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TO SIDNEY MORSE

My Dear Sidney,

I dedicate to you this little book, in which I have tried to tell something of the greatest British soldier of our time. I hope that some day you will be a soldier, as your father was before you.

Yours affectionately

THE AUTHOR.

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CHAPTER I

EARLY DAYS—ARRIVAL IN INDIA

On the 30th September 1832, Frederick Sleigh Roberts was born at Cawnpore, in India.

Like so many of our great soldiers, Lord Roberts is an Irishman, and he is proud of the fact. His father, General Sir Abraham Roberts, was a distinguished soldier, and like his son spent the greater part of his life in India. While still a child of two years old, Sir Abraham and Lady Roberts brought their boy home to England.

Here they remained together for two years, after which the parents had to return to the East, and their child was left in the care of relatives at Clifton.

In common with so many children born in India, he was at first somewhat small and delicate.

His schooldays began early, as at the age of six he started doing lessons at a dame's school. In his eighth year he went to a school at Clifton kept by a Frenchman, Monsieur Desprez.

Here, though he was really eight years old, his small size and delicate appearance led him to be mistaken for a child of five. This false idea of the boy's age and strength led to the downfall of one of his classmates. This latter was a French boy about twice the size of Roberts, but a hulking, stupid fellow, who looked with jealousy on the little chap's cleverness and greater success at lessons. Unable to get above him in class, the Frenchman determined to take it out of his school-fellow by bullying.

One day a great outcry arose in the playground, and on a master hurrying up to see what the fuss was about, little Roberts was found lying on the ground, while the French bully

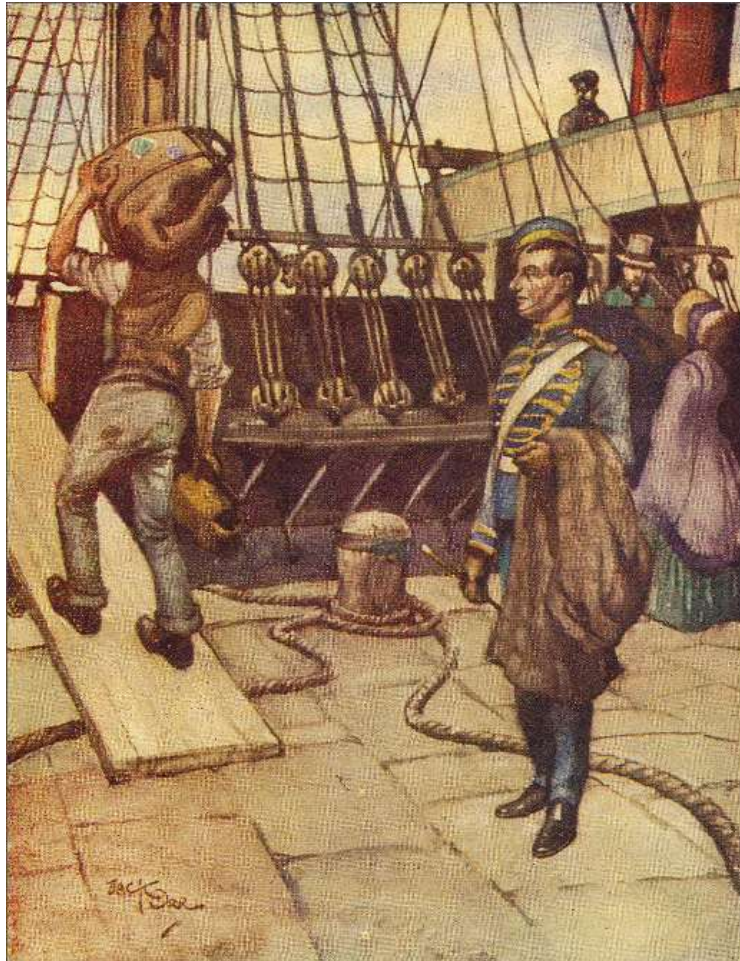
was dancing about in a wild state of joy, and shouting out, "Me I have knock Freddy down! Me I have jump on him! Me I have dance on him!" All of a sudden his capers and song of victory ceased. Little Freddy recovered; quickly jumping to his feet, he landed his tormentor a good smack on the nose, straight from the shoulder, with his fist. The shouts of triumph changed to tears; the Frenchman was no boxer, and from that time he took care to leave the little English boy, who could use his fists in self-defence, severely alone.

At the age of ten young Roberts went to a preparatory school, and after remaining there for three years, he went to Eton, where he stayed a year, during which he gained a prize for mathematics; and this fact was recalled forty years later, when Etonians presented a sword of honour to their distinguished school-fellow on his return from victory in Afghanistan. In January 1847 young Roberts, who had made up his mind to follow in his father's footsteps and become a soldier, entered Sandhurst. Here he worked hard, and among other honours took a prize in German. His stay was not, however, to be a long one, as his father wished him to follow a career in India, rather than in the English army at home. So, after going to a military academy at Wimbledon, he at length secured a vacancy at the famous military college of the East India Company at Addiscombe.

Here the young man of eighteen began his military studies in real earnest, and he gave himself up to the study of "Fortification"; for already at this age he determined to get on in his profession, and we may be sure he was no idler. His life at Addiscombe was a most happy one: he was popular with everybody, and had in especial five friends, who all chummed together, clubbing their pocket-money and having all things in common. Out of this common fund the fortunate member who got leave to spend a weekend in London was able to pay his expenses when his turn came.

Roberts rose to be corporal in the seminary, a position somewhat like a prefect at a public school, and we can well

believe that his reign of authority was a mild and popular one, and that the junior cadets regarded him with the same feelings of affection as the soldiers in after years came to feel towards "Bobs," their popular and trusted Commander-in-Chief.



ROBERTS ON THE QUAY, LEAVING HOME FOR INDIA.

During his stay at Addiscombe, Roberts was by no means strong. But as with Nelson, our greatest sailor, his good spirits and pluck more than made up for any delicacy. His

figure, though small and slight, was well-built. He was wiry and active, and always, we are told, very neat and careful about his dress.

At the end of the year 1851 Frederick Sleight Roberts was gazetted a second lieutenant in the Bengal Artillery, and two months after the young cadet set sail for the land of his birth, where he was to become so famous. The departure of a cadet for India was in those days a much more serious affair than it is now. Leave could only be obtained—except in case of ill health—once, and that only after ten years in India, during an officer's whole service.

"Small wonder, then," Lord Roberts himself says, "that I felt as if I were bidding England farewell for ever when, on 20th February 1852, I set sail from Southampton with Calcutta for my destination."

The vast floating hotels which now cross the ocean were in those days undreamt of. Steamships were still in their infancy, the boats small and slow. The Suez Canal did not exist. People either had to go round the Cape to reach India, or else take the P. & O. to Alexandria; from thence the journey was made by river and canal to Cairo, from Cairo a diligence ran to Suez, and there the weary traveller had again to embark on a P. & O. which took him to Calcutta.

The steamer Roberts sailed in to Alexandria was the *Ripon*, commanded by Captain Moreby, a distinguished officer and a kind, fatherly man, especially attentive to the home-sick young "griffins"—as new arrivals in India are called.

The freshness and novelty of life at sea is a great cure for home-sickness. A passing ship, a school of porpoises, the sight of land—all become objects of excitement and interest. Then games of many and various kinds fill the time, and the passenger at his voyage's end usually steps on shore with a feeling of regret, and kindly feelings towards the trusty vessel which has reached port in safety, and which has, for the time being, been his home.

After Alexandria the journey across the desert was made in a vehicle like a bathing-machine, drawn by four mules, and in this Roberts and five other young cadets bumped and jolted from Cairo to Suez.

The sight of Cairo made a great impression on young Roberts. It was his first real view of the "gorgeous East," and he eagerly took in every detail of the sort of scenery which was to become in India so familiar to him.

At Suez the "griffins" embarked on the *Oriental*, and the terrific heat of that region was soon met with. Only those who have made the voyage know how great that heat may be. Should there be a following wind the stanchions and even the deck seem to be red-hot; and it is only by stopping and sailing full-speed astern that the ship can be cooled down and become a bearable habitation. "I don't know how we shall fight in India if it is as hot as this," Roberts is said to have remarked.

At last, on the 1st of April, Calcutta was reached, and the young cadet stepped on shore in the land of his birth.

After a dreary dinner with an invalid officer of his own regiment (surely no cheerful omen!) young Roberts went to bed, regretting his many comrades of the ship, and feeling lonely and home-sick. Next morning at an early hour he was astir, and made the best of his way to Dum-Dum, where he lost no time in reporting himself and joining his regiment.

Here the same cheerless welcome waited him; there were scarcely any soldiers in the fort, and his second dinner in India, instead of consisting of a cheery mess-party, as he may have pictured, was a lonely meal with another subaltern.

The outlook was most depressing for a young man just arrived in the country. "I became terribly home-sick, and convinced that I should never be happy in India," he afterwards used to relate.

One night, on the rare occasion of his dining out, he encountered on his way home a furious cyclone. His native

servant was walking ahead of him with a lantern, but the light was soon blown out, and his guide continued on his way, thinking his master was following him. The latter shouted to his servant to stop, but the roar of the tempest drowned his cries. The night was pitch dark, several trees had been blown down, and huge branches were being driven through the air like thistle-down. Nearly blown off his feet, and in no little danger from the falling trees, it was only after weary hours wandering up and down and groping in the darkness that Roberts at length reached the safety of his own bungalow.

Next morning he sat down and wrote to his father, begging that if possible he might be sent to Burma. The old general replied with the glad news that he hoped shortly to be given the command of the large Peshawur division, when his son could then come and serve under him.

The young man hailed the news with delight; his dislike to India and his discontent vanished as if by magic; and when in August the wished-for order from his father came, he set forth with boyish eagerness for the frontier.

His journey thither took up nearly as much time as his whole stay at Dum-Dum. The macadamised road went no farther than Meerut; from there the remaining six hundred miles had to be made in a doolie or palanquin—a sort of sedan chair carried on men's shoulders. The heat was so great that travelling by day was impossible, and the stages had to be made by night. However, everything has an end, and at last, after being nearly three months on his journey, he reached Peshawur, where he found his father; and we can well imagine with what feelings of joy the pair greeted one another. They met "almost as strangers." "We did not, however," Lord Roberts himself tells us, "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 to sympathise with the feelings and aspirations of men younger than himself rendered the year I spent with him at Peshawur one of the brightest and happiest of my early life."

CHAPTER II

AT PESHAWUR—MEETING WITH NICHOLSON

During his journey up to Peshawur Roberts had rested at Cawnpore, which was his birthplace. At Meerut he saw for the first time a body of the famous Bengal Horse Artillery, a force which has been described as "unsurpassed and unsurpassable." All the young soldier's ambition was fired to become one day a member of this grand corps, and he had already formed "a fixed resolve to leave no stone unturned in the endeavour to become a horse-gunner."

In the meanwhile, however, Roberts lived with his father, and had a tremendous amount of work to do. His duties were twofold, for he not only acted as his father's aide-de-camp, but also continued to do his duty as officer with the 2nd Company 2nd Battalion of the Bengal Artillery (known locally as "The Devil's Own").

On the 1st of January 1853, Lord Roberts relates that he was at a dinner-party when the unlucky number thirteen sat down. It would be in accordance with the superstition could we relate the after-fate of the party by death and misadventure. Strange to say, the very opposite has to be chronicled. No less than eleven years after all the thirteen were alive, having passed through the terrible times of the Mutiny, during which five or six had been wounded.

In the autumn of the same year the health of old General Roberts began to fail, and he was, under advice from the doctors, obliged to leave India for good. So weak and ill was he that his son thought it his duty to accompany him part of the way down to Calcutta.

While travelling with his father Roberts missed his first chance of seeing active service and "smelling powder." There was trouble on the frontier; a number of the Bari villages were in revolt, and an expedition had to be sent to punish them. Although the young lieutenant galloped back as fast as relays of ponies could carry him, it was no good. He heard, indeed, the guns of "The Devil's Own" booming in the distance, but by the time he came up, to his grief and disappointment he found the fighting was over, and his baptism of fire was not yet to take place.

He was, however, to encounter another enemy of the British soldier in India, and during the winter he became very ill with fever. So serious was his illness that he was granted six months' leave of absence. This time he spent in a most delightful trip to Kashmir, on which he was accompanied by another lieutenant of artillery. The two young men had a splendid holiday; the country is one of the most beautiful and fertile in the world. The climate is good, and especially refreshing are the cool nights and fine early mornings, after the continual heat of the plains.

Thoroughly set up by the change, our hero returned to Peshawur, and here he reached the height of his boyish ambition in receiving shortly afterwards the coveted "jacket" of a lieutenant in the Bengal Horse Artillery—the force he had set his heart on joining.

They were, indeed, a splendid body of men, mostly Irishmen, and great, strapping fellows, "almost all big enough to have lifted him from the ground with one hand." In such a crack corps good horsemanship was a point of honour with all, and Roberts soon set himself to become a good rider. So successful was he that he was chosen to ride in the regimental brake, which was drawn by six horses, ridden postillion fashion by three officers.

