

THE BOY'S BOOK OF BATTLES

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of the Great Discoverers," etc.*

WITH FOUR COLOUR PLATES AND TWELVE FULL-PAGE
BLACK-AND-WHITE ILLUSTRATIONS

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CHAPTER I

MARATHON

Where the Athenians drove back the All-Conquering Persians

Before the great battle of Marathon was fought in 490 B.C., there was much anxious thought on the part of the Athenian commanders. And well there might be, with a force of about eleven thousand men it was proposed, by five of the eleven who made up the Council of War, to march out from the security of Athens to meet ten times their number of Persians—the finest soldiers the world had ever seen—who had swept through the earth as in a cyclone of power that had cast down monarchies and principalities, and who, fresh from victories, were come to take vengeance on devoted Athens for having dared to give aid to rebels against the great King Darius.

By numerical calculation, Athens was distinctly at a disadvantage; she could reckon on no help from outside except a thousand brave men from Plataea, who, out of gratitude for assistance in the past, had, unasked, marched forth to give of their best to their ancient allies. Sparta had promised aid, but religious scruples prevented them from setting out until the moon had reached its full. Hence it was that five of the generals counseled delay until the Spartans came.

In other things Athens was strong: country and freedom—both of which meant so much to them, and both of which would be taken from them if the Medes and Persians overcame them—called into action the love that lay in the heart of every Athenian, and so the remaining five generals, chief among them Miltiades, pleaded for immediate action. Miltiades—ambitious, courageous, experienced in the art of war, and conversant with Persian methods, seeing that he had at one time been submissive to Darius, and had even led his men to do

battle for their overlord—looking out over the Persian forces massed on the Plain of Marathon, and seeing also the ease with which the Athenians could suddenly swoop down upon them, argued for war.

The voting was five to five. Who should give the casting vote? The Athenian War Board was composed of ten generals, one for each of the tribes into which the Athenians were divided, and an Archon (magistrate), who was known as the War Ruler, and whose greatest privilege it was to lead the right wing of the army into battle. This year the War Ruler was Callimachus, and upon his word depended the question of battle; depended, probably, the safety of Athens; depended, maybe, "the destiny of all the nations of the world." To him, therefore, did Miltiades turn, urging him, with glowing eloquence, to support him in his policy. Callimachus yielded; the die was cast. It was to be war, and war to the end!

Miltiades was offered supreme command of the Athenian army, his fellow-generals professing themselves willing to stand aside, so that he need not wait until his day came round (it being the custom for each general to take command in rotation). Miltiades, however, unwilling to arouse jealousy, refused, and waited until his day came round.

That day having come, Miltiades mapped out his plan of campaign, and ordered his army. Callimachus had command of the right wing; Themistocles and Aristides of the centre; the Plataeans forming the left wing.

The Athenian line, though equal in length to that of the Persians, was by no means as deep, though the wings were far stronger than the centre. Miltiades had deliberately followed this course, because, with a practised eye, he saw that if the wings were strong they would be at a great advantage, while the centre, being but a few men deep, would be able to rally quickly if by any event they were broken. This was unlikely, because the Greeks had by long training learnt the secret of regular, compact movement which carried everything before it.

Everything being ready, the sacrifices being made, the wax trumpet gave the signal for action, and, chanting their battle hymn, Miltiades' army of ten thousand Persians and one thousand Plataeans moved out of Athens at the run—an unusual procedure in Greek warfare. Infantry only, armed merely with their long spears and short swords, and wearing their breastplates, helmets and greaves, and carrying their shields, this almost forlorn hope of Athens raced down upon the multitude of Persians, made up of well nigh invincible cavalry and infantry.

The bottom of the hill reached, there intervened between the two armies a mile of even ground, which it was imperative the Greeks should cover before the opposing cavalry could charge upon them. The attack was well planned; the Persians had been dallying in the hope that they might obtain a bloodless victory as the result of the treachery of some who were partisans of Hippias, an Athenian tyrant, who had recently been expelled from the city and had gone over to Darius, and the last thing that they expected was that the Athenians, with so small a force as was at their disposal, would dare to attack the army on the Plain of Marathon. The very foolhardiness of it discomfited the Persians, who were unprepared to receive these men, whom they looked upon as madmen racing to certain death.

At the first sight of the advancing Greeks, the enemy quickly prepared to meet them, "and the Eastern chiefs arrayed, as quickly as time and place allowed, the varied races who served in their motley ranks. Mountaineers from Hyrcania and Afghanistan, wild horsemen from the steppes of Khorassan, the black archers of Ethiopia, swordsmen from the banks of the Indus, the Oxus, the Euphrates and the Nile, made ready against the enemies of the Great King."

Ere all were ready, ere the cavalry had time to form and charge, the solid phalanx of Greeks had hurled itself upon the foe, whose very name even had been a nightmare to them. Greek swords pierced through the weak defence of wicker shields, and did deadly work against unarmoured bodies. The first line of the Medes gave way before the onrushing Greeks, who, keeping

their formation, wrought havoc on their foes. These, not a whit less brave than their attackers, stood their ground well, seeking by sheer force of numbers to break the long line of shields.

Hour after hour the battle raged; the Greek centre was broken, hurled back and chased inland, until, coming to uneven ground, they were able to rally and return to the struggle. The wings of the Athenian army, however, on which Miltiades had laid his greatest hopes, were successful in turning the Persian wings. Instead of pursuing them, when the Persian centre might have swooped down upon them from the rear, Miltiades gathered his two flanks into one body and charged down upon the Persian centre, which till then had been victorious.

Charge after charge did the Greeks make, stopping neither for the arrows which the Persian bowmen at the rear shot in among them, nor for the fierce counter-charges of their opponents, who, forming themselves into groups, made valiant efforts to break the victorious phalanx in order that they might get to close quarters and so be able to use their short lances and scimitars freely. But, steadfast and solid, buoyed up by the love of country, spurred on by the thought of what would be if they failed, the Athenians held on their way, and at last, after one of the greatest battles the world had seen, and after one of the severest struggles within the memory of the Greeks, the Medes and Persians fled. One hundred thousand men conquered; and such men! No king had ever been so consistently victorious as Darius, and here was his great and glorious army put to flight by so small a force!

Back to their ships the Persians fled, followed hard by the Greeks down to the very water's edge. Calling for fire, the Athenians threw themselves upon the ships, seeking to set them on fire. Realising that if this attempt were successful they would be at the entire mercy of their enemies, the Persians fought savagely to drive them off.

Miltiades lost more men here than throughout all the rest of the battle, and Callimachus, the War Ruler, was slain, besides

many other noble Athenians. Despite their fierce onset, the Greeks only succeeded in capturing seven ships, the rest rowing rapidly away.

Defeated, but not subdued, Datis, the Persian commander, determined to make one bold bid to capture Athens. Putting on all sail, and setting his oarsmen to row their best, he sailed round to the western coast, hoping to reach Athens before the Greeks, hoping also to find it unprotected, and that the friends of Hippias might even yet render him aid, in which case the city would have fallen an easy prey to his furious army.

Divining his intent, Miltiades quickly reformed his men, who, flushed with victory, were determined not to be beaten at the very last. Marching with all haste back to Athens, they arrived in time to mount guard over their beloved city and so frustrate the plan of Datis, who, realising that he had been outwitted, sailed away, a discomfited and disheartened man.

Too religious to come before, the Spartans arrived when the fight was over, having started immediately after the full moon. Too late for the battle, they yet desired to see the battlefield. They went, they saw, they marvelled, commended the Athenians on their triumph against the common foe, and returned to Sparta.

The battle was over, and Athens was saved; Miltiades and his brave eleven thousand had conquered the unconquered Mede. One hundred and ninety-two Greeks had fallen for their country's sake; six thousand four hundred Persians had found their destiny on the Plain of Marathon.

On the field where they had fought their great fight were the dead Athenians buried, and above their resting-place was reared a lofty mound, and ten great columns, the latter bearing the names of the noble dead. The mound is there, but the columns have long since gone; but never from the mind of man or from the pages of history will fade the story of the Battle of Marathon, when Greek fought Persian for country and for liberty.

CHAPTER II

TRASEMENUS

Hannibal's Great Victory over the Romans

Hannibal, the Carthaginian, stands out as one of the mighty men of the world's history. His father, Hamilcar, had led the Carthaginians in their first Punic War, when Rome had triumphed; had smashed an armed rebellion of his own mercenaries; and had then, as Livy says "for nine years employed himself in augmenting the Carthaginian Empire in Spain, though it was obvious that his mind was occupied with the thoughts of a greater war than he was then engaged in." He had his eye on Rome. But Death stepped in and put an end to his dream. Hasdrubal, his son-in-law, then took command of the army, Hannibal being still but a youngster.

Then came Hannibal's turn. Hasdrubal died, and at twenty-six years of age Hannibal was Commander-in-Chief of the Carthaginian army in Spain. Soon after he assumed the command he made war upon the Saguntines, allies of Rome, and besieged and captured their city. Rome took umbrage at what they regarded as a breach of the treaty arranged after the first Punic War, and sent messengers to Carthage, demanding the person of Hannibal, and threatening war.

The Carthaginians cared not for the threat of Rome, and to the message, "Here we bring to you peace and war; take which you will," replied: "Give what you choose." Rome gave them war; Carthage accepted it with thanks; and the die was cast.

Meanwhile Hannibal had been making preparations for his invasion of Italy, for he was determined to be the aggressor. He sent his messengers into Gaul and across the Alps, to glean information as to the disposition of the Gauls, and as to the

character of the country through which he had resolved to lead his army. His messengers brought him news that the Gauls were friendly, but that the passage of the Alps was likely to be attended with many, though not insurmountable, difficulties.

With the preparations of Hannibal we will not concern ourselves; suffice it to say that in May, 218 B.C., he crossed the Iberus with ninety thousand foot soldiers and twelve thousand cavalry, drawn from Africa and Spain, subdued some tribes in the north of Spain who were friendly to Rome, carried cities and towns by assault, left eleven thousand men under Hanno to hold the conquered country, sent others home, and with fifty-nine thousand foot and horse crossed the Pyrenees and encamped on the right bank of the Rhone.

To pursue his journey he had to cross the Rhone, but although many of the Gaulish tribes had professed friendship for the Carthaginians, others took up arms against them. Thus it was that, standing on his side of the Rhone, Hannibal looked across the river and saw masses of Gauls arrayed against him on the other, who, brandishing their arms, defied him to attempt the passage.

To Hannibal it was a small obstacle. Quickly he got his friendly tribes to lend him all their boats and to build him others—rough-hewn from the trunks of trees, but sufficiently good to carry his men and their baggage.

But the Gauls waited for them, and were distinctly at the advantage. Hannibal adopted a ruse. During the night he sent out a detachment of his army, with native guides, to ascend the right bank of the river to a point a day's journey off. There they were to cross, and make their way through the woods as quickly as they could and take the Gauls in the rear.

The outposts marched as ordered, crossed the river, and next day marched down towards the Gauls. Arrived within a short distance of the point where Hannibal was going to cross, they gave the signal agreed upon—a column of smoke—and Hannibal embarked his men in their trumpery boats.

All unsuspecting of the trap into which they were being led, the Gauls lined the opposite bank, singing and shouting defiance, shaking their swords and shields above their heads, and bidding the invaders to come on—if they dared.

The foe dared.

The smaller boats were filled with the infantry, the cavalry crossing in the larger boats, and swimming their horses across behind them. It was not an easy crossing, for the current ran strong, the boats were well loaded, and the horses were often difficult to manage; but, pulling with all their strength, the soldiers forged through the stream, and were almost at the farther bank when, with a shout, the ambushed troop burst through the woods and fell upon the Gauls.

In a moment all was confusion; the Gauls were caught in the trap; behind them—they knew not how large a foe; before them an almost numberless host. Still they had not defied without cause; they were brave men, and quickly gathering together in some sort of battle array, they faced the foe who had taken them unawares, fought them bitterly, and failed.

Then the boats disgorged their burdens, the Carthaginians and Spaniards leaped ashore, and fell upon the other side of the Gauls, who, fighting inch by inch, at last had to turn and flee wherever they saw an opening.

Hannibal now brought across the remainder of his army, finally transporting his elephants—thirty-seven in number. It was ticklish work, but at last, by means of huge rafts, the great beasts were got over, though not before some of the drivers had been drowned.

Meanwhile, Hannibal had been busy in other directions. He had sent out five hundred Numidian horsemen to reconnoitre Scipio's position, that Roman general having camped at the mouth of the Rhone, taking the precaution of sending out three hundred mounted scouts.

These two small bodies of cavalry met in a sanguinary conflict, and the Numidians were compelled to fly, reaching the Carthaginian camp with the victors on their heels. These, however, seeing the massed army in front of them, immediately wheeled round and hurried off to their camp with the news of Hannibal's arrival on the left bank of the river.

Scipio immediately set out to meet him, but missed him by three days, for Hannibal had taken the bull by the horns, and, giving his men no time to ponder over the difficulties in front of them, had started on his journey northwards. He had no intention of fighting a pitched battle until he reached Italy; he wanted to meet the Romans on their own ground.

He had secured the assistance of a large number of natives as guides. In four days he arrived at the confluence of the Isere and the Rhone, made friends with a strong Gaulish chief by upholding his claim to authority, received provisions in plenty, then crossed the Isere, "continued to ascend the Rhone, and, striking off to the right across the plains of Dauphine, he reached the first ascent of the Alps at the northern extremity of that ridge of limestone mountains, which, rising abruptly from the plain to the height of four thousand or five thousand feet, and filling the whole space between the Rhone at Belley and the Isere below Grenoble, first introduces the traveller coming from Lyons to the remarkable features of Alpine scenery."

Above them the mountains reared their majestic heads, and the mountaineers held guard. Fortunately for the invaders, it transpired that the watchers relaxed their outlook during the night, thinking themselves secure when darkness fell. Hannibal at once moved his army forward, as if resolved to pass through the defile by day. Night coming on, he encamped again, and the mountaineers left their posts for the night. Hannibal immediately went forward with the bravest of his troops, passed through the defile, and took up his position on the heights where the enemy had been during the day.

The way was now clear for the passage of the main army, and in the morning it moved forward. With daylight, however, the mountaineers sallied out to take up their old posts, found to their dismay that the enemy had forestalled them, and for a while watched with consternation the advance of the mighty army.

Presently, however, they saw that the narrowness of the path and the treacherous nature of the ground were causing great confusion in Hannibal's army. Then, somewhat recovered from their amazement, they scrambled up the rocky sides of the mountains, of which they knew every nook, fell upon the struggling army, rolled masses of rock and stone upon them, and made confusion worse confounded. Over the rocky sides of the defile went men and horses into the valley below; the jostling, struggling crowd did more damage to themselves than did the enemy, and at last Hannibal realised that the only thing that could save his army from disaster was to swoop down upon the marauders. Down, therefore, he went, threw himself upon them, drove them off, and incidentally put his own army into greater disorder. This, however, was soon remedied, for with the withdrawal of the foe the Carthaginians and Spaniards quickly collected themselves and their wits, marched forward in better order, and eventually reached a wide and fertile valley, where Hannibal encamped his men, sacked a city, and augmented his provisions, and then marched forward again up the right bank of the Isere.

Here he was met by the natives, who professed friendship but proved treacherous. As he came into a narrower pass, his elephants and cavalry leading the van, they suddenly appeared on the heights above and began tumbling down rocks and stones, which did great damage to the army. They cut off the cavalry and baggage for some hours, but were at last compelled to turn back.

From that time onward the men of the hills worried the invaders from a safe distance; but the Carthaginians refused to be obstructed in their passage, and nine days after they had commenced the ascent of the Alps, reached the summit. It was

October; snow lay all round; the cold was intense; the winds were bitter and keen, and many days' hard travelling were yet before the adventurous army. For two days they rested themselves after their arduous climb, almost downhearted. Hannibal, quick to feel the pulse of his army, gathered them together on the mountain-top, pointed them to Italy and the valley of the Po, crying:

"We are now surmounting not only the ramparts of Italy, but also of the city of Rome! The rest of the journey will be smooth and downhill, and after one, or at most, a second battle, we shall have the citadel and capital of Italy in our power."

Their general's words gave them fresh courage, revived their drooping spirits, and spurred them on. They began the descent.

But they found that, although their foes did not now press them, the way downward was more difficult than the way upward. The passes were narrower, steeper, slippery and more treacherous, so that horses and men could scarce secure a sure foothold.

Then, to make matters worse, they came to a place where an avalanche had swept down on its destructive course, carrying the road away for about a thousand feet. To go straight on was impossible; to go round also proved out of the question, for the snow was so deep that the mountain sides were unclimbable, and all that remained was to repair the road.

By felling trees and hewing rock they managed, after four days, to build the road, and the army once more moved on its way, three days later arriving on the broad plains of Northern Italy, where they joined some friendly tribes.

The Alps had been crossed. But at what a cost! Thirty-three thousand men had been lost, some by privation, some by cold, some by the foes who had beset them on their way, and when Hannibal arrived in Italy he had only twelve thousand African infantry and eight thousand Spanish, and six thousand

cavalry, and of these, hardly a man was fit for the conflicts that awaited them.

They needed rest, and Hannibal gave it them. Meanwhile what of the Romans?

When Scipio arrived and found that Hannibal had left his camping place on the Rhone, he sent off the main body of his army into Spain, and he himself sailed off for Pisa. Arrived there, he hurried across the Apennines, took command of the army there, crossed the Po at Placentia, and marched up the left bank of the river.

The two armies met at Ticinus. The Romans were defeated, Scipio himself narrowly escaped with his life, and Hannibal, as he had anticipated, received reinforcements from the Gauls.

