point of the Great Boer War. Up to this time the Boers had been successful, even though they failed to capture Mafeking, Kimberley and Ladysmith; but now their fortunes began to decline, and this victory caused the raising of the siege of Ladysmith, and paved the way for the surrender of Bloemfontein and the surrender of Pretoria. Roberts' force was deemed irresistible, and from this time such it proved itself to be. Paardeberg has rightly been called the greatest event of the war. The whole of the Paardeberg campaign is unsurpassed for brilliancy

in Roberts' career, his march was a harder and more trying one than his dash on Kandahar; and although it was chance that threw Cronje into his hands, he was able on a moment's notice to change his entire plan of action and to surround and capture the best fighting general on the side of the Boers. But he had paid his price, and more of his soldiers had perished in that nine days' fighting, or were lying sick in field hospitals from wounds or exhaustion or fever, than had fallen under Methuen in all his weeks of campaigning on the Kimberley route. It had been a hard struggle and a rest for men and horses was an absolute necessity. Cronje out of the way and Ladysmith relieved, he could leisurely proceed on his road to the capitals of the republics.

From February 26 until March 6 the army rested and then the march on Bloemfontein began. The Boers had thought it necessary to weaken their force besieging Ladysmith and holding Buller in check, in order to assist Cronje in the first place, and, after his surrender, to endeavor to keep Roberts from entering Bloemfontein. But they might as well have endeavored to turn back Niagara. The irresistible river of men swept on, and at Poplar Grove on March 7 and Driefontein on March 11 won decisive victories over the Boers. Driefontein was the last great stand made by the enemy against the army of Lord Roberts in the Free State. They had marvellous success in guerilla tactics, but never after this risked coming to decisive battles.

On the 11th and 12th a rush was made to Bloemfontein, and on the 13th Lord Roberts entered the beautiful little town which had already been formally surrendered to him. The horses of his army were scarcely able to drag themselves along; his men were ragged, half-starved, with broken shoes, many indeed in their bare feet, while every here and there could be seen soldiers flushed with the deadly enteric. But all were happy, the first great stage of the war was finished. The Orange Free State was vanquished, and on the flag staff in front of the president's official residence floated the small silken Union Jack bearing a shamrock in one corner. It had been made by the wife of the commander-in-chief. Smokeless powder and long range guns have not yet killed the spirit of chivalry and romance.

All this time Roberts had been, considering his advanced years, enduring much. He never saved himself. He marched with the men, and at the same time had on his mind the responsibility of controlling an army of 200,000 men. It was said that during the investment of Paardeberg "when rations were running low, he called his men around him and told them that what was good enough for them was good enough for him, and so he lived upon the ordinary soldier's rations. It was not an uncommon sight to see him seated on a biscuit box outside his tent eating the same food as the men around him."

Meanwhile Ladysmith had been relieved. Stiff fighting had gone on all through the latter part of February, and despite his reverses Buller remained the idol of his men. His brave, buoyant, sympathetic nature won their confidence and admiration. Luck, the factor that plays the greatest part in making the fortunes of warriors or gamblers, was against him. He, too, was determined to do something to make Majuba Day remembered. Against the Boer line, now weakened by one-half, he threw his army and this time won. He was forced to rest on the following day, and the Boers, seeing that they need not hope to withstand his advance, cunningly retreated taking with them all their guns, so that on March 1 the army of relief was able to enter the city unopposed. It had cost him one-sixth of his army of 30,000 men to relieve Ladysmith. After all it was not too great a price to pay for the honor of British arms, and although Roberts has blamed him "for not asserting his authority and seeing that what he thought best was done," by his bearing under defeat, by his bull dog tenacity, by the calmness with which he has borne censure, he has gained many admirers who believe that time will win him back his old renown as a leader. His soldiers believed in him, and a liberal vote by parliament for his distinguished services would have been appreciated both in England and in the colonies.

One main force and the great Cronje captured, the capital of the Orange Free State in his hands, Ladysmith relieved, the presidents of the Republics fleeing northward, Roberts could but rest to concentrate his army for yet another great march—the march on what was supposed to be by many the most strongly fortified city in the world—Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal.



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### ON TO PRETORIA.

In Possession of Bloemfontein—The Presidents in Flight—The British Unable to Continue the Pursuit—A City of Hospitals—Lord Roberts Reorganizing His Army—His Generous Proclamation to the Boers—The Death of General Joubert—The Boer Commandoes Active—The Disaster at Koorn Spruit—The Reddersberg Affair—British Admiration for De Wet—Roberts Calm Under Reverses—Operations Begin Once More—Forward to Pretoria—Crossing the Zaud—Crossing the Vaal—Into the Gold City—The Surrender of Pretoria.

**N**OW that the British were in possession of Bloemfontein England breathed easier; to the newspaper public the war was ended, and even many of the soldiers in Robert's army expected to leave Africa in a few weeks. The presidents of the republics were of course still hopeful, and on March 5 had sent a message to the British government expressing their readiness to cease hostilities on condition that "the incontestable independence of both republics be maintained," and expressing a belief that, "The Triune God who lighted the unextinguishable fire of love of freedom in the hearts of ourselves and of our fathers will not forsake us, and will accomplish His work in us and in our descendants." To this message the Marquis of Salisbury sent the following reply which admitted of no misapprehension: "Her Majesty's government can only answer your Honor's telegram by saying that they are not prepared to assent to the independence of either the South African Republic or the Orange Free State."

The presidents were playing for two things—time and European intervention. The attitude of the United States prevented the possibility of the latter, and South African conditions alone were to give them time. They fled north of the Vet while Roberts with incredible rapidity rushed his army forward on the capital of the Orange Free State. The pace was a killing one and his large army was forced to rest. The work done since leaving Graspan



NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND MEN OF QUEENSLAND  
MOUNTED INFANTRY



OFFICERS OF QUEENSLAND MOUNTED INFANTRY  
SOLDIERS OF THE QUEEN



THE OCCUPATION OF KROONSTAD  
LORD ROBERTS AND HIS COLONIAL BODYGUARD.

had been even harder on the horses than the men, and a traveller might easily have traced the line of march by the carcasses of the dead horses that were strewn across the veldt.

To follow the fleeing Boers northward was out of the question. French had done marvellous work with his cavalry, but he had not saved his horses, and was now practically in command of a foot regiment; it was, therefore, necessary to rest quietly in the pretty little town of Bloemfontein till the horses that were being hurried to South Africa from the ends of the earth should arrive. The lack of foresight on the part of the authorities was to do much to protract the war. The conflict had now been raging for nearly six months, and from the beginning it was evident that the one thing needful for a successful campaign was an abundance of horses, and yet a month's service in the field had left the army utterly without the power of doing offensive work. While the rains of the African autumn beat down upon the soldiers they were forced to sit idle, many of them without tents. The putrid water of the Modder, too, had done its work, and an epidemic of enteric had broken out in the army. The soldiers succumbed to it not by individuals but by scores. Soon the beautiful and healthful city of Bloemfontein became a city of hospitals, echoing with the sound of the muffled drum and the slow tramp of soldiers carrying to the grave their dead comrades, rudely wrapped in blankets. Hourly the sounds of "Last Post" echoed through the wards crowded with suffering men. The Free State offices, the places of worship, and the Raadzaal were filled with sick and wounded. The beautiful grounds of the Ramblers' Club were white with the tents of Langman's Hospital, and the breezy outskirts of the city were dotted with a hundred hospital tents.

The period of waiting, of inactivity, of watching his soldiers dying by scores tried Roberts more than anything else in the war. He was anxious to terminate the struggle, but before he could march on the Boer capital it was necessary to accumulate a cavalry force well mounted and much larger than the one that had carried him successfully from Graspan. Abundant supplies had likewise to be collected at Bloemfontein, and so he patiently waited, studying the country and endeavoring to win the Free-States to England, gaining information about the force opposed to him, and re-organizing the

army. The public began to grow impatient at the long delay, but there was nothing for it but to wait until he could be sure that his advance on Pretoria could brush aside all opposition.

Meanwhile the Boers, who had been demoralized by his sudden sweep through the Orange Free State, were recovering heart. They saw that the South African climate was fighting on their behalf. Fever was decimating the ranks of the British, and the rainy season which had settled down in all its force would greatly interfere with the rapid advance against them, even if the army in Bloemfontein was abundantly supplied with horses. They could not hope with the army they had in the field after the loss of Cronje's division to beat the British, but they did hope to protract the war till France or Russia, or even Afghanistan, should come to blows with England.

After Roberts made his headquarters at Bloemfontein he issued a most generous proclamation to the burghers still in arms, and though many yielded up their weapons, for the greater part they brought in ancient rifles, and the British became possessed of many flint-locks that would have looked well in a museum of antiquities. For the first week after the occupancy of Bloemfontein it looked if the Boer cause were at an end. The Boer generals were said to be quarreling among themselves. The burghers were reported to be returning to their farms, and Kruger and Steyn were in despair. Had the English army been able to follow up, without a day's delay, the advantage gained by the sudden rush on Bloemfontein the war might have been finished almost at once; but the delay gave the Boers time to recover heart, and their superb guerilla leaders, by patiently biding their time, gained several such triumphs, almost within sight of the great army at Bloemfontein, that the whole Boer population took heart, and the world—even the British world—grew enthusiastic over the daring and dash of the Boer commandants, particularly of De Wet. By the end of March bulletins were anxiously scanned once more with something of the interest that was manifested during the struggle on the Tugela. Severe fighting had taken place at Karee Siding, and though the British were ultimately successful it was only after severe loss.

During this period, too, the Boers sustained their greatest blow in the death of General Joubert, the Washington of the Transvaal. Had this noble

soldier but lived, his sober sense, his splendid intelligence, the breadth of his mind, and his integrity—a thing sadly wanting in the Boer—would in all probability have long since ended the deplorable struggle that is still laying waste South Africa, and sweeping out of existence the only race capable of making a permanent home on the veldt. General Joubert died on March 27, and the world felt that another of the noble leaders of men had been taken, and at the same time that chaos would come now that the guiding hand of the Boer army had been removed. He was buried in Pretoria on March 29, and as if to avenge his death the Boer commandoes became intensely active. On the day of his death little, long-suffering Mafeking experienced a terrific bombardment; on the day of his funeral fierce fighting took place at Karee Siding, and two days later one of the crowning disasters of the war took place at Koorn Spruit, when Broadwood's column of about 2000 men as it retreated from Thaba N'Cbui to Bloemfontein was ambushed by De Wet with some 4000 Boers, and his entire force was in danger of annihilation or capture. As it was he lost 19 killed, 134 wounded and 425 prisoners, besides ninety wagons and seven of the horse-artillery 12-pounder guns. The column would without doubt have been destroyed but for the gallant conduct of the drivers and gunners of Q Battery. Every man proved himself a hero, and the withdrawal of the five guns of this battery will live as one of the great deeds of history. In this engagement the Boer leader De Wet sustained the magnificent reputation he had won as a cavalry leader at Waterval Drift, and the rank and file of the British army added another glory to their illustrious record. Every man of Q Battery was worthy of a Victoria Cross, so Lord Roberts concluded when their conduct was reported to him; as a consequence he decided to award four V. C.'s to the battery and left it to the officers, the non-commissioned officers, the gunners and drivers to select the men they thought most deserving of the honor. Sergeant Parker, driver Horace H. Glascock and gunner Isaac Lodge were selected for the coveted prize. Major Phipps-Hornby and Captain Humphrey were the only unwounded officers left to help save the guns, and each nominated the other, and so the honor fell to Major Phipps-Hornby by right of seniority.

Disaster did not end here. The Boers got possession of the Waterworks

at Sanna's Post and cut off the water supply of Bloemfontein. The situation now became a grave one indeed. The fever which had begun at Paardeberg assumed tremendous proportions and it looked as if the hospital horrors of the Crimea were to be repeated in the heart of South Africa. The end was not yet. On the third of April Captain McWhinnie retreating from Dewetsdorp towards Reddersberg and Bethanie with a detachment of Royal Irish Rifles and mounted infantry blundered into a Boer trap, and after holding out for a day ignominiously surrendered when only twelve men were killed and thirty-five wounded—the most disgraceful affair in South Africa.

At first the public were filled with admiration for what they considered the dying efforts of the Boer commanders; but admiration for the enemy soon changed to outspoken words with regard to the manner in which Roberts was conducting the campaign. They clamored for him to do something, and many thought that the situation was too much for him. Revenge Koorn Spruit and Reddersberg was the cry—why was there no effort being made to capture the Waterworks? A melancholy April dragged itself along with the ever-increasing army settled down in Bloemfontein, enduring the continuous rains, listening to the beat of the muffled drums, and seeing the cemeteries rapidly filling with the bodies of their comrades—fifty burials in a single day were not uncommon.

Roberts, however, heeded the clamor of neither the press nor the public. These small commandos flitting up and down the Orange Free State were a pest, but he could endure them in the meantime. He had to entirely reorganize his army, equip them for a sweeping march that would take the Boers off their feet, and give them no time to recover, and spread out a wide net that would gather in all small bodies of troops while his great main army swept triumphantly forward on its way to Pretoria. He was severely criticised. His work was unfavorably compared with the work of Buller who had at least been most persistent in his efforts; but he maintained his usual calm attitude, and while the Boers were flitting hither and thither performing astonishing feats; and while Colonel Dalgety, for over two weeks, was closely besieged in Wepener and in grave danger of capture, he remained dumb, but all the time was industriously preparing his huge army for its advance on

Pretoria. At length everything was ready and at once the situation became changed. On April 23 Ian Hamilton without much difficulty recaptured the Waterworks, on April 26 Colonel Brahanf relieved the force besieged in Wepener; and then Ian Hamilton and Smith-Dorrien scattered the commandoes which were operating about Thaha N'Chu. By the first of the month of May their troops had brushed aside all opposition and the Boers were scattering in all directions. On May 1 Roberts was ready to send forward his main army; and while Ian Hamilton was sweeping north with a wide front on the east, and General French with his dashing mounted division was speeding over the plain ten miles and more to the west of the railway, the great army of over 40,000 men with its endless line of transports rolled out of Bloemfontein. At once the situation had changed, and the public who had been for the past month or more deploring the reverses which had befallen England's troops in South Africa began to prophesy great victories. The end was in sight, a few sharp fights, a struggle at Johannesburg, a fierce siege at Pretoria with a repetition on a gigantic scale of the cannonading which had taken place at Cronje's laager would end the war—such was the opinion of the "man in the street."

Opposition to the forward movement was expected from the start, but little was experienced until the Vet river was reached. Brandfort was occupied, and then the mounted infantry moved towards the Vet to seize the drifts and clear away the enemy, but the Boers were not strong enough to make a determined stand and so after a few scattered shots allowed the army of Roberts to advance without opposition. In their flight they did all they could to retard the progress of the army, destroying the railway track and blowing up culverts and bridges. However, the ingenuity and experience of the celebrated Canadian engineer, Colonel Girouard, rapidly overcame the difficulties thus presented. On the seventh of the month the mounted infantry under French and Hutton came into contact with the Boers at the Zand River and met with such opposition that, after sharp fighting, they were forced to retire. It was evident from this that before the main army could cross the Zand a battle would have to be fought. The breaks in the line of railway had forced a temporary halt at Smaldeel, and it was not until May 10



that the army under Roberts reached the south bank of the Zand. Across the river on the hills in the distance could be seen the admirable position the Boers had taken up. A frontal advance was out of the question, but a wide turning movement did the work and the Boers once more retired, this time in considerable confusion. As the day wore to a close they rushed in headlong flight towards Kroonstadt, which place Steyn had proclaimed his capital after the surrender of Bloemfontein. Leaders and burghers alike fled in wild confusion from the banks of the Zand. They longed for night, but it was to give them but little relief; behind them thundered cannon and over them burst lyddite shells, filling the air with their sickening fumes; among them fell the spattering shrapnel, and if they lagged for a moment the ping-ping of the bullets played through their ranks. At last sudden darkness spread over the brown withered, treeless veldt; and for a brief period the thick mantle of night made them feel safer. But the hunters of men were close behind, and soon the sharp rifle-fire made them urge their horses and veldt-ponies and oxen on still faster. On they went, a great huddle of men and beasts; bumping through ruts and over stones; wagons breaking down and strewing the plain with household goods, animals tumbling exhausted on the veldt.