Again the old enemy, fever, laid him low, and once more the doctors sent him to Kashmir to get better. From Kashmir he set out on a four hundred miles' march to the

famous hill station, Simla, and here came the "turning-point" in his career.

He was asked to lunch one day with Colonel Becher, the Quartermaster-General. After some talk, Colonel Becher, struck by the young man's soldierly qualities, told him he wished he could have him attached to his department. An appointment of this sort was sure to bring with it a rapid rise in his profession, and Lieutenant Roberts jumped at the idea. From that time it was the goal before him, till in the spring of 1856, far sooner than he had dreamt of, the Deputy-Assistant-Quartermaster-General was required for special service, and Roberts was offered the post.

His delight, however, soon received a check; his appointment could not be sanctioned because he had not passed the necessary examination in Hindustani. This was to be held shortly. Nothing daunted, the young lieutenant engaged a native teacher, and set to work with all his might to learn the language. The time was short, but he made the most of it, and when July and the examination came, he passed the test with flying colours.

Shortly after he got what he had wished for: the vacancy was given him, and he was now a staff-officer, with every prospect of speedy success.

While on tour in his new capacity he received an offer which, had he accepted it, would have changed his whole life, and one of her greatest soldiers would have been lost to the country. This was none other than the chance of a post in the Public Works Department. The salary would, of course, have been far larger than that of an officer in the army, but Roberts was a soldier and the son of a soldier, and he determined to stick to his profession, so the offer was gratefully declined.

In order to join General Reed on a tour of inspection, Roberts accomplished a wonderful ride of a hundred miles in eleven hours, with but one short rest for refreshment. During this tour of inspection Roberts met for the first time a young

subaltern in the Inniskilling Fusiliers, who will always be associated with the heroic exploits of the British army, and who many years after, as Sir George White, engraved his name on the annals of our race by the heroic manner in which he "kept the flag flying" at Ladysmith during the dark days of the Boer War.

An incident worth telling, as showing how unprepared everybody was for the outbreak of the Great Mutiny, came under the young staff-officer's notice at Nowshera.

The 55th Native Infantry were stationed there, and their colonel, who had been hitherto used to clean-shaven Hindu Sepoys, was loud in his complaints of the big-bearded Sikhs who had lately been enlisted in his regiment, and who he declared quite spoilt the smart, trim appearance of the ranks on parade.

Two months later the Hindus had broken out into mutiny: of all the regiment only the despised Sikhs remained loyal, and the colonel, who had declared he would stake his life on his trusty Hindustanis, mad with grief and disappointment, blew out his brains.

While in these parts Roberts met for the first time that modern hero of romance, the great John Nicholson. Perhaps no man ever impressed him more, either before or since, and Nicholson was a fit hero for a young soldier's worship and respect.

Like Roberts, he came of Irish stock, though his ancestors had, in the reign of Elizabeth, been sturdy Cumberland dalesmen who had emigrated to Ireland. He had come out to India as a boy of sixteen, and nearly all his time had been spent keeping order among the unruly tribes of the frontier.

The natives literally worshipped him as a god: he had been known to flog the men who knelt before him in prayer as to a god-like saint. The tribesmen looked on him as no mere

mortal man. "You could hear the ring of his horse's hoofs from Attock to the Khyber," ran the saying on the frontier.

John Nicholson was a man of splendid size and strength, six foot two in height, and of commanding aspect. "He was a man cast in a giant mould, with massive chest and powerful limbs, and an expression ardent and commanding, with a dash of roughness: features of stern beauty, a long black beard, and a sonorous voice. His imperial air never left him." No wonder this modern crusader fired the imagination of the keen young soldier.

"Nicholson," says Lord Roberts, "impressed me more profoundly than any man I had 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. . . ." The great man soon showed a regard and affection for the ardent young officer, and the two were together almost from that hour until Nicholson's heroic death in the streets of Delhi.

CHAPTER III

THE MUTINY

On his return to Peshawur Roberts had looked forward to hard work and a long spell of routine, but the outbreak of the great Indian Mutiny was to provide him with a more exciting field of activity.

The year 1857 broke with the threatenings of coming trouble. The Sepoys were restless, and seemed to obey their orders sulkily. During the months of February, March, and April, mysterious "chupatties," or cakes, were sent about the country, passed from hand to hand, and this was thought to be a means of telling the natives to rise, and a secret signal for them to get ready.

We must remember that, for the first few years of British rule in India, Hindus and Mohammedans had been happy to dwell peacefully side by side. They were thankful for the change from bloodshed and strife to law and order, under just rulers. They could no longer be tortured and robbed by their native kings, for the country was quiet and prosperous, and the poor man could live and labour without fearing the tyranny of the rich.

By-and-by, however, the people began to forget how poor and ill-treated they had been in the past. The Mohammedans looked back with regret on their days of power and splendour, when they had ruled India; while the Hindus thought of how they had got rid of the Mohammedan yoke.

Neither people liked to be ruled and to be under the power of a strange white people, who had come from across "the great water," and conquered their country with a mere handful of men. At this stage, the enemies of our rule spread a report that the English had made up their minds to destroy the

religions of the two great races in India, and force them all to become Christians.

To a Hindu a cow is a sacred animal; on the other hand, the pig the Mohammedan holds in abomination, and he will sooner starve than even touch the flesh of what to him is an unclean beast. A report arose, and was busily spread about the country, that the new cartridges issued to the Sepoys, or native soldiers, had been greased with a mixture of cows' fat and lard. To touch one of these cartridges was to a native of either race a sin, and a great and unpardonable sin, against his religion. As explaining this feeling, Lord Roberts tells a story of a Sepoy, on his way to cook his food, with his "Iota," or tin drinking-vessel, full of water. He was met by a low-caste man employed in the Enfield Cartridge Factory, who begged him for a drink from his Iota. This Sepoy, a Brahmin—one of the highest caste—refused, saying, "I have scoured my Iota; you will defile it by your touch."

"Oh," sneered the low-caste native, "you think much of your caste, but wait a little; the Sahib-log "(that is, European officers) "will make you bite cartridges soaked in cows' fat, and then where will your caste be?"

The Sepoy, no doubt, believed the man, and told his comrades what was going to happen. No wonder, then, that the soldiers believed the reports, and feared that by means of the new cartridges they were to be forced to change their religion.

At the time we speak of the British force in India numbered only 36,000 men, while there were some 257,000 native soldiers. The old belief that the British soldier was invincible, a belief which arose from the way in which mere handfuls of our men had broken and beaten large armies, met with a rude shock during the Afghan War, 1841—42. What the Afghans had shown to be possible the Sepoys might also accomplish. At all events, they had made up their minds to try.

Over the whole land there blew "a devil's wind," as the Hindus called it. The aged King of Delhi, when asked

afterwards to explain the cause of the outbreak, answered, "I do not know. I suppose my people gave themselves up to the devil."

A mysterious prophecy was revived, and was repeated all over the country, from mouth to mouth.

In 1757, the Battle of Massy, Clive's victory which gave us India, had been fought and won. The English "raj," or rule, would run exactly one hundred years—so ran the prophecy; and lo! here was 1857—the hundred years had run their course.

The British forces were scattered in small detachments over Bengal, and most of the artillery was in native hands. Indeed, perhaps among the various causes of the Mutiny, it was the natives' sense of power—they had fought our battles and conquered for us, they argued—which urged them to rebel.

On the 11th of May, while Roberts and the other officers were sitting at mess in Peshawur, the bolt fell from the blue. In breathless haste a telegraphic signaler rushed in, and gasped out the startling news that an outbreak had occurred at Meerut, that Delhi had joined the rebels, and that many residents and officers at both stations had been murdered.

To fully understand the situation we must leave Lord Roberts for a little, and go back to relate the events which gave rise to the outbreak of the Mutiny, during which the whole power of British rule seemed at one moment to be tottering on its throne: a power which was only afterwards to be more firmly established, thanks to the heroic devotion and bravery of our men and their dusky allies who remained steadfast and true to their salt, while their comrades-in-arms on all sides rose in revolt.

As early as the 6th of February, an officer of the 34th Native Regiment had been warned by a Sepoy that his men, fearing that they were going to be forced to become Christians,

meant to rise in revolt. We have already told the story of the Brahmin and the low-caste man at Dum-Dum.

The air was full of warnings had the authorities but been alive to the fact. Already General Hearsay had written to the Government, "We are on a mine ready for explosion," and his words and warning were but too true. At Barrackpore, March 29th, on a Sunday afternoon, the match that was to explode the whole mine may be said to have been lighted.

The 34th were drawn up on parade, or rather the quarter-guard of the regiment—tall, fine, soldierly men—were drawn up in regular order. The rest of the regiment were in a wild state of excitement and disorder, chattering and gesticulating as only natives can.

In front of them a drug-maddened, excited Sepoy, named Mungal Pandey, stalked up and down. He shouted to his comrades to leave their ranks.

"Through biting these cartridges we shall all be made infidels! Be true to your faith, if you are not dogs! Show yourselves men; come out, and let the cursed Sahibs see that we are not afraid!"

Thus he marched to and fro, taunting the men with their cowardice; they were giving up their religion; they were accursed in this world, and with no hope of being saved in the next.

His words acted like magic, and struck home to his eager listeners; murmurs were heard, and the ranks swayed backwards and forwards. At this moment Lieutenant Baugh, the adjutant, roused from his afternoon's sleep by the news of a revolt, galloped upon the scene. Straight at Mungal Pandey he rode; there was a flash from the Sepoy's musket, and the horse went down. The gallant Englishman gets up, bruised and half-stunned as he is, and dashes in at the rebel. He misses his aim, and the first victim of the Indian Mutiny falls under Mungal Pandey's sword.

Hardly had Baugh fallen than the English serjeant-major ran up, hastily buttoning his tunic, hot and blown with his dash across the parade-ground. All breathless as he was, he launches himself straight at the Sepoy's face: the latter is a skilled swordsman, and the brave Englishman, taken at a disadvantage, is cut down. Two of the Sahibs are killed, no startling retribution has followed, and the hitherto loyal quarter-guard refuse to seize the mutineer, though they run forward to do so in a half-hearted manner.

Just then General Hearsay rides up, to quote Mr. Fitchett, "a red-faced, wrathful, hard-fighting, iron-nerved veteran, with two sons, of blood as warlike as their father's, riding behind him as aides."

"Have a care, his musket is loaded!" somebody sang out.

"D—n his loaded musket! If I fall, John, rush in and put him to death somehow," shouted the general to his son.

The native officer, with Hearsay's pistol at his head, fell in with his men, and advanced to seize the mutineer, but Mungal Pandey has done his work. His excitement has left him, the knowledge of his crime remains. He is a brave man, however, though a rebel, and will take his fate in his own hands. Putting the muzzle of his rifle to his own body, he pulls the trigger with his naked toe and falls shot through the breast.

Discipline had for the moment again asserted itself, and the absolute fearlessness of Hearsay had for the time being won the day.

Not long after, at Meerut, the flames of mutiny thus promptly quenched broke out in earnest. Towards the end of April a feeling of restlessness and discontent began to show itself: the Sepoys became less respectful towards their officers, and almost insolent in their bearing. Fires also broke out in the lines at night, and some troopers of the 3rd Light Cavalry actually refused to take the new cartridges. Eighty-five men of the 3rd were tried, accordingly, by a court-martial consisting

of six Mohammedan and nine Hindu officers. They were found guilty, and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment with hard labour.

On the 9th of May there was a parade of the whole Meerut garrison: before their comrades the eighty-five troopers were brought forth, sentence read, and the fetters slowly and laboriously fastened on them. Each man in turn called for his comrades to rescue him, but as yet each man called in vain. Under the pitiless scorching sun the work of degradation went on; occupying as it did several hours, the ceremony ceased to impress, and inspired anger rather than fear in the hearts of the Sepoys.

The next day was a Sunday. Outwardly, things seemed peaceful and calm; the lesson read to the mutineers, it was hoped, had taken effect, but in the bazaars and elsewhere there was a spirit of unrest. Still the British officers were confident in the loyalty of their men, and their suspicions, which ought to have been awakened, were strangely lulled into a feeling of false security.

The chaplain of Meerut was about to start for church accompanied by his wife, when their faithful native nurse fell on her knees before them and begged them to stay at home. "There was going to be a fight with the Sepoys," she kept on saying. The clergyman pooh-poohed her fears, but his wife believed the woman, and at her request he took his children with him instead of leaving them alone with their ayah.

He soon saw that the native woman had spoken the truth. Before the church was reached the rattle of musketry was heard. On arrival at the door the buglers of the both were sounding the "alarm" and the "assembly"; the parade was hastily dismissed, and the British soldiers rushed to the barracks for their arms and ammunition.

Fortune to a certain extent favoured our men. The mutineers had expected to find the both in church, unarmed save for their bayonets. By a lucky chance, however, church

on this particular Sunday had been put off for half-an-hour, and as the rebels galloped down the lines of the both they found the men fully armed and in the act of falling in.