Later the armies met at Trebia, the Romans were routed, and Rome was shaken to her foundations when she received the news of the conquering invader who, it seemed, would soon be within sight of her hills.

Hannibal spent the winter in camp, and with the first indications of spring, attempted to cross the Apennines, pitched his camp at Placentia, met the Consul Sempronius, and drove him back on Lucca, and himself retired into Liguria to await further developments.

When spring was fully come, Hannibal, who had suffered much at the hands of many of the Gauls (they having turned against him), moved from his winter quarters, crossed the marsh formed by the Arno over-flowing its banks, laid waste the country between Cortona and the Lake of Trasemenus, while Consul Flaminius, now commanding the Roman army, moved forward from Arretium to meet him.

Hannibal at last took up a strong position near Trasemenus. "It was," says Livy, "formed by nature for an ambuscade, where the Trasemenus comes nearest to the mountains of Cortona. A very narrow passage only intervenes,

as though room enough just for that purpose had been left designedly; after that a somewhat wider plain opens itself, and then some hills rise up. On these Hannibal pitched his camp, in full view, where he himself with his Spaniards and Africans only might be posted. The Baliares (slingers) and his other light troops he led round the mountains; his cavalry he posted at the very entrance of the defile, some eminences conveniently concealing them, in order that, when the Romans entered, the cavalry could advance and every place be enclosed by the lake and the mountains."

Flaminius and his army arrived shortly after Hannibal had secured himself in his position, carelessly marched into the defiles in broad daylight without sending scouts to reconnoitre, and debouched his troops into the plains beyond. Before him he could see only Hannibal and the troops he was using as a decoy; he knew nothing of the ambush which had been laid in his rear and above him on the hills.

As soon as Flaminius had moved his army into the plain and so was surrounded by the lake and the hills, Hannibal gave the word, his army raced in at all points, and fell upon the Romans before the latter could even seize their arms.

They had not expected so sudden an onset; they looked for strategy, and found action; they looked for a matching of armies on equal footing, and found cunning. To make matters worse, the white mist rising from the lake enveloped the Roman army in its shroud, while it left the hillsides fairly clear, so that the Carthaginians were able to move with regularity and in combination.

In a moment all was confusion; the trapped Romans turned and faced the enemy as quickly and as orderly as they could, but the suddenness of the attack had thrown them into disorder, and instead of fighting in solid phalanxes they fought in little groups, every man for himself, every man his own officer.

Wooden shields, brass helmets, coats of mail of iron plates or rings, received the blows of the African short swords or the thrust of spear; Roman javelins hurtled through the air at the attacking force, and Roman swords crossed Spanish spears. The din of battle, the cries of wounded men, the shouts of enraged combatants filled the air. The men from Africa, who had fought these Romans before and been defeated, fought now with a courage that boded ill for Rome; they fought for vengeance, aye, for liberty; they fought with all the heat of their own deserts, their Spanish comrades emulating them in courage and determination.

Yet did the Romans fight as became their heritage. The past conquests of Rome called to them—they answered with acclamations of patriotism, with thrust of sword and with throw of javelin. For hour after hour they fought—fought to stem the tide of the conquering Carthaginian, fought to hold him off from fair Rome, fought to uphold the glory of their fatherland.

Grim, dogged, determined, the combatants both stood their ground; neither gave way before the other; neither asked nor received quarter; neither had ears nor eyes for aught but the battle. "So great," says Livy, "was the ardour of the conflict, so intent were their minds upon the battle, that not one of the combatants felt an earthquake which threw down large portions of many of the cities of Italy, turned rapid rivers from their courses, carried the sea up the rivers, and levelled the mountains with a tremendous crash."

Around Flaminius himself the battle raged in greater fury than elsewhere on the field. With him were the fairest of the sons of Rome; here, there, and everywhere he seemed to be, urging his troops on when arms ached and heads throbbed beneath the blows that fell incessantly.

A conspicuous figure in his armour, he was quickly marked down for death, and towards him there pressed the bravest of the Carthaginians.

Presently, an Insubrian horseman, named Ducarius, cried: "Lo! this is the consul who slew our legions and laid waste our fields and city! Now will I offer this victim to the shades of my countrymen, miserably slain!" and, urging his horse forward, alone he dashed into the dense masses of the Romans, fought his way to the standard beneath which Flaminius was fighting, slew the bearer, poised his lance, and ere he could be stopped had run it through the consul.

Next he would have stripped the fallen general of his arms, but the bodyguard gathered round when it was too late to stay the lance of death, and held the warrior off.

But the fall of Flaminius sent dismay into the ranks of the Roman army. They turned and fled; they hewed their way through the pressing Carthaginians, flying in all directions, yet finding no outlet anywhere. Into the lake some of them plunged, followed by the enemy's cavalry. Up the hills they scrambled, to fall down the precipitous sides, to be dashed to pieces on the rocks. Six thousand of them, nearer the opening of the defile than the others, fought their way through the Carthaginians, and so escaped, all unconscious that their general was dead, and that in their rear their comrades were panic-stricken as a result. Had they known, they must have returned, but as it was they lingered in the neighbourhood, hearing the crash of the battle, but ignorant of its fortune until too late, when, fearing the coming of the Carthaginian cavalry, they retreated, only to be followed next day and compelled to surrender.

Thus ended the battle of Trasemenus; fifteen thousand Romans lay dead on the field, fifteen hundred Carthaginians and Spaniards keeping them company in death.

CHAPTER III

TOURS

The Decisive Battle between Crescent and Cross

It was the eighth century, and the Saracens were over-running Western Europe; the Crescent was everywhere conquering before the Cross. Caliph Abderrahman Ibn Abdillah Alghafeki, governor of Spain, mighty soldier from Africa, conqueror in Europe, led an expedition into Gaul to carry his triumphs farther. The Arabs passed through like a cyclone; and then they met Charles Martel at Tours.

Charles, surnamed Martel from the hammer-like blows which his strong arm and his armies inflicted, was Duke of the Franks. And when the Saracen peril became too pressing, and the Christian leaders found themselves helpless to combat it, Charles was called to the command of the Franks.

These latter wished to tackle the Saracens at once; Charles advised prudence, telling his followers that in their passage through the country the Saracens had laid the land waste, had dismantled the monasteries of their riches and then given them to the flames; so that at every step they gained in wealth. They had, too, brought with them their families and goods to the intent to settle in the land they were about to conquer.

All these were encumbrances, as Charles knew, and he made his preparations as quickly as he could, gathering his irregular army round him, and when all was ready, marching with such haste that he came upon the Saracens between Tours and Poitiers before they expected him.

And then, in 732, was fought the Battle of Tours—the trial of strength between the Cross and the Crescent.

When Charles appeared, Abderrahman was engaged in storming Tours, intent on carrying out his pillaging and burning policy. Creasy, translating an Arab chronicler, says: "And Abderrahman and other prudent cavaliers saw the disorder of the Moslem troops, who were loaded with spoil; but they did not venture to displease the soldiers by ordering them to abandon everything except their arms and war-horses. Abderrahman trusted in the valour of his soldiers, and in the good fortune which had ever attended him. But such defect of discipline is always fatal to armies. So Abderrahman and his host attacked Tours to gain still more spoil, and they fought against it so fiercely that they stormed the city almost before the eyes of the army that came to save it; and the fury and the cruelty of the Moslems towards the inhabitants were like the fury and cruelty of raging tigers. It was manifest that God's chastisement was sure to follow such excess."

Then came the chastisement.

The Moslems were a mighty host. Infantry from the conquered land of Spain, and wild, dashing cavalry from the deserts of Africa, veterans in the art of war, fresh from victories which had swelled their heads and filled their coffers, they looked forward to the battle with confidence. Memories of glorious battlefields filled their minds, burning towns marked their path behind them, visions of yet greater conquests rose before them; they were out to carry the Crescent throughout Europe.

As for the army of Charles Martel, it was composed of hardy men from the left bank of the Rhine, warriors from among the Franks, who had fought many a sanguine battle with the tribes who opposed the overlordship of the Hammer. Behind them lay the land which the Saracens had come to conquer; before them lay the Moslem army, and farther on, the devastated country through which the infidels had come; and each man knew that if, in the trial of strength, the Arabs won, the future held little good for the soldiers of the Cross.

Flushed with past victories, the Moslem hosts went into the fight with a rush, giving Charles no time to make the first attack. The dark-faced, white-robed horsemen from the desert sands swept down upon the serried ranks of Frankish warriors like a tornado. Gleaming scimitars flashed in the sun, swept round and round, and laid many a Frank low; yet still the mass held to its place, and back the Arabs were forced.

For six days did the battle thus rage, the solid wall of northmen receiving the charging cavalry at the point of the sword, "standing firm as a wall, and impenetrable as a zone of ice," but nevertheless suffering much themselves from the trampling horses and the masses of African infantry who poured down upon them and sent in their clouds of arrows. For six days neither side gained much advantage; but on the seventh day things changed.

That day the Moslems penetrated the Christian ranks, the cavalry hewing their way into the very centre of the army, wielding their scimitars with deadly effect, the footmen whirling their swords round or short-thrusting them, so that Franks fell on all sides.

But weight told at last; those warriors from the north were men of iron whose battle-axes crashed through skull and body; and chief among them all was Charles the Hammer. All day the battle raged, but the Moslems could not get right through the soldiers of the Cross; they even began to doubt the issue of the battle, began to fear for the hard-won treasure in the camp.

"A false cry arose from their ranks that some of the enemy were plundering the camp; whereupon several squadrons of the Moslem horsemen rode off to protect their tents. But it seemed as if they fled; and all the host was troubled. And while Abderrahman strove to check their tumult, and to lead them back to battle, the warriors of the Franks came round him, and he was pierced through with many spears so that he died. Then all the host lied before the enemy, and many died in the flight." So says the Arab chronicler.

It was an ignominious retreat. Their leader slain, their treasure, so it would seem, in peril, their foe pressing hard upon them, the Arabs forgot their valour, forgot their past triumphs, forgot the purpose of their coming; and the retreat turned to a rout. Dismay seized upon their hearts; panic spread through the fleeing ranks; and, losing their heads completely, some of the Arab tribes turned their weapons upon each other.

Then the sun went down upon the scene of carnage, and the Franks drew off to wait until the morrow.

Morning came. Away in the Moslem camp not a sound was heard. What was happening? Were the Arabs lying low to lure the Franks out? Charles Martel at once sent out spies to reconnoitre. Carefully they made their way to the camp—and lo! it was deserted!

Under shelter of the night of the rout, the Saracens, defeated and demoralised, had fled from the field where-on they had left so many of their noblest warriors. The Cross had triumphed over the Crescent; the Hammer had swept down upon the Moslem hosts and stayed their progress through Northern Europe.

CHAPTER IV

MALDON

Where the Vikings Fought and Conquered the Northumbrian

It would appear that there were two battles at Maldon. The first went in favour of the English, who placed themselves beneath the banner of Brithnoth, alderman of Northumbria, and almost annihilated a force of sea-wolves from the North. The few who did escape carried the news back to their own country and preached a war of retribution.

Hence the second battle.

Brithnoth, as we have said, was a Northumbrian chief who lived in the days of the giants, and was himself a giant. Fair-haired, blue-eyed, with a body as hard as nails, and arms that knew well how to wield the mighty sword—in all, a noble figure of a man—Brithnoth had one ambition in life, and that was to preserve England from the encroachments of the Danes, those wolves of slaughter who ravaged the coast and plundered where they could. Brithnoth's valour and his known determination to check the inroads of the Danes brought him many other chiefs who placed themselves beneath his victorious banner. When, therefore, the Danes, under Anna and Guthmund, came on their errand of vengeance, and sent to tell Brithnoth that if he refused to give them battle, they would regard him as the greatest of cowards, Brithnoth went forth to give them what they asked.

He had gathered together what force he could, and rather than wait for reinforcements and so give the Danes time to advance far, he set out with a comparatively small army, and

hastened away to Maldon, where, with poetic feeling, the Danes had decided to take their revenge.

Arrived at Maldon, he found the Danes in battle array; Brithnoth quickly put his own army in fighting order, and then went to the front to hear what the Viking herald had got to say.

The Danes had come for gold, or failing gold, for blood. They were pirates through and through. So, standing there on one side of the river (the estuary of the Blackwater, at Maldon, Essex, seems to have been the scene), the Viking herald lifted up his voice:

"The seamen bold send me to thee; they bid me say that thou must deliver to them forthwith thy treasures for thy safety; better it is for you that ye should buy off this warfare with tribute than that we should wage so hard a conflict. It boots not that we should slay each other; if ye will assent to this, we will ratify a peace with gold."

Brithnoth was angry; he would hold no truce with the pirates.

With buckler upraised, and shaking his slender javelin, he answered the sea-wolves' herald.

"Hear, thou mariner, what this people sayeth; they will for tribute bestow on you their weapons, the edge of their spears, their ancient swords, and arms of war, which shall not avail you in the fight. Herald of the men of the ocean I Deliver to thy people a message in return—a declaration of high indignation. Say that here stand undaunted an earl with his retainers, who will defend this land, the domain of my sovereign Ethelred, his people, and his territory; and the heathen shall perish in the conflict. . . . Point and edge shall determine between us in the grim game of war ere we give you tribute."

Back to the Danish camp the herald went, and down to the river bank the Northumbrian army moved. On the opposite bank the Danes were gathered, but between them lay the river, with the tide at the flow, which prevented either army crossing.

The battle began nevertheless, the warriors, unable to use their swords, sending in flights of arrows at each other.

So they waited till the ebb of the tide, when the Danes began to construct a bridge by which they could cross the river and fly at their foe. The bridge was made under difficulties, and the Viking Wulfstan and two comrades stood as guard over the workers. Down upon them went the English, but the bold three stood firm, giving and taking many a lusty blow. At last the bridge was in position, and the invaders began to pour across to the other side of the river where stood Brithnoth hurling defiance at them, taunting them, and waxing sarcastic and bidding them come on.

The Danes needed no second bidding; England was a fair country, and offered much plunder, so they went to the fight with zest and eagerness. The English let them cross the river—and the two armies met.

Then, with shouts and battle-cries, they hurled themselves at each other. The air was dark with javelins and arrows, and filled with the sound of crashing battle-axes, groans and screams of pain. Both sides fought as they loved to fight—hand to hand, with keen-edged swords, penetrating spears, and mighty axes, which crashed through bucklers and shields, and lay their bearers low.

All over the field deeds of valour were being done, youngsters scarce out of their teens vying with well-tried warriors, and proving their mettle. "Shouts arose—the ravens congregated—and the eagle greedy of its food," so says the noble Anglo-Saxon poem which celebrated the battle, "a cry was on the earth. They darted from their hands many a stout spear—the sharpened arrows flew—the bows were busy—the buckler received the weapon's point—bitter was the fight."

Thus the battle raged for several days, and at last the final combat came. The Vikings formed themselves into a wedge, and advanced on the Northumbrians, breaking through

their ranks, and doing terrible damage in the already decimated army.

Brithnoth and a great Danish chieftain met. First blood went to the Dane, who hurled a javelin that pierced buckler and hauberk and inflicted a serious wound on Brithnoth. He broke the spear shaft, and succeeded in getting the head out of the wound, and then, incensed at the blow, hurled his own javelin, pierced the Viking's neck, threw another which found its way through mail, pierced the heart, and laid the warrior low. Brithnoth had triumphed.

But his triumph was short-lived. A Viking dart sped through the air, transfixing the noble Northumbrian, and brought him to the earth. A boy standing at his side quickly plucked the spear from his master's breast and hurled it back, striking down the man who first had thrown it. But Brithnoth was wounded to the death, though he lay there issuing orders and inciting his men to fall on and drive the hated pirates back. A Dane approached to loot the earl of his rich apparel, his rings, his gems, his mighty sword. With a great effort Brithnoth raised himself, seized his battle-axe, and gave the thief such a blow as he had never before felt. It sent him scampering off.

It was Brithnoth's last blow, for the axe fell from his nerveless hand; the hero was dead.

The pirates flung themselves upon his corpse, mutilated and mangled it, though two youngsters stood watch over their fallen master and fought like brave men till speeding arrows and flashing swords sent them headlong over Brithnoth's body.

The fall of the chief struck dismay into the hearts of a large number of the English, and many of them, including Godric, son of Odda, and Godwy, played the coward, and left the field. With biting sarcasm the old poet cries: "They sought the woods, they fled to the fortress, they sheltered their lives!"

Others, however, scorned to flee; few though they were, they stayed to avenge the death of their noble chief. Shaking

their spears, whirling their battle-axes round their heads, they arrayed themselves in a solid wall and fell on the foe. Again bucklers crashed into bucklers, swords met swords—and the Saxons were through the ranks of the Vikings, and the carnage began afresh. Soon the Vikings rallied their broken ranks and fell on the Northumbrians. Men fell on all sides, yet not a Saxon flinched, though the battle was going against them, and the sea-wolves were carrying everything before them, hewing a way through the buckler-made wall of the Northumbrians.

For hours the conflict raged, and the flower of Northumbria's chivalrous forlorn hope bit the dust, till the field was a shambles, and bodies of brave men lay piled high. On went the mariners, not after the Saxons, but over them and through them, till at last the second battle of Maldon was lost and won.

The sea-kings from the North had conquered; and in that year of grace 991, for the first time England paid tribute to the pirate horde.

CHAPTER V

HASTINGS

Where the Last Saxon King Fought—and Lost

By the battle of Hastings England lost her last Saxon king and obtained her first Norman sovereign.

Harold, a prisoner to William the Norman, had some time before the death of Edward the Confessor vowed over the relics of the saints to do his utmost to secure the English throne for William. The Saxon took his oath under compulsion, and, what is more, it was not until afterwards that he was told he had sworn upon the saints' relics. Wherefore Harold considered himself free to do as he wished, and when Edward the Confessor shuffled off the mortal coil Harold stepped on to his throne. William was angry.