In their efforts to escape they fired the dry grass of the plain, hoping to flee the easier under cover of the flames and smoke. The night was dark, the moon hidden behind the clouds, and the leaping, running flames added a tragic color to the tragic scene of flight and death.

Kroonstadt was in the wildest confusion; burghers were bivouacking in the streets and the squares waiting till dawn to continue their flight. From nearly every house lights shone as the inhabitants packed up their valuables and made ready to go into exile. The government officials were busy preparing to move President Steyn's capital to Lindley; but such an easily moved institution had its destination changed, and the State papers were forwarded to Heilbron.

Meanwhile Botha (now commandant-general of the army of the Transvaal) and DeWet had succeeded in getting some two or three thousand men under control, and when Steyn joined them later with what few men he could induce

to stand by him, were hopeful of being able to make a sufficiently long resistance at Bosch Rand to give those who wished time to get well out of danger. Bosch Rand is a high ridge towering above Kroonstadt, giving an excellent natural position from which to oppose the enemy's advance. It had been strengthened by trenches, but when the Boers saw the wide flanks of the army with Generals Tucker and Hamilton on the right, and Generals Hutton and French on the left, sweeping forward with a forty mile front, threatening to surround them, it is not to be wondered at that they did not dare to attempt, even from their well protected ridge, to face the huge army of Lord Roberts. There were a few daring spirits, however, in the Boer ranks, and inspired by such leaders as Botha, De Wet, and Colonel Blake of the Irish Brigade, they turned their faces to the British to protect as long as they could the disordered host that was hurrying through Kroonstadt.

At noon an occasional shell began to drop along Bosch Rand, while to east and west the cavalry and mounted infantry were hurrying forward to turn the flank of the rear guard. Botha saw his danger. He might at any moment find himself cooped up as was Cronje at Paardeberg. Still he tenaciously held to his position almost till dark, but a dashing charge of the cavalry and lancers drove the Boers from their trenches; and the rear guard, too, put spurs to their horses and rushed to Kroonstadt.

Before this happened Botha had seen that Bosch Rand could not long be held, and that the mounted men of the enemy were rapidly surrounding Kroonstadt. He knew that an engine with a train of cars attached (the last left) was waiting word from him to steam out of the yards, and so he sent in a message that the enemy were within three miles of the town. On the instant the train that was standing waiting began slowly to roll northward.

While the train was still in the yards, flames began to burst from the station and warehouses, and soon the whole town was as bright as day through the light of the burning buildings. An English battery caught sight of the fugitive cars and trained its guns upon them. All resistance was brushed aside, and another capital of the Free State had fallen.

In that great trek out of Kroonstadt there were at least ten thousand men and twenty guns, and this force Botha's strategy alone had saved. The

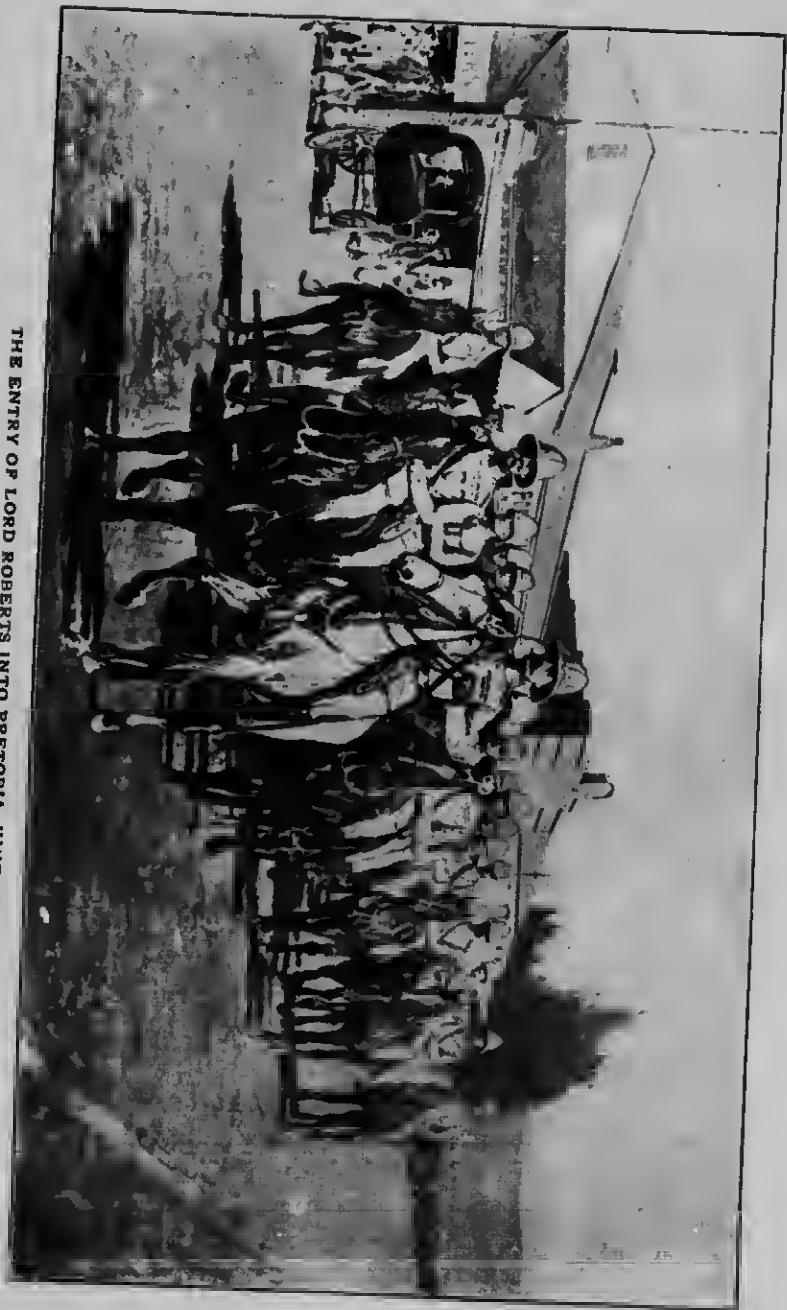
men might have escaped; but for him their guns, ammunition, supplies and rolling stock would surely have fallen into Roberts' hands.

The game was up; it was useless to resist; the few shells that had fallen into the town during the night made the authorities, as at Bloemfontein, fear that the appearance of their pretty little town would be sadly disfigured, and so they decided to promptly surrender. While the field-marshal was at the drift over the Valsch the Mayor of Kroonstadt and a deputation of citizens came out for a conference. The surrender of Bloemfontein was to be repeated; they were ready to yield without firing an opposing shot. The landdrost, however, was the chief official, and with him alone would Lord Roberts confer; and so after considerable delay the landdrost and the entire council came out to him and humbly surrendered the keys of the town.

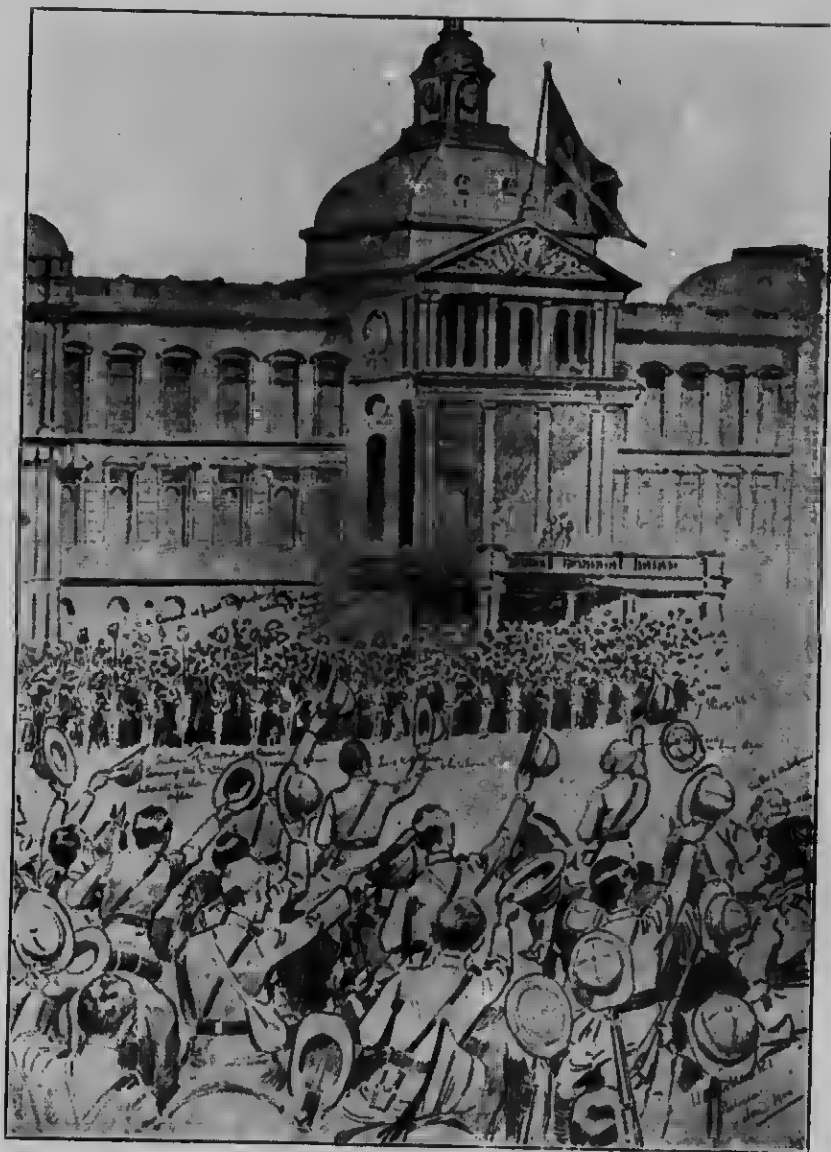
There was still further delay. The infantry division had not yet reached the Bosch Rand, and the commander-in-chief waited till it came up; and then surrounded by his body-guard of colonials and accompanied by his staff he marched in state into Kroonstadt. There were a few Englishmen in the town; some Dutch who had never taken up arms; and many cowards who were now, in the hour of their defeat, ultra-English, and his advance to the broad market-place was a triumph. Waving of flags, shouting and cheering accompanied him at every step. To one unacquainted with the circumstances of this march it would have seemed that the general was entering an English town in holiday humor.

That the British would win was a foregone conclusion, but the speed with which the work was done amazed even the war critics of Europe, and actually won from the Germans words of praise. It was Roberts of Kandahar once more; even greater on this march, for he had forced forward an army of 50,000 men with the swiftness of a cavalry brigade. The march, too, had been made with but few casualties; some regiments, such as the Canadian Mounted Rifles which bore the brunt of the fighting, not losing a single man. No wonder "Bobs" was the idol of England, a general who could win almost bloodless battles could not but be dear to the anxious hearts across the ocean.

The Boers in their flight to the Vaal broke the railway line in a number of places and it was therefore necessary to make a somewhat protracted halt



THE ENTRY OF LORD ROBERTS INTO PRETORIA, JUNE 5TH, 1900



**HOISTING THE BRITISH FLAG ABOVE THE RAADZAAL**

"At 2 o'clock in the afternoon of June 5th, Lord Roberts made his formal entry into Pretoria, and the Union Jack was hoisted on the Parliament House, in Church Square amid a fierce clamor of kettledrums." *The Sphere*.

in Kroonstadt. But the skilful engineer corps under the direction of Colonel Girouard had everything ready for a general advance before the end of the month. As early as the 15th of May, French and Hutton had been sent forward on the right and left of the railway to clear the road for the main army. They met with but little opposition, however, and the army of Lord Roberts crossed the Vaal without coming in contact with the Boer forces. It was evident to all that if a battle was to be fought it would be in the vicinity of Johannesburg, or perhaps not until Pretoria was reached.

Meanwhile it looked as if the Boer cause had completely collapsed. Brave little Mafeking had been relieved, the army was within the Transvaal itself, and in a day or two the soldiers would be at Johannesburg, and they were hopeful of being able to reach the forts of Pretoria early in June. They were not, however, to get into Johannesburg without a fight, and a sharp one, too, among the Klipriversberg hills and a fierce battle on the historical field of Doornkop where Jameson had come to wreck.

The Boers were discovered in force with heavy artillery, checking the advance on Roodepoort and Florida. They had between two and four thousand men, and not fewer than six guns together with a number of "pom-poms." The British had suddenly come upon a difficult position, but there was nothing to do but fight, and that under the most trying circumstances. *The London Times* correspondent gave the following account of the beginning of the action of Doornkop:

"The Twenty-First Brigade advanced on Roodepoort in front, the City Imperial Volunteers in the centre leading, the Derbyshire Regiment on the left, and the Cameron Highlanders on the right. The Sussex Regiment, which were originally in reserve, were then skilfully moved, and soon afterwards the Nineteenth Brigade, with the Canadians on the left, the Gordon Highlanders in the centre, the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry on the right, and the Shropshire Light Infantry in reserve, also advanced to take the main Boer position, while the Twenty-First Brigade acted as an outflanking force."

The Boers were in a strong position to oppose this well-planned attack, and with the shrewdness that had marked their tactics from the

commencement of the war, they had made it doubly strong. The khaki uniform of the British soldiers had in previous fights served as a natural protection on the brown veldt. At long range it was almost impossible to catch sight of the thickly extended line of earth-colored figures, and they as often fired at ant hills and rocks as at men. But they had resolved that on this occasion if the British did succeed in driving them from their trenches they would pay dearly for their success. For several miles along their front they had set fire to the veldt, dry with the autumn frosts, and the British as they moved forward saw before them rolling slopes of fire and smoke, ridges along which ran spurts of fire, and broad stretches black with a deadly blackness. The khaki uniforms which had protected them in the past stood out on this background, an excellent target for the sharpshooters making a last determined effort to keep the "rooineke" from entering the Gold City.

The Nineteenth Brigade advanced in extended order. As the infantry moved forward the 5-inch guns and two batteries began to send well-directed shells over their heads at the Boer position. The British force was still several miles from the enemy's lines when shells began to scream through the smoky air and hurt their noses in the blackened plain, fortunately hurrying but seldom. Still the advance continued; that distant ridge guarding the way to Johannesburg had to be won before nightfall. A mile was crossed under the shell fire, and still another mile of blackened veldt intervened when, sharp and deadly, the shrill Mauser bullets began to sing among the advancing soldiers. Through clouds of smoke, through belts of fire, across broad black stretches the men hurried, reserving their fire.

The Boers made an attempt to flank the right of the brigade, but the Canadian Maxim gun was in a good position and foiled their attempt. So till darkness began to fall the Canadians poured volley after volley into the trenches where the enemy seemed thickest; so till darkness was approaching the shells from the big guns and the quick-fire guns screamed and roared across that grim battle ground.