Without a moment's delay the 3rd Native Cavalry dashed to the gaol, broke into the cells, set free their eighty-five comrades, and all other prisoners as well. While this was going on the two Native Infantry regiments, in a wild state of excitement, set fire to their tents, and began firing their muskets at random.

In vain the British officers tried to restore order. The Sepoys would not actually attack their own officers, but telling them that the Company's raj was over, begged them to get away while they could in safety; officers of other regiments they did not spare, and showed no feelings about shooting them down. While exhorting his own men of the 11th to remain true to their salt, Colonel Finnis, who had served with Sepoys for forty years, and fully trusted in their loyalty, fell riddled with bullets from the muskets of the 10th.

The fall of Colonel Finnis was the signal for a general rising. Seven officers, the wives of three officers, two children, and every stray European found—man, woman, and child—were ruthlessly massacred. The work of murder went on apace; the streets were in a blaze; by the light from the flames the Sahibs were discovered; every hated white man was chased and cut to pieces.

"When day broke Meerut showed streets of ruins, blackened with fire and splashed red with the blood of murdered Englishmen and Englishwomen."

And now the die had been cast: the Sepoys had betrayed their salt; they were murderers and traitors, and could look for no mercy if caught. In Delhi, they learnt from the native officers of the court-martial sent to try them, the troops were all ready to join them and revive the old Mogul rule.

"To Delhi! To Delhi!" was their cry, as the murderers galloped off, leaving behind them nothing but smouldering

fires and the dead and mutilated bodies of their officers and victims.

Amid this tale of treachery and crime there is one bright incident of native loyalty worth telling. A Hindu native officer had warned Lieutenant Gough, of the 9th Light Cavalry, that there was going to be serious trouble. Gough had repeated the tale to his colonel, and also to the brigadier, General Wilson, but both had thought lightly of the news.

The following day, that fateful Sunday, the same native officer, attended by two troopers, galloped to Gough's house, shouting that the "hala" had begun, and that the Native Infantry were firing on their officers. Saddling his horse, the Englishman set off at full gallop for the parade ground, attended by the three natives. The Sepoys called to the troopers to get out of the way, as they meant to shoot the Sahib. No notice being taken of this, they fired, but missed the whole party.

The lieutenant with his trusty escort then turned and galloped to the lines of the 9th Cavalry. Here the men were saddling up and helping themselves to ammunition. A recruit or two fired at him, but the old soldiers were loyal; and the native officers flocked round him and implored him to go away, telling him that they could not answer for his safety.

Darkness was coming on as Gough rode towards the European lines and charged through the crowded bazaars. In sight of the Artillery mess the faithful natives left him. They had seen their Sahib safe, had protected him at the risk of their lives, but they could not leave their relations and friends, with whom they had determined to throw in their lot. With a respectful "salaam" they bade farewell to the officer whose life they had saved, and galloped off to join their rebel comrades, nor could any trace of them afterwards be found.

General Hewitt has been much blamed for not starting in pursuit of the mutineers on their way to Delhi. The officers of the Carabineers begged hard to be allowed to avenge their

fallen comrades. The Rifles, 1000 strong, were ready and eager for the fray. Lord Roberts himself, however, considers that pursuit would have been useless.

"The Carabineers," he says, "were but lately arrived from England, and were composed largely of recruits still in the riding-school, while their horses were, for the most part, quite unbroken. *No action, however prompt, on the part of the Meerut authorities could have arrested the Mutiny.* The Sepoys," he continues, "had determined to throw off their allegiance to the British Government, and the 'when' and the 'how' were merely questions of time and opportunity."

CHAPTER IV

THE MUTINY (*CONTINUED*)

"Fortunately for India there were good men and true" (to use Lord Roberts' own words) "at Peshawur in those days, when hesitation and irresolution would have been fatal."

Immediately on hearing the news, the Commissioner Edwardes, acting with his deputy, Nicholson, sent to the post-office and seized all native letters. These on being opened and read showed that the worst fears were only too well grounded. Every native regiment in the garrison was in the plot, and prepared at the earliest opportunity to join the rebels.

Two days after the news came to Peshawur, Roberts was ordered to attend a meeting at the general's house. The problem to be solved was how the Punjab could best be made secure with the small force of British troops available—all told, not more than 15,000, with 84 guns, against upwards of 65,000 natives, with 62 guns.

It was decided that the only chance of keeping the Punjab quiet was to trust the chiefs and the people, and to try and get them to ride with us against the Hindustanis. Nor was this confidence misplaced; the chiefs along the border proving again, as they had already done in the Sikh War, how loyal and trustworthy they were.

It was also arranged that a movable column, made up of reliable troops, should be formed in the Punjab, and be kept ready to move and strike whenever its services might be required. Brigadier Neville Chamberlain was appointed to the command of the column, and Lieutenant Roberts, to his great delight, was chosen as one of the staff.

The night of the conference might have been Roberts' last. The guard which kept watch outside his bungalow was

furnished by the 64th Native Infantry, a regiment with a bad reputation. The letters, which had been taken from the post-office and opened, showed it to be on the verge of mutiny, and it was to be ordered to leave Peshawur the following morning.

"I could not help feeling," says Lord Roberts, "as I lay down on my bed, which, as usual in the hot weather, was placed in the verandah for coolness, how completely I was at the mercy of the sentry who walked up and down within a few feet of me. Fortunately he was not aware that his regiment was suspected, and could not know the reason for the sudden order to march, or my career might have been ended then and there."

Within a week from that time Roberts started for Rawal Pindi to be ready to join the movable column, which was to be formed as soon as the troops could be got together.

"I took with me," he tells us, "only just enough kit for a hot-weather march, and left everything standing in my house just as it was, little thinking that I should never return to it or be quartered in Peshawur again."

With General Neville Chamberlain, Roberts left Peshawur and went to Rawal Pindi, where he was for some time employed doing confidential work in the office of Sir John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner. Sir John was all for the policy of striking while the iron was hot. Delhi was in the hands of the mutineers, and must at all costs be retaken. To the Commander-in-Chief, General the Hon. George Anson (who, as an ensign, was present at Waterloo), he wrote, imploring him to press on to the city's recapture.

"When have we failed when we acted vigorously?" he asked. "When have we succeeded when guided by timid counsels? Clive, with 1200 men, fought at Plassy in opposition to the advice of his leading officers; beat 40,000 men and conquered Bengal."

One of the native princes, the Maharajah of Patiala, whom Lawrence was all along for trusting at this juncture, came to our aid and proved his loyalty.

"Maharajah Sahib," he was asked, "answer me one question: Are you for us or against us?"

"As long as I live, I am yours," was the answer. "What do you want done?"

Patiala was true to his word, and throughout the Mutiny the Phulkan chiefs stood firm and did us trusty service.

While Lieutenant Roberts was still at Rawal Pindi it became known that the mutineers were going to make their great stand at Delhi, and the order came that the troops from the Punjab were to be sent thither. On the 2nd of June the movable column entered Lahore, to the great joy of the Europeans in the city, who had been anxiously awaiting its arrival.

At Lahore Roberts first saw the grim realities of the stirring times in which he was living. He was sharing a bungalow with the brigadier, when, during the night, a spy awoke him and said that the 35th Native Regiment, which was attached to the column, intended to revolt, and that some of the men had already got their muskets loaded.

Roberts at once awoke General Chamberlain and told him the report. Next morning a drumhead court-martial, composed of native officers, was ordered to try the case. Two Sepoys, whose muskets were found to be loaded, were found guilty of mutiny and sentenced to death. The carrying out of this sentence made a great impression on the young officer. To quote his own words:

"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 it into effect. It was a terrible sight," he continues, "and one likely to haunt the beholder for many a long day; but that was what was intended."

The condemned men went to their doom calmly and showed no fear: their comrades were taken aback at the swift

and terrible punishment, but it in no way altered their resolve to desert to Delhi on the earliest chance they might have to do so.

Two days after this the column left and came to Jullundur, and, General Chamberlain having left for Delhi, Roberts' hero, John Nicholson, took over the command. Jullundur was garrisoned by the troops of the Rajah of Kapurthala. These evidently thought that the British rule in India was at an end, and were in consequence most swaggering and insolent.

A *darbar*, or council, was arranged, at which Roberts was present, and was an eye-witness of the scene between the Rajah's general, Mehtab Sing, and Nicholson. After the *darbar* was over, Mehtab Sing was walking to the door, when the stalwart form of Nicholson appeared in front of him, barring the native general's further progress.

"Do you see that General Mehtab Sing has his shoes on?" he sternly asked. "If I were the last Englishman left in Jullundur you should not come into my room with your shoes on." Then, politely turning to Commissioner Lake, "I hope the Commissioner will 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."

For a native to enter the presence of an Englishman with his shoes on is, to his mind, the greatest insult he can offer a white man. Never before the Mutiny would the Kapurthala general have dared to act in such a way. Now, completely cowed, Mehtab Sing did meekly as he was bidden, and walked to the door, his shoes in his hand.

Six years later Roberts was on a pig-sticking expedition with the Rajah of Kapurthala, who, when he heard that his guest had been at the Commissioner's house during the scene we have told, laughed heartily and said, "Oh, then you saw Mehtab Sing made to walk out of the room with his shoes in his hands? We often chaff him about that little affair, and

tell him that he richly deserved the treatment he received from the great 'Nicholson Sahib.'"

On the column reaching Philour, it was determined to disband the 35th Native Infantry. The native troops had as yet caused no trouble, but it was feared that when Delhi was reached they would try to desert. Quickly and silently the British troops took up their position; the two batteries in the centre, the guns unlimbered and ready for action.



THE CITY OF DELHI.

Roberts himself was told off to give the commanding officer orders to disarm and dismiss his regiment. Surrounded by our own troops the native soldiers were ordered to pile arms and take off their belts.

Both officers and Sepoys were equally taken aback; the former had no idea of what was going to happen, while the latter had hoped they would be able to slip off to Delhi with their arms. Major Younghusband, the commanding officer, had been with the 35th for thirty-three years. He was proud of his regiment, with which he had served in the Afghan War, where they had fought with great bravery, but now even he felt

his men could not be trusted; and when he heard the order he could only murmur "Thank God!"

After the 35th had been disbanded, the 33rd arrived. The loyalty of this regiment was like-wise doubtful, and it was decided that the men should be dealt with in like manner. The British officers of the 33rd did not, however, take things so quietly. Their colonel trusted them to the death. On hearing what was to take place, he exclaimed, "What! disarm my regiment! I will answer with my life for the loyalty of every man."

"On my repeating the order," Lord Roberts relates, "the poor old fellow burst into tears."

"You have drawn the fangs of one thousand snakes—truly your luck is good!" was the remark of an old Sikh colonel who saw the ceremony. Meanwhile an order had come from the Commander-in-Chief, asking that all artillery officers who could be spared should be sent to Delhi. Next morning the young lieutenant set off in high spirits. From Philour he went to Ludhiana. Here there was a block: all the vehicles were in use, and a long delay seemed in store for him when he, by good fortune, managed to get a seat on an extra mail-cart laden with ammunition, on the condition that his kit must be of the smallest, as there was no room for anything inside the cart.

Greatly pleased at his luck, Roberts describes himself "as like a boy at school who has got a hamper from home." He determined to share his success, and managed to squeeze, with two other officers to whom he had offered a lift, into the cart.

Near Delhi their driver pulled up, and refused to go any farther: the enemy were constantly on the road, threatening the rear of our troops, and the cart and its occupants might at any time drive into the middle of them. The officers let the driver get out and drove on themselves, hearing more plainly the booming of the guns, and passing by the wayside many dead bodies and other signs of warfare.

As they neared the city they came to a place where the road divides—one branch going through the cantonment, the other leading straight to the town. Fortunately for them-selves they chose the right road—to have followed the other would have landed them right in the middle of the foe—and pushed on through the growing darkness as fast as their tired ponies would go. At last they reached the British lines and safety.

"The relief to us when we found ourselves inside our own piquets may be imagined," says Lord Roberts.

On arrival his father's old staff officer, Henry Norman, who was then Assistant-Adjutant-General at headquarters, welcomed him most warmly, and very kindly asked the young artillery officer to share his tent. Dead-beat, Roberts was very soon sleeping the sleep of the weary. Next morning he awoke quite refreshed, none the worse for his long and dangerous journey, and above all, overjoyed to find himself at Delhi, and that the fighting was still going on.

CHAPTER V

THE RIDGE AT DELHI

Delhi, the city of the Great Mogul, may be said to have been the centre and heart of the Mutiny. Hither, as we have seen, the mutineers fled after the outbreak at Meerut on May 11. The native regiments in the town joined them, and a general massacre of Europeans followed. To Delhi flocked all the rebels, and soon the city was filled with fierce, warlike troops, who knew that there was now no turning back or hope of mercy, and that they were fighting with their backs to the wall. The Delhi Field Force, which was sent to retake the stronghold, at first numbered only 3000 men, and afterwards it never rose above 9000 fighting men.