He made mighty preparations for an invasion of England, gathering men from various parts of Europe who hastened to his standard full of joy at the prospect of pillaging England. Adventurers, rogues, gallant knights, all hankered for a share in the work, especially as it had received the blessing of the Pope, who had consecrated and sent a banner to Duke William. By receiving the Pope's blessing and laying emphasis upon the fact that he was going forth to punish a man who had violated a solemn and binding oath, William really proclaimed a Holy War—a Crusade, in fact.

In due course the Norman had round him an army of sixty thousand men, a fleet of four hundred sailing ships, and over a thousand (some say three thousand) transport boats in which his warriors were to cross the Channel, on the other side of which Harold, well knowing that William was bent on trying to wrest his throne away, had mustered a fleet larger than England had ever had before.

William had intended to sail in the middle of August, 1066, but contrary winds and many other things delayed him until the beginning of September. It was a good thing for William, but a bad thing for Harold; the latter's fleet was not sufficiently well provided with food to daily about so long, while away in the North another fierce enemy had landed, and when he could ill afford to leave the South Harold had to march off to the North.

Harold of Norway was a claimant for the throne, and had been urged to press his claims by Earl Tostig, Harold's renegade brother. Harold did not need much urging, and with five hundred vessels and the best and fiercest Norsemen he could get, he sailed across the North Sea, looked in at the Orkneys, enlisted many of the islanders in his army, and then sailed down the coast to Yorkshire. Marching inland, he routed Earls Edwin and Morcar near York, entered York, and subdued the country from the Tyne to the Humber.

It was too much for a valiant Saxon king to stand. By a forced march he reached Yorkshire in four days, took the Norsemen by surprise, met them and beat them at Stamford Bridge on September 24th, killed their king and his own traitor brother, retook his captured country, and then prepared to march southward again to match his strength with the Norman invader.

Stamford Bridge had cost him dearly; hundreds of his best and bravest soldiers had fallen, and William had been able to land without opposition.

It is time to return to William.

When the wind changed in his favour he had embarked his army, and set off for England. A gale broke upon them, forced them down the French coast to St. Valery, casting many of the vessels upon the rocks, and wrecking them.

For a time this misfortune damped the ardour of the adventurers, most of whom were imbued with the superstition of

their age and argued that so bad a beginning augured a bad ending.

William persuaded them otherwise, and as a matter of fact the gale had befriended them, for it had delayed them so long that by the time they were finally able to start Harold was away in the North.

At last the winds changed, and the Normans embarked, hoisted their sails, and sped across the Channel, reaching Pevensey Bay, Sussex, between the castle of Pevensey and Hastings, late in September.

Running their ships on the beach, the archers disembarked first, bows ready lest the enemy should be hiding; then the knights, who at once mounted and lined up on shore, all accoutred and ready—a gallant-looking host, with pennons flying and armour glistening; then the carpenters who had brought, piecemeal, three wooden castles, one of which they put together.

As William stepped ashore he slipped and fell on his hands.

"An evil sign!" the army cried.

William was cunning; he knew what faith his men put in such little things, and picking himself up, holding two handfuls of English soil, he cried:

"See, my lords! By the splendour of God I have taken seizin of England with both my hands. It is now mine; and what is mine is yours."

During the next few days William busied himself with reconnoitring the country, massacring the Saxons who were unlucky enough to get in the way of his marauding bands, and setting up his other two castles.

Moreover, squadrons of cavalry were dispatched into the country to see where Harold was. Very soon they fell back on camp, reporting that the Saxon was hastening from York as

quickly as he could, and that ere long he would be within sight of Hastings.

It was true. Harold was at York when the news of William's landing was brought him, and though his soldiers were weary from their long march and fierce fighting, he determined to go south at once.

At almost every mile he was reinforced by men willing to fight for their country, and at London he received a large body of fresh troops. His brothers, Earls Gurth and Leofwin, urged him to delay meeting the Norman, advising him to remain in London, and lay waste the country round about, so that William, finding his provisions gone, and being unable to receive supplies from Normandy owing to the presence of the English fleet, which had once more put out to sea, should be at a disadvantage when he marched on London.

Even if the battle must be fought at once, they endeavoured to persuade him not to be present on the field, fearing that his breaking of the oath to William would bring down the vengeance of Heaven. As for themselves, they said, they were fighting justly for their country. "Leave us alone to fight this battle, and he who has the right will win."

Harold scorned the idea. Fresh from his victory at Stamford, he vowed that "he would give battle in person, and convince his subjects that he was worthy of the crown they had set upon his head."

When they found that he would not agree to their course, they followed him into Sussex, where, on the heights of Senlac, the Saxon camp was pitched.

On October 13th the two armies were almost face to face, waiting for the morrow to come when each side knew the battle for the English throne would take place.

Presently a messenger, Hugh Margot, came from the Norman camp, summoning Harold either to resign in favour of

William, or to refer the matter to the Pope for arbitration, or else to settle it by single combat in front of the assembled armies.

Harold refused to do either. William sent the monk again, this time promising that if Harold would keep his oath, the Norman would give him the country beyond the Humber, and his brother Gurth the lands previously held by Earl Godwin. Harold refused again.

Whereupon the monk, in William's name, called him a perjurer and a liar, and told him that he and all who aided him were excommunicated by the Pope.

Harold didn't mind being called a liar; but some of his chiefs disliked the thought of excommunication. At last, however, one of them spoke up saying that they must fight. The Norman had already given their lands to his captains, and promised them their goods, and all else in England, as soon as he should become king. What, then, were the English to do? But one thing; to fight, and fight they would.

The monk returned to camp and reported to William, who decided to begin the battle next day.

That night the Saxons spent in feasting; the Normans in prayers.

October 14th dawned.

William divided his army into three divisions, harangued them in inspiring words, and told them to strike hard and spare not, neither to ask nor give quarter.

Then the Duke went to his tent to gird himself for the fray, put his chain shirt on the wrong way about, reversed it with a laugh and said:

"A good sign, and a lucky one; you shall see the name of duke changed into king."

Then, having finished his war toilet, the Norman mounted his Spanish charger and rode out to his men.

Harold was ready, knowing the battle was at hand. A motley crowd his army was; peasants with forks and stakes, clubs and picks for weapons; archers and chain-clad soldiers. He had taken up a position on the hill of Senlac, commanding the broken ground between itself and the sea. "The hill itself is of a peninsular shape, stretching from the east to the south-west, and is united by a narrow isthmus to the great mass of the high road to the north . . . a sort of ravine at the base of the hill cuts off the south-western end of the battle-ground from the isthmus and the ground connected with it. The steepness of the ground here is considerable, at the extreme south-east end the . . . ascent is gentler. Turning the eastern end of the hill, which here takes a slightly forked shape, the ground on the north side . . . is exceedingly steep, almost precipitous. Along the south front of the hill, that most directly in the teeth of the invaders, the degree of height and steepness varies a good deal. The highest and steepest is the central point occupied with the buildings of the Battle Abbey. Some way westward from the abbey is the point where the slope is greatest of all, and here the access to the natural citadel is least difficult. But here a low detached broken hill, a sort of small island in advance of the larger peninsula, stands out as an outpost in front of the main mass of high ground, and as we shall see, it played a most important part in the battle."

Harold had it strongly protected by trenches and palisades, behind which his engines for casting stones were placed. In the midst of all was the royal standard, round which Harold and his brothers and the Londoners gathered. The first line consisted of the men of Kent, mailed, armed with javelins, battle-axes and swords. Harold, mounted on his charger, surveyed his army and exhorted it; then dismounted and took his place beneath the standard, and the dragon of Wessex. Thus they stood waiting.

They did not wait long. At nine o'clock the Normans advanced, three long lines. The first consisted of the archers and light infantry, led by Roger de Montgomery; the second, made

up of the men-at-arms, was commanded by Martel; the third, composed entirely of cavalry, was led by William himself, attended by Friar Toustain, carrying the Pope's banner.

On came the Normans to the sound of their battle song, sung by Taillefer, the minstrel, who as they drew near the English, received permission from William to strike the first blow.

Setting his horse at the gallop, the minstrel dashed at the English, thrust his lance into an Englishman's breast—and the battle had begun.

Drawing his sword and crying:

"Come on, come on! What do ye, sirs? Lay on, lay on!" he made for another Saxon. Taillefer fell, wounded to death, but as he dropped from his horse the Normans flung themselves at the English position crying "God is our help," as they clambered up the hill, and tried to tear down the palisades.

Firmly the English withstood the assault. Arrows and stones fell thick and fast among the Normans, many a Saxon javelin found entry between chain-mail, axes fell on Norman heads, cleaving helmets of steel, or crushed through hauberk. Norman arrows found many a billet, lances pierced many a leathern tunic; the Norman infantry made no headway.

True to their orders, the English stood their ground, sallying not forth lest the foe should get behind them. At last the Normans passed the fosse which Harold had made to protect one side of his army. Seeing the danger, the English charged furiously, hurling the Normans, horses and men, into it, many a Saxon being dragged in, and being done to death beneath the weight of falling bodies.

Dismayed at seeing some of their friends driven back, and, moreover, losing sight of their Duke, who, during that awful day had three horses shot under him, many of the Frenchmen began to turn back.

Aided by his half-brother Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, William rallied his men, crying:

"I live! I live! Death is behind you, victory is before you! By God's help we shall conquer!"

"Stand fast! Stand fast!" cried the bishop, mace in hand.

The Normans rallied, returned to the charge more furiously than ever; and the battle went on for six long hours, neither side seeming to gain the advantage. Now this side and then that achieved some little victory, only to be robbed of the gain. Once it seemed that William and Harold would come face to face; spurring his horse through the fighting through the Duke made for Harold, reached the barricades, when, crash! his horse had gone under, pierced by a spear hurled by the strong hand of Gurth. Springing to his feet, William faced the Earl, engaged him hand to hand, and felled him with a mighty blow. Harold's first brother had died! Leofwin fell soon after, and of the sons of Godwin Harold alone remained.

William now ordered his archers to shoot into the air, so that the arrows would fall upon English heads. "Thicker than rain before the wind, the arrows flew," and one of them struck Harold above the right eye. Half mad with agony, the Saxon king drew the arrow out, broke it, and threw it away, and leant upon his shield for support. Although filled with dismay at seeing their hero wounded, the English fought on with renewed vigour. William had at last to resort to a stratagem to draw them from behind their barricades.

When the fight was at its fiercest and yet the foe were unconquered, the Normans were ordered to fall back as if defeated. William had seen how, when his army had broken some time before, the English had rushed out after them, and he now thought that if he could induce them to leave their barricade, he might throw them into confusion. Little by little the Normans drew off; caught in the trap the English issued forth from their strong and well-defended palisades. Filled with joy, they pursued the Frenchmen, laying many a foeman low,

taunting them, jeering at them, calling them cowards, vowing that not a Norman should return to the land whence he had come.

At last the Normans turned, and to their dismay the English found they had left the safety of their barricades. Inch by inch they fell back, followed hard by their foes, who passed with them through the now broken-down palisades.

Back, back, back, they were driven, gathering round the last Saxon king and his standard, still proudly flying in the breeze. William now sent his cavalry at the charge, and the Norman knights sought the Saxon king.

Eager to come into mortal combat with Harold, William pressed his charger into the thick of the fight, striving to reach the standard, followed hard by his knights.

In all that day of valiant fighting, no fight was so terrible as that round the standard. Men fell in scores on both sides. Englishmen fought and died to guard their king; Normans fought as bravely to bring him to the ground. Time after time did the men of Kent and Essex force the Normans back, and had not William rallied them they must have fled the field.

Rising in his stirrups, he called on them to return; then, surrounded by a thousand men, he rushed at the English. The force of the impact broke the English ranks, though here and there fierce duels raged. Then yet again did the Saxons rally round their king, seeking in turn to kill the Norman Duke. One, a veritable giant, famed for his wrestling, attacked William with his hatchet; William spurred on his horse, aimed a terrific blow at the Saxon, and missed. Jumping aside, the giant lifted his hatchet high, and before the Duke could recover from striking the blow which had missed its mark, brought his great hatchet down on the Norman's head, beating in his helmet. Reeling from the shock, William yet pulled himself together for another blow; but the giant had gone, pursued by a score of Normans who pierced him through and through with their lances. "Loud was the clamour and great the slaughter; many a soul then quitted the

body it inhabited. The living marched over the heaps of dead, and each side was weary of striking. . . . The strong struggled with the strong; some failed, others triumphed." And now the Normans pressed so far that at last they had reached the standard. There Harold had remained, defending himself to the utmost; but he was sorely wounded.

Pressing through the stabbing, maddened throng, came a Norman knight. He reached Harold and struck him a mighty blow which brought him to his knees. Writhing with agony, the king struggled to rise, but in vain; another knight hurled himself upon him, struck him on the thigh with a great sword, and Harold, cut to the bone, fell to rue no more.

Still the fight went on; the standard still floated above that field of carnage, and twenty Norman knights vowed to take it or die. They charged; at the first onslaught ten bit the dust; at the second, the standard fell, and in its place there floated the banner of the Pope, and beneath it lay the mutilated body of the last of the Saxon kings. For four Norman knights had brutally hacked the wounded king to death.

The battle was lost and won, yet did the English keep up the fight till the shades of evening fell, fought with the recklessness of despair, with the courage born of vengeance; and then, kingless, leaderless—for their great chiefs had every one of them been killed—they turned and fled from the scene, pursued by the victorious Normans.

William had won; the Norman conquest had begun. That night William ate and drank on the battlefield, gave thanks for the victory, and then in a tent pitched in the midst of the dead and dying, slept—a king but for the crowning.

The crowning came on Christmas Day, for William, after a triumphant march through the south of England, arrived in London in December, and there in Westminster Abbey, amid the noise of strife without and the acclamations of his knights within, the Conqueror had the crown of England placed upon his head.

CHAPTER VI

DAMME

England's First Great Naval Battle

King John, having by his various misdemeanours, enraged certain of his enemies, found his kingdom under a Papal interdict, and Philip of France, with the authority of the Pope, preparing to invade England. John, realizing that his soldiers were by no means loyal enough for him to rely upon them, patched up a peace, took oath of fealty to the Bishop of Rome, and promised tribute.

This act of weak-kneed diplomacy on the part of John naturally put a stop to Philip's warlike preparations against him, but the French king, feeling spiteful against Ferrand, Count of Flanders, for having refused to enter into a league with him against John, preferring rather to form a secret treaty with the latter, determined to thrash the valiant Count.

King John, for all his faults, was true to his compact, and so, when Philip marched his army into Flanders, and dispatched a huge fleet to Damme, an old Flemish town, and the port to Bruges, the English fleet was sent across the Channel to join issue with Philip on behalf of the Count. The French, on arrival at Damme, had offered peace—at a price. It had been accepted, and the money paid. The French then broke faith, and plundered the town and neighbouring country.

The French fleet numbered something like seventeen hundred vessels, the English only five hundred—odds of over three to one. These numbers sound vast, but it must be remembered that the ships of the thirteenth century were far from being Dreadnoughts, and that they were, in fact, only small vessels, boasting one centre mast, with large square sails, blazoned with the arms of the nation to which the ships

belonged. Surmounting the sail were large, round turrets, from whose shelter cross-bowmen and archers were able to effect considerable damage to the enemy. With high poops and prows, gun-wales decorated with the shields of the knights who were aboard, sides well provided with grappling irons, these vessels, albeit small, were by no means to be despised, especially when it was a case of a chase, for, supplementing the sails, long sweeps were then thrust out and lusty arms, pulling with the vigour and enthusiasm for which seamen are known the world over, sent the ships racing across the sea.

Such was the English fleet that sailed with all haste across the Channel to the aid of Count Ferrand. William Longsword, Earl of Salisbury, commanded. Arriving off Damme, situated near the junction of the rivers Rey and Lieve, he found that he had come at an opportune moment, for while a few of Philip's vessels were moored inside the harbour, the larger ones, the "tall ships," were lying at anchor almost unmanned, most of the men being ashore engaged in pillaging the neighbourhood. It was too good an opportunity to be missed, and, having sent out scouts to learn the exact strength of the French, and finding that his task would be fairly easy, Salisbury gave the order for a general and immediate attack. The English bore down upon the French, fell to with a will—with such a will, in fact, that in a short time three hundred of the French vessels were captured, and over a third of that number were driven ashore. Having an eye to business, the English lost no time in ransacking the captured and stranded ships. When all that was worth having had been pillaged, they loaded the largest vessels with their spoils, manned them and sent them away to England, consigning the remainder to the flames.

So far, Salisbury had only attacked the ships riding at anchor outside the harbour. Having disposed of them, he next turned his attention to those within the harbour. He therefore dispatched his smaller vessels to effect the capture and destruction of the remaining French ships. In a short time the English had passed into the harbour, grappled with the French,

and there ensued a terrible hand-to-hand battle. The Frenchmen were, of course, at a disadvantage, inasmuch as so many of their seamen were ashore, but to the credit of these latter be it said that as soon as they perceived the state of affairs they made all haste to return, and so not miss the fun.



DAMME

"THE ENGLISH BORE DOWN UPON THE FRENCH."

The grappling-irons held fast, and the ships hugged each other so closely that the decks formed one great battlefield, and men could pass from one deck to another as the death-dealing work proceeded. The French put up a bold fight, and every inch that the English won was won at a terrible price.

While this was going on aboard the ships, Salisbury moved bodies of men on to the land, and these, "ranging themselves on both sides of the haven, beat the Frenchmen on both sides . . . till that finally the Frenchmen were not able to sustain the force of the Englishmen, but were constrained, after long fighting and great slaughter, to yield themselves prisoners."