The Gordons, however, bore the brunt of the fight. Their position was the most difficult on the field; they had but little shelter and their men fell in great numbers. "The Men of Dargai," however, were worthy of their

reputation, and when General Smith-Dorrien sent in word that the Boers must be cleared from the ridge by nightfall they fixed bayonets, and with a wild reckless dash moved forward on the enemy's main position and scattered them before their impetuous charge. But they paid dearly for their bravery; twenty gallant fellows of the regiment were killed and seventy wounded—almost a sixth of their entire force in the fight.

This charge of the Gordons was one of the most dashing in the war and in a way the most effective. It cleared the road to Johannesburg; it practically ended the war, for this stand outside of Johannesburg was the last important stand that the Boers made during the campaign. From the fight at Doornkop till the annexation of the Transvaal there were many skirmishes, much breaking of the lines of communication, but no more battles; guerilla warfare, deadly and tantalizing, alone had to be faced.

This last charge was a most spectacular affair. The hillside was on fire, and through a ridge of flames it was necessary to pass to get at the Boers. Hamilton says of the situation: "A belt of fire and smoke ten feet wide, well nigh of man's height, swept towards our position, and through the flames and smoke line after line of our men leaped, and went with singed eye-brows and beards over the blackness the fire had wrought."

This fight shattered the hopes of the Boers; they had made their last strong stand, there was now nothing left them but retreat to Pretoria, a fight about that strongly fortified city, or flight to the distant corners of the Transvaal, where the British could only follow them with great difficulty. The bravest and best generals they had were about Johannesburg in this final struggle to keep the British from crossing the Rand. Commandant General Botha was there, urging his men on with voice and whip to face the British; there, too, were De Wet, Delarey, Pretorius, Meyer, and other equally famous commandants; but the overwhelming number of the British, the rapidity of the movements of French and Hutton, the fearless bravery of the artillery, and the dash and endurance of the infantry showed how hopeless was further resistance, and they fled precipitously towards Pretoria.

On the following day, May 31, the city was surrendered and Lord Roberts made his triumphal entry. The streets towards the suburbs were largely



deserted and the stores and houses barricaded for the most part; but as the troops marched towards the public buildings the crowds gathered. James Barnes in the *Outlook* gave a fine description of the final scene in Johannesburg.

"The approaches were packed," he wrote, "and a great jostling crowd filled the square. A few of the advanced guard had already arrived, and there were some mining police in their neat uniforms, the captain of the fire-brigade and Doctor Krause, the young commandant to whose forethought and ability the order of the city and safety of property had been due.

"From down the street mounted men in khaki appeared, in charge of an officer. They cleared the square and kept the crowd back. The cheering had already started, but it was mingled with 'boo-boos' and hisses.

"But when Lord Roberts and his staff appeared there arose a shout that drowned all signs of discontent.

"I had read of the forced exit of the Uitlanders and how they were packed in open trucks and sent over the border. But the cheers sounded loyal enough and presaged well enough for the future. A guard of honor appeared and the field-marshal took a division to one side of the flag staff on which the Transvaal flag was still floating.

"There was little ceremony and no speech making. Down came one color and up went the other—a little silken emblem that was soon replaced by a huge Union Jack. The field-marshal, having his head, led the cheers. The soldiers lifted their helmets on the point of their bayonets in the rare old fashion. A bugle sounded the key of G and they sang God Save the Queen.

"The staff sang, and the mounted men sang, and the grimy marching fellows of the guard of honor sang too, even a few in the crowd joined in, but the Boer special policemen sat glum on their horses."

Comparatively few of the army entered Johannesburg; but the few who did saw a strangely new city, a city that had risen from the plain in less than twenty years, a city of about 150,000 inhabitants, a city with tall chimneys and staring factories, with piles of refuse from which the gold had been crushed, a city without churches, a city of saloons. A wicked, greedy,

worldly city; and for this city they had crossed six thousand miles of ocean, and climbed another thousand miles of veldt and kopje. Was it worth it? Yes! The spirit that broods over history was but using the greed and arrogance and ignorance of Kruger and the oligarchy at Pretoria, and the insatiable greed of the companies operating along the Rand to unify mankind. From the Cape to Cairo the same unity of ideas that sways the whole of the North American continent will yet bind together all the diverse peoples of European extraction living in the West Africa.

But before this could be a final scene had to be played in the great war drama, and the cry was, on to Pretoria!

The troops were pretty well used up by this time and it was necessary to halt for a couple of days at Johannesburg while the men were recruiting and getting ready for their final dash on Pretoria. All expected a stiff fight and probably a somewhat protracted siege. Terrifying tales had reached the army of the wonderful forts of the Transvaal, and just before the final advance was made on Pretoria the following interesting account was going the rounds of the press and was familiar to men in the army now boldly advancing on this impregnable position:

"You look up," the writer says, "to the mountain fronts as your train struggles to find its way into Pretoria, and wherever the eye rests there appears to be the lines of a fort, a redoubt, the front of masked batteries, or the domes of bomb-proof rifle and cannon pits. To the north, east, west and south these engirdle the city. They command the few—very few narrow entrances to Pretoria. They watch like great dogs the dusty, sun-rotted, veldt over which any English troops coming from the south must pass. They flank at the one railroad to Johannesburg and the one to Lorenzo Marques. They face the north at Wonderboom and guard the ways to Beersheba, Hebron and Polonia. Their location had been with purpose. Captain Schiel, now an English prisoner, constructed the one at Daspoort from plans obtained in Berlin. He brought special assistants from Berlin to aid him in the work. Amsterdam engineers built others of the defences. After them came French engineers, and then those of Italy, so that the completed structures represent the genius of four nations.

"In external appearance the seven forts are alike. They have masonry faces with earthwork which covers their fronts to a great depth. In this they conform with plans and suggestions to be found in M. Bloch's much studied work 'The War of the Future.' Pile upon pile of sand bags are stacked up wherever shells from the enemy might strike. There are many hidden recesses, secret passages, complete telephone connections—not only with each other, but with the government buildings in Pretoria. Search-lights are mounted in each structure so as to command the surrounding country at night. The magazines are under ground, and reported to be mined. Report has it, also, that the near approaches are mined, and that the electrical construction is such that considerable portions of an enemy's army might be blown into eternity before surrender came. For food, in the event of siege, enormous quantities of maize had been accumulated—enough, it is said, to feed the army and the population of Pretoria for five years. The supply of ammunition was calculated to be sufficient for two years; how many guns are mounted or will be it is difficult to estimate. The total artillery force of the Boers at present is estimated at 450 guns by the English.

"The guns originally placed in the forts were 15-centimetre Creusots, but their number is not definitely known.

"The centre of the system of forts lies about 3,600 feet to the westward of the northern end of Pretoria, and has a radius of something more than seven thousand yards. The centre of the city is only about 11,000 feet nearly due south, on the fort on Signal Hill, which is about 400 feet above the plain on the west side of the railway to Johannesburg, and about 13,000 feet from the fort on the hill to the east of the railroad and the Aapies River running to the north. Between this fort and the river are the fountains that furnish the water supply to Pretoria. The distance between the forts on either side of the railway is 7,100 feet to the railway station, where the lines from Johannesburg on the south, Delagoa Bay on the east, and Pietersburg on the north, form their junction, is immediately outside the city on the south side. The railway to Pietersburg, after winding some distance to the westward, passes out at the plain on which Pretoria is situated, through the Daspoort or defile in the range of hills behind the city. Through this also runs the

Apies River, the railway and river running together across the plain through the Wonderboom Poort.

"Both river and railway pass under the guns of the large fort 21,000 feet from the centre of Pretoria; the western fort is on the range of hills behind Pretoria, and lies at a distance of 31 1/2 miles from the city's centre. There is a powerful redoubt to the southwest on the range of hills through which the transport road to Johannesburg passes. It is equipped with various earth batteries, the circle of the larger works denoting the Boer capital. Behind the great redoubt mentioned are the principal magazines, one excavated out of the solid rock with a bomb-proof roof, and the other built into the kloof, also bomb-proof. Communications between the redoubt and the last mentioned magazines is by means of a covered way. Roads connect all these forts of the capital, and they have pipes laid for water, as well as electric lights for the search-lights. An estimate made a short time ago before all the Boer guns in use at Kimberley and Ladysmith were started back to Pretoria, gave the number of cannon in the forts and redoubts as one hundred and twenty, large calibre and quick-firing. Some are said to be of 23-centimetre calibre. A great many Krupps, Maxims, and other machine-guns are ready for service."

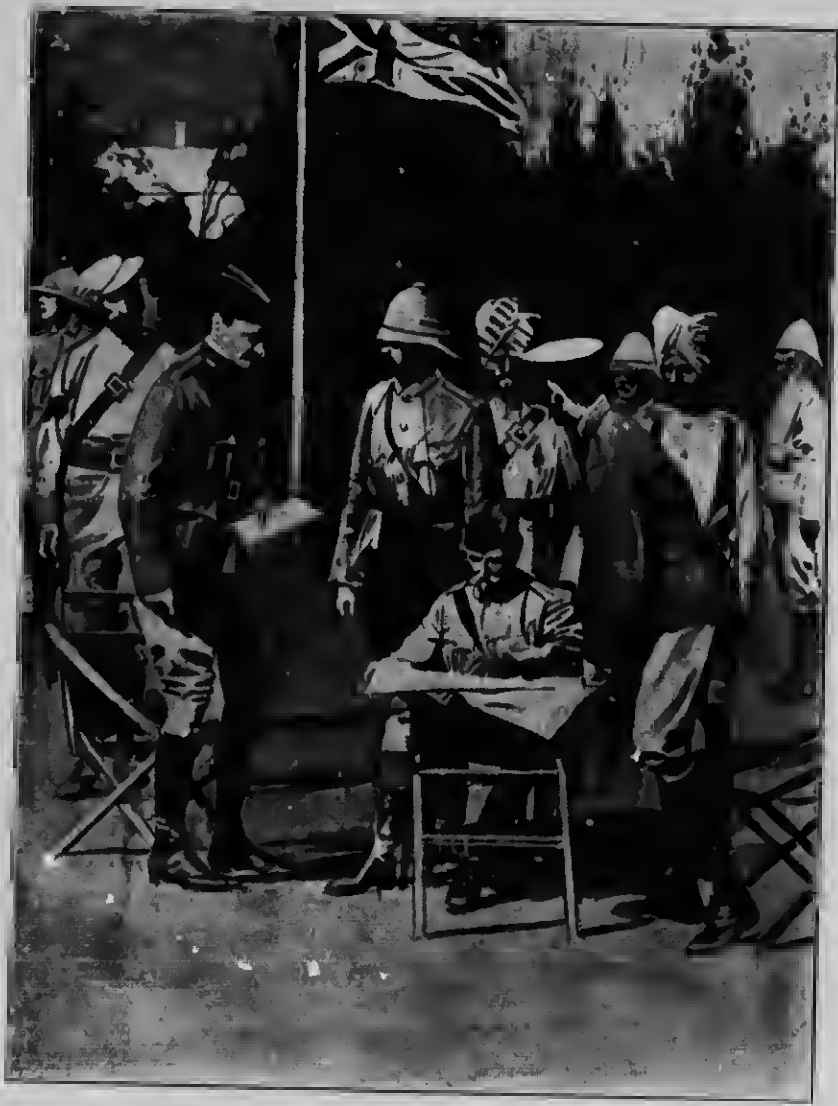
Such was the supposed strength of the city on which the troops as a whole began their final advance on June 3, after a much needed rest of two days at and about Johannesburg. The cavalry had already moved forward on June 2, with the intention of making a wide detour and practically surrounding Pretoria. Although the main army was advancing through a region that gave the Boers excellent opportunities of checking their advance, they met with but trivial opposition. French and Ian Hamilton, it is true, encountered several Boer commandoes but brushed them aside, and it looked to the soldiers as if the great tragedy in whose last act they were now playing their parts was after all to end in a howling farce. The deed that Kruger said would "stagger humanity" was never likely to be performed, and even the forts that had been built at such enormous cost and so magnificently equipped would, it was rumored, in all probability stand grim and silent spectators of the march of the triumphant army into the Boer capital.

There was, however, a little brisk fighting on the 4th but towards evening the artillery had got within range of the girdle of forts and began to throw an occasional shell into them to see if it were possible to find their voices, and even dropped several into the city itself; but the forts remained dumb and it dawned upon the advancing army that the guns had been removed, and that the Boers were for the most part in flight towards the more inaccessible regions of the Transvaal.

It has already been pointed out that the honors of the greatest event of the Boer War, the surrender of Cronje and his army, had fallen to the lot of the Canadians; now the Australians under Colonel de Lisle were to have the glory of being the first to come into direct contact with the citizens of Pretoria. These fine mounted troops had hotly pursued the Boers, who had attempted to delay their advance, to within rifle shot of the city, capturing a Maxim gun. From the position they took up they could see with their field-glasses the Boers they had been endeavoring to capture riding in confusion through the streets of Pretoria. A flag of truce was sent in with the demand for the city to surrender, and the citizens with the consent of General Botha made ready to obey the demand, so that Pretoria practically fell into the hands of the English on the evening of June 4.

At break of day on the following morning the troops prepared to enter the city. The Boers were making the best of their time, and an engine and train escaped at the last moment with guns and provisions and treasure, but several others of less value were captured in a similar attempt.

During the night the Boers had made ready to surrender to Roberts, and early on the morning of the 5th the whole British force moved within a couple of miles of the city, and waited for the triumphal entry which was to take place at two o'clock in the afternoon. At the hour appointed the field-marshal took up his position in front of the government buildings, and the silken flag that had floated over Bloemfontein, Kroonstadt and Johannesburg was run up amidst the cheering of the troops and the wild shouting of the British officers freed that day from the "Bird-Cage." As the long line of troops marched past with bayonets fixed, the band of the Derhys struck up "The Boys of the Old Brigade," and the tired, hungry, footsore men forgot



LORD ROBERTS AT WORK ON THE LAWN OF THE BRITISH RESIDENCY  
AT PRETORIA



THE RIGHT HON. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.



THE RIGHT HON. CECIL RHODES

their suffering. The goal was reached; Pretoria was theirs; the end of the war at last; homeward on the morrow.

They were, however, to meet with serious disappointment. Commandant-General Botha's resistance in the hills south of Pretoria had been hut to gain time to remove his guns from the city and to get the rolling stock from the railway yards. He had succeeded in taking everything of value with him, and the British found an orderly town, a comfortable, clean, pious town, with a few harmless Boers in the streets, with curious, unshapely women gazing from doors and windows, with many blacks in every quarter; hut they had captured no prisoners, and the guns of the enemy were being hurried away to hatter at the lines of communication, and from the fastnesses among the hills to assist in picking off nnwary and isolated companies of British soldiers. Many of the troops now in Pretoria had seen ehell-battered Kimberley; some had been at the relief of Ladysmith, and remembered the starved, fever-smitten heroes, who had beaten hack the Boers for months; all had heard of the heroic resistance of Mafeking, so lately relieved; and as they looked on this city, strong as Gihraltar, and yet deserted by its guardians, they rejoiced that they were Britons and not Boers.