From the outset the force showed its splendid fighting qualities and power of hard-hitting. As far back as the 30th of May, 700 British soldiers beat and routed seven times their number of Sepoys, capturing five guns and a large quantity of stores and ammunition. Next day the enemy again attacked, and again our men drove them back in head-long confusion. The natives were learning the lesson that the British rule would continue as long as there were Britons left to shoulder a musket.

To quote Lord Roberts: "The Sepoys were no match for British bayonets; and they now learnt that their misdeeds were not to be allowed to go unpunished." On the arrival of Roberts, the British Army, in which we include the loyal native troops, was posted on a ridge about sixty feet high, and varying in distance from the city from 1200 yards on the right, to 4 miles at the end near the river Jumna.

The Flagstaff Tower, which became the rendezvous for all non-combatants, was about one mile and a half away. It was here that the residents of Delhi assembled to make a stand

on hearing of the outbreak at Meerut. The heat was almost unbearable to the closely packed throng of men, women, and children. No help seemed to be coming as they anxiously scanned the horizon towards Meerut, and at last, before dark, it was decided to leave and take the road to Umballa. They were only just in time; for before the last of the party were out of sight the natives poured in. Had they found the Sahibs there, all must have been killed.

Among the fugitives were Captain Tytler and his wife, who, after some hair-breadth escapes, arrived in safety at Umballa. This couple afterwards joined the camp at Delhi, where, on the 21st of June, Mrs. Tytler gave birth to a baby. This infant was christened "Stanley Delhi Force Tytler," and a soldier was heard to say: "Now we shall get our reinforcements. This camp was formed to avenge the blood of innocents, and the first reinforcement sent to us is a new-born infant." Sure enough, fresh troops did join the camp the very next day.

For the first two months General Barnard and the British force were fully occupied in defending themselves on the Ridge. The time for attacking the city had not yet come, and the little army had to fight for its very existence. The morning after General Barnard occupied the Ridge, the famous Corps of the Guides arrived in camp, "as fresh as if they had returned from an ordinary field-day, instead of having come off a march of nearly 600 miles, accomplished in the incredibly short time of twenty-two days, at the most trying season of the year. That very afternoon they showed their worth by driving the enemy back to Delhi, after a fierce hand-to-hand fight. Close up to the walls, Quintin Battye, the daring commander of the Guides Cavalry, got his death-wound. He might have had a great career; the Guides adored him, and would have followed him anywhere. Seldom, we are told, had a young soldier given such early promise of a brilliant future. Always fond of quotations, his last words were: *Dulce et*

decorum est pro patria mori ("A sweet and comely thing it is to die for one's country").

The Guides had found in camp a soldier after their own heart, who had been their leader in many a gallant charge. This was Hodson, of Hodson's Horse—"a tall, fair-haired man, with bloodless complexion; heavy, curved moustache; keen, alert, and, what some one called, 'unforgiving eyes.'" As the Guides rode in Hodson met them, and was greeted with wild cries of welcome.

"They seized my bridle," he says, "my dress, hands, and feet, and threw themselves down before the horse with tears streaming down their faces."

Five days before Roberts arrived came the centenary of Plassy, and the Sepoys, by a more than usually fierce attack, determined to fulfil the prophecy that the British rule should only run a hundred years. For eight hours the attack continued; every man in the camp was engaged, and both sides fought with desperate fury. The Sepoys were "thousands against a mere handful," but they could do nothing against the steady valour of our men, and at last they were put to flight with the loss of over 1000 men. So the anniversary of Plassy came and went, and the British rule was still undefeated. The heat had been terrific: a hot wind was blowing, and there was a pitiless glare. After the battle men lay down where they had fought, quite done up; even the Ghurkas were worn out.

On the 30th of June, Roberts, who had taken up his duties as D.A.Q.M.G. to the Artillery, was under fire for the first time.

The next day the first regimental band to reach the camp arrived, playing the lively strains of "Cheer, Boys, Cheer!"

The fighting continued daily, with equal fury on both sides. Our loyal allies, the Ghurkas, were doing splendid service. The first time the mutineers encountered them they halted, said that they were brothers and should not kill one

another, and begged them to come out and help to destroy the Sahibs. The Ghurkas listened in silence—the Sepoys thought they had persuaded them to betray their trust—when suddenly, with a shout of "Oh, yes, we are coming!" our loyal little allies fired a volley straight into the midst of the mutineers, killing more than thirty of them, and letting the rebels see that, come what might, the Ghurkas would remain loyal to the salt they had eaten at the Sahibs' hands.

On the 14th of July, an engagement was fought in which our hero came near to ending his life. Roberts, by the means of spies, found out that a more than usually desperate attack was to be made on Hindu Rao's house, which was the keystone of our position on the ridge. "We have beaten them nineteen times, and I don't expect we shall be worsted on the twentieth," cheerfully replied "Ghurka" Reid, when warned of the assault which was to take place.

At eight o'clock in the morning, under shelter of a heavy fire from the city walls, the attack began in earnest. Brigadier Showers was in command. Chamberlain was with him, and Roberts was there as staff officer. Our men—Reid with his Ghurkas in the centre—swept the enemy back. Under the shelter of a low wall the Sepoys clung, and made a desperate resistance. Nothing daunted, Chamberlain, calling to his men to follow, leapt his horse over the wall. He was wounded in doing so; but the British swarmed over, and right up to the walls of Delhi they pursued the flying Sepoys. They pursued them too far, in fact: a murderous fire met them from the city walls; men were mowed down in scores, and the "retreat" was sounded.

When the retirement began, Roberts was with the two advanced guns. The subaltern in charge of them was severely wounded; the sergeant had fallen with a bullet in his leg. After seeing to the wounded men, all Roberts' attention was turned to saving the guns. The horses, some of them wounded and maddened by the noise and tumult, had become restive and almost unmanageable. As they plunged and reared, Roberts

ran to their heads, patted them, and endeavoured to keep them quiet, when, to use his own words, "Suddenly I felt a tremendous blow on my back, which made me faint and sick, and I was afraid I should not be able to remain on my horse." Fortunately the feeling of faintness passed, and he was able to ride back with the retiring guns.



ROBERTS SAVING THE GUNS.

On arrival at camp it was found that he had been struck near the spine by a bullet. By rare good fortune, the leather pouch in which he carried caps for his pistol had slipped round; the bullet struck this, losing its force, and thus the slipping of his belt probably saved our future Field-Marshal's life.

The whole scene was very like that which was enacted many years after under African skies, when, in December 1899, our hero's only son, Lieutenant Roberts, laid down his life at Colenso while gallantly saving the guns. To use the words of Mr. Maclaren Cobban, "Why was there no shifted pouch to save the dear life of the only son?"

This accident kept Roberts on the sick list for a fortnight, and for a month he was unable to wear a sword-belt

or to mount a horse. "I remember him well," wrote a doctor who knew him: "a bright, eager little fellow, very cheerful, very even-tempered, with the clear eye and the curious interest of a bird for every detail, and with a decided disposition rather to listen than to talk. He was too young, too quiet and modest, to be a very well-known figure in camp; but with all who did know him he was a great favourite, although none, I imagine, had any notion of the great destiny in store for him."

Before Delhi was once again captured and in British hands, no less than thirty-two fights took place. The struggle was a fierce and desperate one—"a struggle between a mere handful of men along the open ridge, and a host behind massive and well-fortified walls." During this time there had been three officers in chief command. General Barnard had died, stricken by cholera; General Reid was unable to continue at his post, having broken down through strain and anxiety; and it was left to General Wilson to finish the work the others had begun, and finally, in mid-September, to plant the British flag once more on the walls of the ancient city of the Mogul emperors. Wilson had never wavered; from the first he had written, "It is my firm, determination to hold my present position and to resist every attack to the last. The enemy are very numerous, and may possibly break through our entrenchments and overwhelm us, but this force will die at its post."

For some time before the final assault on the city Lieutenant Roberts was especially busy. For a week at a time he never left his battery, except for his meals. While in the battery he had a wonderful escape; he was actually knocked over by a ball and yet remained unhurt.

The British guns were now doing splendid work; night and day they kept firing, and the breaches in the walls began to widen. Late in the afternoon of the 13th, Nicholson, who was to lead the assault, went round the guns to see that all was ready. "He was evidently satisfied," Roberts tells, with pride, "for when he entered our battery he said, 'I must shake hands

with you fellows; you have done your best to make my work easy to-morrow.'"

That night there was no work in the batteries; the men lay down and tried to sleep, in view of the hard work before them on the morrow. "Any officer or man who might be wounded was to be left where he fell; no one was to step from the ranks to help him, as there were no men to spare. No prisoners were to be made, as we had no one to guard them; but care was to be taken that no women or children were injured:" so ran the grim orders. Next morning the assault began.

The attacking force was formed in four columns. Roberts, being on the general's staff, was not attached to any of the columns. He, however, rode with the general into the town after our men had gained an entrance, and were desperately fighting their way through the streets. A report that disaster had befallen one of the columns reached the general's staff: Roberts was instantly sent off to find out what had happened. While riding through the Kashmir Gate he saw a doolie without bearers and with a wounded man inside. To quote his own words:—

"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 was lying on his back; no wound was visible, and but for the pallor of his face, always colourless, there 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.*"

Nicholson had fallen in the forefront of the battle. With the words, "Come on, men!" on his lips, he had been struck down.

The victory was dearly bought at the cost of this hero's life. "From city to city, from cantonment to cantonment, went the chequered tidings: Delhi had fallen, the King of Delhi was a captive—but John Nicholson was dead."

Delhi was once again in our hands, but fierce fighting still continued in the streets of the city, till on the 10th of September the palace itself was taken, and for the second time in the century the stronghold of the Moguls was captured by a British force.

CHAPTER VI

CAWNPORE AND LUCKNOW

During the siege of Delhi, by his zeal and by the way in which he had never lost an opportunity of serving the cause in which our soldiers were engaged, Roberts had gained much praise from his superior officers. He was "mentioned in dispatches," General Archdale Wilson writing thus: "I beg also to bring very favourably to notice . . . *that gallant and active officer Lieutenant Roberts.*"

Three days after Delhi had fallen, a force, consisting of 750 British and 1900 native troops, with 16 guns, was sent out, their object being to proceed to Cawnpore, and there join the column which was to advance to the relief of Lucknow.

As the little army left the city, Roberts' heart was full of the saddest feelings, for the funeral of John Nicholson—the great Nicholson Sahib, "the Christian hero, the happy warrior upon whom had come nothing which he did not foresee"—was taking place.

The column had only gone four days on their journey when they met and had a sharp brush with the enemy. In a wild charge for the guns Lieutenant Roberts was the first to reach the enemy's battery. The enemy were driven back into the town of Bulandshahr, where some fierce hand-to-hand fighting went on in the narrow streets.

Roberts was riding a somewhat restive horse, a Waziri which had been the favourite of Nicholson. Just in the thickest of the fight a Sepoy took careful aim at our hero. In vain Roberts tried to get at him and cut him down—the throng was too great: the native pulled the trigger and fired point blank. Fortunately, at that instant the charger reared, and received in its own head the bullet which had been meant for its rider. It is

pleasant to learn that the faithful Waziri recovered, and bore his master for many a day after.

During the column's advance, the fighting was frequent and continuous. The men were worn thin and lean as greyhounds, so tanned and bronzed by the sun that they looked like natives. They were a terrible, hard-hitting, seasoned force for the enemy to meet, however, and the fame of their doings already inspired terror in the Sepoys' hearts.

At Agra Roberts again had a narrow escape for his life. He was engaged in a single-handed combat with a native. The latter waved his turban in front of the Englishman's charger, and while the startled horse reared back, slashed at its rider. Roberts drew his pistol, but the trigger jammed. His horse refused to come to close quarters, and he could not get near enough the Sepoy to use his own sword. His position was one of extreme danger. At this moment, however, a Lancer galloped up and ran the native through the body.

After leaving Agra, the column were eleven days on the march before they reached Cawnpore. This town, the birthplace of Roberts, was the scene of one of the blackest deeds of the Mutiny. General Wheeler, who was in command there when the wave of mutiny swept over the place, refused to believe in the treachery of his own native troops, with whom he had served for fifty years. His Baba-log (baby-folk) he called them, and he trusted them but too well.

This is not the place to tell the tragedy of Cawnpore, and of the Nana Sahib's treachery. The British force trusted to the Nana's word; they were to leave the city in safety, and be allowed to embark in boats on the river; so he had promised. Scarcely had they pushed off, however, when a murderous fire was directed on them, the boats were set on fire, and many defenceless women and children taken captive. These were confined in one small house to the number of about two hundred. Painfully the days dragged on; at last the guns of Havelock's relieving force were heard. Their troubles, they fondly trusted, were now at an end; but the tiger—the blood-

thirsty Nana—was not to be baulked of his prey. Havelock was thrashing his huge Sepoy hosts, and with his handful of men driving them before him. The Nana would at least be avenged on the defenceless women and children he had in his power.