Again the captured vessels were pillaged and fired, and then, having drunk of the cup of victory, Salisbury determined to drink still deeper if Fate should prove as kind to him again. Farther in the harbour there were still a large number of French vessels, protected by the town of Bruges, a formidable obstacle to be overcome, seeing that it held a large force of French. But obstacles are made to be overcome, and Salisbury set himself to the task of doing that in this case, especially as there was the prospect of a good haul in the event of victory.

Bringing his ships up before the town, he landed his men, who were joined by the Flemish Count. A grand assault was made, and a sharp engagement ensued. But this time the enemy was prepared, and a town is different from ships, and, moreover, Philip had been able to hasten from the siege of Gent, and hurl his force at the attackers. Salisbury found his match, the assault was unsuccessful, and so hot did the French make it that it was found advisable, after a glorious struggle, to call the English off. A retreat was, therefore, made to the ships, but so severe had the fighting been that Salisbury lost two thousand men, which, doubtless, caused him much mortification, seeing that by it he had effected nothing.

Still, it had been a fine battle, and one of which he had just cause to be proud, seeing that he had crippled Philip's fleet.

Regarding Philip, an index to his feelings may be found in the fact that, disgusted at having been so badly hit, and furious at having his scheme of vengeance knocked on the head, and knowing that there was little chance of saving his fleet, seeing that Salisbury was still in the vicinity, he gave Damme to the flames, burned what little remained of his one-time gigantic fleet, and shook the dust of Flanders from his feet.

So ended England's first great naval fight, her first pitched battle with France for the supremacy of the seas. England had won.

CHAPTER VII

BANNOCKBURN

Where Robert Bruce cast off the English Yoke and won for Scotland her Independence

What Edward I. of England had won Edward II. lost. He was a weak king, governed by favourites for whom he sacrificed the loyalty of barons and people, a king who took his ease while his foes in Scotland won back what the first Edward had taken from them.

Step by step Robert Bruce regained the lost ground, until at last Stirling Castle was the only stronghold in English hands; and this was besieged by a large force of Scotsmen. Sir Philip Mowbray commanded the castle, and he, by permission of Edward Bruce, hurried south to London to beg the King to hasten north to the relief of Stirling, it having been agreed between Bruce and Mowbray that unless this was done by June 24th the garrison would surrender.

It brought home to Edward II., as nothing else could have done, the sad straits into which he had come, and, almost in tears, he prepared to call out his military forces, although, be it said, not without the strong urging of the nobles, who looked back with regret to the days of Edward I., the Hammer of Scotland.

The royal summons called upon the military to meet the King at Berwick on June 11th, 1314, and thither hastened an army of one hundred thousand men, including forty thousand cavalry. From France, from Flanders, from Ireland, and from Wales troops hurried to the standard of Edward, and on June 22nd Bruce, who was stationed at Torwood Forest, midway between Stirling and Falkirk, received tidings that the royal

force was advancing from Edinburgh. He immediately moved his army of forty thousand men (and twenty thousand camp followers) to a piece of ground called the New Park. It was a strong position, crowning the slopes of a hill. The trees formed a considerable obstacle to the advance of cavalry, by means of which Edward hoped to win the day, especially as he was aware that Bruce was sadly deficient in this respect. Directly in front the position was protected by a morass, to pass which would be exceedingly difficult. To the right it was guarded by the steep woody banks of the rivulet of Bannockburn, and to the left by pits which Bruce had ordered to be dug, while strewing the ground in every direction were iron calthrops, three-pointed steel spikes, which would lame and disable the horses which trod on them. The pits, which were knee-deep, were carefully hidden by brushwood.

Bruce divided his army into four columns. The right wing was commanded by Edward Bruce; the left by Randolph, Earl of Moray, who was stationed near the church of St. Ninians, with orders to prevent, at any cost, the English from sending succour to Stirling, which lay in the rear of the Scottish position; the centre by Sir James Douglas and Walter the Steward, Bruce himself commanding the fourth column, which was held in reserve. "Angus of the Isles was with him, and there was stationed his little body of cavalry, under Sir Robert Keith, the Mareschal of Scotland, to whom he assigned the particular duty of attacking and, if possible, dispersing the English archers. The royal standard was fixed in the stone which now marks the centre of the Scottish line, and is protected by an iron grating."

By the time Bruce had made all his preparations the English army came in sight—a mighty concourse of men, with banners, pennons, flags, and standards of all kinds flying in the breeze and making so gallant a show that, reported two of Bruce's scouts, "the bravest and most numerous army in Christendom might be alarmed to behold."

On came the English troops, their mail and weapons gleaming in the sun. In the van came the archers, spearmen, and

billmen, covered by a host of mailed cavalry; behind them the remainder of the army debouched from the wood, which stretched away towards Falkirk, finding some difficulty in keeping any kind of formation owing to the narrow ground over which they had to pass. Surrounded by four hundred of his chosen knights, the flower of English chivalry, Edward commanded his great army in person.

This was on the 23rd. The battle really began on that day. While his main body was advancing Edward had sent Lord Clifford, with eight hundred horse, on a circuitous route towards Stirling Castle. The King had not forgotten the terms of the arrangement come to between Bruce and Mowbray, and thought that if Clifford and his cavalry could manage to reach Stirling unseen he might be able to effect its relief and so release Mowbray from his promise.

By making a very wide detour, Clifford's squadron managed to pass the Scottish line, and might have succeeded in reaching Stirling had not the glittering of their spears and the flashing of their armour in the summer sun caught Bruce's eye.

Riding up to Randolph, he cried:

"See, Randolph, there is a rose fallen from your chaplet! You have suffered the enemy to pass!"

Making no reply, Randolph hurried away at the head of five hundred spearmen to intercept Clifford. As soon as the latter perceived that he was discovered, he wheeled his squadron to the left, and charged down upon the Scots. In close order the spearmen waited for the impact. It came. The English charged full speed at the wall of spears, many a knight being unhorsed in the fruitless attempt to break through the phalanx. In a few minutes the devoted little column was surrounded and so hard pressed that Sir James Douglas craved Bruce's permission to go to their help.

"No," replied the King; "let Randolph redeem his fault!"

"So please you, my liege," said Douglas, "I must aid Randolph. I cannot be idle and see him perish."

Bruce unwillingly gave permission, and Sir James hastened away to the succour of his friend.

His aid was not needed, however. Randolph had redeemed his fault unaided, and when Douglas arrived he found that the English cavalry was in confusion.

"Halt!" cried Douglas to his men as he beheld this. "Randolph has gained the day. Let us not diminish his glory by seeking to share it!"

Meanwhile the English van was still approaching the field where the battle would take place on the morrow, for neither side seemed eager to begin till then. Bruce rode along his line, mounted on a small white palfrey instead of his great war-horse. Carrying his great steel battle-axe in his hand, and wearing a golden crown upon his head, he presented a conspicuous figure. For a moment Bruce advanced a little before his line to take better stock of the advancing English, and at the same instant there rode out of Edward's army an English knight, Sir Henry Bohun. Bohun had conceived the idea that if he could strike Bruce a fatal blow the battle would be terminated forthwith, and, mounted on his war-horse, and armed at all points, with lance couched, he dashed towards the King.

Despite the fact that he was well aware of his danger, for his small steed could not be expected to withstand the shock of the impact with the oncoming knight, Bruce stood his ground, calmly awaiting the attack.

With thundering hoofs, the charger raced over the intervening ground. Such was his speed that when, with a quick movement, Bruce turned his horse aside, Bohun was unable to pull up his mount, and went clattering past the King. Rising in his stirrups, Bruce brought his battle-axe down upon the head of the passing knight, crashing it through his helmet, shivering the mighty axe into pieces, and hurling Bohun to the ground dead.

Going calmly back to his own line, the King met with a smile the reproaches of his men, who grumbled at his having exposed himself to such danger, merely saying, as he looked at the remains of his axe:

"I have broken my good battle-axe!"

On the morning of June 24th the battle began in real earnest. Edward's trumpets sounded the attack, and as the Scots saw the great army massed against them they joined together in an appeal to Heaven for help.

The Abbot of Inshaffray walked barefoot through their ranks, exhorting them to fight boldly and bravely. As he passed among them they knelt on the ground before him, and King Edward seeing this cried:

"See! they crave mercy!"

"Yes," said Sir Ingram Umfraville, a Scottish traitor "But they ask it of God, not of us, for on that field they will be victorious, or die."

The main body of the English, under the command of the King, advanced in along, dense column, and assailed the Scottish line. Time after time they hurled themselves at the foe; but the wall of spears kept them back, broken and dismayed. The Earls of Hereford and Gloucester lead their cavalry at a fierce charge upon the right wing commanded by Edward Bruce, while at the same time the left wing was also attacked.

The battle had begun indeed. All along the Scottish line fighting was taking place. Standing like rocks, the Scots kept their ground, hurling back cavalry and infantry alike. Not a man budged, except those who fell beneath battle-axe, spear, or bill. The thunder of horses' hoofs, the clash of steel on steel, the thud of falling horses, and the cries of wounded men, mingled together to make the air hideous. Stepping on the calthrops, horses fell, throwing their riders headlong to the ground, to be put to death by the fierce Scots. Charging the right wing, Gloucester found the pits barring the way. Hidden as they were

by brushwood, none knew of their existence until horses stumbled into them and were pierced by the pointed hazel stakes which had been driven in. The column was thrown into confusion, and, to make confusion worse confounded, out came the Scottish infantry and a dreadful *mêlée* ensued.

In the centre Randolph pushed his men forward, piercing the English line, until his men became lost, as it were, in a sea of foes, but doing dreadful damage to their opponents.

Again and yet again did Edward hurl his cavalry at the foe; but the men on whom he had fixed his greatest hopes fell before the solid wall of rugged men from Scotland, or, if they reached the Scottish ranks, pitched headlong into pits they had not yet seen.

Then came the English archers, concentrating upon the Scottish centre, working awful havoc, and, so it seemed, about to turn the fortune of war, which had hitherto been all in favour of Bruce. The latter, however, had laid his plans well, and as soon as the archers approached, sent off Sir Robert Keith and five hundred mounted men-at-arms to outflank them.

Moving quickly round the morass, Keith charged at the archers, who, having neither short swords nor pikes with which to fight at close quarters, were very soon thrown into confusion. Into their ranks and through them, back again and yet again, Keith and his cavalry charged, cutting them down, piling them many deep, or scattering them in all directions, bringing disorder into the English main body.

Seeing that Keith had been successful in routing the archers, Bruce now advanced with his reserve, and sent forward his own bowmen, whom he had taken the precaution of arming with short axes in addition to their bows. Thick clouds of arrows sped through the air into the English cavalry, bringing down horses and men in scores; then, with a ringing Scottish slogan, the bowmen burst in upon them, doing dreadful execution with their axes. "It was awful," says Barbour, the poetical chronicler, "to hear the noise of these four battles (referring to the four

columns), fighting in a line; the din of blows, the clang of arms, the shouting of war-cries: to see the flight of arrows, horses running masterless, the alternate rising and sinking of the banners, the ground streaming with blood, covered with shreds of armour, broken spears, pennons, and rich scarves torn and soiled with blood and clay, and to listen to the groans of the wounded and dying."

When Bruce began to move forward with his reserve, the other three columns pressed forward more eagerly, crying, "On them! On them! They fail! They fail!" as indeed the English did. Back, back, were they forced, although they still put up a bold fight. At that moment, however, the camp followers on the hill at the rear of the Scottish position came into sight. Some historians say that Bruce had planned this; others assert that it was merely by chance that the camp followers appeared then, being intent upon taking part in the looting which would ensue as soon as the battle was over, which they had reason to believe would not be long. Whichever view may be correct, their appearance decided the day. Believing that a second army was about to fall upon them, and seeing Bruce and his reserve advancing at a headlong rush, which it seemed nothing could turn back, the English broke their ranks and fled in all directions.

Raising his battle-cry, and putting himself at the head of his reserve, Bruce rushed with fury against the failing ranks, chasing them far from the battlefield. To the south, through the deep ravine of Bannockburn, the greater number of the fugitives fled, hotly pursued by the victorious clansmen. Horses were worse than useless in that ravine—they served but to retard the flying men, who were quickly overtaken by the Scottish spears. The slaughter was fearful: horses and men simply choked the ravine.

Other fugitives made for the River Forth, dashing into its waters to escape their pursuers; but even there death found them, and those who escaped bill and spear were drowned.

Gloucester made a bold, yet foolhardy, attempt to renew the battle. Charging furiously at the Scottish infantry, he called upon his men to follow him. They followed, but little good they did! Hardly had Gloucester reached the foe than he was unhorsed and cut to pieces, although the Scots would have spared his life had they but known who their foe was; but, wearing no surcoat above his armour, Gloucester was not recognised. The forlorn hope had failed.

"King Edward, with a spark of knightly feeling, spurred his horse, resolving to die with his subjects," but the Earl of Pembroke and Sir Giles de Argentine, a crusader of great renown, seized his bridle and led him out of the press of the panic stricken field. As soon as the King was safe, Sir Giles bade him farewell, and saying, "It is not my custom to fly," dashed off to the fray, raising his battle-cry, "Argentine! Argentine!" Straight for the Scottish spears he rode, sending many a man to his last account ere a spear laid him low.

Meanwhile Edward had hurried off to Stirling, entreating Mowbray to open his gates for him. The Governor, true to his treaty with Bruce, refused, saying that he could not break his word: the castle had not been relieved.

Angry, dispirited, and ashamed, the fugitive King put spurs to his horse and fled through Torwood, making towards England, with Sir James Douglas and sixty horsemen in hot pursuit. For sixty miles they chased him to the very gates of the castle of Dunbar, into which, however, Edward managed to escape. Here he was received by the Earl of March, who, later, put him aboard a fishing skiff and sent him off to Berwick, "leaving behind him the finest army a King of England ever commanded."

The Battle of Bannockburn was won, and next day Stirling surrendered. The second Edward had lost what the first had gained.

CHAPTER VIII

AGINCOURT

The Battle of the English Archers

Soon after his accession Henry V. of England, seeking outlet for the energies of his knights (fearing, no doubt, that inactivity would breed discontent), egged France on to war. His method of procedure was crafty. France was convulsed with civil war, and, taking advantage of this, Henry sent embassies demanding the surrender of the French crown to himself. Naturally, the modest request was refused—refused, that is, by silence, for no answer was returned.

Henry, nothing abashed, preferred a new claim. In 1360 the treaty of Bretigny was made, by which England renounced all claims to the French crown, Maine, Anjou, Normandy, and Touraine; France on her part surrendering Gascony, Guienne, Poitou, Saintange, Périgord, Limoges, Montreuil, and Calais, paying 3,000,000 gold crowns, and receiving back her King John, who had been taken prisoner by Edward III. at the battle of Poitiers. Henry now demanded that the territories which had thus fallen to England should be forthwith handed over, together with several other provinces, and 1,600,000 gold crowns, the arrears of King John's ransom. As if this was not sufficient to cause the French government to laugh up its sleeve, Henry wound up by asking for the daughter of the French king to be given to him in marriage, with a dowry of 2,000,000 crowns.

To this France replied that the King would be willing to give 600,000 crowns with his daughter, and the duchy of Aquitaine.

Henry's reply was to summon Parliament and receive supply for war; but he also sent to France another embassy with moderated demands. The final result of all these negotiations

was that Henry was able to do just what he wanted—declare war.

The only thing that stood in Henry's way was that his treasury was almost empty. But what did this matter? There were the crown jewels—they could be pawned; there were people willing—or people who could be made to appear willing—to lend money; from these loans were raised.

Then at the head of an army of 30,000 men, including 6,000 cavalry, Henry embarked from Southampton and sailed across the Channel to the mouth of the Seine, where he arrived on August 15th, 1415.

Henry immediately landed his army, laid siege to the fortress of Harfleur, which surrendered on September 22nd, garrisoned it with English, and then struck off across country toward Calais, a journey of one hundred miles. It was a foolhardy adventure, but Henry swore that rather than the French should think he was afraid of them, he would get to Calais, despite the hundred thousand men who were marching to intercept him.

Henry's route lay through Picardy, where the Constable of France, with over fifty thousand men, awaited his coming; through Rouen, where the King and Dauphin lay with another army almost as large. Food was scarce, guides were not to be found, and the enemy dogged them all the way, cutting off stragglers, but refusing to be enticed into a general engagement.

By October 12th, four days after leaving Harfleur, Henry had reached the Somme. On the opposite bank of the river D'Albret and his main army appeared; the fords were impassable, and though Henry spent five days in trying to force a way through the river, every attempt was unsuccessful, for at each place where a passage was sought D'Albret appeared. At last, on the 19th, Henry cutmarched D'Albret, reached Vienne, found it undefended, dashed across the river, and marched on to Monchy-la-Gauche, D'Albret falling back on St. Paul, and finally on Agincourt and Ruisseauville, directly in the path of

Henry's route to Calais. Henry wavered not one whit from his purpose, and eventually it became evident that the day of battle had arrived.

Henry's army, consisting mainly of archers, now numbered about fifteen thousand men; the French force totaled some fifty thousand or more.

The night before the battle, the 24th, was dark and rainy, and was spent by the English in getting what rest they could, for their long forced march had wrought havoc with them; sick, many of them, hungry all, they flinched not from the coming battle. Wills were made and confessions; the King visited every part of his army and sent out spies to examine the ground.

Then came the dawn, prayers were said, and the army was led into the field. Like the bold warrior that he was, Henry kept to the fore. Clad from head to toe in bright, shining armour, emblazoned with the arms of England and France, with a rich golden crown surmounting his helmet, the young King presented a fine appearance.