The great march that had just been completed by the army under Lord Roberts will ever live as one of the great events of British military history. It is three hundred miles from Bloemfontein to Pretoria, and the commander-in-chief had ewept his vast army over that distance in hut two days over a month. When he rode to Kandahar he had a better selected and more hardened body of men; the people he was operating against had not the weapons nor the intelligence of the Boers; and, as he pointed out, he really ran no great risk of disaster. When everything in connection with the advance on Pretoria is considered—the South African terrain, the climate—extreme heat in the day and hitter cold at night—the character of the opposing force, and the great danger he every day experienced of having his lines of communication cut, hie march on Pretoria, in conception and achievement, is undouhtedly the most brilliant thing in his brilliant career.

It was necessary to rest for a few days before going in pursuit of the commandoes which had fled from Pretoria. While the troops rested it was



hard to realize that they were in a conquered city. It seemed to many of them, as it seemed to James Barnes, that "It couldn't be Pretoria—this quiet little town with its churches and public buildings, its open shops, its watering-carts spraying the dusty streets, its English signs, and tennis courts and flower-gardens." But it was Pretoria, and each regiment there had only to look at its parade state to see what it had cost Lord Roberts to reach this quiet town. From the Cape to Pretoria their comrades lay in hospitals; from Orange River to Pretoria the gloomy mounds of stones surmounted by rude crosses dotting the veldt, told the price that the English army had paid to win its way to the city of the Boer.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### AFTER PRETORIA.

Roberts Lenient With the Conquered Boers—A Great Peace Lord—The Boers Encouraged by De Wet's Successes—The War Recommences—The Battle of Diamond Hill—Roberts Settled in Pretoria—Buller Fights His Way Into the Transvaal—The British Soldiers Without Enthusiasm for the War—Roberts Forced to Issue Proclamations Threatening the Boers—Boer Plots Against the Commander-in-Chief—The Execution of Hans Cordua—Boer Reverses—De Wet Still a Victorious Leader—His Nature Undergoes a Change—The British Show Vigor in August—Kruger Flees From the Transvaal—Komati Poorte Entered by the British—The Boer Cause Apparently at an End—Kruger Sails for France—A Plot to Murder Lord Roberts—Lord Roberts Leaves South Africa for England.

**R**OBERTS had won his way to Pretoria after one of the most remarkable marches in history. Not the least remarkable thing about it was the leniency with which he treated his enemies. The long pull and the hardships, first from Enslin to Paardeberg, then from Osfontein to Bloemfontein, and the month of hard work from Bloemfontein to Pretoria are quite enough to make anyone wonder at the manner in which he conducted this campaign. Although his soldiers had met with but little opposition on their march they had, as we have seen, endured much from exposure and hunger. For days at a stretch they were on short rations, and yet as they trudged over the veldt, almost fainting from hunger, they dare not help themselves from the stores they found at the Boer farms. To wring the neck of a chicken and stuff it into the haversack would, if it were discovered, meet with severe punishment, and did meet with it in a number of cases. The soldiers of the invading army raised the price of food stuff in the Orange Free State and in the Transvaal, and dipped into their own pockets to pay the fancy war-prices they had created to the wives and daughters of their enemies. It was not much like war, and a great deal of grumbling went on against Lord Roberts for his lenient methods.

But Roberts while leading a force armed with great guns, with quick-fire guns, with modern rifles—while playing the part of a War Lord, desired in

his heart to be a great Peace Lord. His main thought on this march was to bring about speedily a permanent and lasting peace between England and the Republics. Much of his efforts were wasted, at any rate for the time being; the world misunderstood him, deeming him a general who failed at the one all-important point, the power of steeling the heart to the voice of pity; and the Boers misunderstood him, thinking that his leniency was but a sop held out to them to win them from rebellion. Doubtless in time this noble pity will have its reward; otherwise it would seem that cruel chance rules the world, and that a soft word is a producer of wrath.

Throughout the march, too, the intensely religious character of the man showed itself. Without any attempt at display he daily attended religious service when he could, and, while he prayed for the success of the army of England, he prayed with equal earnestness for the mistaken enemy he was battling against. When he reached Pretoria, however, his heart must have hardened a little within him. He found that his kindness had not been appreciated; he found, too, that while many of the citizens and soldiers had been kind to the prisoners who had fallen into their hands, on the whole they had been treated badly, and while he discovered that one Dr. H. P. Veale, M. B., of Cambridge, a man of English descent, was most to blame, the Boer authorities were very guilty.

The first great stage of the Boer War was closed at Bloemfontein, the second at Pretoria—and Roberts hoped as he marched through the city on that June day with his victorious army that it was the last stage, but he soon realized that he had before him abundance of arduous work. Commandant-General Botha had fled from the city and for a day or two seemed inclined to consider the terms offered him by the British commander-in-chief; but soon from the south came tidings of the brilliant work being done by De Wet. That cavalry leader was dashing hither and thither through the Orange Free State or rather, from a British point of view, the Orange River Colony, for it had been formally annexed by Lord Roberts on May 28—breaking the railroad, seizing convoys, capturing prisoners, and cutting off troops. The Boers about Pretoria took heart and Botha refused to consider the terms offered, so that there was nothing for it but to begin the struggle once more, and on June 11

the war began again in earnest with the fight of Diamond Hill which raged over a wide battlefield for three days, and although the Boers did not sustain very great loss they were cleared from about the city of Pretoria for a distance of thirty miles.

It was now evident, that as at Bloemfontein, after the march from Enslin, operations would have to be brought to a standstill for the time being. The pace had told on the army. The troops were without horses with which to pursue the well-mounted and mobile enemy, and the immense army of invasion was reduced by over one-half. Many were sick, many were worn out, all along the line of march for the three hundred miles from Bloemfontein company after company, regiment after regiment, had been left behind to guard the railway and to hold the country they had conquered. During the month of June, on this account, there was no great disparity between the number of Boers operating in the Transvaal and the British army fit for service in and about Pretoria.

At this critical moment Roberts showed weakness; it was no time to grant favors, and when he issued a proclamation while inactive in Pretoria after Diamond Hill, offering the burghers who were prepared to lay down their arms free passes to their farms it was of course supposed that the campaign was too much for the army under him, and that he was endeavoring by a show of kindness to weaken the Boer cause.

Meanwhile De Wet and Botha were growing stronger with each day. De Wet's successes had made a national hero of him and hundreds who had taken the oath of neutrality flocked to join his ranks. His amazing victories were to continue though every able British general was from time to time in pursuit of him—Kitchener, Methuen, Ian Hamilton, Smith-Dorrien, etc., etc.—he managed to evade them all, and gained victories even when they seemed to have him thoroughly hemmed in and in their grip. De Wet's name is the one that will live, the most renowned in the great struggle that has gone on for the last two years in South Africa; and yet he was only a captain, sharp and shrewd, not a general; what would he have done had he been in command of such an army as Joubert had at Ladysmith, or the one with

which Roberts marched on Pretoria? That is a question it would indeed be hard to answer.

Roberts was now forced to settle down at Pretoria and wait till time and reinforcements would enable him to move his army east and west and north and south to finish the fight which he thought was finished when he entered Pretoria.

However, the army in South Africa was not idle. On the east General Buller was fighting his way towards Pretoria against strong forces of Boers and through positions as difficult as he had experienced on the Tugela. He had learned much, and during this advance showed most brilliant generalship, outmanœuvring the Boers, on ground with which they were thoroughly familiar, with the greatest possible success. Early in July he was well into the Transvaal and in touch with Lord Roberts' army. This union of the forces of the two great generals began to make the work look more hopeful, but still the task before the British army was a heavy one. Their men had become thoroughly dispirited—officers and privates alike had hoped that when Pretoria was reached the war would be at an end; but there seemed no end to the affair and they had lost all their enthusiasm. They had grown weary of much marching over wide wastes of South African wilderness; they had no longer any joy in this long-range warfare; they were in rags; their strength ebbing, and fever still playing havoc with their ranks. Even Roberts was feeling the strain, and as he discovered that the burghers were breaking the oath of neutrality his proclamations became less lenient. It was now decreed that where telegraph lines and railways were cut the farms in the vicinity would be burned or heavy fines levied on their occupants.

These proclamations had little or no effect. The women of the Transvaal were with their men in the fight and to a great extent made heroes of them; they would have them lose all—property, life, everything—rather than surrender.

As a consequence of this state of affairs much intrigue went on between the Boers residing in Pretoria and the Boers in the field. Roberts found it necessary as a matter of mere security to order that all women whose husbands

were still in arms should be deported to the Boer lines. When this order was carried out the press of Europe clamored loudly against the brutality of the commander-in-chief. If such a course had been followed earlier in the war, it might have long since been ended, as the women have had quite as much to do with its continuance as the men. It is sometimes necessary to be cruel only to be kind.

There were several serious plots against the British during the months of July and August; one among the undesirable foreign element in Johannesburg, but it was discovered in time and some four hundred of the plotters arrested—the severest punishment Roberts gave these schemers was deportation. Early in August a more daring one was discovered; a fire was to be started in Pretoria and during the confusion the residences of the British officers and officials, which were allotted to parties of armed men, were to be attacked and quick work made of the inmates. Lord Roberts was to be seized and hurried away to the nearest commando. It was hoped that this act would paralyze the British forces in the Transvaal. The principal plotters were arrested. Hans Cordua, a German lieutenant in the Boer army, had engineered the plot. He was a foolish boy, only twenty-three years old, and it was hoped by many that the death penalty would not be meted out to him. It would have been, however, mistaken generosity to have spared his life, and after a fair trial he was shot in the garden of the Pretoria jail. The time for leniency, through the action of the Boer conspirators, was past, and after the Hans Cordua plot the severest proclamation yet issued appeared. "It is manifest," it said, "that the leniency which has been extended to the burghers of the South African Republic is not appreciated by them, but on the contrary, is being used as a cloak to continue the resistance against the forces of Her Majesty the Queen." All burghers breaking the oath would now be shot or imprisoned; all found in the district occupied by the British troops who had not taken the oath would be seized as prisoners of war; all buildings harboring snipers and scouts should be destroyed—and it further commanded that all farmers should give notice of the presence of the enemy in their districts under penalty of being considered partners with them in any destruction they should perpetrate on the railway.

This last proclamation had as little effect as the former ones. De Wet went on with his work, and although Prinsloo was captured with 986 men, 1432 horses, and one Krupp 9-pounder, and though Commandant Ollvier, one of the most intelligent of the Boer leaders, likewise fell into the hands of the British, and "the dashing Theron" who had done so much destruction with his "wild rovers" was killed, the ubiquitous, slippery De Wet continued to attract men to his ranks and to win the most enthusiastic admiration of even the soldiers pursuing him. As the fight went on, however, and his friends and associates were slain, his property laid waste, what seemed to be madness seized him, and he did deeds which, if they are as they have been reported to the world, will do much to cloud what would otherwise have been one of the most glorious careers of modern times.

It was not until well towards the end of August that Roberts was able to move against Botha and De Wet with anything like an adequate force. His main army was now moved eastward along the line leading to Delagoa Bay and the Boers were pressed ever back. By September 1 they were in full flight and Roberts from his headquarters at Belfast issued a proclamation formally annexing the Transvaal. The fight went on and the enemy were forced to continue their retreat until by the end of September Komati Poort was occupied and through communication opened up between Pretoria and Delagoa Bay.

In the meantime President Kruger had, on September 11, left the Transvaal in two special trains with abundant treasure, and for over a month smoked his pipe and issued his orders in Lorenzo Marques.

It seemed now as if the war must surely end. The September successes of the British had cut the Boers off completely from the outside world; they had lost vast treasures; many of their guns were seized or destroyed and the majority of their commandoes were greatly reduced in size. But De Wet and Botha were still in the field and the amazing way in which for over a year after they seemed utterly defeated they have continued to carry on the war is more astonishing than anything else in the struggle. That the guerilla war has continued up to the present time is due more largely to De Wet than to any other Boer commander. The feeling that he inspired in the hearts of his



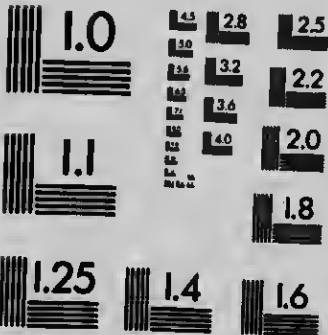
**THE RETURN OF LORD ROBERTS**  
The hero of a hundred fights welcomed back to England by an enthusiastic people and by an admiring and grateful monarch.





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FIELD-MARSHAL EARL ROBERTS IN THE FUNERAL PROCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA

pursuers even is well expressed in the following extract from a letter written by a correspondent with one of the forces in pursuit of him :

"I cannot describe to you the consternation and disgust experienced by all ranks, from general to native driver. All those exertions of days past—and really supreme ones—made nugatory by some bungling form of inactive administration! These passes were the key of the whole operation. It must have been obvious from the start, and yet, somewhere, trouble was not taken to send the necessary troops to close them. Rustenburg, like Potchefstroom, had suffered the same fate, and at one of the most crucial moments of the campaign, when the presence of troops there became imperative to success. Possibly people in England hardly appreciate the importance of capturing De Wet and his 4,000 or 5,000 followers to the same extent that we out here do, with our constant experience of his power. Thrice has he evaded a British cordon; and he is fast earning for himself a fame quite out of proportion to his real worth, due more to British mistakes than to his own Boer ability. He is now abroad once more, and free to roam where he may. Ultimately he will, I suppose, be caught, but that day is still far removed, unless some better co-operation is effected by columns that pursue him, and more concerted action by those who conduct the operations of this campaign."

This was written over a year ago, and De Wet still (October, 1901) seems to be as "slim" and ubiquitous as at the beginning of the war.

So the unhappy war went on taxing the resources of the greatest nation in the world and denuding the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony of its sturdy, if stubborn, people. Even the friends of the Boers—and every European power sympathizes either openly or silently with the Republics—wondered why they continued the struggle that could have but one ending. The Boers still hoped; Kruger and Steyn still looked for European intervention. At last Kruger determined to go to Europe and sailed for Marseilles in the Dutch war ship Gelderland, and arrived in France Nov. 22, 1900. He met with a most enthusiastic reception. No doubt there was a good deal that was genuine in this welcome, but most of the noise and display was caused by the Frenchmen's ancient hatred of England. There is no

sadder spectacle in history than this austere old Israelite of the Transvaal hohobbing with the Amalekites of France.

It would indeed be hard to find a more deplorable ending to a great career than the exit of Kruger from the Transvaal. In Pretoria there is the base for a statue of the ex-president—a fine, strong base, but the statue is wanting. So is it with his life. It was splendidly based; even with his unprogressive ideas he might have gone down to posterity as one of the most astute rulers of the world; but in one hour he spoiled it all—his ultimatum of October 9, 1899, (Kruger's Folly) blasted his career. Just as the Boers will look upon the base erected for his statue and think with burning hearts of what might have been, so the student of history will in the future read the story of his life and marvel that so wise a man could have been guilty of such folly, and think of the magnificent civilization that might have been built up on the base laid by the courage and austere piety of the hardy race inhabiting the veldt. A. Conan Doyle in his thoroughly unbiased book "The Great Boer War," in dealing with his flight to Lorenzo Marques gives the following able and true paragraph:

"On September 11 an incident had occurred which must have shown the most credulous believer in Boer prowess that their cause was indeed lost. On that date Paul Kruger, a refugee from the country which he had ruined, arrived at Lorenzo Marques, abandoning his beaten commandoes and his deluded burghers. How much had happened since those distant days when as a little herdshoy he had walked behind the bullocks on the great northward trek! How piteous this ending to all his strivings and his plottings, a life which might have closed amid the reverence of a nation and the admiration of the world was destined to finish in exile, impotent and undignified. Strange thoughts must have come to him during those hours of flight, memories of his virile and turbulent youth, of the first settlement of those great lands, of wild wars where his hand was heavy upon the natives, of the triumphant days of the war of independence, when England seemed to recoil from the rifles of the burghers. And then the years of prosperity, the years when the simple farmer found himself among the great ones of the earth, his name a household word in Europe, his state rich and powerful, his coffers filled with

he spoils of the poor drudges who worked so hard and paid taxes so readily. Those were his great days, the days when he hardened his heart against their appeals for justice and looked beyond his own borders to his kinsmen in the hope of a South Africa which should be all his own. And now what had come of it all? A handful of faithful attendants, and a fugitive old man, clutching in his flight at his papers and his money-bags. The last of the old-world Puritans, he departed poring over his well-thumbed Bible, and proclaiming that the troubles of his country arose, not from his own narrow and corrupt administration, but from some departure on the part of his fellow-burghers from the stricter tenets of the Dopper sect."