LORD ROBERTS.

The order to kill went forth. In justice to the Sepoys they remembered that they were soldiers: their work was to wage war: but, treacherous as they had been to the Sahibs,

they revolted at the idea of shooting the Mem-sahibs and the Baba-log. They obeyed orders to the extent of marching to the prison-house, but there they refused to act; their shots purposely went up into the roof, and no one was hit.

Wild with the passion of cruelty and rage, the Nana now sent hired butchers from the bazaars to do his bidding. No soldierly instincts stayed the hand of these; the work of blood and death went on unchecked by pity, the house became a shambles, and not one escaped the slaughter.

Small wonder that, when Havelock and his Highlanders marched in, a terrible vengeance was enacted. The Highlanders struck terror in the superstitious native mind, and "flying fast, the Nana's troops told everywhere that the Sahibs had come back in strange guise; *some draped like women to remind them what manner of wrong they were sworn to requite.*"

After leaving Cawnpore, Roberts, who at this period seemed to bear a charmed life, had another narrow shave.

While on ahead of the column, accompanied by another officer, looking for a suitable camping-ground, they suddenly found their return barred by a crowd of armed horsemen, who seemed to have sprung from nowhere. They instantly began firing, and bullets were soon whizzing unpleasantly close to the Englishmen's heads. Their only chance of escape lay in riding hard enough to get round the enemy's flank before the Sepoys could stop them.

To use his own words: "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 the village we must pass, and which we could see was already occupied. The firing got hotter and more uncomfortable as we neared this 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* (a river). 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 that 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 boys; very glad to have you back! Never thought to see you again.'

Sir Colin Campbell shortly after this joined the column, which now consisted of about 600 cavalry and 3500 infantry, with 42 guns.

Everything now being ready, the little army set off on its march towards Lucknow. One and all were eager to have a share in the rescue of our suffering countrywomen. Sir Colin had a cheering and inspiring word to say to each battery and regiment, and the whole force was in grand fighting trim, the Delhi troops, in particular, looking "the picture of workmanlike soldiers."

Roberts was entrusted by Sir Colin, very shortly after this, with the duty of conducting the troops to a large park called the Dilkusha, near Lucknow, where the general intended encamping. He had always a good eye for locality, and he accomplished his work to everybody's satisfaction.

On the 15th November, Roberts had a more than usually hard day of it, and was just looking forward to a long night's sleep, when he was told that the Commander-in-Chief

wished to speak to him. On arriving, Sir Colin told him that he thought that there was not enough small-arm ammunition in the camp, and asked Roberts if he could find his way back in the dark to the "Alumbagh," a large bungalow passed on the march, in which the cartridges had been stored. "I am sure I can," came the ready answer.

Accompanied by two other officers, Roberts meant to start with a guide; the latter, however, soon bolted, and the little party had now to trust to our lieutenant entirely for its safety. It was an exciting night. First there was the risk of coming upon the enemy—indeed, several times they were dangerously near the Sepoy piquets; then, again, there was the chance that our men in the "Alumbagh" might mistake them for the foe, and fire upon them. Roberts left his companions and rode on alone. The sentry challenged immediately, but after some parleying he gained the bungalow and explained what he wanted. The lading up was quickly finished, and by dawn the ammunition was, as Sir Colin had ordered, safe in our soldiers' hands at Lucknow. Old Sir Colin, only half-dressed, greeted the escort most heartily, and warmly praised Roberts, who describes his old Chief's welcome and approval as "a very happy moment."

That same day the troops moved forward, and after some days' hard fighting the object of the expedition was achieved, and the women and children, and the brave garrison, were able to march out in safety and join the attacking column.

Before entrance to the city could be made, our guns had to batter a breach in the walls. At last a hole three feet square and three feet from the ground was made. It was a small opening through which to storm a town, but Sir Colin determined on the attack.

The order was given, and then started a wild rush.

"It was a magnificent sight, a sight never to be forgotten," says Roberts, "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 Mahommedans, Dogras and Pathans, all vied with each other in the generous competition. A Highlander was the first to reach the goal, and was shot dead as he jumped into the enclosure; a man of the 4th Punjab Infantry came next, and met the same fate. Then followed Lieutenant Cooper, of the 93rd, and immediately behind him his colonel (Ewart), Captain Lumsden, of the 30th Bengal Infantry, and a number of Sikhs and Highlanders, as fast as they could scramble through the opening. A drummer-boy of the 93rd must have been one of the first to pass that grim boundary between life and death, for when I got in I found him just inside the breach, lying on his back quite dead—a pretty, innocent-looking, fair-haired lad, not more than fourteen years of age."

Once our troops had poured through the breach, the enemy were completely taken by surprise, and caught in a trap. Two thousand of them had collected in a sort of large courtyard, intending to assault our flanks. Into this courtyard, however, our men dashed. The Sepoys had no outlet but a single gateway and the breach we had made. Escape was not to be thought of; the rebels fought to sell their lives as dearly as they could; no mercy, they knew, awaited the slayers of women and children. Inch by inch they were forced back to the pavilion, and bayoneted and shot down till not a man remained. The Sahibs had delayed their vengeance, but it was swift and terrible when it did come.

Next day the troops were at it again. The first object to be gained was the mess-house, on which our guns were soon merrily pounding. Sir Colin, who sat on his white horse watching the attack, as soon as the mess-house was captured bade Roberts hoist our flag on the top, to show the beleaguered garrison the success of the arms coming to their aid. Assisted by two other officers, Roberts planted the standard of the loyal 2nd Punjabis on the loftiest turret. Twice was the standard shot away, and twice did the gallant lieutenant, amid a storm of bullets, replace it. Again it fell, the

staff this time broken in two. Once more Roberts picked up the colour and managed to prop it up a third time on the turret, where it remained at last, a sight to cheer the loyal garrison and strike terror into the hearts of the rebels.

At last the "Relief" was accomplished and the brave defenders rescued. Unable to take the city with the small force available, rescuers and rescued retired.

Roberts, who seemed to have a genius for finding his way in the dark, was, as night fell, sent with a message to General Hale, to tell him at what time the troops were to withdraw. Having delivered this message in safety, in spite of the dangers around him, Roberts returned to join the main body. To his dismay he found the positions we had gained, deserted. The whole force had moved off and he was alone—the one Englishman in Lucknow! The experience was a trying one, but Roberts was used to danger, and calmly turning his horse's head from the city, he galloped on the line of route his instinct told him our army had followed.

Fortunately for him the enemy had not discovered that the British had stolen away, and after a hard gallop he reached the straggling column in safety.

For days the work had been desperately severe, and arrived at the "Alumbâgh"—the villa from which he had got the ammunition—Roberts had the first wash and change of clothes during ten days' fighting.

Despite the never-ending work, the brief snatches of sleep, and the fact that he almost lived on horseback, Roberts described himself as very fit and in splendid training. He was now all eagerness for more fighting, and started in high spirits for the march on Cawnpore, where he was to win what every soldier prizes above any other honour, "The Victoria Cross."

CHAPTER VII

THE END OF THE MUTINY

On the 27th December the column started from Lucknow to go to the relief of Cawnpore.

Roberts had no light work before him in arranging the transport for such an unwieldy army as the force had now become. The column, with all its train, extended from ten to twelve miles in length, and frequently its head had reached the end of the day's journey before its tail was ready to start. The next day heavy firing was heard in the direction of Cawnpore, and a native met the force with a note, written in Greek characters, addressed to Sir Colin, "or any officer commanding troops on the Lucknow road." This letter told of the sore straits the troops at Cawnpore were in, and urgently begged that help might be sent as soon as possible.

The news acted like magic on the tired, straggling troops. To use the words of an eye-witness, who published the account shortly afterwards, "the impatience and anxiety of all became extreme. Louder and louder grew the roar; faster and faster became the march; long and weary was the way; tired and footsore grew the infantry; death fell on the exhausted wounded with terrible rapidity; the travel-worn bearers could hardly stagger along under their loads; the sick men groaned and died—but still on, on, on was the cry." Sir Colin was in a fever of impatience, and anxious lest the bridge of boats which led to the city had been destroyed. Roberts was sent on ahead to find whether this was the case or not, and great was the rejoicing when he returned, bearing the news that the bridge was still undestroyed. The passage over the boats was, however, a long and tedious job, and it took from 3 p.m. on the 29th till about 9 p.m. the next day before the last of the troops had safely crossed.

The time had now come to read the mutineers in Cawnpore a lesson.

Lord Roberts writes: "Sunday, the 6th December, was one of those glorious days in which the European in Northern India revels for a great part of the winter—clear and cool, with a cloudless sky. I awoke refreshed, after a good night's rest, and in high spirits at the prospect before us of a satisfactory day's work; for we hoped to drive the enemy from Cawnpore, and to convince those who had witnessed—if not taken part in—the horrible brutalities there, *that England's hour had come at last.*"

Sir Colin, whose little army had been lately reinforced by the arrival of the 42nd, the famous Black Watch, had now a force of about 5000 infantry, 600 cavalry, and 35 guns.

The rebel army consisted of 25,000 men, with 40 guns, so the odds against the British were very great. But a desperate courage ran through the whole of Sir Colin's force, and weight of numbers mattered little to the spirit of daring, and the just desire for vengeance, which possessed our men.

Roberts describes the advance as a "sight to be remembered." Across a grassy plain the British moved steadily onwards, marching as though on parade, despite the storm of shot which plunged through them, or ricocheted over their heads.

The loyal 4th Punjabis, supported by the 53rd Foot, were the first to charge the rebels. Native soldier and British fought side by side with fierce valour, and soon the Sepoys broke, and fled across the canal.

Soon after the attack, Sir Colin Campbell and Sir Hope Grant (Roberts, of course, accompanying them), with their respective staffs, hurried up and joined in the fight. The rebel camp was soon broken up, and orders were given for a pursuit. By some accident the mounted troops were not yet up. The rebels must not be allowed to escape without further punishment. Sir Colin was not long in doubt. Supported by

Bourchier's battery, he determined to follow them up himself, with only his escort.

"What a chase we had!" says Roberts. "We went at a gallop, only pulling up occasionally for the battery to come into action, to clear our front and flanks."

For two miles did the chase continue without a check, when a halt was called. While the horses were having a breather, the cavalry came up, and off they all started again, Sir Colin taking the lead, the mutineers bolting in all directions.

"The pursuit is continued to the fourteenth milestone, assuming all the character of a fox-hunt. Strange to say, not many miles beyond the enemy's camp, a fox broke right in front of the enemy, and a view-halloa told Reynard that the heavy crops would be his safest refuge. At the fourteenth milestone, on the banks of the Pandoo river, the pursuit ceased, not a trace either of an enemy or a cart of any kind being in sight."

The defeat of the enemy was complete, and when Roberts rode his weary steed back, in order to select a camping-ground in front of Cawnpore, the rebel army had ceased to exist. Such as had not been cut down in the chase had thrown away their arms, and were for the future as harmless as the innocent peasants they pretended to be.

Part of the Cawnpore force, indeed—those who had been within the city—had escaped, and to Roberts the duty fell of finding out where they had gone. This, with the help of a trusty native guide, he was soon able to do, and the rebels were overtaken and speedily routed, with the loss of all their guns.

Two days before Christmas, the British again moved forward, in order to restore order, and open up the roads between Bengal and the Punjab. On New Year's Day (1858) the troops were halted near Futtehghur, as the enemy had turned, and seemed determined to make a stand. Their courage was, however, gone. Our men, flushed with victory, charged

the Sepoys with a will. "Then despair seized upon the rebel mass; breaking their ranks, throwing aside their arms, they fled in wild confusion; but the horsemen were upon them and amongst them. The slaughter was terrible; for several miles they rode along, spearing and cutting down at every step."

The chase continued till daylight began to fall: the fugitives seemed all to have been dispersed, and our men were ordered to form up in the road. To describe the ensuing incident we shall use Roberts' own words:—

"Before, however, this movement could be carried out, we overtook a batch of mutineers, who faced about and fired into the squadron at close quarters. I saw Younghusband fall, but I could not go to his assistance, as at that moment one of his 'sowers' was in dire peril from a Sepoy who was attacking him with his fixed bayonet, and had I not helped the man and disposed of his opponent, he must have been killed. The next moment I descried in the distance two Sepoys making off with a standard, which I determined must be captured, so I rode after the rebels and overtook them, and, while wrenching the staff out of the hands of one of them, whom I cut down, the other put his musket close to my body and fired; fortunately for me it missed fire, and I carried off the standard."