Henry's sturdy archers, on whom he relied with the confidence that was to be so greatly justified, were posted in advance of his men-at-arms, four deep, and wedge shaped, a formidable front. These men had laurels of which to be proud; battle after battle had they won for England against their arch-enemies the French, and to-day, gaunt and haggard though they looked from their arduous march across country, the very sight of them struck terror into the hearts of the opposing army. "Many of them," according to a reliable authority, "had stripped themselves naked; others had bared their arms and breasts, that they might exercise their limbs with more ease and execution."

Every man of them was also armed with battle-axe and sword, and before him had planted obliquely a stout iron-tipped stake, forming a formidable rampart to the French cavalry.

Despite the brave show made by the English force some of the captains had not the same confidence of victory as had

Henry, who later, during his tour of inspection and exhortation, heard one of them say:

"Would that some of the good knights who are idle in England might by a miracle be transported to the field of battle!

Like a flash, Henry had turned upon him, crying:

"No, I would not have a single man more! If God gives us the victory, it will be plain that we owe it to His goodness. If He do not, the fewer we are will be the less loss to England. But fight with your usual courage, and God and the justice of our cause shall protect us."

And the opposing army? D'Albret had drawn his men up in a formation very similar to that of Henry, but so overwhelmingly did they outnumber the English that their line was thirty-nine deep as against four. D'Albret himself commanded the first division, the Dukes of Alençon and Bar the second; the Lords of Marie and Fallconberg the third. D'Albret, intent upon presenting a firm front to the English, made the mistake of crowding his troops into a narrow field between two woods, where it was impossible to deploy, or use their weapons with the ease of the English archers.

For some time the two armies faced each other, seated upon the ground, their weapons before them, waiting for the word that should send them forth into the fray. During this prelude, Henry quietly moved forward two detachments, one to set fire to some houses in the enemy's rear as soon as the engagement began, and so deceive them into thinking that they were out-flanked; the second to lie in ambush in a wood on their left flank.

While Henry was executing this manœuvre, D'Albret, who, despite his overwhelmingly superior force, felt by no means sure of victory, and little relished the prospect of the battle, endeavoured to gain time in the hope that he would receive some reinforcements he was hourly expecting. To this intent he dispatched three knights to Henry, offering him safe

passage to Calais on condition that he surrendered Harfleur and gave up all claim to the French crown. Henry dismissed the proposition with disdain, and refused to enter into any negotiations whatever except on the conditions which he had originally laid down.

Thus foiled of their purpose, the three knights tried another plan. One of them, the Sire de Helly, Maréchal of France, who had been a prisoner in England, and had been accused of breaking his parole, challenged to mortal combat, in front of the two armies, any man who was brave enough to repeat that accusation.

"Sir knight," answered the King, "this is not a time for single combat. Go tell your countrymen to prepare for battle; and doubt not that for the violation of your word, you shall a second time forfeit your liberty, if not your life."

"Sire," the Maréchal retorted, "I will receive no orders from you. Charles is our sovereign; him we obey, and for him will we fight against you whenever we think proper."

"Away, then," cried Henry, "and take care we are not before you!"

Then, before the French knights had time to turn, the King stepped forward, raised his sword, and called out to his men:

"Banners, advance!"

Immediately out stepped brave old Sir Thomas Erpingham, who, throwing his warder into the air, cried:

"Now strike!"

As one man the English moved forward, the archers carrying their iron-tipped stakes. Within a bow-shot of the French they halted, cast themselves upon the ground and kissed it, the priest elevating the Host in front of them. Then, with a loud ringing cheer of defiance, they once more drove their stakes into the ground, fixed their bows, stepped in front of their

rampart, let fly a cloud of arrows, and retired a pace. This first flight did terrible execution amongst the closely packed French army, and D'Albret, well knowing the dexterity of the archers, and having few himself, immediately determined to endeavour to break their ranks.

To this end he gave the word of command, and a company of twelve hundred cavalry moved forward at the charge. Before them, immobile and unafraid, stood the English archers, once more in front of their stakes. Shower after shower of arrows came hurtling through the air, and then the archers retreated behind their rampart to await the onset of the thundering cavalry. These, with cries of "Montjoye! St. Denis!" dashed over the intervening ground, horses slipping hopelessly, men falling, armour and visors pierced through and through by the well-aimed arrows sent on their death-dealing way by strong English arms. On, on, they came, these prototypes of the glorious Light Brigade. Floundering amidst the clayey soil, reeling and stumbling against each other, heads turned aside to escape the unerring arrows, they soon fell into greatest confusion. A thousand of them never reached the iron-tipped stockade, and riderless horses, panic-stricken, turned about and galloped back into the ranks of the French army, causing disorder and confusion amongst the first division. The remainder gallantly rode on, reached the stockade, only to be met by a fierce onset of the English archers, who, slinging their bows behind them, grasped battle-axe and sword and dashed out upon them. Back were the French driven, back on their own ranks. These steel-clad horsemen were no match for the fierce infantry from England, who with their hatchets wrought terrible execution, chasing the flying cavalry into their own lines.

At the same moment the men in ambush fell upon the French flank, and there began one of those conflicts for which the battles of olden times were renowned. Plunging horses, maddened by sword-thrusts and quivering arrows; hacking and stabbing men, fighting for life and country, for glory and for king, combined to make up a hideous tragic episode in a great

and dreadful battle. Nothing could quench the valour of the attacking English, nothing could turn them back; and in a short time D'Albret's first division was scattered, its commander and most of his officers slain. It was a triumph for the rugged archers, unaided by the men-at-arms.

The fleeing French, pursued by the archers, moved back on the second division, which in its turn was thrown into confusion, and must also have been driven back at once had it not been for the fact that at that moment the Duke of Brabant, in the vanguard of the expected reinforcements, charged at the head of his cavalry. Nothing daunted, the men of the bow and battle-axe kept on their way, bringing horses and men to the ground. Brabant suffered a similar defeat to that sustained by the previous squadron, and in a short while the archers had reached the second division.

Here another fierce conflict raged; the French horses had sunk to their girths in the mud, the men-at-arms, weighed down by their armour, were up to their knees in it. Yet all stood their ground, fighting like grim death to turn back the lithe, untrammelled, leaping English.

Meanwhile Henry, at the head of his men-at-arms, had come up, intending to charge, but seeing the state of the ground, and knowing that to advance meant being in as bad a plight as the French, held off and rallied his bowmen for another concentrated attack. By this time the King had dismounted from his charger and led his men into the thick of the battle. In his glittering armour and golden crown, he presented a conspicuous mark for the French, among whom were many, including the Duke of Alençon, who had vowed to kill or capture him.

Henry gave the word, and the battle began afresh, this time with renewed vigour. The archers led as before, and, with Henry at their head, attempted to pierce the French lines. The King's fearlessness and valour brought him into many dangers. Fighting side by side with the Duke of Clarence, the latter was brought to the ground by the battle-axe of a knight. Leaving the

knight with whom he was engaged, Henry rushed to the assistance of Clarence. Striding the body of the fallen duke he met the onslaught of the knight, slew him and held off other assailants who crowded in upon him, until the duke was carried off to safety.

At this instant the knights who had vowed to kill Henry, eighteen in number, hurled themselves upon him. One of them struck him a terrific blow with his battle-axe, bringing him to his knees, but, seeing the plight of their King, a number of his followers closed round him and slew the whole of the attackers. Then did the Duke of Alençon advance. Fighting his way with glorious courage through Henry's bodyguard, he struck the Duke of York to the ground, killing him instantly; then turning his attention to Henry, cleft the crown on the royal helmet. Staggering from the impact of the blow, Henry yet faced his foe, and with one stroke of his sword brought him to the ground, turned and slew two attendants, and would then have slain the duke had he not cried out;

"Hold! I yield! I am Alençon!"

Henry immediately held forth his hand, but he was too late. His devoted followers, seeing the King's danger, had rushed upon Alençon and slain him.

Meanwhile in other parts of the field the battle had been going strongly in favour of the English, and the French second division, seeing their commander fall, lost heart and began to fly in all directions, despite all that D'Albret did to incite them to return to the fray. The third division, fresh and in good condition, might still have turned the fortune of the battle, had they but then fallen upon the English, who, wearied by long fighting, would probably have been forced to retire, if only for a while to regain their strength. As it was, the French, seeing their comrades of the first and second divisions scattered like chaff before a wind, began to give way without striking a blow, especially as they saw coming towards them at the charge four

hundred English horsemen who had until then remained in ambush.

The second division still continued to fight, though it was but a hopeless effort, for so disheartened were they that the English found it easy to kill and capture. Fourteen thousand prisoners were made, and their arms taken from them.

While this work was proceeding, Henry, seeing that the third division had not yet left the field, although they were slowly retreating, dispatched a herald warning them to retire at once on pain of receiving no quarter from the victorious English. The French needed no second bidding; the half-doubtful retreat turned into a headlong rush.

But the blood of the French had not ceased to flow. Suddenly at the rear of Henry's triumphant army there arose a loud tumult, and word was brought him that the French had reformed, or that reinforcements had arrived, and were falling upon his rear. Believing that the battle was about to recommence, and wishing to guard against the prisoners turning upon him during the fray, Henry ordered all except those of rank to be put to the sword.

Then began a terrible carnage; weaponless, defenseless men were slaughtered by the thousand, some without resistance, others making a brave show although unarmed; and ere Henry discovered that the tumult at the rear was caused by a few hundred fugitives endeavouring to pillage the camp, fourteen thousand French soldiers had been put to death. Henry immediately stopped the slaughter, though the mistake might have cost the English dear, for the third division, deceived into believing that their reinforcements had arrived, took fresh courage and seemed about to begin the battle again. When, however, they too discovered the reason of the tumult, they once more turned and left the field.

Little remains to be told. Henry, realising that his troops were by this time needful of rest, gave orders that the pursuit of

the flying French was to stop, had the wounded tended, and surveyed the field of battle.

While this was being done there came a French herald, Montjoye, seeking permission to bury the dead. To him Henry turned and said:

"We have not made this slaughter, but the Almighty, we believe, for the sins of France. To whom does this victory belong?"

"To you, sire, the King of England, and not to the King of France," replied Montjoye sadly.

"And what castle is that which we can perceive in the distance?" asked Henry.

"It is called the castle of Agincourt," answered the herald.

"Then since all battles ought to be named after the nearest castle, let this henceforth and lastingly be called the battle of Agincourt."

Thus ended the battle, and after holding a service of thanksgiving and giving his men the needed rest, Henry marched on his way to Calais, no more molested by the French, who in the conflict had lost some thousands of men, including seven princes of the blood, D'Albret, Brabant, Alençon, and Bar, and a whole host of her gallant knights; besides having had about fourteen thousand men of all ranks captured, while England had lost but sixteen hundred men.

Henry and his archers had triumphed; France had been humbled.

CHAPTER IX

CAXAMALCA

The Story of a Great but Shameful Victory

There is but one excuse for including this incident in this collection, and that is that it throws a light upon the methods of the conquerors of the New World. It shows how the soldiers of fortune of the sixteenth century braved the terrors of the unknown, and with a mere handful of followers aimed at the subjection of vast empires; and often reached their goal. Properly speaking, it was not a battle, but a massacre, and in order to understand it fully, we must briefly recount the adventures of Pizarro and his little band of conquerors.

Francisco Pizarro discovered Peru, and he conquered it. But no conquest was ever made by more shameful means. Like all the adventurers of his age—and Pizarro was an arch-adventurer—he went out into the unknown to search for country and for gold; if both could be obtained without bloodshed, so much the better, but if not, well, he had the blessing of the Pope; and what were often nothing more than unprovoked attacks on peaceful inhabitants were exalted into holy wars. With a Bible in one hand, a sword in the other, the conquistadors passed through the New World, telling the story of the Prince of Peace, but more often using the weapon of death. Yet it might perhaps be too severe to call them hypocrites; it was the spirit of the age.

Pizarro, then, discovered Peru, the fabled land of gold, the Eldorado of the New World. He returned to Spain, exhibited his trophies of gold and silver, fine fabrics and what not, received the right to conquer the country, and with one hundred and fifty men set out to do the conquering. He duly arrived in the New World; where Diego de Almagro, an old associate of his, received with jealousy the news that Pizarro had been appointed

to effect the conquest of Peru. With the bickerings of the adventurers we have nothing to do; suffice it to say that they patched up a peace, and that shortly after Pizarro left Panama with just over two hundred men, twenty-seven of them mounted.

Three fair-sized vessels carried the adventurers down the coast to the Bay of St. Matthew. Here they disembarked, and continued their journey on land, following the coast. The inhabitants of the towns and villages fled at their approach, leaving enormous wealth to the invaders. The marching was done under great difficulties: through blinding sand, beneath the scorching rays of the sun, the invaders had to pass. Then a plague broke out, killing many and prostrating others; yet still they kept on, though some of the soldiers cursed the day that they had enlisted under the banner of the conqueror.

Arrived on the Gulf of Guayaquil, they received reinforcements which brought up their numbers to about three hundred. After some conflicts with the natives, in which several of his men were killed, Pizarro began to reconnoitre the country, and after about a month spent in this work, he founded a town, setting up church, fortress, magazine, justice house, and appointing officials. San Miguel he named his settlement in honour of the saint by whose help he had won so many victories. Fifty men were left in charge of the place, the remainder setting out shortly afterwards on their journey inland.

Pizarro's destination was about twelve days' journey from San Miguel, and his object was to come into contact with the Inca Atahualpa, who had but recently carried out a successful revolution against his brother, Huascar, who was captured by a ruse and kept a close prisoner, after having been made to witness the massacre of nearly all his friends and relatives.

Pizarro knew that the Inca was at the head of a mighty and victorious army, but that did not deter him from venturing. He had come out to conquer Peru, and there was but one thing for him to do, and that was to go forward. So forward he went. On September 24th, 1532, he left San Miguel at the head of the

absurdly small force with which he intended to subdue an empire.

To the Spaniards the country through which they passed seemed like an earthly paradise; rich soil, covered with verdure and beautiful flowers which scented the air; majestic forests, fine streams, and admirable artificial waterways which the people—the last of an ancient and noble civilisation had made to render their country even more fertile.

Five days' journey from San Miguel, Pizarro called a halt to rest and take stock of his men, some of whom were discontented. The conqueror determined to have no malcontents—they might bring disaster—and calling them all together, he explained the hazardous nature of the enterprise and gave them the opportunity to go back. Nine of them chose the lesser part, and returned to San Miguel, but the rest vowed to see the adventure through to the end.

So, with a hundred and sixty-eight men the adventurer went on his way to effect the conquest of an empire. For two days he journeyed, and then reached Zaran, a town in a fertile valley lying some distance from Caxas, where Pizarro learned that a large Peruvian force was quartered. Thither he dispatched Hernando de Soto to glean information. Hernando was long in coming, and a week passed before he returned to Zaran, but when he did come he was accompanied by an envoy from the Inca, and several other Peruvians.

Soto had reached Caxas to find its inhabitants in anything but a peaceable mood, but by dint of much persuasion he had managed to win them over to such an extent that he was able to explain the reason of the presence of the Spaniards. A Peruvian tax-collector informed him that the Inca was at Caxamalca, "a place of considerable size on the other side of the Cordilleras, where he was enjoying the luxury of the warm baths, supplied by natural springs, for which it was then famous, as it is at the present day" (Prescott's "Conquest of Peru"). After visiting Guancabamba, Soto had, with the Peruvian envoy, returned to

Zaran to convey his news. The envoy brought numerous valuable presents to Pizarro, and, moreover, was the bearer of a greeting, and an invitation from the Inca to visit him in the mountains.

Pizarro decided to accept the invitation, and sent off the ambassador with a message to that effect, giving him presents for the Inca. Eventually Pizarro resumed his march, and after varying fortunes reached the foot of the Andes, delivered a rousing address to his troops, received their cries of "Lead on, lead on!" and then set his face upwards.

They were going to cross the Cordilleras. We need not follow them through the long and arduous journey. At length they reached the crest of the mountain range, and there received information from a messenger, whom Pizarro had sent on in advance, that the way was clear, and that the Inca had dispatched an embassy bearing more presents and expressing the hope that the Spanish captain would soon show himself at Caxamalca. The envoy and his attendants arrived.

Pizarro assured him that he was coming as quickly as he could. So far the adventurer had been polite; now he became rude. The ambassador boasted of Atahualpa's greatness, whereupon Pizarro answered that the Inca was infinitely inferior in every respect to the great white monarch whom the new-comers represented. With grave and expressionless mien the Peruvian listened to this diatribe, and departed—to inform the Inca, no doubt, of what he had heard and seen.

Next day the troops began the descent of the Cordilleras, and met another embassy, which they received with courtesy. Almost at the same time another messenger whom Pizarro had sent on in advance hurried up to the camp with the information that he had been treated scurvily by the Peruvians. They had repudiated his mission to see the Inca on behalf of the Spaniards, and refused him admission. Moreover, he told Pizarro that the Inca was a crafty, treacherous man, who, far from being at Caxamalca, was encamped some distance away with an army of

about fifty thousand men, intending, no doubt, to entice the Spaniards into the city, and then surround it.

Pizarro concealed his vexation and suspicions from the Peruvian embassy, and sent it off to the king with assurances of his coming. At last the Spaniards came in sight of Caxamalca, and sure enough the city was empty of troops, and the Inca was encamped about a league away, in a strong position on the hills.

Putting a bold face on a sorry matter, Pizarro advanced courageously, with banners and streamers flying in the breeze, mailed men and horses making a great display, and one which inspired terror into the hearts of the Peruvians, who watched their advance from a distance. On the evening of November 15, 1532, the Spaniards entered the city, which was a noble one, with clay and hewn stone buildings, some of them of immense size.