So exit Kruger. His sympathizers on the Continent might applaud him and curse England in his hearing, but Anglo-Saxon ideas are bound to prevail. It was against these ideas he legislated and fought, and all the armies and navies of Europe would be as powerless to win against them. There is a Greater Britain, a world-wide Britain now to fight against, and it was this Greater Britain, found in the colonies and in the United States, that kept the European powers silent while England's strength was taxed with the difficult struggle in South Africa.

While the ex-president was on his way to Europe another cowardly attempt was made against the life of Lord Roberts. This time it was by means of a plot hatched by the foreign anarchists of Johannesburg; their usual cowardly weapons, infernal machines, were to be used. Bombs were to be hidden in St. Mary's Church in the seat occupied by Lord Roberts and his staff, and the leaders of the army were to be slain. It was plotted to kill Sir Alfred Milner in a similar manner, but fortunately the entire plot was revealed and those who were supposed to be the leaders arrested. As no bombs were discovered it was a difficult matter to prove their guilt, and deportation was the only punishment meted out to men whom everyone believed to have plotted a cowardly and wholesale murder.

Meanwhile the elections had taken place in England and the government was sustained by an overwhelming majority. The people were evidently going to stand by the ministry despite their mistakes in the conduct of the war. Lord Wolseley's term as commander-in-chief of the British army

expired, and as it was felt by all that it was only a matter of a few months till the guerilla leaders and their commandoes would be captured or slain, it was thought wise to appoint Lord Roberts to this highest position in the army; so, despite the fact that in some parts of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony the Boers were very active, he made ready to say farewell to the soldiers who had endured so much toil and so many privations with him for almost a year.

He had eulogized his troops when he bade farewell to the Kabul-Kandahar Field Force after his celebrated campaign in Afghanistan; many years had passed since that time, but he found the British soldier unchanged, and his farewell orders show that in his estimation they had lost none of their courage and their powers of endurance, and likewise that he loved his army as of old.

"The service which the South African force has performed," he wrote, "is, I venture to think, unique in the annals of war, inasmuch as it has been absolutely incessant for a whole year, in some cases for more than a year. There has been no rest, no days off to recruit, no going into winter quarters as in other campaigns which have extended over a long period. For months together, in fierce heat, in biting cold, in pouring rain, you, my comrades, have marched and fought without halt, and bivouacked without shelter from the elements. You frequently had to continue marching with your clothes in rags and your boots without soles, time being of such consequence that it was impossible for you to remain long enough in one place to refit. When not engaged in actual battle, you have been continually shot at from behind kopjes, by invisible enemies to whom every inch of the country was familiar, and who from the peculiar nature of the country were able to inflict severe punishment while perfectly safe themselves. . . . You have endured the sufferings inevitable in war to sick and wounded men far from the base, without a murmur, and even with cheerfulness. You have, in fact, acted up to the highest standard of patriotism, and by your conspicuous kindness and humanity towards your enemies, your forbearance and good behaviour in the towns occupied by you, you have caused the army of Great Britain to be as

greatly respected as it must henceforward be greatly feared in South Africa.  
. . . And now farewell."

Lord Kitchener, "The Man of Ice and Iron," the destroyer of the Khalifa's forces, was appointed to succeed him as commander-in-chief in South Africa, and, as he was given a free hand, it was thought by the knowing ones that the terror of his great name would be sufficient to awe the Boers into submission. However, nothing is more evident from the struggles of the Great Boer War than that Roberts is still the greatest soldier in the British army—greater in this last war than in any of his previous campaigns; the failure of Kitchener to make headway against the Boers is the very best evidence of the military genius of Roberts. His three great marches, to Paardeberg, to Bloemfontein, to Pretoria—and finally his campaign eastward to Komati Poort, still remain phenomenal performances, and nothing to compare with them has been done since he left the Transvaal; and possibly only one thing prior to that time—Buller's march from Ladysmith into the Transvaal.

But for Roberts the war was over, and he made preparations to leave for England, visiting, on his way to Durban, the grave of his son whose early and heroic death had done much to keep his heart kindly towards the Boer lads fighting for their country, and tender to the brave boys from the wide Empire who fought under his banner.



## CHAPTER XXXVI

### EARL ROBERTS

The War Unfinished When Roberts Leaves South Africa—Expresses Confidence in Lord Kitchener—The First Great Leader of the Empire's Armies—The Imperial Problem Solved—Lessons Learned From the War—Homeward—His Travelling Companions—Distinguished Animals on Board the Canada—Robert's Visit to Madeira—His Stop at Gibraltar—Honored by the Queen—Created an Earl—His Reception in London—Disappointing News From South Africa—Roberts Refuses to be Dined and Wined—At Work in the War Office—The Death of the Queen—Voted £100,000 by Both Houses of Parliament.

**I**T was not without considerable regret that General Roberts left South Africa. Although the war, as a great war, was finished, he had hoped before leaving the country to have brought about absolute peace throughout the whole region over which he had fought. Instead of this, the irreconcilables were becoming more active than ever, and he saw, with considerable alarm, the removal of many regiments who had become seasoned to South African conditions.

He was received at Durban and Cape Town with the greatest enthusiasm, and at both places expressed the hope and belief that the war would soon be over. It had been rumored that he and Lord Kitchener had not got on well together, that his chief-of-staff had been greatly hampered by his methods, and that even angry words had passed between them. To give the lie to this report, he, in his farewell addresses in South Africa, expressed both confidence in, and admiration for, his successor. He likewise spoke in the highest terms of his soldiers, and particularly of the colonial troops who had served under him. He had shown enthusiasm for the colonials ever since arriving in South Africa, and with good reason. None of the regular regiments had a finer record than the volunteers from Natal, from Australia, from New Zealand, and from Canada; and had there been more such troops in the field, more such officers as commanded these troops, the Boers would have been

forced to accept terms before becoming such hardened professional soldiers, that many of them now prefer war to peace. It is noteworthy that, when they were withdrawn in large numbers towards the end of 1900, the guerilla bands became more daring, and their successes followed each other with astonishing rapidity.

What is, however, of more interest in this life-story is that, due to so many of these colonials being engaged in England's war, Roberts can truly be called the first general of the Empire's armies. Never before in battle were seen marching against Britain's foes her own strength and the strength of her children. From the rich cities, the sheep farms, and the gold fields of Australia; from remote New Zealand; from the growing cities and towns, the fruitful plains, the pine forests, the mining regions of Canada; from the crowded centres of historical India—thousands flocked, and tens of thousands were ready to flock, to the banner of England. Roberts led them into battle and the imperial problem was solved. They had fought together in a common cause and the children of the Empire were thus hound together in an enduring union—a union stronger than any legislative act could have created. What the future of Canada or Australia will be, no man can tell; but of one thing all can now feel sure—that the Empire is firmly based. Roberts by his attitude towards the colonials in South Africa has done more than any other man in the present age to bind these same colonials to the motherland. As has already been pointed out, before he reached South Africa the colonial troops had little love for the imperial officers and their methods, and many of them openly expressed their regret at having taken service; but his treatment of them and evident admiration for them changed this unfortunate state of affairs. An Empire builder, then, Roberts has been in the best sense of the word.

He left South Africa with the consciousness of having done a year's faithful work in the field, and with the hope of doing still greater work for the army as a whole. He had learned much of modern war since landing in Cape Town in January—much from the farmers of the Transvaal and from the skilled European adventurers who directed their operations. He had learned, too, that the isolation of England and her conservatism had caused

her much loss; that red-tape and favoritism had done more to make her forces for a time almost ridiculous in the eyes of the world than had the troops of the Boers. Over these things he could ponder as he steamed northward on the ship *Canada*; and during those ocean weeks what plans he must have laid for future reforms in the army! It is, however, much easier to plan than to do; it would almost seem that only a threatened invasion of England could thoroughly arouse lethargic John Bull.

Lord Roberts' northward voyage, despite the fact that he left his work in a sense unfinished, was, on the whole, a pleasant one. He was accompanied by two of his most brilliant officers, General Kelly-Kenny, who had done such brilliant work in helping round up Cronje and his four thousand, and General Ian Hamilton, whose march with the Winburg Column to Pretoria had been one of the great feats of the war. Daily these three veterans would fight their battles over again, and no doubt speculate on the speedy way Kitchener was bringing the war to a close, having little thought that the departure of Roberts from South Africa would be a signal for the Boers to become intensely active.

There were other interesting passengers on board the *Canada*, chief among them the faithful collie "Bush" from the sheep farms of Australia, who had seen service in South Africa and been wounded, and Roberts was now taking him home to England as a gift to his Queen. There is something noteworthy about this; a leader returning from vanquishing half a continent and taking possession of the capitals of two Republics and bringing with him not slaves, money or jewels to fill the coffers of his sovereign, but a dog, an animal at once the type of faithfulness and courage. It were well to ponder over this; there is much food for reflection in this act of the great War Lord in the closing year of the nineteenth century. There was, too, a number of what might be called distinguished steeds on board the *Canada*. Roberts' own charger was there—the horse that had thrown him shortly before he left South Africa, causing him to keep his arm in a sling even after his arrival in England; there, too, was a favorite steed of ex-President Kruger; there, too, the horse on which Cronje had said he would ride into Cape Town, now it was being carried over to misty England, while on the

gloomy rock in the heart of the seas was its owner, a prisoner. But the thing on board that was dearest to the commander-in-chief was another steed, the one that had borne his son into the hell of fire on that bloody day at Colenso, when the gallant effort was made to save England's guns. There was thus much to remind him on his homeward voyage of the sunshine and shadow of his last campaign.

The pleasant voyage to England was not without its gloomy spot. South Africa was pursuing them; there were troops on board who were still weak from disease and wounds, and one of the Imperial Yeomanry, Trooper King, died from the results of the campaign. He was buried at sea; sunk into the gloomy Atlantic while Roberts stood by reverently at the service, and thought of his own son lying in the South African veldt.

The *Canada* stopped at Madeira for a short time and Roberts received many messages from England and South Africa. \* "The Portuguese authorities received the British general with all possible honors. The *Canada* was greeted by the war-ships and the fort by a salute of nineteen guns. Another salute was fired from the fort when Lord Roberts landed to pay a visit to the Portuguese governor. He had the honor of an escort, and, on a microscopic scale had some prelude to the enthusiasm which was to stir him so deeply on his arrival in London. The British Consulate in Madeira was the only other point of call; and there, of course, from his fellow-countrymen the field-marshal received the heartiest of welcomes and blessings."

From Madeira the *Canada* proceeded to Gibraltar which was reached on December 23. Roberts landed at the New Mole. \* "A naval guard of honor received his Lordship with a general salute, and the formal reception was made by Sir George White, the chief naval officers on the station and the staff-officers. The streets were gaily decorated with flags and devices and enthusiastic crowds cheered Lord Roberts as he passed along. Alighting in Commercial Square . . . he received the punctual address of welcome from the civil community, and afterwards drove to the North Front. Business for that day at any rate, was suspended, and the holiday makers were wonderfully enthusiastic."

On January 2 he landed in England, and as had been previously arranged first visited the Queen at Osborne; and one of the last acts of her illustrious reign was to bestow on him the ribbon of the Garter and an Earldom, as a reward for the work he had done during the past year in South Africa. He could not but notice at that meeting that his sovereign's life was rapidly drawing to a close. She had aged greatly since he saw her before leaving for the seat of war, and her mind, ever clear, seemed at this time to wander.

A great reception was prepared for him in London. Fog had delayed him somewhat, and a characteristic mist still hung over the city when he reached it, but the drenched and shivering crowd gave him a most hearty welcome home. The following is the account, of this day given by the Illustrated London News:

"It was not until ten minutes past one that the train bearing Lord Roberts entered the station. The band struck up "See the Conquering Hero Come," and the guard of honor came to the salute, and immediately Lord Roberts was seen advancing to receive the greeting of the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Connaught. After the inspection of the guard of honor the Royal Party drove away, and Lord Roberts remained to receive the address from the borough of Paddington, presented by its first Mayor, Sir John Aird. Sir John, who wore the brand-new scarlet fur-tipped robes and gold chain of his municipal office, was accompanied by the aldermen in their Mazarine-blue robes and by the town clerk in his wig and gown. Agreeable words having been exchanged, Lord Roberts entered the Royal carriage sent to convey him to Buckingham Palace. Royal outriders preceded the carriage, which was closely followed by six mounted Indian orderlies, and had a further escort of the 10th Hussars. People who expected the returned hero to be riding had, perhaps, a poor compensation even in this scenic display of a cavalcade of royal carriages, the others containing General Kelly-Kenny, General Ian Hamilton, and other members of the commander-in-chief's staff, but Lord Roberts preferred to drive rather than ride, if only because the injury to the right arm, received a few weeks ago when his horse threw him, is not yet cured, so that all his salutations were left-handed. Twelve or fourteen

thousand troops guarded the way, and flags, shields and flowers, which no one could number, made it gay, the while the hero passed along to the sound of cheering, which followed his cars without flagging at any point of his progress. "Bravo, Bobs!" was the most popular cry, and it grew into a great discordant roar. The pressure at some parts of the route was very severe, especially in Jermyn Street where the crowd, pushing forward into St. James' Street, had to be repressed by mounted soldiers and by police.

"Buckingham Palace, never gay, was shrouded with fog when the procession reached its doors. Between the Lion Gate and the main entrance were stationed convalescent soldiers who had been wounded in the campaign. For these the commander-in-chief had a kindly glance. Lord Roberts, on alighting, inspected the guard of honor, consisting of men whose proportions made the conqueror of the Republics more conspicuous as one of the 'big little men' of history. At half-past two, only a quarter of an hour after the two-fifteen of the invitation-card, and therefore with fashionable punctuality, he entered the Palace as the guest of the absent Queen and of her representative the Prince of Wales. The Princess was also there, with Princess Victoria of Wales. Other royalties present were the Duke and Duchess of Connaught and their children, the Duke and Duchess of York, Princess Louise, the Duke of Cambridge, and the Duke and Duchess of Teck. Lady Roberts and her two daughters were present; so were Lord Salisbury, Lord Wolseley, Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain, General Ian Hamilton, Sir Evelyn Wood, and Lord and Lady Pembroke. Speeches were made by the Prince of Wales, Lord Roberts and others, in which each said the appropriate word, and later in the day the commander-in-chief paid his first official visit to the war office, enveloped in fog. On arriving at his hotel, Lord Roberts was met by Lady Settrington and her two little girls. The field-marshal greeted them with a soldier's courtesy and bent to kiss the hands of the two small maidens, thereby providing them with a pleasant memory that will last a life-time."