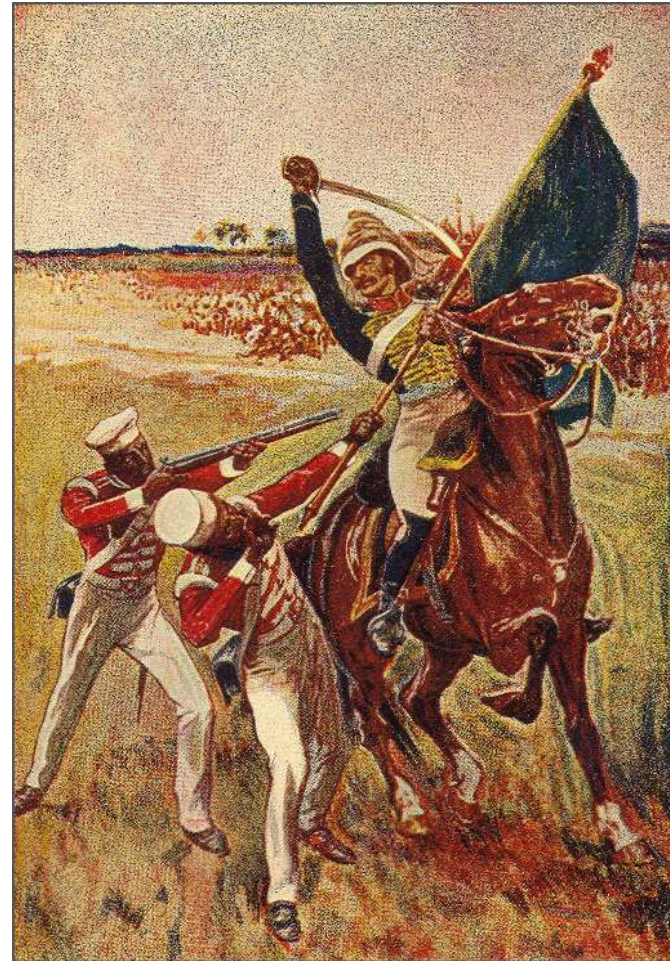
In such simple language does our great soldier tell the story of a deed of bravery and courage which bore with it its reward—a reward more valued than any other our soldiers can attain.

"For these two acts I was awarded the Victoria Cross," is how Lord Roberts modestly puts it in a footnote to his book, *"Forty-one Years in India."*

Nearly a month was spent at Futtehghur, after which the force was kept busy clearing the country and keeping the roads open. While engaged in this duty, Roberts was one day out for a ride with a brother officer.

He was followed by a greyhound, which always accompanied its master. Suddenly a "nilghai," or antelope, got

up in front of them, so close that Roberts' brother officer aimed a blow at it with his sword and gashed its quarter. Off started the greyhound after the quarry, and the two eager riders were soon galloping in the chase as hard as their horses could go.



ROBERTS WINNING THE VICTORIA CROSS.

Suddenly they saw moving towards them a large body of the enemy's cavalry. Their horses were blown after their long gallop, and escape seemed impossible. Thinking their last hour had come, the two young Englishmen shook hands and

said "good-bye," determined at the worst to sell their lives dearly. "When lo! as suddenly as they appeared, the horsemen vanished, as though the ground had opened and swallowed them; there was nothing to be seen but the open plain, where a second before there had been a crowd of mounted men." The whole thing was in reality an illusion, or mirage, so well known to travellers in the desert.

There now remained the last act in the Mutiny. This was the siege and final capture of Lucknow, and here, from the 2nd to the 21st of March, when the city fell, Roberts was actively engaged. The rebels fought with the courage of despair, and offered a splendid resistance, in which numbers of the Highlanders and Punjabis fell. Hodson, of Hodson's Horse, was killed, to the sorrow of the whole British force. He had shot with his own hand the rebel sons of the King of Delhi, for which act he has been blamed. But his unflinching courage and personal bravery won him the respect and admiration of all soldiers; and loyal natives and British alike mourned the early death of their daring leader.

The hard work and all he had gone through had told on Roberts, but, with the fall of Lucknow, the fighting was practically over.

On the 1st of April 1858, six years after his arrival in India, he handed over the office of Deputy-Assistant-Quarter-Master-General to another soldier, who has become likewise famous as Viscount Wolseley, and towards the middle of the month he left Lucknow.

Before leaving, Sir Colin Campbell thanked him for his services, and promised at the earliest opportunity to give him the rank of brevet-major.

Thus, having won golden opinions from his superior officers, and "having during his first half-dozen years in India seen more of fighting than many soldiers see in lifetime," Lieutenant Roberts, on May 4th, embarked on the *Nubia* on his way to England and home.

CHAPTER VIII

MARRIAGE—AT HOME—RETURN TO INDIA—THE LUSHAI EXPEDITION— ABYSSINIA

The young Mutiny hero had a very pleasant voyage home, travelling overland through Europe by way of Trieste, Venice, and Switzerland, and arriving in England in the end of June. "The intense delight of getting home after one's first term of exile can hardly be exaggerated, and certainly cannot be realised save by those who have gone through the exile, and been separated, as I had been, for years, from all that made the happiness of my early life," writes Lord Roberts. "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 whitey-brown sameness of dried-up, sandy plains, or the all too gorgeous colouring of eastern cities and pageants."

His people were living in Ireland, in the county of Waterford, and General Roberts, wonderfully hale and hearty in spite of his seventy-four years (fifty of which had been spent in India), was greatly delighted to welcome his son home again, and to hear from his own lips all that so deeply interested the veteran concerning the tragedy of the Mutiny.

Roberts was a fearless horseman, and many a good run did he have during the winter with Lord Waterford's hounds, the famous "Curraghmore." While on leave, Roberts met Miss Norah Bews, whom he married on the 17th May 1859, the ceremony taking place in the parish church of Waterford, which was most gaily decorated for the occasion.

The honeymoon was spent in Scotland, and was interrupted by a command from the Queen for Roberts to be present at Buckingham Palace on the 8th June, in order to

receive at her Majesty's hands the decoration of the Victoria Cross.

On the 27th June, little more than a month after their wedding, the newly-married couple started for India.

The heat in the Red Sea was appalling, hotter even than on Roberts' first trip, and to make matters worse they encountered a terrific storm in the Indian Ocean. To quote Lord Roberts: "Eventually we arrived in Calcutta, in rather a dilapidated condition, on the 30th July."

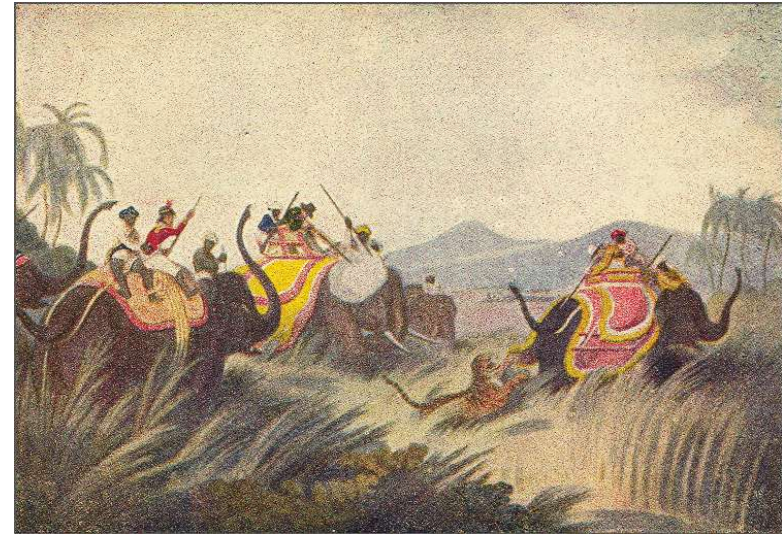
Roberts was soon actively employed. The dominions which had been formerly ruled by the East India Company were to be formally taken over by the Queen. To celebrate this event the Viceroy, Lord Canning, made a great triumphal tour, "a six-months' march over a thousand miles," and to Roberts fell the duty of organising this huge pageant.

Mrs. Roberts accompanied her husband on this tour. Lucknow was their first halt. We can well imagine with what interest the young couple went over the places, now quiet and peaceful, which had but a short time before been the scenes of so much violence and bloodshed.

"I made use of the next week," writes Roberts, "which was for me a comparatively idle time, to take my wife over the ground by which we had advanced two years before, and explain to her the different positions held by the enemy. She was intensely interested in visiting the Sikandarbagh, the Shah Najaf, the mess-house, and, above all, that glorious memorial of almost super-human courage and endurance, the Residency, mined, roofless, and riddled by round shot and bullets."

After his duty with the Viceroy was ended, Roberts, his wife, and their little daughter, who was born on March 10th, went to Simla. Here, in a glorious climate, they lived in a bungalow well named Mount Pleasant, which was approached through a forest of rhododendron, along a path crimson with fallen blossom. Both were delighted with their new quarters. "Our servants had arranged everything in our little abode most

comfortably; bright fires were burning in the grates, a cosy breakfast was awaiting us, and the feeling that at last we had a home of our own was very pleasant."



TIGER HUNTING.

Lieutenant Roberts' promotion, when it came, burst with surprising rapidity. When the East India Company's army became joined to the Queen's forces he got his step; on 12th November 1860 he became a captain; the following day his name appeared in the *Gazette* as a brevet-major!

This year he had again the management of the Viceroy's camp, but this was on a much smaller scale than the year before. During the Viceroy's progress Roberts had plenty of shooting, and on this occasion shot his first tiger. "Not considering myself a first-rate shot," he says, in his usual modest way, "I thought I should be best employed with the beaters; but, as good luck would have it, the tiger broke from the jungle within a few yards of my elephant; I could not resist having a shot, and was fortunate enough to knock him over."

Roberts had been disappointed in not being sent with the expedition to China, with whom we were then at war. His

old chief, Sir Colin Campbell, now Lord Clyde, had thought it hardly fair to send off a newly-married man so far on such a dangerous mission, and was much surprised that both the young major and his wife should not be more grateful to him for having spared them the separation. When Mrs. Roberts told him how sorry they both were at his having to stay behind, the old Scotsman burst out in his rough, half-playful 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."

Though he was not to take part in the fighting in China, Roberts had his chance nearer home, towards the end of 1865.

As usual, there was trouble on the frontier. Many of the rebels who had escaped the Mutiny had fled over the border, and with the aid of fanatics were continually stirring up the tribes to revolt. In order to check this disturbance General Garvock was despatched with a force of about five thousand men. Major Roberts was with the mountain battery which led the way, and was in the thick of the two days' fighting which followed, and in which the tribes were completely beaten. The terms of peace were that the Bunerwals should go and destroy the village of the fanatics who had made all the trouble. This they consented to do, and Roberts and six other officers went with them to see the agreement carried out.

It was a dangerous job for the little band of Englishmen. The villagers looked on in sulky silence as their homes were set on fire. There was deep anger in their hearts towards the hated white men who were the cause of the deed, and who now stood amongst them.

Murmurs at last led to threats of violence; the tribesmen began to crowd round Roberts and his dauntless companions. At this moment the staunchness of the Bunerwals probably saved their lives. "You are hesitating whether you will allow these English to return unmolested," broke in an old, grey-bearded chief. "You can, of course, murder them and their escort, but if you do you must kill us Bunerwals first, for

we have sworn to protect them, and we will do so with our lives." The little band returned in safety, though they had had a narrow escape for their lives: and on his return to Simla Roberts found his wife had been most anxious for his safety. She had accidentally heard the expedition described as "madness" by Sir Hugh Rose, the Commander-in-Chief. "It was madness, and not one of them will ever come back alive," he had said while passing her tent. We can well imagine with what delight she hailed her husband's return, as, till the morning of the day he returned, she had had no news of his safety.

Shortly after this, Major Roberts was ordered home on sick leave, and with his wife he sailed in February, on board a transport, for the long voyage round the Cape.

His first action at the inspection parade on board ship was to let off all the culprits detailed for punishment. He addressed the men in a few short, manly sentences, told them that he was unwilling to commence their acquaintance by awarding punishments, and that he hoped their future conduct would show him that he had not made a mistake in being too lenient.

"The officers seemed somewhat surprised at my action in this matter," says Roberts, "but I think it was proved by the men's subsequent conduct that I had not judged them incorrectly, for they all behaved in quite an exemplary manner throughout the voyage."

After a few months at home Major Roberts again sailed for India, in March. In that year a brigade was sent from Bengal to Abyssinia. The king of the country, Theodore, had ill-treated and imprisoned some Europeans, and it was determined to punish him. Roberts was chosen, much to his delight, to go with the troops as Assistant-Quartermaster-General, and on the 3rd of February they anchored in Annerly Bay, near Zula, a port of Abyssinia.

He was not, however, to take part in the fighting, but had to remain as senior staff officer and look after the transport arrangements. The heat was almost unbearable, 117° in Major Roberts' tent. Roberts was very fortunate in finding an old friend and Eton schoolfellow on duty in the harbour. This was Captain Tryon, afterwards Admiral Sir George Tryon, K.C.B., whose untimely end, many years afterwards, in the sinking of H.M.S. *Victoria*, plunged the whole nation into mourning. To his old schoolfellow, our hero tells us, he owed many a good dinner, and, what I appreciated even more, many a refreshing bath on board the *Euphrates*—a transport fitted up for Captain Tryon and his staff.

For four months Roberts stayed in the furnace heat of Zula. On the 17th April news came that Magdala had fallen, and the object of the expedition was accomplished.