Not a soul came out to greet them; every Peruvian had gathered into the king's camp, and thither Pizarro immediately dispatched Soto and fifteen of his cavalry to interview the Inca. Soto and his troopers clattered off, followed soon after by Hernando Pizarro and twenty others, the elder Pizarro conceiving that the first force was far too small to make an impression on the Peruvians.

The embassy was conducted to the Inca's bath, in the courtyard of which that potentate sat surrounded by a large number of his nobles arrayed in gallant attire.

With almost scant ceremony, and without dismounting, Hernando Pizarro and Soto and one or two others approached the Inca, and Pizarro acquainted him with the fact that they came from the commander of the white men who had arrived at Caxamalca. They had come to instruct him and his people in the doctrines of the only true faith, and to offer him their help in his battles. They invited him to visit the new-comers in Caxamalca.

The Inca remained as dumb as a post, and almost as impassive. Only a courtier answered the Spaniards, saying "It is well."

Pizarro had another try, and at last the Inca condescended to reply, promising to visit Caxamalca in the morning, but commanding that the Spaniards were to take up their quarters only in the buildings on the square of the city.

The embassy shortly after returned to their commander, by no means so confident of success as they had hitherto been. Pizarro the elder, however, lost none of his composure or courage, and succeeded in reviving the spirits of his men. He then called a council of war and laid bare his plans, which were nothing less than to effect the capture of the Inca himself when he should look in upon them on the morrow; he was to be ambushed.

A bold plan, the very audacity of which must almost have staggered his followers. They realised, however, that it was only by treachery such as was proposed that they could hope to obtain the upper hand, for what were a hundred and seventy men against the horde of Peruvians into which they had thrust themselves?

It was decided to adopt Pizarro's plan.

Sentries were posted on all commanding points, the cavalry was divided into two divisions and concealed in the large hall which opened on to the square; Pedro of Candia and two pieces of ordnance were stationed in the fortress at the end of the square, and the infantry took up their position in other of the buildings. Pizarro had a little band of twenty men hidden away with himself to act according to the exigencies of the moment. He issued orders that the Inca was to be allowed to enter the square unmolested, that the priest Valverde was to meet him and proclaim the Christian message, and at the waving of a scarf, a gun was to be fired, and the hidden troops were to dash out on the unsuspecting Peruvians.

The night passed peacefully, as did the greater part of the next day. Atahualpa sent a message saying he was coming with his soldiers fully armed, a proposal to which Pizarro could but agree. He went as far as to assure him of a brotherly welcome! Later on, the Inca and his force began to advance, but stopped just outside the city. Atahualpa sent a messenger to say that he would not be coming till the next morning, and this time Pizarro protested that he would be put to much inconvenience if the Inca persisted in this course. The Inca graciously assured him that he would come that night after all, and would, moreover, not bring many of his soldiers, and that all would come unarmed.

Nothing could have suited Pizarro better! Towards evening, the Inca and some five or six thousand of his followers, all unarmed and unprepared for the horrible incident that was to follow, entered the tragic square, others coming in quickly. Not a sign was to be seen of the Spaniards; with hands on swords and guns they were safely hidden away, waiting for the signal to fall upon their victims:

"Where are the strangers?" asked the Inca, looking down from his gorgeous palanquin of gold and silver and rich plumes.

For answer there appeared the priest, holding in his hand either a Bible or a breviary. Addressing the Inca, he explained the reasons of their coming, and then he launched forth into a long harangue (given through an interpreter) upon the doctrines of Christianity, winding up with the assertion that the Pope, the Vicegerent of God on earth, had granted to the great white king the right to conquer the Western hemisphere. Hence their presence. If the Inca would throw over his own faith and embrace that of which they were the messengers, and own allegiance to the Spanish emperor, he would receive help and protection against all his foes.

A curious sermon!

The Inca, furious and indignant, vowed that he would be tributary to no man.

"I am greater than any prince on earth," he said. "Your emperor may be a great prince; I do not doubt it, when I see that he has sent his subjects so far across the waters; and I am willing to hold him as a brother. As for the Pope of whom you speak, he must be crazy to talk of giving away countries which do not belong to him. For my faith, I will not change it! By what authority do you say these things?"

Valverde held up his book. The Inca took it in his hands, glanced through its pages and hurled it from him. He had had enough! He demanded that the Spaniards should give an account of themselves.

Valverde picked up his book, left the Inca in a fume, and hurried off to Pizarro. After acquainting him with what had happened, he urged him to set on, absolving him on the spot for whatever he might do.

Pizarro needed no urging. He waved his scarf, the signal gun spoke forth its dreadful message, and the carnage began.

Putting himself at the head of his twenty men, Pizarro raised his war-cry, "St. Jago and at them!" and charged into the square. From their places of concealment the Spaniards issued forth into the square. The artillery in the fortress let fly, the infantry poured in a dread, terrible fire, which simply scared the Peruvians out of their wits, and the cavalry charged down upon them with flashing swords and trampling horses. In a moment all was confusion. The sight alone of the strange-looking men on horses, seemingly all in one piece, struck terror into the Peruvians, who turned to flee from their attackers. Men fell by the score, and their bodies, piling high on top of one another, blocked every avenue of escape. The crush was awful; the victims of the treacherous onslaught fought each other in their attempts to escape the whirling swords that laid so many low. At last they made a way of escape for themselves, although unwittingly. The heaving mass pressed against the wall of the plaza, a solid structure of clay and stone; crash! a great mass of it was hurled to the ground, leaving a space of some fifty yards

or more in length, through which the Peruvians rushed, followed immediately by the Spanish cavalry who slashed and hacked to their hearts' content.

The centre of the massacre, however, was round the palanquin of the Inca. Pizarro meant to capture him; the Peruvian nobles determined to frustrate any such design, and ranged themselves round their monarch. Unarmed, defenceless, they set themselves against the white men, whom they tore from their saddles or met in unequal combat on foot. Dozens of them fell, yet the fight went on, the palanquin swaying as the crowd swayed. The Peruvians fought with the courage born of despair, "yet they still continued to force back the cavaliers, clinging to their horses with dying gasp, and, as one was cut down, another taking the place of his fallen comrade with a loyalty truly affecting."

The Spaniards fought with ferocity, their weapons, of course, giving them the advantage, though the numbers of the Peruvians rendered it difficult to get at the Inca. Yet the Inca must be captured or they were all lost. Upon this depended not only their lives but the success of their venture. Night was coming on apace, and still the monarch was safe in his palanquin. Some of the Spaniards sought to put an end to matters by killing the Inca, but Pizarro warned them that the Spaniard who dared to do this would do so at the sacrifice of his own life. At that instant Pizarro received a wound in the arm, inflicted by one of his own men. The Conqueror had stretched out his arm to turn aside a blow aimed at the Inca, and he received it himself; and he was the only Spaniard wounded in all that dreadful fray.

The Peruvians tried to get the Inca's palanquin towards the opening in the wall; the Spaniards tried to prevent them, and at last the latter, having succeeded in killing most of the bearers, rushed the litter, over turned it, caught the Inca as he fell, and, after a severe struggle, secured him and bore him off to one of the halls.

The plan had succeeded; in full view of his army the Inca had been taken prisoner by a handful of determined men.

But at what a price! Some historians say that two thousand, others ten thousand, Peruvians fell during the battle that was a massacre. And all during thirty brief minutes—a half hour that must ever live in history as one of the most appalling the world has ever known. Pizarro had won the day—indeed, had by that one great fray all but conquered Peru. But he had won through dishonour, through treachery, and through massacre; and he had clothed it in the mantle of religion.

When the Peruvians saw that their monarch had been captured, they one and all took to their heels, seeking to put as much distance as possible between them and the Spaniards; the army that had remained in camp also fled, pursued by the white men until they were recalled by the blare of a trumpet in Caxamalca.

After events must not detain us, though there is a temptation to follow the Conqueror. One thing must be told, however. After much dallying and long negotiations, and another breaking of faith on the part of Pizarro, the Inca was condemned to death and executed by the garotte. Pizarro pursued his triumphant course, and at last Peru was conquered and annexed to the Spanish crown.

CHAPTER X

THE SPANISH ARMADA

Philip of Spain's proposed Invasion of England was a deep and well-laid scheme; but it failed

Apart from his political reasons, Philip considered that he had a mission to wipe Protestantism off the face of the earth, but what made him determine to tackle England was undoubtedly the fact that, unlike her sister of black fame, Good Queen Bess had refused to marry him; moreover, he felt that the crowns of England and Scotland were his by right of the bequest of Mary Queen of Scots. So, to cloak his revenge and greed, he proclaimed a Holy War, received the spiritual and financial aid of the Pope, and prepared a huge Armada to carry his army over to England. Once on shore, he had not the slightest doubt that the Catholics in England would make the task of conquest easy. In this, as in many other things, he was deceived. For Catholic vied with Protestant to furnish the means wherewith to repel the invader.

There was much delay. For one thing the valiant Drake dashed into Cadiz Harbour, where ships and stores were being collected for the great day, destroyed some dozen ships, captured others and a large quantity of provisions and treasures, and then sailed off along the coast to continue his "singeing of the king's beard."

There were also many subterfuges, and, to hide his design, Philip professed peaceful desires. But England was not deceived, and prepared against the invasion. At last subterfuges and delays were done with. The Armada sailed. In very truth it was a gallant enough and formidable enough looking array. One hundred and thirty ships of fifty-nine thousand tonnage, some seventy of them great galleons, eight thousand sailors, two

thousand galley slaves to work the sweeps, over three thousand great guns, and twenty thousand soldiers from every part of Christendom—such was the force that Philip sent against England; While in Flemish ports was a large army under the Duke of Parma waiting to invade England.

The fleet was divided into ten squadrons, all pretty equal in strength, under supreme command of the Duke of Medina Sidonia.

But for all its impressiveness and apparent greatness, the Armada was weak—weak, that is, compared with the fleet which it was to meet, for although the English ships were nothing like so large, nor their guns so numerous, yet the former were more seaworthy and better handled, while the latter were manned by superior gunners whose aim was sure.

Meanwhile in England active preparations were being made. For some years the English had expected this invasion, and had been arming ready for it. The coast had been surveyed and its weak spots defended; the militia had been called up for training; beacons were looked to, to see that they were ready to flash their warning light through the country; a camp was formed at Tilbury, and the Queen herself rode through the ranks, encouraging her loyal soldiers, and, with eloquent speeches, keeping alive the fire of enthusiasm that burned in the breast of every man. Thus was England's second line of defence ready in case the invaders set foot on English soil.

Some there were who advised that the enemy should be allowed to land, and the battle be fought in England but others, the wiser spirits of the time, insisted that the only way to frustrate Philip was to tackle him on the high seas, those seas which the English sea-dogs had learned to love, and on which they had fought so many noble fights and won so many gallant victories. As can be imagined, Francis Drake was of this view; so also was Raleigh. They prevailed, and at last, after much vacillation on the part of the strong-minded Queen, England's first line of defence was called together.

It was a force not to be despised. The Royal Navy consisted of thirty-four ships, with tonnage varying from thirty to eleven hundred, and carrying some eight hundred guns and six thousand men.

Elizabeth asked London to supply her with fifteen ships and five thousand sailors; London sent her twice that number. All the great seaports gave their quota, as did also men of means and adventurers from the Spanish Main. Altogether England's fleet totaled some one hundred and ninety ships, with a tonnage of thirty-one thousand, against the Spanish fleet of one hundred and thirty, with a tonnage of fifty-nine thousand.

While the Spaniards waited to make their final arrangements, the English kept guard. But Spain was long in coming, and Elizabeth was short of patience and money; so, when she found that Philip dallied, she dispersed the fleet (January, 1588), at the same time accusing Drake of wasting precious money on useless firing practice! Of course, the sea-dogs grumbled, but the Queen was Queen—she never would be a mere figurehead.

Eventually, however, the Armada sailed. At the end of May the mighty fleet left Lisbon, only to be driven back by the winds of heaven. The English fleet had been got together again, and Lord High Admiral Howard sailed forth to come to grips with the foe. The same storm that dispersed the Spaniards sent Howard back towards Plymouth. Still hoping to meet the Armada well away from the English coast, he sailed out again, sending scouts to find out what had happened to the foe. The scouts returned newsless, and Howard once more put in at Plymouth.

Elizabeth's patience was again strained to the breaking point, and, on Howard asking for more money, she proposed paying off some of the ships. Howard bluntly refused to do anything of the kind, vowing that he would rather pay expenses himself. He meant to be ready.

It was as well, for on July 12th Medina Sidonia made his second attempt to reach England. It may be as well to say here that the Spanish Admiral was the man least fitted for so great an undertaking as had been entrusted to him. He had taken the place of Admiral Santa Cruz, into whose hands the task had been put, but who died ere the Armada was ready to sail. As a matter of fact, Sidonia realised the difficulty of the work before him, and after the fleet had been driven back by the storm he proposed sending to Philip to ask him to abandon the expedition. His lieutenants refused to be parties to such a confession of weakness, and Sidonia perforce had to keep on his way—the way to disaster.

Sidonia's object was to join forces with Parma, so that the latter might be able to transport his men to England under the convoy of the Armada; but, as events proved, they were not of the slightest use.

The Spaniards sailed up into the Channel, and by July 20th were off the Lizard, sailing in front of the south-westerly wind.

On the Hoe at Plymouth, so the story goes, Howard, Drake, Raleigh, and many another were engaged in a game of bowls. Looking out across the Channel, one of them espied a little pinnacle racing towards them. "Who is it?" they asked of one another.

They soon knew. In a few minutes the pinnacle made the shore, her captain leapt on land, and, hurrying on to the Hoe, burst in upon the players with his cry:

"The Spaniards are here!"

"What say ye?" queried a thick-set, bullet-headed man. "The Spaniards are come? Ah! well, there's plenty of time to finish the game, and beat the Spaniards too!" It was Drake who spoke thus.

The game was finished, and the greater game began. Along the cliffs and through the land the beacons flared, sending

the tidings through the country that the Spaniards at last had come.

The Admirals quickly hurried aboard their ships, and in the morning found that the Spaniards had passed Plymouth and were rolling up the Channel towards Calais. Sidonia had been advised to enter Plymouth Sound and attack the English ere they were fully prepared, but, like a weak commander, he had scorned the advice, and so missed his opportunity.

Howard, sailing on the *Royal Ark*, had under him but some eighty ships—the remainder of his fleet being at different places on the coast, chiefly in the Downs, where Lord Henry Seymour was in command—and sailing before him, in an enormous crescent formation, with horns seven miles apart, was Spain's Armada. Howard meant to frustrate Sidonia's attempt to join forces with Parma, and in this he was ably assisted by Seymour and by the Dutch ships which were blockading Parma's army in Flemish ports.

Howard began the fight by sending out the *Defiance* to fire a gun at the Spaniards. The nimble English ships followed this up by attacking both horns of the crescent, snapping at them as a dog snaps at an offending master. Howard made no attempt to break up the formation, because he realised that while Sidonia held on in that way the Spanish ships were comparatively useless.

All that day the English hung on to their foes relentlessly, cutting off stragglers, sailing up close to Spanish ships, firing in heavy broadsides, and then tacking off before they could be fired upon. Such tactics had a very disconcerting effect on the Dons, who quickly saw that what they gained in size they lost in seamanship.

Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher attacked the flagship of de Recaldez. They worried him; they worried his whole squadron, and although de Recaldez did all that he could to keep his ships together, they were at last driven into the main body of the fleet.

It caused dire confusion amongst the Spaniards, who found their ships far too unwieldy, and during this excitement Drake poured in a terrific fire. The *Nuestra Senora del Rosario*, on which sailed Pedro de Valdez, suffered much from this, fell foul of another vessel, and, with foremast shot away and bowsprit gone, was at last so disabled that she could not keep up with the fleet. Valdez at once signaled to Sidonia for help, but that gentleman, with all sails set, was making for Calais, and paid no heed. The *Rosario*, therefore, fell astern just as night came on, but was passed by the English Admiral. At break of day, however, she was espied by Drake, who during the night had been ordered to show a light on his ship, the *Revenge*, in order to guide the others. For a reason known to himself, Drake disobeyed, set off after some stragglers, and eventually fell in with the *Rosario*. He at once ordered her to surrender. Valdez, bold man that he was, refused to do so except under certain conditions.

Drake did not like conditions. He immediately sent word, saying:

"Tell him Francis Drake has no time to parley. Let him yield and he shall find me friendly and tractable. Howbeit, if he wants to fight, I am ready!"

The name of Drake, whom the Spaniards had nick-named The Dragon, had the desired effect. Valdez surrendered, came aboard the *Revenge*, gave his sword to Drake, kissed his hand—and then was put back on his ship and sent into Weymouth.

Drake's little game had misled Howard, who, mistaking the light on a Spanish ship for that which he had instructed Drake to show, followed the Spaniards up the Channel, the rest of his fleet laying to. In the morning, therefore, Howard found himself in a tight corner; his ship was almost on the Armada, while his friends were a good way behind. Fortunately, Howard managed to escape and rejoin his squadron, having succeeded in capturing one of the best and largest of the Spanish ships.

That day little was done, but on the next the wind changed to the north-east, and the Spaniards, now off the Isle of Wight, determined to get to grips with their foes and put a stop to the baiting to which they had been subjected long enough. Swinging round, the great galleons managed to get a section of the English fleet between themselves and the land, and could not resist the temptation. Both sides immediately prepared for battle, but fickle Fate played Sidonia a nasty trick, for, just when it seemed that he would be able to pay back his enemy in kind, the wind shifted, the English tacked—and the Spaniards found themselves in a worse plight than ever. Instead of attacking, they found themselves attacked. Turning eastward once more, they were followed in the same old way, stragglers were cut off and great galleons were riddled by shot.