The soldiers with him who saw this act must have called to mind an incident of a similar kind which happened on the day of the entry of the troops into Johannesburg. He had his headquarters then at a very different

hotel, one with the sign "Orange Grove." The inn-keeper had a sweet little daughter, and with his usual tenderness Lord Roberts took the child on his knee and tried to teach her the letters of the alphabet. He was interrupted in his work by one of his staff who had come on urgent business to the conqueror, who had just captured one of the enemy's strong cities, and to his evident haste Lord Roberts said, "Don't come now! Can't you see I'm busy?" Incidents like this in the great soldier, showing tenderness combined with strength, are what have endeared him to all hearts.

At a luncheon given in his honor at Buckingham Palace, Lord Roberts spoke in the highest terms of the work done by the soldiers in South Africa. His simple, pithy remarks were really a repetition of much of what he said in his Mansion House speech at the banquet given to him after the celebrated relief of Kandahar. Public fetes were planned in his honor, but almost simultaneously with his arrival in England came news of serious reverses to British troops in South Africa, and it seemed for a time as if the war would have to be fought all over again. With his usual straightforwardness he made no excuses for his hopeful words at Durban and Cape Town, but admitted that he had made a mistake and underestimated the strength of the Boers. It was no time for rejoicing and he refused to be dined and wined "in view," as he said, "of the present unhappy circumstances in South Africa."

Kitchener's name and methods seemed to have no terrors for Botha and De Wet, and it looked for a time as if he was to lose the great reputation he had won in the Soudan. Commandoes were operating in the Transvaal, in the Orange River Colony, and in Cape Colony; and some of them even threatened Cape Town itself. The government became alarmed, and it was deemed wise to make that important city secure against attack. It must have seemed strange to the people of Cape Colony to see trenches being dug about their principal city, town guards formed, Table Mountain fortified, and guns taken from the war-ships in the harbor and mounted to protect their capital months after the war was officially finished.

Roberts at once went to work in the war-office. A serious mistake had been made in withdrawing so many troops from the seat of war; these must be replaced, and to the amazement of everybody he asked for a force of no

fewer than 30,000 men. At the commencement of the war in 1899 such a force was deemed by the authorities sufficient to bring Kruger and Steyn to terms. Enlistment of yeomen began; 5,000 were wanted to serve for a year, or "until the war was ended"—a most significant afterthought. So the struggle went on, and the presence of Roberts as commander-in-chief seemed not to make the slightest difference in the situation. Of one thing the public was sure, however, no weakness would be shown in the conduct of affairs.

Years and the strain of this last great war told on the Queen, and after a brief illness Her Majesty died at Osborne House, her winter home in the Isle of Wight. Her death occurred on January 22, and in the great procession that followed her remains through London on February 2—the greatest funeral procession the world has probably ever seen—there was no more conspicuous figure than Earl Roberts, and no one who felt the loss more keenly. The chivalric Sydney and Raleigh were soldiers whose characters were in every way in keeping with the character of good Queen Bess; likewise, Roberts, an earnest, noble Christian warrior, was a fitting man to be the first soldier of a Queen who loved her people with as great a love as Queen Elizabeth, and who was in everything a noble example to the nation—an ideal wife, mother and Queen.

There is little more to be said about Earl Roberts. For the next few months the situation in Africa, combined with army jealousy, did much to lower his stock in military circles, and affected him not a little in the eyes of the public; but when it was learned that on July 31 he had been granted £100,000 for his services in South Africa, there was scarcely a disapproving voice heard. When Mr. A. J. Balfour, the government leader, moved the grant he delivered a speech that did much to bring Roberts back his old renown with the general public. He was very properly compared with the great leaders of the past, with Collingwood, with Marlborough, with Nelson, and with Wellington; and Mr. Balfour impressed on the House how thoroughly Roberts had saved the situation after the dark days of Magersfontein and Colenso, and with what fine genius he had swept his forces forward to Paardeberg, to Bloemfontein, to Johannesburg and to Pretoria. Mr. Balfour struck the right note. It is not his fighting that has made him



great—although in his early days he had proved himself a bold fighter in the heat of the conflict—but his power to seize a broad situation, and his boldness in taking a great chance.

But it is time to say good-bye to this brilliant soldier. He has had much of renown in the past; and when the war that seems now (October 1901) to be rapidly drawing to a close is definitely at an end, his hands which are tied by the circumstances of the case, will be freed to force on the war-office much-needed reforms; and it will doubtless be his privilege to close his life, feeling that not only has he by his military genius secured a somewhat abiding peace in Afghanistan, made India safe against Russia, improved the lot of the native populations in that country and of the troops ruling them, conquered South Africa and paved the way for the union of that dark continent from the Cape to Cairo, but given a new army to England, an army in which gold-lace and gilt buttons will play a minor part, and in which ability will find its reward.

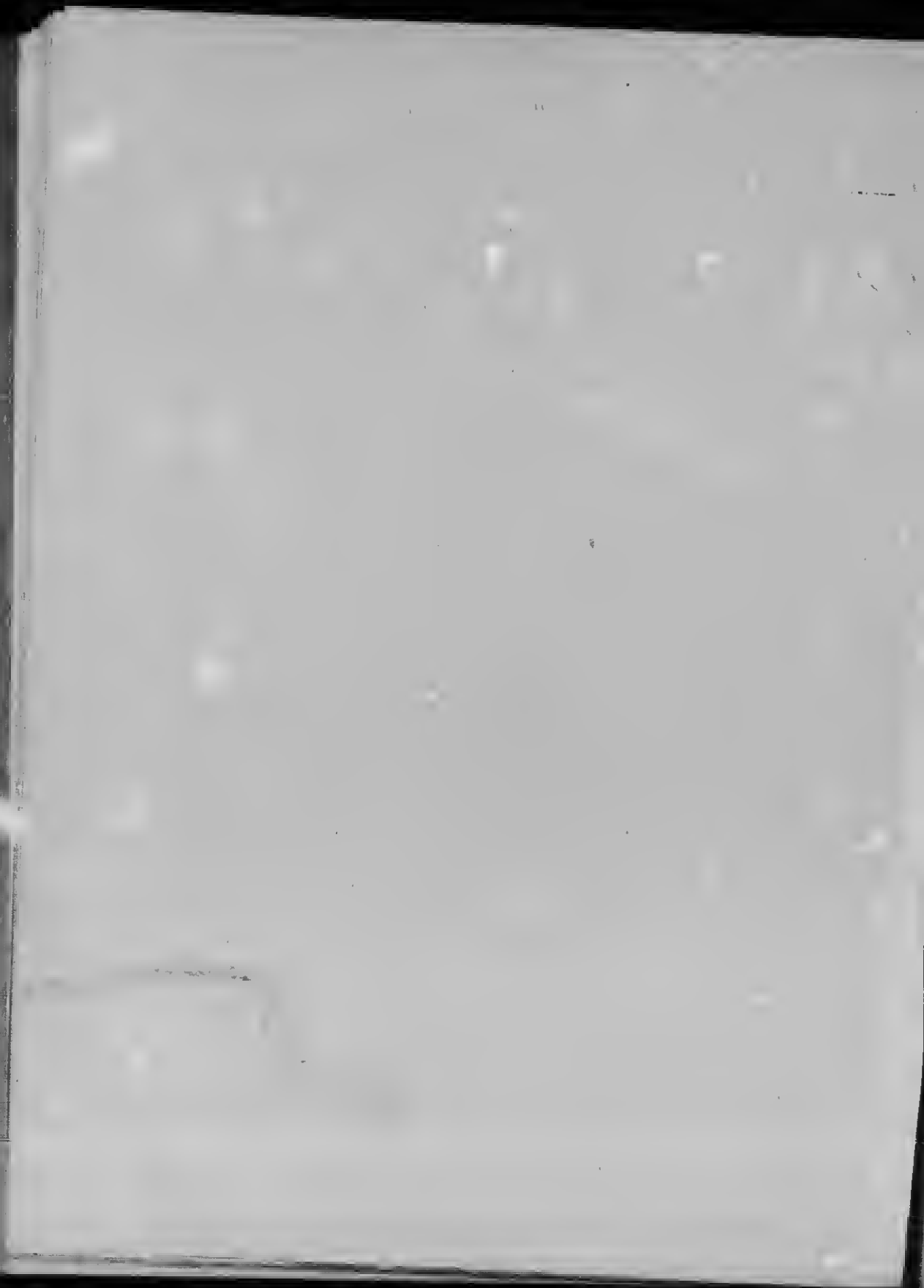
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**PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF EARL ROBERTS**

BY

**FREDERICK HAMILTON, M. A.**

**WAR CORRESPONDENT FOR THE TORONTO GLOBE IN THE  
GREAT BOER WAR.**



## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### A CANADIAN'S REMINISCENCES OF LORD ROBERTS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The Canadians in Camp at Belmont—The War Drama About to Begin Again—The Canadians' First Sight of Lord Roberts—Lord Roberts Launches His Army Eastward Into the Free State—The Manner of the March—An Oasis in the Thirsty Desert—The Naval Guns Steered Toward Bloemfontein—Crossing a Difficult Drift—The Regiment Inspected by Lord Roberts—Lord Roberts Resting With His Staff—French to the Relief of Kimberley—Kelly-Kenny in Pursuit of Cronje's Fleeing Convoy—At Jacobsdal—Lord Roberts at Paardeberg—The Commander-in-Chief and the Canadians on Majuba Day—His Admiration for the Boers—With Lord Roberts in Bloemfontein—In the Triumphant March Into Pretoria—The Annexation Ceremony—Lord Roberts Bids the First Contingent Farewell.

THE Canadians' first sight of Lord Roberts was on Thursday, February 8, at Belmont. That was the uneasy time of preparation, when the line of communications was tense with the sensation that a move was imminent. The Kimberley coach-road, in sight of our camp, was one line of troops and transport toiling northward, unable to find room on the overburdened railway. Heavy trains thundered past our tents day and night, following as closely as safety permitted, laden with guns and gunners, horses and horsemen, stores, transport animals—all the innumerable needs of an army. We dimly knew that French's cavalry was being brought past us, around from Rensburg. Still more dimly did we hear of the Highveld Brigade's fighting at Koodoesberg. Rumors flew thick. Everything was in motion except at Belmont, it seemed; and our impatient regiment of young adventurers chafed in waiting, sick with the uncertainty as to whether they would have a part to play in the drama whose curtain was so soon to ascend.

Then came Lord Roberts, on the Thursday morning of that anxious week. A long special train drew into the station, it came to a halt, and in a moment the chief was on the platform which was the centre of the social life of Belmont, and was being stared at by the throng which packed its edges. What struck me most forcibly at this first look was that he must be the

smallest man on the platform; and simultaneously my mind went to the feats of arms which he had performed in his youth, went with a sense of incongruity, as one looked at the exquisitely neat, dapper little old gentleman and thought of his feats of swordsmanship, of the hot hand-to-hand encounters, of banners captured and foemen struck down. It was this that I thought of, not of the hoets he controlled, or the strange modern war he was to ride master of. It needed the look of his face, and the fact of his age to remove the effect of the fashionable puttee-leggings, the perfect fit of the greenish khaki serge jacket, the unwrinkling set of the "Sam Browne" belt, its sword-frog empty, the graceful curve of the neck piece of his helmet. But below the visor was the face, small, indeed, and grey, but keen, intent, quiet and reserved, with a look, too, of refinement. Confronting him were the two tallest men in the throng, Lieutenant-Colonel Rochfort-Boyd, the station-commandant, and the remarkable Kitchener, tall, with shoulders at once bulky and stooped, his forage cap crammed down upon his head, evidently observant and apparently uncommunicative. A few minutes of conversation and then the train went on. Word flew abroad that Col. Otter had received the field-marshal's promise that the regiment should be brigaded. The visit was the prologue to our campaigning. Ten days after, to the very hour, the regiment was advancing upon Cronje's Transvaalers at Paardeberg.

It was upon the Sunday, Monday and Tuesday following that Lord Roberts launched his army eastward into the Free State from the two railway sidings of Graspan and Enslin a few miles north of Belmont. From the two wide, dusty, supply-encumbered plains, half a dozen miles apart, column after column moved off in succession during those three days. With accurate timing, the newly-created Ninth Division was on Monday evening concentrated at the two railway points, on the camping grounds just vacated by the Sixth and Seventh Divisions. The Highland Brigade moved down from Modder River to Enslin, and the new Nineteenth Brigade was brought together at Graspan. It had been gathered up from the line of communications; the Gordons had been at Graspan and the adjacent Maple Leaf Camp; the Cornwalls had been at various stations, Belmont and Witteputs among others; the Shropshires had been, I think, at Orange River, and our own regiment

came up on the train, full of song and wild with delight, drawn from Belmont, Richmond and Maple Leaf Camp.

Tumbling off the cars, our Canadians fell in, marched a few hundred yards over a soil ground to finest dust by the heating of many thousand feet, shook out their quarter column to fifteen paces distance, piled arms, spread their blankets, and then and there bivouacked. Other squares of sleeping men were to right hand and to left hand. The brigade was mobilized and our men were in the swing of the campaign. Lord Roberts' promise had been kept.

Reveille went in the darkness before the dawn. The cooks' fires blazed, and the color-sergeants handed from the long tin boxes handfuls of the flinty but nutritious biscuits, while the transport men, as yet inexperienced, permitted the regiment's half-dozen wagons to be burdened with all too heavy loads. The cups of coffee and the rough breakfast were swallowed and before the sun had fairly thrust his edge over the flat horizon we were off, straight for the brightening spot in the sky. The Cornwalls had gone on as advance guard. The Gordons marched ahead of us. Our regiment followed and the Shropshires, two of whose companies had not yet joined, lingered behind. Before us and around us was the veldt. A mile or so to our left was the long and formidable hill which Lord Methuen stormed in his second fight. No road at all on this day, simply the wide plain, the grass growing up in tufts from the naked red soil, low bushes here and there. One thing about marching in the Free State was the abundant room usually at one's disposal, and so the regiment advanced in what may be described as quarter column with distances increased to fifteen paces; each company in line, followed by the succeeding company fifteen paces in rear. During the first portion of our march to Bloemfontein this was the standard formation. As a rule three regiments of the brigade marched in this formation side by side, a fourth moving in rear as baggage guard. Usually our regiment and the Gordons were neighbors and our men liked it, not only on account of the close friendship between the two regiments, but also because the Gordons' bagpipes made marching easier. Later on, a rather curious formation was adopted, that of advancing in fours from both flanks of companies. The

battalion would thus advance in two parallel columns of fours at company front interval. The three battalions would still be abreast, so that the aspect of the brigade from the front would have been that of six such columns of fours advancing, the four inner ones in two groups of two. It was an easier formation, partly because the battalion distances were preserved almost automatically, partly because it is easier to march in columns of fours than in the long company line.

Away the brigade swung, stripped for action. The men were in the light marching order in which they were to tramp seven hundred miles. The day of the knapsack is gone; the valises which represent that by-gone equipment were in a storehouse at Cape Town. What each man had was a greatcoat, a blanket, and his haversack filled with what he could stuff into it. The blankets and, whenever possible, the greatcoats were carried in wagons; the men soon learned to cram various small belongings into the pockets and the folds of the tightly rolled greatcoat so as to relieve the weight on the person. The haversack was carried fairly on the back, drawn up high on the shoulder blades. The bandoliers were over the left shoulders, the heavy pouches were at the belts. It happened that on this first day our men had an unusually severe experience of the march, for the wagon which carried the greatcoats broke down, and after a delay which robbed them of the cooler morning hours they had to trudge through the fiercest heat of the day burdened with the heavy roll of the greatcoat pulling at the back of the waist belt. That tipped the balance between endurance and collapse in many a case, and soon men were dropping behind in numbers. Thirst came to aid fatigue, and it was after a cruel strain that Ramdam was reached.