On the 2nd June Sir Robert Napier, Commander-in-Chief, returned to Zula, and on the 10th he embarked for home, taking Roberts with him as his bearer of final despatches.

On his arrival home Roberts was met by his wife, and on the 14th of August, among the rewards for the Abyssinian Expedition, his name appeared for a brevet lieutenant-colonelcy. On January 4, 1869, Colonel Roberts, with his wife and child, again left for India. On the voyage they experienced the great sorrow of losing their little girl, who died on board ship, and was buried at sea.

The next two years were spent quietly at Simla, in a round of official duties. Among other things, Colonel Roberts went through a course of electric telegraphy, and was soon able to send and to receive messages on the instrument. In the summer of 1871 there again was a chance of active service for the young colonel.

In the district round Cachar, between South-eastern Bengal and Burma, it was found that the tea-plant would thrive to an extraordinary degree. Gradually the jungles became

cleared, and the tea-gardens were pushed further and further into what had been but lately the wilds.

The native tribe, the Lushais, whose territory was thus encroached upon, were a wild, fierce people. From time to time they had raided the tea-gardens, done the planters much damage, and carried off prisoners. Small expeditions had been sent out to punish them; but, from various causes, these had not met with much success. The Lushais became bolder, raids on the gardens became more frequent, until at last the raiders kidnapped the daughter of a planter, a little girl named Mary Winchester.

It was then thought that the time for action had come, and this was absolutely necessary for the future security of British subjects. Two columns were therefore fitted out, and Colonel Roberts was appointed as chief staff officer, his orders being "to fit out and despatch the two columns and then join General Bouchier at Cachar."

The progress of the columns was slow; the way lay through a dense jungle with thick undergrowth, and at times the men could only march in single file. At one time the road was "blocked by a curious erection in the form of a gallows, from which hung two grotesque figures made of bamboos." "A little further on it was a felled tree which stopped us; this tree was studded all over with knife-like pieces of bamboos, and from the incisions into which these were stuck exuded a red juice, exactly the colour of blood. This was the Lushais' mode of warning us what would be our fate if we ventured further."

After some fighting, the tribe saw that the Government was in earnest, and soon came to terms.

On New Year's Day 1872, Colonel Roberts received the news that he had gained an important step in his department, and had been appointed Deputy-Quartermaster-General. A few days later he got the news of the birth of a son and heir at Umballa. Though there had not been much fighting, the expedition had had a trying time, marching in the

jungle and subsisting mainly on tinned foods, and no one was sorry when peace was made and the troops were able to return. For his services against the Lushais Colonel Roberts received the C.B.

For the next four or five years Colonel Roberts was to spend a life of duty and routine without actual fighting. He had much to do with making the arrangements for the Prince of Wales' successful tour in India in 1875.

Again, in January 1877, he was kept busy in forming the huge camp at Delhi when, amid much pomp and ceremony, the Queen was proclaimed Empress of India.

Shortly after, events in Afghanistan began to look threatening, and Roberts was soon to find a wider field for his military genius.

CHAPTER IX

AFGHANISTAN

On the 15th March 1878, Roberts took up the command of the Punjab Frontier Force. He had often longed for a command, and the Frontier Force promised chances for active service afforded by no other post.

Events in Afghanistan were now coming to a crisis, and it was proposed to send a mission to try to come to terms and settle all disputes. Accordingly, an Englishman, Major Cavagnari, was told to go to Kabul and let the Amir know that a mission would soon arrive.

Major Cavagnari had, however, hardly crossed the frontier when he was met by the Afghan general, Faiz Mahomed. Faiz Mahomed treated the English officer courteously, but told him distinctly that he had orders not to let the mission pass. Such was the command of his master the Amir; nay more, "but for their personal friendship," he said,

"he would, in obedience to further orders from the treacherous Afghan ruler, have shot Major Cavagnari down, and his escort." This direct insult could not be allowed to pass unnoticed. The peaceful mission was forced to retire, but to take its place two British columns were immediately formed, and the command of one of these columns—the Kuram Field Force—was given to Major-General Roberts.

The object of this force was to defeat and disperse any Afghan army that might march to oppose it, and at the same time it was to threaten Kabul, and thus try and bring the Amir to his senses.

On the 21st of November our troops crossed the frontier, General Roberts being in front with the advanced guard. As the British advanced the Afghans sullenly retired, and finally took up a very strong position on a hill called the Peiwar Kotal. The general had only a small force with him (it consisted of 1345 British and 3990 native soldiers, with 13 guns), but he determined to strike a blow.

The tribes in the Kurman thought the small army doomed. "Even the women taunted us," says Roberts. "When they saw the little Gurkhas for the first time, they exclaimed, 'Is it possible that these beardless boys think they can fight Afghan warriors?' They little suspected that the brave spirits which animated these small forms made them more than a match for the most stalwart Afghan."

The plan of attack was soon formed. It was to make a night march, arrive at the foot of the Kotal Hill, where the enemy lay encamped, and storm the position by daybreak. Meanwhile the Afghans' attention was turned to every point of assault but the one determined on.

With great skill the general made use of his small forces by spreading them out, and feinting to attack in different places. In consequence of this, the enemy were completely puzzled and out-manœuvred.

At 10 p.m. on Sunday the 1st December, the men fell in, and began their perilous march in absolute silence. A bitterly cold wind blew down the valley, and by the fitful moonlight, over boulders and through mountain torrents, the soldiers surely but steadily toiled upwards. As dawn was breaking, the enemy saw them, and hastily began to fire into them. Up leapt the Gurkhas and Highlanders, and side by side charged wildly into the entrenchments. A fierce hand-to-hand fight followed; the Afghans fought bravely, but after a short resistance the plateau was taken, and the enemy fled.

Roberts, who led the attack in person, had a narrow escape, a bullet whistling past him, and actually grazing his finger. During the thickest of the fight his native orderlies showed the greatest devotion to their well-loved master. He had two Sikhs, two Pathans, and two Gurkhas in attendance on him, and while the firing was at its hottest, all six crowded round him, regardless of their own safety, as long as they could shield the general from the storm of bullets.

After two hours' well-earned rest, the troops again marched forward on the enemy's main position. The attack on the enemy's front had also been successful, and soon the whole Afghan camp was in our soldiers' hands. The foe were in headlong flight, pursued by our cavalry. The rout was complete; their guns, waggons, and baggage were left behind, and General Roberts had won his maiden victory.

The victorious general now made all his plans for a march on Kabul as soon as spring came. News came, however, that a treaty of peace had been signed, and that a peaceful British mission was to be sent to the Amir's capital. On hearing this, Roberts bade farewell to his splendid little army, and started off to return to Simla. Before actually leaving, he met the Peace Mission, which consisted of Major Cavagnari, who was accompanied by three other Englishmen, and an escort of the Guides.

They were all in the best of spirits, but General Roberts was haunted by a feeling of approaching disaster. At dinner he

sat silent, filled "with gloomy forebodings as to the fate of those fine fellows." Next morning he rode with them part of the way. A solitary magpie—emblem of bad luck—flew past them, and Major Cavagnari begged the general not to tell his wife of their ill-omened start. With a heavy heart Roberts bade the little company good-bye. "My heart sank," says he, "as I wished Cavagnari good-bye. When we proceeded a few yards in our different directions, we both turned round, retraced our steps, shook hands once more, *and parted for ever.*"

This parting took place in July; between one and two on the morning of the 5th September, Roberts—who had returned to Simla—was awakened by the arrival of a telegram. The contents told him that his worst fears were realised. Cavagnari and his comrades had been treacherously murdered in the Residency at Kabul.

.This, of course, meant war; the murderers must be punished, the murdered mission avenged. With the least possible delay, Roberts was soon busily engaged in plans for the formation of "The Kabul Field Force," as his new command was called.

On the 6th of September he left Simla and went to Umballa, where he was joined by his staff. When he reached the troops the general received a most hearty and enthusiastic welcome, and he was much cheered by the bearing of his soldiers.

"A splendid spirit pervaded the whole force; the men's hearts were on fire with eager desire to press on to Kabul, and be led against the miscreants who had foully murdered our countrymen, and I felt assured that whatever it was possible for dauntless courage, unselfish devotion, and firm determination to achieve, would be achieved by my gallant soldiers."

The troops moved steadily on. On the 5th of October, exactly a month after the sad news of the fate of Cavagnari had reached Simla, it was halted at the "pretty little village of

Charasia, nestling in orchards and gardens, with a rugged range of hills towering above it, about a mile away."



SIKH ORDERLY TRYING TO PROTECT GENERAL ROBERTS FROM BULLETS.

The general had made up his mind to strike while the iron was hot. The Afghans were in great numbers, and strongly posted; they were being hourly reinforced, and the situation was one of great anxiety. After breakfast the attack began: delay might have been fatal; and Roberts, grasping the

situation at a glance, hurled his little force straight at the dense hordes of Afghans on the ridge.

The enemy were obstinate, and fought with dogged courage. The ground was steep and difficult, and the advance of the stalwart Highlanders was somewhat checked in consequence. Seeing this dilemma, their brother hill-men (the little Gurkhas) joined them, with the fierce, active Punjabis. Highlanders, Gurkhas, Punjabis, all men of fighting race, united in a desperate charge.

Loading and firing as steadily as if on parade, our troops went on till finally the position was reached, and cold steel was called upon to do its work. The Afghans fought well, but the attack was not to be resisted, and finally they fled, leaving their trenches in the hands of our gallant troops.

The order for a general advance was now sounded, and Highlanders, Gurkhas, and Punjabis again dashed forward in friendly rivalry, each striving hard to be the first to close with the enemy.

The Afghans could not meet their fierce onslaught: first they wavered, then, finally, they scattered and fled in all directions, and the victory was won.

A day or two afterwards the victorious army were at Kabul: the city was at their mercy, and so far their success had been complete. Though the entry into Kabul had been accomplished there was still much to be done. The murderers of Cavagnari had to be brought to justice, order had to be kept in the city, and all the plans made for the army's going into winter quarters.

While in the city Roberts visited the spot where the members of the Residency had made their brave defence and met their cruel end. He was familiar with such scenes of native treachery and British courage; and doubtless the scene of Cavagnari's last stand must have brought back to the Mutiny hero the days of Delhi, Cawnpore, and Lucknow.

"The walls of the Residency, closely pitted with bullet holes, gave proof of the determined nature of the attack and the length of the resistance. The floors were covered with blood-stains, and amidst the embers of a fire were found a heap of human bones. It may be imagined how British soldiers' hearts burned within them at such a sight, and how difficult it was to suppress feelings of hatred and animosity towards the perpetrators of such a dastardly crime."

In the meantime, although the British army was in Kabul, it was by no means in safety, nor was the war at an end. The 8th December saw the enemy's "last peaceful act." That day a great parade of all the troops was held in order to show the Afghans "our teeth and our mettle." Six days after, the enemy had become so daring that General Roberts got all his troops together within the Sharpur Cantonments. Two days before Christmas the Afghans made their fiercest attack. This was beaten back by the steady courage of our troops, who, surrounded by masses of the enemy, and in the heart of a hostile country, were now fighting for their very existence.

The weather was bitterly cold; there was a very hard frost, and the ground was covered thick with snow. "I think I had good reason to be proud of my force," says Roberts. "Native and European soldiers alike bore the hardships and the exposure with the utmost cheerfulness, and in perfect confidence that when the assault should take place victory should be ours."

On the 5th of May Sir Donald Stewart arrived with his force, having marched from Kandahar and gained a great victory on the way. Sir Donald, as senior officer, took command of the united forces. The army was divided into three divisions, Roberts retaining the command of two divisions.

With such a large army in front of Kabul it was thought that some of the troops might be sent back. Accordingly a column was formed, the command of which was given to

Roberts, and the idea was that the little army should withdraw by the Kurman route.

Roberts himself had started off in order to view the Khyber Pass, when in his own words: "Suddenly a presentiment, which I have never been able to explain to myself, made me retrace my steps and hurry back towards Kabul—a presentiment of coming trouble."

This feeling, as in the case of Cavagnari, was justified; as, on approaching Kabul, he was met by Sir Donald Stewart with the news of a grave disaster to the British arms. This was the defeat of General Burrows' force at Maiwand.

The general had left Kandahar with about 2500 men, and on reaching Maiwand the little army had been attacked by 25,000 Afghans. The artillery stood to their guns till all their ammunition had been fired away. Our troops fought doggedly, but they were overwhelmed by numbers, and were finally broken. Nearly half the British force was killed, wounded, or missing; the remnant struggled on through the night, and reached Kandahar the next morning. General Burrows, who in the fight had two horses shot under him, was among the last to reach the city.

Kandahar was soon besieged, a vast native army hemming in the British force.

The consequences of this defeat might well be expected to be serious and far-reaching. "The disaster to our arms caused, as was to be expected, considerable excitement all along the border; indeed throughout India the announcement produced a feeling of uneasiness—a mere surface ripple, but enough to make those who remembered the days of the Mutiny anxious for better news from the north."