Howard's star was in the ascendant, for he succeeded in capturing a number of the Spanish ships, but before the day had ended he found himself running short of ammunition. Sidonia also was suffering a similar shortage, but, while he was unable to get stores from Parma, Howard received supplies from various places along the south coast, and, what is more, was reinforced by a number of vessels from various ports. Feeling stronger, the English Admiral determined to risk an attack. Gathering his forces, he sailed bang into the midst of the Armada, sending broadside after broadside through the unwieldy galleons. Howard, on the *Royal Ark*, engaged Sidonia himself, and, backed up by several other ships, simply riddled the *San Martin*. Then, thanks to their nimbleness, the English emerged from the tangle before the Spaniards could reload their guns.

The rest of the day was passed in comparative tranquility, and Howard amused himself by knighting several of his lieutenants, including his brother, Lord Thomas Howard, Hawkins, and Frobisher.

Meanwhile Hawkins and Frobisher had been busy. The latter, sailing in the *Triumph*, engaged a number of galleons and did good work for England. Hawkins tackled de Recaldez, who flew his flag on the *St. Anna*. Bringing his ship to close quarters,

Hawkins's big guns hurled their iron messages of death into the *St. Anna*, riddled her, brought her masts down with a crash, and so badly mauled her that de Recaldez had to abandon her and hoist his flag on another ship. Seeing the plight of his second in command, Sidonia, treating him better than he had treated Valdez, bore down on the *St. Anna*, and endeavoured to secure her before the English could take possession. He also reckoned on being able to inflict a crushing blow on the English; he had fallen into temptation again—and retribution followed quickly.

Tacking about, Hawkins, Howard and Drake swooped down upon the oncoming Spaniards from three different points, gave them a volley, tacked, and gave them another, and put poor Sidonia into such a fright that he signaled to his fleet to sail off before the wind toward France.

The next day passed quietly enough, Howard reserving his fire until he could be sure of using it to good advantage. The 27th brought the opportunity. Sidonia was anchored off Calais, and Howard sailed up within gunshot, and as joined by Seymour and Sir William Winter. The attacking English fleet now numbered some hundred and forty sail.

Sidonia was in a hole. He realised that to invade England was not the easy task it had been thought, even when the mission was proclaimed a Holy War. But he did not give up hope. He dispatched messengers to Parma telling him to join forces with him at Gravelines next day, and, under cover of the galleons, to slip over and land his army in England.

It was all very well for Sidonia to tell Parma what to do; Parma could not do it. His transports were not ready, and, moreover, he was blockaded by the Dutch. So, instead of going to England, he went on to Bruges.

Howard decided to strike the great blow at once. A council was held on the *Royal Ark*. The question of ways and means was discussed. The best way? Drake had it. Francis had been at San Juan de Ulloa, when the Spaniards had played him and Hawkins a double game, and sent out a fireship against

them. He suggested taking a second revenge—he had had the first when he ravaged the Spanish Main, diverting into good English coffers the treasures destined for Philip. What he now proposed was that some of the oldest vessels should be turned into fireships and sent in among the Spanish galleons.

The suggestion was hailed with delight. Seven ships were tarred and pitched, and loaded with combustibles. Then, when night had fallen, they were ignited, their sails were set, and, sailing before the wind, they bore down upon the hapless Spaniards—blazing masses that struck terror into the hearts of the Dons.

It must be left to imagination to conjure up the confusion that ensued. Those great galleons, at the best but unwieldy tubs, slipped their anchors, or cut their cables, hoisted all sail, and set out off hither and thither—anywhere so long as they escaped those terrible engines of war, those fiery monsters that threatened them with destruction.

If the fireships failed to ignite any Spanish vessels, they succeeded in dispersing them, succeeded too, in doing incalculable damage. In the panic that raged, ships collided with ships, unshipping rudders, battering sides, and generally knocking each other about in a highly satisfactory way—to the English.

Don Hugo de Moncada had the mortification of having his ship rendered useless. Her rudder was unshipped, and she was tossed about by the merciless waves, until, drifting helplessly, she was stranded on the sands of Calais. As soon as the ship's bottom touched land, most of her crew scrambled overboard and took to their heels, but Moncada and the few men who bravely remained with him determined to hold the ship to the last. After him went a crowd of English boats, containing some hundred men commanded by Sir Amyas Preston. One of the best fights during the epoch-marking episode now took place. Time and time again were the English hurled off by the devoted little band of Spaniards; but each time they renewed the

attack until at last the Spaniards were overcome, the Spanish flag was hauled down and the English hoisted in its place, and the ship was captured. But not before the gallant de Moncada had fallen on the deck he had so bravely defended.

All night the greatest consternation reigned amongst Sidonia's fleet. Notwithstanding the fact that he had given orders that, when the immediate danger of the fireships had passed, his vessels were to rejoin each other, when morning broke he found that they were scattered far and wide. He frantically signaled to his fleet to reform round the few ships that remained with him, but his signals were unheeded by the vessels flying northward.



THE SPANISH ARMADA

"THE CRISIS HAD COME . . . ALL DAY THE BATTLE RAGED."

At last Sidonia decided to follow them, and off Gravelines he managed to get about forty ships together and array them in some semblance of fighting order.

Drake was nothing averse to a proper stand-up fight; he had been hankering after it, and, with a small squadron of ships, bore down on Sidonia, emptying broadside after broadside into

the foe, and working great havoc among them. The crisis had come, and the Spaniards, realising that the end was in sight, fought like brave men and true, determined to make a last great stand. Death-bearing cannon-balls hurtled aboard the doomed vessels, bringing masts down with a crash, and laying brave men low. But still the Spaniards fought on, refusing to strike even when to keep on fighting meant death and the foundering of their ships. All day the battle raged, and only ceased when powder and shot had given out. Three of the Spaniards were sunk, in honour be it said, for not one would strike his colours. Indeed, one captain ran his sword through the body of a man whom he caught about to haul down the flag, and another resolutely gave battle to four or five English vessels when riddled with shots and at the point of sinking. Besides these, some ten or twelve others had been driven ashore."

It was the defeat of the "Invincible" Armada. Sidonia was beaten—and he knew it. But one course was now left open to him, and that was to return to Spain. But how? By what way? Behind him lay the victorious English fleet. Before him stretched the North Sea, and, farther north, the rock-bound coasts of Scotland. To the north he went, intending to pass round Scotland and the west of Ireland, and so to carry his news to his royal master.

While his fleet raced northward, Sidonia sat in his cabin, his face buried in his hands, mourning his defeat and humiliation. Through the North Sea the remnants of Spain's mighty Armada ploughed their way, the English sea-dogs hanging on and cutting off where they could. Pressing on all sail, Sidonia tried to shake them off, but it is doubtful whether he would have succeeded had not a great storm broken out, and had not Howard's powder become exhausted. As it was, Howard reluctantly had to give up the chase, but what he failed to do the winds of heaven did for him. Arrived off the north coast of Scotland, the Spaniards were tossed about by terrible storms that flung them headlong on to the rocks.

Here we leave them. To follow them through their long journey home would be to tell a tale of woe; suffice it to say that of the hundred and thirty ships that sailed so proudly out of Lisbon, but fifty-three reached Spain.

Chased by the sea-kings of Britain, worried by fireships, scattered by the winds of heaven, wrecked on Scotland's iron-bound coast, Philip's great Armada had abandoned the invasion of England.

CHAPTER XI

EDGEHILL

Where King Charles raised the Royal Standard and so began the Civil War

Every schoolboy knows the story of the events that led up to the great Civil War which cost King Charles I. his head. The country divided itself into Parliamentarians and Royalists—the former being dubbed the Roundheads in allusion to their mode of hairdressing; the latter being scathingly known as Cavaliers in consequence of their haughty manners and showy garb.

Parliament had the best of it at the very beginning; holding London, commanding the neighbouring counties, the large towns and seaports, the navy and the Thames, they had also at their disposal most of the military stores, imposed import duties, levied taxes on every hand; while the king had to be content with the crumbs that fell from the nation's table. What the country would not give him, his adherents endeavoured to make up for by mortgaging estates, pawning jewels, and melting plate.

The contrast between the two armies was also marked, but in this the king could boast some superiority—of a kind. Most of the nobles of the land ranged themselves beneath his standard, bringing with them their armed dependants, men trained in the art of war; while his "rebel" Parliament gathered in the tillers of the soil, the tradesmen from the shops, and the artisans from the bench—men to whom weapons of war were new, and the din of battle strange and terrifying. But when men are fighting for the liberty of the subject against the tyranny of kings these drawbacks count but little.

Marching on Hull, Charles was refused admission. It was a sore blow, for within the town lay the stores which had been garnered for his campaign against the Scots. Falling back on Nottingham, he unfurled the standard on August 25th, 1642.

The raising of the standard was a momentous event in English history. From the castle of Nottingham six hundred infantry issued forth and set up the standard, on which was a hand pointing to a crown, with the motto, "Give to Cæsar his due." After them went the king, attended by two thousand men, and followed by the inhabitants for miles round. Up went the standard, the king's proclamation was read; the Civil War had begun.

The Earl of Essex came out against the king with a force of fifteen thousand men, eventually taking up a position at Worcester. The king, feeling himself unequal to give battle, fell back on Shrewsbury. Here he gained confidence because he gained strength, being reinforced by a large number of recruits. He seized the arms of the militia of several counties, and also some Parliamentary stores destined for Ireland. Twelve thousand men now gathered round him, and Prince Rupert, the king's nephew, ravaged the neighbouring country with his cavalry, on which great hopes were placed.

Essex had come after the king but slowly, "as if," says a historian, "rather following than desirous of overtaking" him. It was September 23rd when he reached Worcester, but a few miles from the king. Here he dallied for some three weeks, and the king, gaining courage from Essex's inaction, and from success which had attended the Royalist skirmishers, determined to break through to London, and to seek by one crushing blow to finish the war. The Stuart had Fate against him.

True is it that London was agitated; true that the Royalists in the south looked forward with confidence to the king's coming; true, too, that the Parliamentarians were amazed and set about defending London. But true, too, is it that Essex, as soon as he heard of the king's resolve, set out to frustrate him.

The king began his march, but Essex met him at Edgehill, in Warwickshire. Here it was that while out skirmishing Rupert discovered that Essex was advancing. Riding like the wind, he brought the news to the king.

It was during the afternoon of October 23rd when the king received this information. It took him by surprise, for although only a few leagues separated the two armies each was unaware of the other's proximity. Late though it was, Charles determined to give battle at once. He need not have been afraid, for Essex had also resolved to adopt the same immediate course, although most of his artillery and a large number of infantry and cavalry were far in the rear.

Marching across the hills, Charles saw Essex taking up position on the plain called the Vale of the Red Horse, midway between Kineton and Edgehill. Clad in almost complete mail and mounted on his charger, Charles gave the signal for battle, firing the first shot with his own hand. Instantly the opposing artilleries opened fire upon each other. For an hour and a half the duel raged, and then, when the way was cleared, the infantry engaged. Pikemen and musketeers on both sides rushed forward, seeking to drive each other back. Essex, seeing that the Royalists were making some headway, sent off a squadron of dragoons, which after a fierce conflict succeeded in driving off the enemy's right. The main body, however, with which was the standard, pressed forward till almost within musket shot. The Roundheads charged then furiously; the Royalist pikes were like a steel wall which refused to be broken, and the enemy fell back, "and Sir Philip Stapleton, our captain," says Ludlow, in his description of the battle, "wishing for a regiment of foot to secure the cannon, we promised to stand by him in defence of them, causing one of our servants to load and level one of them, which he had scarcely done, when a body of horse appeared advancing towards us from that side where the enemy was. We fired at them with case shot (i.e. old iron, nails, stones, musket balls, etc.), but did no other mischief save only wounding one man through the hand, our gun being overloaded and planted on high

ground; which fell out very happily, this body being our own army and commanded by Sir William Balfour." A narrow escape!

Meanwhile Rupert and his cavalry had been busy on the king's right wing. Marching down a slope intent on charging the enemy's left, he saw coming towards him a regiment of Roundhead cavalry, lead by Sir Faithful Fortescue. On, on, they came—but on a different errand from that on which they had been sent. They came, not as foes, but as friends, deserters from the enemy. Joining forces with Rupert, their treachery demoralised the remaining cavalry squadrons coming after them. On the other hand, the Royalists took courage, charged furiously at the oncoming cavalry, and succeeded in breaking through their lines. Instantly all was confusion; the Roundheads, dispirited by Fortescue's desertion, turned and fled. Reckless, impetuous, and thinking not at all of the work that still remained to be done in the centre, Rupert pursued them upon the spur. Across the plain the fugitives sped, while on their heels the Cavaliers hung, hacking, hewing, cutting and shooting down with murderous ferocity.

At last, after a full-speed, death-followed ride of two miles, the routed cavalry came up with Hampden's artillery, which speedily made the pursuers turn about and gallop off for the royal standard.

The incident had cost the king dear. Thinking that the battle was won, a reserve regiment of cavalry had set out to follow Rupert in his wild rush across the plain, thus leaving Charles in a precarious position.

Essex had been quick to take advantage of the king's exposure. Two regiments of horse were sent to charge the Royalist centre. Both failed, but at last Sir William Balfour, whose squadron had so narrowly escaped disaster at the hands of their friends, suddenly swept his body of horse round to the king's rear, and fell upon the centre. Putting spurs to their horses, the Roundheads charged and charged again, breaking the

Royalist line, working great havoc, and sending the foe flying in all directions. Quickly recovering themselves, the Royalists ranged round their king once more, though not before he had been in imminent danger of capture. As it was, the Earl of Lindsay, the commander-in-chief, was mortally wounded and taken prisoner; Sir Edmund Verney, the royal standard-bearer, was killed and the banner taken.

Thus did Rupert find the king when he returned from his wild pursuit. Had he but led his men as impetuously against the infantry of Essex, the battle might have been claimed as a distinct Royalist victory; but, almost exhausted, the cavalry refused to advance upon the solid line of musketeers and pikemen that faced them. On the other hand, Essex did not feel strong enough to move forward to the attack, especially as the Royalist cavalry had now returned. The battle, therefore, gradually eased off into an artillery duel, until night came on and put an end to it altogether.

The royal standard, however, had been recaptured. Lieutenant John Smith, snatching an orange scarf (the colour of the Earl of Essex) from a dead Roundhead, and wrapping it round himself, bravely galloped into the enemy's line, tore the standard from the hands of the man who was carrying it off in triumph, quickly turned his horse round, and galloped off with it to the king. For this deed Charles made the lieutenant a knight-banneret on the spot.

All that night the two armies lay under arms, waiting for the morning to come, both uneasy, both weary from the day's hard fighting. The day broke; it passed without a shot being fired. Neither side felt equal to renewing the conflict, though each claimed the victory of the previous day's battle. Without doubt it had rested with the Parliament, for Charles's attempted march on London had been frustrated.

Essex was advised to resume the attack at once. "The king," said some of his officers, "is unable to withstand it; three

fresh regiments have joined us, and he will fall into our hands, or be forced to accept our conditions."

Essex and several other officers differed from this opinion, saying that it was best not to attempt too much at once, especially considering the untrained men who made up so large a part of the army.

Essex, therefore, moved off to Warwick, keeping in the king's rear. The latter fell back on his old position, though somewhat later he established his headquarters at Oxford.

But his first battle, though a drawn one, had put him on the blood-stained road of tragedy—a road which led to the scaffold in Whitehall.

CHAPTER XII

WHEN BLAKE WHIPPED THE SEAS

How Blake showed Van Tromp that an English Whip was better than a Dutch Broom

General-at-sea Blake, the greatest English sailor of the Commonwealth, had one or two scores marked up against Admiral van Tromp. First, this doughty Hollander had refused to salute the Red Cross of England; then he had beaten Blake off the Goodwins, and, for a crowning insult, had swept down the Channel, flaunting his victory and vowing to sweep the English from the seas.

Blake was angry.

He resolved to take his revenge. Therefore, on the 17th of February, two months after the fight at the Goodwins, he was waiting off Portsmouth for Tromp to pass up the Channel, convoying about three hundred Dutch merchantmen from the Isle of Rhé. Tromp arrived, bringing with him seventy-three men of war, whereas Blake had but fifty sail, which he had divided into three squadrons, distinguished by their colours, the Red, White and Blue. The first was commanded by Blake and Deane, keeping each other company on board the *Triumph*; the second by Monk; the third by Penn.

Late on the 17th Blake received news that Tromp was about twenty leagues off to the westward of him, and everything was made ready for battle. Unfortunately, during the night the wind shifted, and when the dawn broke Blake found that his fleet was scattered. Lawson, the rear-admiral, was about a mile to the north-east, Penn as far off to the west, and Monk four miles to the south, thus leaving Blake and the Red Squadron to

encounter the enemy, who, taking in the situation at a glance, determined to give battle at once.



WHEN BLAKE WHIPPED THE SEAS
"BLAKE KEPT THE FIGHT GOING MERRILY...GIVING AND TAKING MANY
EFFECTIVE BROADSIDES."

Van Tromp, therefore, with his four squadrons of men-of-war, swept up the Channel towards the Red Fleet, making straight for the *Triumph*, in the hope of being able to cut out the valiant Blake. Blake decided not to be cut out, and banged away, taking on four Dutch vessels at once, among them being Tromp's own ship, the *Brederode*. Holding his fire until within musket shot, Tromp let fly a broadside into the *Triumph*, tacked about nimbly, and gave him the other side, repeating the process with such good results that Blake's ship was raked through and through. Supported by about a dozen other vessels, Blake, however, kept the fight going merrily for six hours, taking and giving many effective broadsides. Blake's captain was killed, as also was his secretary, while the Admiral himself received a wound in the thigh by a splinter, fortunately not seriously, although later it grew worse, owing to the fact that when on shore after the fight he foolishly managed to catch cold.