Lord Roberts had found Lord Methuen's army held in check at the confluence of the Modder and Riet River. He had made up his mind to cross the Riet River at a place about twenty-four miles above the fork. He was accordingly striking across country towards a crossing-place known as Waterval Drift. It was two days' march for our infantry, and in that dry land water was the important thing. At Ramdam wells existed which supplied the men of the brigades, and a large stagnant pool, or dam, unfit for human use, gave water for the animals. It was weary, torturing work

before the one well which our brigade could use had given water enough for the panting, suffering soldiers; at least a thousand men crowded and jostled around the hole in the rock, and almost fought for the water which the little party of Royal Engineers were slowly sending into the improvised tanks of green tarpaulins from a tiny force-pump which they had rigged up. A mile and a half away, near a tree-embowered farmhouse, the Highland Brigade was bivouacked, Hector Macdonald riding through our camp on his way to his headquarters. Sir Henry Colville had concentrated the Ninth Division, and the ill-starred soldier, already a prey to melancholy, although his misfortunes had not begun, had his headquarters that afternoon and night in a forlorn-looking farmhouse close to the well where the thirsty yet orderly soldiers strove for water.

On the morrow the whole Ninth Division marched for the Riet in one great mass over the far-extending plain. As we crested a rise of land and descended at the farther slope the whole mass of soldiery lay before the eye. The two brigades were marching abreast, so that they presented a front of six battalions. Ahead rode a body of horsemen and with them a close-packed mass of guns. The yellow of the khaki blended with the hues of the plain and the steady roll onward of the eight thousand British soldiers gave the oddest appearance of tremulousness to the veldt. Well did the Dutch revise their old nick-name for our men and style them the "locusts." Very close to our regiment, moving in the interval between it and the Gordons, were the big 4.7-inch naval guns. Thirty-two oxen dragged each monster along. Its long and slender barrel (these wire-built naval guns looked like enormous carbines) was to the front, in defiance of the methods of land gunners; and, crowning quaintness, half a dozen sailors were working an actual rudder on wheels behind the low-set limber which dragged along behind the huge gun.

And so, after another hot and thirsty twelve-mile march we came to the Riet River. It was our first objective, and it had been in our hands since Monday, when French had captured it. On Tuesday night the Sixth Division had slept there; now on Wednesday night we had come up, and the Seventh Division, which had marched down from De Kiel's Drift, was awaiting us. Lord Roberts had ridden to it that morning from De Kiel's Drift, five miles



up the stream and remained there through the day. Between the ranked divisions which were trudging over the yeldt from halt to halt flowed the great river of transport, miles upon miles of ox-wagons, mule-wagons, carts, the heavy vehicles creaking and pounding, the native drivers rearing the air with their delirious yells. Over the broad plain the army flowed like a wave; but at narrow passes such as this ford the whole stream was pinched into one narrow road and over the drift day and night the torrent of transport roared, down the steep sandy pitch to the dry river-bed, up the heavy grade on the other side, weary soldiers, spent already with the march, doing extra work by hanging back on the drag ropes as the wagons plunged down the one bank, pulling them up on the other. An army crawls with its transport wagons; this choked-up passage taught us what that meant. The very next day we learned still more of what such an obstacle means for an army, when the Boers under Christian De Wet elipped behind our own column, opened fire from the jagged line of kopjes some hundred yards eastward of where we bivouacked, and ultimately got 176 wagons. That happened on Thursday, and our men fasted almost all day on Friday and most of Saturday.

When the regiment, worn by heat, thirst and weariness, approached the drift, the narrow roadway was encumbered with the river of transport and for hours the men waited in the beating sun for a gap in which to cross without delaying the wagons. The opportunity came at last, and late in the afternoon the regiment crawled along the further bank to its camping place, the men thoroughly exhausted, many of them carrying in their hands the equipment they had stripped off during the halt, the sections of fours barely maintained, all weariness and lassitude. Suddenly word passed like an electric shock that the regiment was about to pass Lord Roberts' tent. The men's demeanor changed instantly, the sections of fours were locked up, the equipments were hurried on, and the Canadians passed by the Headquarters Camp with a precision and a swing which aroused the chief's especial commendation. It may have been a mere coincidence, but the honor of furnishing the commander-in-chief's guard fell that evening to the Canadians. Splendidly tall, powerful men the guard were, and Lord Roberts appeared much pleased

with their appearance; he sent to the regiment one of those graceful complimentary messages of which he is a master. The regiment that same evening furnished a proof of efficiency in another direction, by furnishing a working party of two hundred men to help the sailors to haul their great guns up the slopes of the drift. The party acquitted itself well, both for sheer strength and for resourcefulness.

A few hundred yards down the stream from the clamorous drift was a bend in the river, the banks high and almost perpendicular. There the Headquarters Camp was pitched. It was an irregular huddle of light wagons, tiny shelter tents and fires. About fifty officers were included in Lord Roberts' staff, and they had split up into seven or eight little messes. Their belongings spread over the ground here and there; South Africa is generous of space and the camp took abundance of elbow room. Over near the crest of the steep bank fluttered a big Union Jack on a staff driven into the ground. Near it was a light four-wheeled wagon with a canvas tilt. It was the commander-in-chief's sleeping wagon; and I saw the chieftain sitting on a camp-chair beside the wagon. A strong air of detachment rested on the figure of the little old gentleman who sat there with folded arms, his face towards the stream of wagons laboring across the ford. Around were the officers of his staff busy with their own affairs, some working, some eating, some preparing for the night. It was an animated, almost a trivial scene, but for the silent and lonely figure of the field-marshal. When he stood on the platform of Belmont his left arm was towards the train, as he faced in the Kimberley direction. Now he sat with his left arm towards me, and I suppose that was why I noticed for the first time the broad black band of crepe. A certain look of quiet sorrow sat upon the figure of the war-lord, in the field, with twenty thousand men within his sight. At that moment, on that Wednesday evening, French was at Klip Drift, thirty miles away, fairly upon Black Cronje's flank. Kelly-Kenny's Sixth Division, Lord Kitchener riding with it, was starting from Wegdraai on its toilsome night march that was to take it to Klip Drift in time to fasten upon Cronje's rear guard. Our division and the Seventh were at Waterval Drift, and behind us, coming by way of Ramdam were miles of transport wagons. The net was poised in

the air, thrown at the Boer host, as I looked at the arch-huntsman on that evening, and what I saw was a lonely-looking old gentleman, whose aspect suggested quiet sorrow and a certain reflectiveness.

At nightfall we lay down in the level plain near the drift. Day-break next morning found our regiment on the road several miles away, and the sun was by no means high in the heavens when we were at our next camping ground, the dusty expanse of Wegdrail Drift, eight miles from Waterval, four miles from Jacobsdal and on the Bloemfontein road along which for weeks had come the supplies for Cronje's army. We were getting close to the centre of things now. At that very moment French was pushing from Klip Drift on the forty-mile ride which that evening ended in the relief of Kimberley, and Kelly-Kenny was getting his bull-dog hold upon Cronje's fleeing convoy.

Wegdrail is a desolate plain bordered by lines of serrated randtjes, or ridge-shaped kopjes. Nestling in a nook of these on some high ground giving a view of the country was a solitary, big, square-built house, starting abruptly from the untilled and untended soil, its lack of garden, yard or barns giving it an air which made it difficult to picture it as a human habitation, and strangely in keeping with the look of the little plain, which looked as if it had been a halting-place for innumerable transient ox-teams. At the front door of that house flew the Union Jack as our line of troops marched into camp; and beside the flag lingered a couple of orderlies. On a kopje top a hundred yards away was a heliograph with a group of signallers beside it. Later in the day as I was rambling around the camp, while our division lay and rested beneath rough shelters made of blankets, hung upon the barrels of the rifles, I noticed two battalions parading close to the big house, wherein for the moment Lord Roberts abode. They were the Cheshires and the South Wales Borderers of General Wavell's Brigade, the Fifteenth, of Tucker's Division. With the greatest care the two battalions were being drawn up in quarter column, and it had a strange look to see the markers out at the flanks of the companies industriously covering each other, their rifles at the "recover," magazines in front of their noses; precisely as if they were forming for an adjutant's parade in a home barrack square. From this formal parade these two battalions marched directly into action; moved

through our camp, passed through our outpost line towards Jacobedal, swung out into fighting formation on the plain, and then we heard for forty minutes a dropping rifle fire and the occasional banging of a field piece. It all sounded very matter of fact and quite inevitable, and nobody in camp seemed excited or even particularly interested. At the end of the little fight Jacobedal was ours and a couple of ambulance wagons were out looking for the ten men or so of ours who had been shot. Jacobedal was the halting place of the Seventh Division for several days; the Ninth went on to Klip Drift and then to Paardeberg in support of the Sixth, and the Seventh did not catch up until Monday. At Jacobedal Lord Roberts also remained for two or three days, until Cronje was decisively cornered at Paardeberg. Then he rode the thirty-five or forty miles at speed, arriving at the scene of the battle about noon or one o'clock on Monday.

It was on that Monday that I had my next view of Lord Roberts. We had fared far and seen much in the four days since we had marched past his headquarters at Wegdraai; two toilsome night marches, and the bloody Sunday. A search for the press censor to get my despatch passed led me about noon to cross the river and look for the Headquarters Camp. The eastern bank of the Modder at this place is skirted at some distance by a line of fairly high kopjes, which about a mile above Paardeberg Drift approach fairly close to the river bank, and opposite the drift recede, leaving a rather large recess. In the small plain thus formed a great mass of our transport was laagered. Lord Roberts was reported to be at the end of the range of kopjes which approached the river, and to that point I repaired. The hill occupied by the field-marshal was moderately high and broken into ridges by the curious gullies which divide these South African hills. On a slope of this hill which gave the clearest view of the Boer camp was the commander-in-chief. The light wagon was up, many horses were about, and the staff was not so large as before; one or two circumstances made me conclude that in some cases their mounts had not proved equal to the long and hard ride which had brought Lord Roberts up. It was at the moment of the request by Cronje for an armistice which had caused the story to fly through the army that the Boers had surrendered. Lord Roberts, still neat and dapper, was all alive

now, but showing no excitement; his manner as I saw him for a moment was intense, keen and interested, but still composed. That night I had to visit the press censor at the Headquarters Camp. It was in a bend of the river, in a leafy spot, the acacias and other trees one sees on a South African river bank hanging their leaves over the leaping fires, and the shadows cast by them hiding the want of turf which is the great defect of a South African landscape in our northern eyes. Several watercourses—dongas, gullies, spruits, call them what you please—ran into the river here and fenced the camp in a manner discomposing to a person, ignorant of the road, approaching after nightfall. One feature of the camp which I recollect was the field-telegraph office which was within a hundred yards of the chief's quarters. Another was the picturesque look of the rude little camp of the field-marshal with his fifty staff-officers and his meagre guard—although that guard seldom was in evidence, and I do not remember being challenged as I approach the hivoac. So far as I could tell, no considerable body of troops was within easy reach; but the night was very dark.

The next time our regiment saw Lord Roberts was on that memorable occasion, Majuba Day of 1900. Our men had clinched the nail in the early morning hours, Cronje had surrendered, Colley's disaster was wiped out. The Canadians marched into the laager which our foes had held so obstinately, and were held inactive for several hours in the southern portion of it by a message that Lord Roberts was coming to address them. It was a long wait, and then a cavalcade was seen approaching from down-river, evidently having ridden over the scene of the morning's fight. The slowness of its approach was what struck us most; the chieftain, mounted on a beautiful pony, came up at a very slow, easy walk, his staff behind him. When he came closer it was his small stature which drew the eye; Colonel Otter on his big brown horse towered above the little general on the dainty pony. The commander-in-chief's voice as he addressed the regiment was noticeably low and deliberate and in it was perceptible a strain of sadness; not a note of exultation or pride could be observed in tones or manner. His words were highly complimentary, but our men who, like most non-professional soldiers, had gone into the fight with a strong desire to damage the enemy as

much as possible, were quite startled at the pitying and admiring manner in which he spoke of the army we had just captured. The Boers, poor fellows, had been very hard pressed, Lord Roberts said in narrating to the regiment how the attack had come to be authorized; and he went on to say that he had asked what regiment had been selected and was quite satisfied when he learned that it was the Canadians. He added a graphic touch of description of how in the early hours he had been awakened by the outburst of firing, had struck a match, looked at his watch and gone to sleep again.

During the march from Ofontein to Bloemfontein our regiment saw little of Lord Roberts. His camp at Ofontein was across the river from us, in a comfortable-looking farmhouse. At the Poplar Grove fight he was on the far side of the river, and our division came up at Driefontein on March 10 just in time to see the end of the battle that on that day raged from Abraham's Kraal on the north to Driefontein on the south. We saw Lord Roberts' headquarters, in a poverty-stricken white house, but did not see him.

During the long halt at Bloemfontein Lord Roberts seemed almost to become domesticated. He took up his quarters in the big turreted stone mansion which had been the official residence of President Steyn. The road from the big common where the Ninth Division was encamped came to the edge of the town, passed between the convent and the girl's school (both converted into hospitals) and dipped down in a little hill for two streets, then turned to the right. At the bottom of this little grade was the presidential mansion, a low stone wall separating its lawn from the street, a vacant lot in front of it. Daily one could see the guard mounted there with every detail of ceremony, the Coldstreams' fife and drum band in attendance. Daily, too, Lord Roberts went out for his constitutional. It was a stately little function. Across the street two turbaned Indian lancers, his personal attendants, could be seen waiting. They usually kept close to him, but I do not recollect having noticed them until the Bloemfontein days. From the gateway issued Lord Roberts, his staff behind him, the guard presenting arms. The dark men with turbans and lances fell in behind, and the cavalcade, neatest-fitting khaki surmounted by white, flat-topped, visored staff-caps, paraded the town at a grave walking pace. Once I remember

seeing Lord Kitchener in the party, his forage cap, of the ordinary pattern, crammed down on his head till the top was spread, emphasizing the contrast with the others which his great size would in any event have suggested. I have a couple of personal reminiscences of these parades. Late one afternoon a friend and I were being driven in a Cape cart by a Kaffir who united inexpertness to cocksureness in equal proportions. We were going out to camp, and swung around the corner to climb the hill, and found ourselves directly in front of the field-marshal and his staff. Albert lost his head and gave a melancholy exhibition of pulling and counter-pulling, tacking across the street and back again, like a boat beating against the wind, right in the face of that brilliant staff, and very nearly charging into it. We slunk by abashed, acutely miserable at the exhibition we had made of ourselves. On another occasion we were driving into town and came down the slope at a sharp pace, at the instant that Lord Roberts emerged from the gate of the residency, at the foot of the slope. A moment's hesitation would have sent us cannoning into the middle of the group. I seized the right hand rein and we swung sharply into the street which providentially ran off to the right just before the residency was reached. The wheels groaned with our swirl around, but we had averted a catastrophe.