Roberts was quick to grasp the situation. He saw that a force ought, without delay, to be sent from Kabul to the relief of Kandahar. After consulting with General Stewart, he sent a telegram to the Adjutant-General in India, in which he told his views plainly and to the point.

"I strongly recommend that a force be sent from this to Kandahar," he began. *"You need have no fears about my division. It can take care of itself, and will reach Kandahar under the month,"* he continued.

On the 3rd of August the reply came; the authorities cordially agreed, and an assent was given.

Roberts was given a free hand in selecting his troops, and he quickly chose an army of close on 10,000 men, with 18 guns. All sorts of fighting men were represented, and many nationalities—Highlanders, British Lancers, British Artillery, with Sikhs, Punjabis, Gurkhas, Native Cavalry, and Native Artillery.

On the 9th of August, at 6 a.m., the force bade farewell to Kabul, and started on its famous march. From that date till its triumphant entry into Kandahar "Sir Frederick Roberts' army was cut off from all communication with India and the outer world." Of this historic march, with its record of heroism, of dangers met, and difficulties overcome, this is not the place to tell.

The picked troops marched splendidly. The general, ever anxious for the comfort and safety of his men, had arranged the whole scheme with absolute fearlessness and prudent forethought.

To quote from the words of an officer who was with the column: "While it must be allowed that the whole force, men and officers, had done their duty nobly, and had accomplished a march which has 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 victory inspired, has stamped it as one of the greatest achievements of the British army."

All ranks believed and trusted in their leader, and though the work was hard, the way long and weary, one and all would have fallen on the march rather than give in.

On the morning of the 31st the force reached Kandahar, having marched just over 313 miles from Kabul. Next morning the battle was fought. The fighting was of a fierce and often hand-to-hand order. On the British dashed, position after position being carried at the point of the bayonet. "Just one charge more to close the business!" Major White shouted as he led his men at an intrenchment, and in this spirit of reckless gaiety and daring officers and men alike fought. Soon the foe were in confusion, and, with comparatively slight loss on our side, the Afghans were utterly routed, and Kandahar and the besieged force relieved.

Peace was soon afterwards made, all the British demands being fully satisfied, and the victorious general started to return to India, his work nobly done and ended. "I shall never forget the feeling of sadness with which I said good-bye to the men who had done so much for me," says Roberts. "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."

With the ringing cheers of the soldiers he had led to victory, and the pathetic strains of "Auld lang syne" in his ears, Roberts bade farewell to the gallant army which had made his name and its own so famous, and started off for Quetta, on his way to England.

CHAPTER X

RETURN TO INDIA—SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—CONCLUSION

When Sir Frederick Roberts landed in England on November 17, 1880, he found himself the hero of the hour. Honours fell thick upon him; for his services in Afghanistan he was created a Baronet, received the thanks of both Houses of Parliament, and was appointed to the command of the army of Madras.

The march to Kandahar had aroused the greatest excitement and fired the popular imagination, and vast crowds met to cheer the general who, amid so many trials and dangers, had led his army to victory.

His well-earned rest at home was, however, to be but short.

On Sunday, 27th February 1881, came the news of the defeat of the British arms under General Colley by the Boers at Majuba Hill.

On Monday Roberts was asked to take command of the army which was assembling in Natal in order to avenge this defeat. In the short space of five days the general—"ready, aye ready for the field"—had sailed with his staff from Southampton.

As we know, the time for "wiping something off a slate" had not yet come, owing to the strange policy of the British Government. Roberts himself describes how he was sent on "a wild-goose chase." The ship had no sooner entered Table Bay than a telegram was handed to him which ordered him to return at once, as a peace had been patched up, and there was no further need of his services. His stay at Cape Town was indeed limited to twenty-four hours. "The

Government seemed to be as anxious to get him away as they had been to hurry him out there."

After a short time at home he again set sail for India, in order to take up the command of the Madras army. This army was much improved during the time General Roberts was at its head. The Madrassi is often a tall, finely set-up, handsome man. In the days of Clive, and even later, he had shown himself a bold fighter, but years of peace had left their mark on him. In spite of his imposing appearance on parade, Roberts saw that the ordinary Southern Indian, as a fighting-man, is "soft."

Still he did not despair of him; he was as a rule better educated and more intelligent than the warlike native of the north. Accordingly the general determined to create an enthusiasm for marksmanship and rifle-practice among the troops. He himself set the example by becoming a keen rifle shot, and he was well backed up in this interest by his staff, among whom was Captain Hamilton, now General Sir Ian Hamilton.

In July 1885, on the retirement of Sir Donald Stewart, Sir Frederick Roberts succeeded to the proud position of Commander-in-Chief in India. During the seven years he held this post, Roberts won the esteem, admiration, and affection of all, Native and European, from the highest to the lowest. Under his command many important improvements in the condition of the army were made; and he brought all his skill and experience to bear on the question of frontier defence.

On the 1st January 1892, Sir Frederick was raised to the peerage, as Baron Roberts of Kandahar and Waterford, and a year later he left India, after forty-one years' service, for good.

On his return from Afghanistan he had been called the "most popular man in England"; now he might be termed, on his departure from his command, the most popular man in the army. "Bobs" was essentially the soldiers' general, and all

ranks, British and Native alike, looked on the general with genuine feelings of love and admiration.

Two years after his return to England, he was promoted to be Field-Marshal.

It was during his term of service as Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in Ireland, that Lord Roberts was again called upon to lead his country's armies.

The fatal peace of Majuba Hill—"a peace which was no peace"—was about to reap a harvest of disaster and bloodshed.

In the autumn of 1899, the Transvaal Republic, joined by the Orange Free State, declared war on Great Britain. They had been preparing for war for a long time, and in a short time the British colonies in South Africa were invaded by a well-equipped, hostile force.

Then came bad news fast—the fight at Talana Hill, the retirement on Ladysmith, the battles of Belmont, Graspan, and Modder River. These were the dark days of the war.

People at home, as the newsboys in the murky November afternoons shouted their tale of fresh disaster, caught their breath, and wondered if this was the beginning of the end—if the sun of British power was about to set.

The feeling everywhere grew that there was one man who could save the Empire, and turn defeat into victory. All eyes were turned towards "Roberts, the deliverer," as he was already felt to be. At length the Government asked him to take the chief command in South Africa.

"My Lord, for nineteen years I have led an abstemious life in the hope of this day," came the reply.

During the preceding week the worst news that had reached England for a century came pouring in. Buller had moved to cross the Tugela, but under the terrible fire of the

Boers had been forced to retire, and Ladysmith, with its heroic garrison, was still unrelieved.

During this fight Lord Roberts' only son had been mortally wounded, and had died the following day. Like his father, years before, at Delhi, he had been shot down whilst gallantly saving the guns. As in the case of the father, a V.C. was assigned to him; but alas! it was only to his parents that the honour could be sent.

In spite of personal grief, in spite of the weight of years, Lord Roberts was ready at the nation's call. Nor did he long delay: a week was all the time he asked for, in which to make his preparations. Two days before Christmas he sailed from Southampton, carrying with him the hopes and anxious wishes of a mighty Empire.

"Three English forces were apparently helpless in the face of the armed positions occupied by the Boers; three towns on English soil were beleaguered by hostile forces; three great reverses had befallen three English generals; and 11,000 of the best troops of this country were entangled in Ladysmith. On Saturday, the 16th, we sent for Lord Roberts, and on the following Saturday he was on the high seas."

In these brief words did Mr. Arthur Balfour afterwards sum up the position of affairs, and pay a tribute to the dauntless soldier.

Meanwhile, on board the *Balmoral Castle*, the active brain of the general was busy, and when, on the 10th of January, the ship reached Capetown, Lord Roberts was ready with his plan of campaign.

No longer was Cronje's taunt, that the British were "tied by the leg to the railway," to hold good. The little man, who had marched from Kabul to Kandahar, had his method of attack prepared, and was ready to move swiftly and strike hard.

Some time had, however, to be spent at Capetown before all the arrangements could be made. Finally, on the 6th of February, Lord Roberts left Capetown, and two days after he reached the Modder River camp. Here for two or three days he remained, his head-quarters for the time being the railway carriage in which he had travelled.

"Ladysmith must be relieved," Lord Roberts had from the first declared.

On the 15th the relief of Kimberley was accomplished, and this success roused the spirits of all—the soldiers fighting in the field, and the anxious watchers at home. Back from Kimberley French and his tired cavalry rode: the great object now was to round up Cronje and his army.

At Paardeberg, Cronje and his Boers lay, lulled by a feeling of false security. Gradually the British forces under Lord Roberts drew the net closer.

The Boer general was taken by surprise; in spite of repeated warnings, he had scoffed at the idea of a British army moving so swiftly and so secretly. Little did he know the man he had to do with, this new general who had infused such life and activity into his troops.

The Boer leader at last saw that his position was getting desperate; already he could be seen signalling frantically for help. At sunrise, on the 18th February, he woke to find himself "hopelessly and helplessly beleaguered." "Bobs' had got old Cronje at last," the soldiers said.

On the 27th day of February, the anniversary of the Boer victory at Majuba Hill, the end came. The white flag went up, and Cronje and his burghers, to the number of about four thousand men, laid down their arms.

For nineteen long years the Boers had taunted the Englishmen and boasted of their victory, saying how, if ever war again broke out, they would drive the red-coats to the sea.

Now, at last, the day of reckoning had come, and they themselves were to know the bitterness of defeat.



SURRENDER OF CRONJE AFTER PAARDEBERG.

The very day Cronje surrendered, General Buller, after desperate fighting, found the way to Ladysmith practically open; and, on the 3rd of March, his army was able to join hands with the gallant garrison.

Success followed success; ever moving onwards, the army reached Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free

State. The town surrendered promptly, and Lord Roberts hoisted the British flag, a silk Union Jack, worked especially for the occasion by Lady Roberts' own hands.

Here the army rested for a bit, but soon they were on the march again, and closing in on Johannesburg—"the golden city"—which surrendered on the 31st of May, and was occupied by our troops. Again the army pressed on, this time to Pretoria, and Roberts, playing for a great stake, launched his troops at the Boers, and again was victorious, and the capital of the Transvaal was in the hands of the British.

The fighting still went on, however, round the city, and it was not till seven days afterwards that the Boers were finally dispersed, and driven from the neighbourhood of Pretoria.

At Bergendal, Buller and the men from Natal again defeated the Boers, and this was the last great fight of the war.

How long the Boers still in the field resisted we all know, but the backbone of the fighting had been broken, and Lord Roberts' work was done. He had marched and fought his forces over a huge area—an area greater than France, Germany, and Austria. The war was now practically over: the veteran fighter had turned gloom into joy, defeat into victory. His work was done, and the time had come for him to say farewell to the gallant army he had so ably led.

The lessons of the war still remain. It has knit together the whole British Empire. It was a war fought not alone by a British army, but by the militia, yeomanry, and volunteers of Great Britain, and by our brothers across the sea—the men of South Africa, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, and Ceylon. Lord Roberts was the first general to command an army of Britain and of Greater Britain—an imperial host.

The mother country had been in sore distress, and her children in the colonies had heard the parent voice and hastened to her aid.

"So we stand," said Lord Roberts, in his farewell address at Capetown, "and please God, will continue to stand, a united, world-wide dominion, bound together by indissoluble ties, and ever ready to carry out the destiny of our race. God has brought us out of what in the dark days of last December appeared to be the valley of the shadow of death, and we can now look back on those days of tribulation with deep gratitude for the mercy vouchsafed to the Queen's troops."

On the 2nd of January 1900, Lord Roberts reached England, and next day he rendered his last obeisance to the Queen he had served so long and so faithfully. From her dying hands almost he received, as reward for his latest and greatest services, the Order of the Knight of the Garter and an Earldom. A few days later he entered on his new duties as Commander-in-Chief, and at this post he remained for three years.

The veteran Field-Marshal had more than doubled the span allotted. by the ancient law of India, which says that a man shall be twenty years a fighter. But, though he had reached the verge of threescore and ten years, the rest he had earned had no attractions for him as long as there was work to be done. "The truth is," he had said, "that the mother country takes long to understand that the best way to avoid war is to be well prepared for it."

He who was ever ready to take the field at a moment's notice, in order to fight the enemies of his country, now set himself the task of preparing the country itself for the stern duties of war.

"I shall continue to work for the army as long as I can work at all," Lord Roberts has said. "The experience I have gained will greatly help me in the work that lies before me, which is, I conceive, to make the army of the United Kingdom as perfect as it is possible for any army to be. *This I shall strive to do with all my might.*"

But it is not only with the regular army that Lord Roberts is concerned.

On every occasion has he urged the youth of our country to train themselves to arms, as the only real means of peace and of safeguarding our Empire.

Under his fostering care a spirit of patriotism has been awakened, and it is to be hoped that the day is not far distant when every able-bodied man in the country will have learnt to be able to shoot, and to fight, if necessary, for his hearth and home. Then—

"Come the four corners of the world in arms, And we shall shock them: nought shall make us rue, If England to itself do rest but true."

THE END.