About the middle of the halt in Bloemfontein Lady Roberts and the Honorable Miss Roberts joined the chief, and daily a carriage would take Lady Roberts out for a drive through the town. Stories were current of the care taken of Lady Roberts by her husband; it was at Bloemfontein, I think, that the army awoke to the fact that its chief was sixty-seven years of age.

During the advance upon Johannesburg and Pretoria the Canadians were in the mixed division which was under Sir Ian Hamilton and were on semi-detached work. It was not until the capture of Pretoria that we saw Lord Roberts again, and then the occasion was purely formal, the march past before him in the central square of the conquered capital. It was in front of the Government Building, as the edifice is styled where the irreconcilable Transvaal Legislature met. Against its heavy facade fluttered red a little Union Jack—a silken flag, worked by Lady Roberts for her husband. Army gossip said that a little shamrock was worked into one corner of it. That flag

had been hoisted at Bloemfontein, at Kroonstadt, at Johannesburg; now it floated over the capital of our principal foe. Facing the Government Building sat Lord Roberts, his staff and his body-guard behind him. In front poured a portion of his army—a great mass of mounted troops and artillery and the infantry of two divisions, the Eleventh, and Ian Hamilton's, the Nineteenth and Twenty-First Brigades. Fourteen battalions of the British army had the honor of marching in that historic parade, and of these the Royal Canadian Regiment and the City Imperial Volunteers were the only ones which were not units of the Regular Army of Great Britain. Guards, Gordons (75th), Camerons (79th), Derhys (45th), Essex (44th), Welsh (41st), Yorks (15th), Cornwalls (46th), Shropshires (85th), and Sussex (35th)—our men were in good company.

One more review and the Royal Canadian Regiment's reminiscences of Lord Roberts are finished. It was the annexation ceremony, when the royal standard was hoisted and the state review was held, a more formal function than the hurried march past on the day of entry. The three companies of the regiment which remained in South Africa, A, B and I, were in this stately pageant and marched past with the guards and other famous regiments. Then came the farewell, when Lord Roberts had the first contingent good-bye in one of his charming speeches. It was in the dark hour when the Canadians saw him first—it was their privilege to bid him farewell in times of comparative ease when his task was drawing to a close and Great Britain had a firm grip on the countries which had planned to overthrow her ascendancy, had challenged her might.





## APPENDIX

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THE FOLLOWING TEXT OF THE CONVENTION OF 1884 IS PUBLISHED IN FULL TO GIVE READERS INTERESTED IN THE WAR IN WHICH EARL ROBERTS PLAYED SUCH AN IMPORTANT PART, AND WHICH IS STILL BEING WAGED IN SOUTH AFRICA, THE EXACT RELATION IN WHICH THE TRANSVAAL STOOD TO ENGLAND.



## APPENDIX

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### A CONVENTION BETWEEN HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC.

**W**HEREAS, the Government of the Transvaal State, through its Delegates, consisting of Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, President of the said State; Stephanus Jacobus Du Toit, Superintendent of Education, and Nicholas Jacobus Smit, a member of the Volksraad, have represented that the Convention signed at Pretoria on the 3rd day of August, 1881, and ratified by the Volksraad of the said State on the 25th October, 1881, contains certain provisions which are inconvenient, and imposes burdens and obligations from which the said State is desirous to be relieved, and that the south-western boundaries fixed by the said Convention should be amended, with a view to promote the peace and good order of the said State, and of the countries adjacent thereto; and, whereas, Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland has been pleased to take the said representations into consideration. Now, therefore, Her Majesty has been pleased to direct, and it is hereby declared, that the following Articles of a new Convention, signed on behalf of Her Majesty by Her Majesty's High Commissioner in South Africa, the Right Honourable Sir Hercules George Robert Robinson, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, and on behalf of the Transvaal State (which shall herein-after be called the South African Republic) by the above-named Delegates, Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, Stephanus Jacobus Du Toit, and Nicholas Jacobus Smit, shall, when ratified by the Volksraad of the South African Republic, be substituted for the articles

embodied in the Convention of 3rd August, 1881; which latter, pending such ratification, shall continue in full force and effect.

## ARTICLES.

Article I.—The territory of the South African Republic will embrace the land lying between the following boundaries, to-wit: \* . . . . .

Article II.—The Government of the South African Republic will strictly adhere to the boundaries defined in the first Article of this Convention, and will do its utmost to prevent any of its inhabitants from making any encroachments upon lands beyond the said boundaries. The Government of the South African Republic will appoint Commissioners upon the eastern and western borders, whose duty it will be strictly to guard against irregularities and all trespassing over the boundaries. Her Majesty's Government will, if necessary, appoint Commissioners in the native territories outside the eastern and western borders of the South African Republic to maintain order and prevent encroachments.

Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the South African Republic will each appoint a person to proceed together to beacon off the amended south-west boundary as described in Article I of this Convention; and the President of the Orange Free State shall be requested to appoint a referee to whom the said persons shall refer any questions on which they may disagree respecting the interpretation of the said Article, and the decision of such referee thereon shall be final. The arrangement already made, under the terms of Article 19 of the Convention of Pretoria of the 3rd August, 1881, between the owners of the farms Grootfontein and Valleifontein on the one hand, and the Barolong authorities on the other, by which a fair share of the water supply of the said farms shall be allowed to flow undisturbed to the said Barolongs, shall continue in force.

Article III.—If a British officer is appointed to reside at Pretoria or elsewhere within the South African Republic to discharge functions analogous to those of a Consular officer he will receive the protection and assistance of the Republic.

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\*Practically the same as the boundaries of Convention of 1881.

Article IV.—The South African Republic will conclude no treaty or engagement with any State or nation other than the Orange Free State, nor with any native tribe to the eastward or westward of the Republic, until the same has been approved by Her Majesty the Queen.

Such approval shall be considered to have been granted if Her Majesty's Government shall not, within six months after receiving a copy of such treaty (which shall be delivered to them immediately upon its completion), have notified that the conclusion of such treaty is in conflict with the interests of Great Britain or of any of Her Majesty's possessions in South Africa.

Article V.—The South African Republic will be liable for any balance which may still remain due of the debts for which it was liable at the date of Annexation, to-wit, the Cape Commercial Bank Loan, the Railway Loan, and the Orphan Chamber Debt, which debts will be a first charge upon the revenues of the Republic. The South African Republic will moreover be liable to Her Majesty's Government for £250,000, which will be a second charge upon the revenue of the Republic.

Article VI.—The debt due as aforesaid by the South African Republic to Her Majesty's Government will bear interest at the rate of three and a half per cent. from the date of the ratification of this Convention, and shall be repayable by a payment for interest and Sinking Fund of six pounds and ninepence per £100 per annum, which will extinguish the debt in twenty-five years. The said payment of six pounds and ninepence per £100 shall be payable half-yearly, in British currency, at the close of each half-year from the date of such ratification. Provided, always, that the South African Republic shall be at liberty at the close of any half-year to pay off the whole or any portion of the outstanding debt.

Interest at the rate of three and a half per cent. on the debt as standing under the Convention of Pretoria shall as heretofore be paid to the date of the ratification of this Convention.

Article VII.—All persons who held property in the Transvaal on the 8th day of August, 1881, and still hold the same, will continue to enjoy the rights of property which they have enjoyed since the 12th April, 1877. No person who has remained loyal to Her Majesty during the late hostilities shall

suffer any molestation by reason of his loyalty; or be liable to any criminal prosecution or civil action for any part taken in connection with such hostilities; and all such persons will have full liberty to reside in the country, with enjoyment of all civil rights, and protection for their persons and property.

Article VIII.—The South African Republic renews the declaration made in the Sand River Convention, and in the Convention of Pretoria, that no slavery or apprenticeship partaking of slavery will be tolerated by the Government of the said Republic.

Article IX.—There will continue to be complete freedom of religion and protection from molestation for all denominations, provided the same be not inconsistent with morality and good order; and no disability shall attach to any person in regard to rights of property by reason of the religious opinions which he holds.

Article X.—The British Officer appointed to reside in the South African Republic will receive every assistance from the Government of the said Republic in making due provision for the proper care and preservation of the graves of such of Her Majesty's Forces as have died in the Transvaal; and if need be, for the appropriation of land for the purpose.

Articles XI.—All grants or titles issued at any time by the Transvaal Government in respect of land outside the boundary of the South African Republic, as defined in Article I, shall be considered invalid and of no effect, except in so far as any such grant or title relates to lands that fall within the boundary of the South African Republic; and all persons holding any such grant so considered invalid and of no effect will receive from the Government of the South African Republic such compensation, either in land or in money, as the Volksraad shall determine.

In all cases in which Native Chiefs or other authorities outside the said boundaries have received any adequate consideration from the Government of the South African Republic for land excluded from the Transvaal by the first Articles of this Convention, or where permanent improvements have been made on the land, the High Commissioner will recover from the native

authorities fair compensation for the loss of the land thus excluded, or of the permanent improvements thereon.

Article XII.—The independence of the Swazis, within the boundary line of Swaziland, as indicated in the first Article of this Convention, will be fully recognized.

Article XIII.—Except in pursuance of any treaty or management made as provided in Article 4 of this Convention, no other or higher duties shall be imposed on the importation into the South African Republic of any article coming from any part of Her Majesty's dominions than are, or may be, imposed on the like article coming from any other place or country; nor will any prohibition be maintained or imposed on the importation into the South African Republic of any part of Her Majesty's dominions which shall not equally extend to the like article coming from any other place or country. And in like manner the same treatment shall be given to any article coming to Great Britain from the South African Republic as to the like article coming from any other place or country.

These provisions do not preclude the consideration of special arrangements as to import duties and commercial relations between the South African Republic and any of Her Majesty's colonies or possessions.

Article XIV.—All persons, other than natives, conforming themselves to the laws of the South African Republic (a) will have full liberty, with their families, to enter, travel, or reside in any part of the South African Republic; (b) they will be entitled to hire or possess houses, manufactories, warehouses, shops and premises; (c) they may carry on their commerce either in person or by any agents whom they may think fit to employ; (d) they will not be subject, in respect of their persons or property, or in respect of their commerce or industry, to any taxes, whether general or local, other than those which are or may be imposed upon citizens of the said Republic.

Article XV.—All persons, other than natives, who established their domicile in the Transvaal between the 12th day of April, 1877, and the 5th August, 1881, and who within twelve months after such last-mentioned date



have had their names registered by the British Resident, shall be exempt from all compulsory military service whatever.

Article XVI.—Provision shall hereafter be made by a separate instrument for the mutual extradition of criminals, and also for the surrender of deserters from Her Majesty's forces.

Article XVII.—All debts contracted between the 12th April, 1877, and the 8th August, 1881, will be payable in the same currency in which they may have been contracted.

Article XVIII.—No grants of land which may have been made, and no transfers or mortgages which may have been passed between the 12th April, 1877, and 8th August, 1881, will be invalidated by reason merely of their having been made or passed between such dates.

All transfers to the British Secretary for Native Affairs in trust for natives will remain in force, an officer of the South African Republic taking the place of such Secretary for Native Affairs.

Article XIX.—The Government of the South African Republic will engage faithfully to fulfil the assurances given, in accordance with the laws in the South African Republic, to the natives at the Pretoria Pitso by the Royal Commission in the presence of the Triumvirate and with their entire assent, (1) as to the freedom of the natives to buy or otherwise acquire land under certain conditions, (2) as to the appointment of a commission to mark out native locations, (3) as to the access of the natives to the courts of law, and (4) as to their being allowed to move freely within the country, or to leave it for any legal purpose, under a pass system.

Article XX.—This Convention will be ratified by a Volksraad of the South African Republic within the period of six months after its execution, and in default of such ratification this Convention shall be null and void.

Signed in duplicate in London this 27th day of February, 1884.

(Signed) HERCULES ROBINSON.

(Signed) S. J. P. KRUGER.

(Signed) S. J. Du TOIT.

(Signed) M. J. SMIT.

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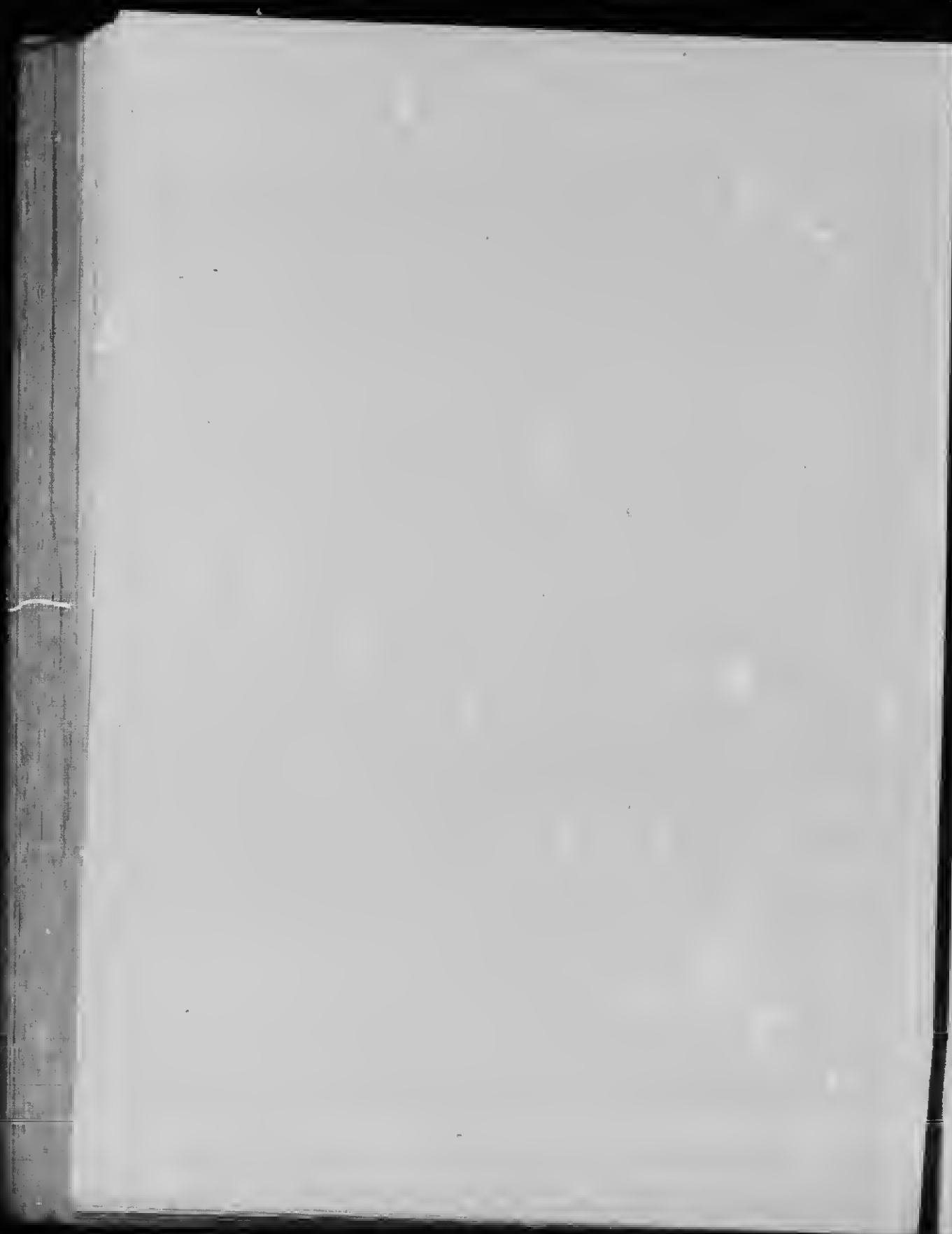
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