Although Blake put up so stubborn a fight, things were beginning to look black, when, fortunately, Lawson managed to come up in the *Fairfax*, which, with well directed fire, kept the Dutch at bay. Several of Tromp's largest vessels concentrated their fire on the *Triumph* and the *Fairfax*, and so hotly were these two engaged that when the fight was over the casualties on them alone amounted to two hundred, and the *Triumph*, moreover, was battered in her hull, and her sails shot to ribbons.

But this is anticipating. In a little while the rest of the scattered English fleet was able to sail up and enter into the fun, and a battle that had seemed to be going in favour of the Dutch assumed a different complexion. Broadside after broadside the combined English fleet poured into the Dutch, and so near were the opposing vessels, that the English musketry swept the decks of the Dutch ships with a galling fire, and by four o'clock in the afternoon twenty-six of the largest of Tromp's vessels were so crippled that they had to retire.

This lightened the work for Blake, although the battle was by no means at an end. Indeed, it was after this that some of the sternest fights took place.

De Ruyter's ship and the *Prosperous*, commanded by Captain Barker, engaged in a fierce duel. After raking the English vessel with his broadside, de Ruyter brought his ship alongside the *Prosperous*, gave the order to board, and, sword in hand, dashed at the head of the boarders on to the English deck, whereupon a great fight ensued. The English were ready. Standing their ground firmly, they received the Dutchmen as they swarmed over the sides on to the deck, hurled them one by one into the sea, or made them scamper back to their own vessel, and in a little while the *Prosperous* was free of Hollanders. Barker decided to pay de Ruyter a return visit, especially as he had been reinforced by a number of sailors from the *Merlin*, which had immediately come to his assistance. As soon as de Ruyter divined their intention, he rallied his men again, and, sword in hand, cried, "Come on, lads; at them again!"

And once more they scrambled aboard Barker's ship. This time they were more successful, and despite the brave show made by the English, in a little while the *Prosperous* was won. Hardly had they had time to haul down the English flag, than the *Triumph* and several other of the wooden walls of England arrived on the scene, boarded the captured vessel, and compelled de Ruyter to retire to his own ship. Barker, however, was dead, having "made a good end against de Ruyter."

This scene was re-enacted, in a measure, on several other English ships—the *Oak* and the *Assistance* being boarded, captured, and re-taken and put into action again. The *Sampson*, however, was not so fortunate. Rather than allow it to fall into the hands of the enemy, the crew scuttled her; this was the only vessel that Blake lost, though several others were so battered and torn that they were unfit for service until repaired.

As for the Dutch, they were in a poor state; the headstrong courage of the English, and the disastrous effects of their firing, had given them such a thrashing that, as we have said, twenty-six of their ships were compelled to sheer off during the afternoon, too crippled to keep up the strenuous fight, which was going all in favour of the English. That first day Tromp lost

eight ships, either sunk or captured, for not to his force alone did the glory of boarding appeal. Pouring in their broad-sides, the English ran their ships alongside the Dutch, and, swords, pistols, muskets and weapons of all kinds in hand, hurled themselves on board their foe, fought many a fierce hand-to-hand encounter, and made the Dutch on several ships haul down their flags.

In this vigorous way did the battle proceed. Towards evening, Blake, confident that the victory would be his, and finding he could spare some of his fastest vessels, dispatched them to cut out some of the merchantmen. This was too much for Tromp: after all, his task was to protect the convoy, and as his ammunition was giving out, he thought discretion was the better part of valour, and sailed off after his convoy, the whole armada making its way up the Channel. Close on his heels hung those of the English vessels that were able to follow, the rest contenting themselves making what repairs they could to render them fit for further battle in the morning.

As soon as they were able, off up the Channel they swept, and early in the morning the Dutch fleet hove in sight. Tromp had drawn up his ships in half-moon formation, with the merchantmen in the centre for safety, but though Blake worried him as a dog does a rat, for a long time he refused to engage again.

At last, urged to desperation and fearful for his merchantmen, many of whom were heaving their cargo overboard and running for it, Tromp doubled and opened fire on the English, still keeping his half-moon formation. Blake immediately hurled himself on his foe, straining every effort to break through Tromp's line of battle, with such good result that several of the convoy fell victims. This fight was as stubborn as that on the previous day. De Ruyter, engaged in a fierce conflict with an English vessel, had his own dismasted and left a helpless hulk at the mercy of his foes. Quickly his friends came to his assistance, and, taking him in tow, sailed with him out of danger.

Courage met courage, boarders met boarders; from deck to deck they swarmed; now was an English ship boarded, only to hurl the attackers back and to follow them on to their own decks. The Dutch fought as brave men, and though some perforce hauled down their flags, others refused, and fought and drove their enemy off. One of them, finding himself attacked by an English ship on each side, and disdaining to strike, even although the fight was all against him, deliberately set fire to his own vessel, hoping, no doubt, to carry the English heavenward with him. Luckily, they sheered off, and hardly had they done so, than, with a sound as though the heavens were falling, the Dutchman blew up, every man on board perishing.

Once more night came on and put an end to the battle, leaving Blake in possession of eight men-of-war and sixteen merchant ships. A good day's work indeed!

Repairs, rest and morning found the English ready for the fray again. Tromp's ships were hugging the French coast, intending to make off for Holland, but ere they could do this the English were upon them.

With many of his ships captured, and half of those remaining to him without powder, and nearly all the others refusing, despite his threats and his entreaties, to renew the battle, Tromp was in a bad plight. The weaklings left him, making their way to Holland, and Tromp found himself with scarcely more than thirty ships. Nothing daunted, and scorning to run, he once more fell to, doing his utmost to keep the English from reaching what was left of the convoy. All in vain! Despite his reckless bravery, his dogged determination, his line was broken, the battle was lost at last, forty of his merchants fell to the English, and, broken and dispirited, Tromp retired at night to the sands before Calais.

Exulting in their victory, and firm in their belief that Tromp could not give them the slip before morning, the weather being all against him, the English hauled to and lay by. Between Tromp and Holland lay Cape Grisnez. How *could* he escape

without coming out to sea again? So argued the English. But otherwise thought the Dutchman. Hoisting his sails, and putting out his lights, while the English rejoiced over their triumph, he quietly stole out with the turn of tide and headed for home, entering the Texel with a battered and woeful fleet.

So did the wily Tromp outwit Blake; but Blake had done better—he had shown Tromp that empty boasts frightened not an Englishman.

CHAPTER XIII

PLASSEY

How Clive With A Handful Of Men Met And Defeated Surajah Dowlah And His Hosts

As a youngster Bobby Clive was the fool of the family which, in later years, was proud to call him one of them. They could do nothing with him in England, so shipped him off to India, and to fame. He went as a writer in the East India Company. He arrived in India minus money and introductions to anyone who could serve him, for the letters he did carry were useless because the man they were addressed to had returned to England. Early days in India were anything but pleasant for him; he quarreled with an officer, got homesick, and contemplated suicide.

Then the Franco-English war which had been raging for some time in Europe spread to India, and at twenty-two Clive was an ensign in the Company's army. He went up by leaps and bounds, distinguishing himself at numerous places—Pondicherry, Devocotta, Trichinopoly, and then at Arcot, which he took and held against an overwhelming body of French and Indians, sallying forth occasionally to give them a thrashing. So did this youngster behave, and when, after a dazzling career, he returned to England in 1753, he was hailed with enthusiasm, promoted to general in the Company's army, and stood for Parliament. Then India called him again, and he went across the seas carrying in his pocket a lieutenant-colonel's commission in the regular army, and a warrant making him commander of Fort St. David.

He at once got to work, captured the fortress of Geriah—a stronghold of pirates—then, in revenge for the Black Hole of Calcutta, took Hugli and Fort William, and later tackled the

Nabob Surajah Dowlah near Calcutta, but was obliged to retire—with honour.

He had subdued the Nabob, or at least it appeared so, for that swarthy gentleman concluded a treaty with the English at the expense of the French. But the Nabob was a traitor, and at once opened negotiations with the French in the Deccan, advising and indeed entreating them to fall upon the English in Bengal. Clive took his revenge in his own way, with the result that after the Nabob had received a severe drubbing he threw caution to the winds and openly allied himself with the French.

But the Nabob had a traitor in his camp—Meer Jaffier, who aspired to his master's throne. Jaffier promised Clive help, a pledge which Clive accepted, promising to give *his* help in return.

At the same time Clive opened up negotiations with the Nabob, professing friendliness in order to put him off his guard. It may not have been "cricket," but it certainly was war.

The Nabob had collected a large army at Plassey, but Clive, by counterfeiting friendliness, played upon him to such an extent that he dismissed it, not without some suspicions, however.

"If this colonel should be deceiving me!" he said.

The Colonel was deceiving him, as he soon found out, and, enraged, vowing vengeance, while filled with fear of the Englishman whose way through India was marked with triumph, he recalled his army and prepared to meet Clive.

Clive was nothing loth. The only thing that worried him was the fact that Meer Jaffier had renewed his oath of allegiance to the Nabob, and he could not tell what that might mean. Still, with about eight hundred Europeans, two thousand sepoy, and a small force of artillery consisting of eight six-pounders and a howitzer, he moved off to Plassey, incidentally reducing a fort and a town that barred his progress.

Absence of news from Meer Jaffier still worried him, for information constantly reached him that that gentleman was firm in his loyalty to the Nabob. "I feel," he wrote, "the greatest anxiety at the little intelligence I receive from Meer Daffier; and, if he is not treacherous, his sangfroid, or want of strength, will, I fear, upset the expedition. I am trying a last effort, by means of a Brahmin, to prevail upon him to march out and join us. I have appointed Plassey as the place of rendezvous, and I have told him at the same time that unless he give this or some other sufficient proof of the sincerity of his intentions, I will not cross the river. . . I shall act with such caution as not to risk the loss of our forces; and whilst we have them, we may always have it in our power to bring about a revolution, should the present not succeed."

From which it will be seen that Clive the Conqueror realised that he had a hard nut to crack.

Next day Meer Jaffier sent word to Clive that he would join forces with him with about three thousand cavalry, but even then Clive doubted. He therefore called a council of war to discuss the situation. Should they go ahead without waiting for Meer Jaffier? The majority of the officers, including Clive himself, said no, though the minority argued that to strike at once was the best policy, lest the Nabob should receive help from M. Bussy, the French commander.

Here a pass—the majority was for waiting, while to wait was evidently almost as dangerous as to go on. Clive left the council, sought solitude in a neighbouring grove, fought the question out, and then changed his mind. He would fight—and fight at once. He did care a jot for the majority—he was the chief.

So back he went to his army, issued orders for the advance to be resumed on the morrow, and on June 22, 1757, the British force crossed the Hugli and set out on their march to Plassey, towing their store-laden boats against the current as they marched along the river bank.

By one o'clock in the morning Clive was encamped in the grove of Plassey, about a mile from the Nabob's army.

That night the army lay under arms, within sound of the gongs, cymbals, and drums of the Nabob's camp. Clive had chosen his position well, for the grove, eight hundred yards by three hundred yards, consisted of mango trees, and was surrounded on three sides by the river, being guarded by a trench on the other. It was therefore particularly suitable to withstand an attack. It was a hunting ground of the Nabob's, who had a hunting-lodge on the bank of the stream. It "afforded, with its walled garden and enclosures, an excellent point of defence for one of Clive's flanks, as well as a convenient station for his hospital. In the meantime the enemy occupied an entrenched camp about a mile or a mile and a half in his front, which, commencing at the neck of the peninsula formed by the curvature of the stream, ran directly inland for two hundred yards, after which it formed an obtuse angle and bore away nearly three miles to the north-east."

The Nabob had erected a redoubt in this angle, on which he had mounted his cannon, and although there were some well-wooded eminences near by he did not take advantage of these, but when the morning came brought his whole army down into the open, and Clive, standing on the roof of his watch-tower, saw that the Nabob was bent on attacking at once. Thirty-five thousand infantry and fifteen thousand cavalry were coming down upon the little European force, bringing with them over forty cannon, each one drawn by a team of bullocks, and an elephant, and some of them worked by Frenchmen.

Against all these Clive had about three thousand men and nine guns.

"He drew his whole force in one line, with the three slender European regiments in the centre, and just beyond the skirts of the grove. He did this under the impression that if he kept his men in cover, the Nabob, mistaking prudence for fear, would acquire additional confidence; besides this, he felt that a

corps so pliable might at any moment be thrown back long ere the unwieldy masses of the enemy could interfere with his alignment. He posted three cannon on each flank, and the remaining two, with the howitzer under cover of a couple of brick-kilns, so as to protect his left." His orders were for his men to "keep steady, and neither advance nor retire without orders."

The enemy began the battle, determined to take things at the rush. Their artillery opened fire, but, being on platforms and not depressed sufficiently, the shots flew over the heads of the English force, which, according to orders, lay on the ground. About an hour after the engagement began Clive's men advanced into the grove; the enemy imagined that they were put to flight, and came on with terrible yells and a more terrible fire. The yells did not frighten, nor the fire much damage the Europeans, who were safe behind the shelter of the mango trees. On the other hand, the enemy suffered severely from the steady fire poured into their dense masses, though they still kept up their own heavy fire.

Clive went to sleep. There was not much doing; after all, they were only having to keep their ground—the natives could not get into the grove. At last the firing slackened, for a storm broke out and spoilt a great part of the Nabob's ammunition.

Then something upset the Nabob. Meer Murdeen, one of his greatest chiefs, had been killed, and the Nabob lost heart altogether. He could not get into the grove; he could not lure the enemy out, and, besides, he doubted Meer Jaffier.

Meer Jaffier was sent for. Throwing his turban at that courtier's feet, the Nabob cried:

"That turban must be defended!"

Meer Jaffier promised it should be done, bowed, and went out—to send a message to Clive that he should attack at night, when he would be able to drive the enemy off.

Clive, however, did not receive the letter until after the battle was won; and meanwhile another traitor obtained audience

with the Nabob, and advised him to retire. He played on the Nabob's fears so successfully that he issued orders for a general retreat, and at two o'clock the big guns went to the rear, and the army began to retreat.

Clive was still asleep, and Major Kilpatrick determined to attack. The Frenchmen working some of the guns, however, stuck to their post at a water-tank and worked their guns bravely and well, and before the English could effectively fire upon the retreating army it was necessary to dislodge the battery. First he awakened Clive to acquaint him with what he intended to do, and received a reprimand for daring to dream of doing such a thing on his own responsibility! The Colonel, however, "warmly praised the idea of the proposed movement, and, sending Kilpatrick to the rear to bring up the rest of the troops, he took command of the storming party, and captured the tank without the loss of a single life."

The whole English force then advanced. Coming towards them was a large column of the enemy, really a corps which Meer Jaffier was sending along at last. There were, however, no signals to this effect, and the English opened fire upon them and scattered them, one corps only remaining steadfast and flying Jaffier's standards—"so the fact of his adherence to the original secret agreement became proved to Clive and his officers," for the traitors did not fire.

Away went the little army after the Nabob's force, took the camp at the point of the bayonet, and in little more than an hour had put the seal upon the victory. The Nabob was defeated, and, mounted on a camel, was fleeing for his life—first in the ranks of the vanquished. Behind came the victorious Europeans who, led by their gallant Clive, had that day achieved a great thing for England. Meer Jaffier was next day hailed as Nabob of Bengal, and English supremacy in Bengal was assured.

CHAPTER XIV

QUEBEC

England Won a Battle but Lost a Brave General

In 1759 the French determined to descend on England. England—or Pitt, it was the same thing—decided that they should do nothing of the kind. Rodney and Boscawen, accordingly, went to sea, respectively tackled the Havre and Toulon fleets—with good results—while Dunkirk and Brest, where other fleets were gathered, were blockaded.

So ended the French dream.

Pitt, however, also had a dream; he dreamt that England was going to wrest the Canadian colonies from France, and he formed a plan whereby he could bring his dream true. Canada was governed by Marshal de Montcalm, a brave and gallant Frenchman, and it was well defended at the vital spots by strong forts. Pitt determined to effect a great coup; he sent three forces against as many important points—General Prideaux against the Niagara Fort and Montreal, General Amherst against Ticonderoga, and Major-General Wolfe, a young man of thirty-three, against Quebec; the two former generals, after bringing their own enterprises to successful issues, to concentrate before Quebec.

With regard to the first two objects, it must suffice to say that Prideaux's force captured Niagara Fort, but was unable to advance to Quebec; while Amherst succeeded in taking Ticonderoga, but could not go to Wolfe's aid. It seemed that Pitt's scheme—for —for it was Pitt's, from beginning to end—was likely to fail.

But there was still Wolfe.

Wolfe had reached the Isle of St. Orleans, in the middle of the St. Lawrence, some distance below Quebec, and landed his army of some seven thousand men on June 27th. He then began to clear the way for his operations against the city. The first thing he did was to issue a proclamation vindicating the action of England in attacking the French possessions by referring to French projects to invade England, and pointing out the utter hopelessness of the French-Canadians making any resistance. He also offered them "the sweets of peace amidst the horrors of war," and wound up by saying that he flattered himself "that the whole world will do him justice, if the inhabitants of Canada force him, by their refusal, to have recourse to violent methods."

The inhabitants of Canada forced him to violent methods, for they refused to entertain his suggestion that they should give in without striking a blow.

Wherefore Wolfe got to business. He knew that he had a difficult task in front of him, yet he did not care a jot for that. Before him and above him lay Quebec, a city strongly placed on a steep and rocky promontory on the left bank of the St. Lawrence, with the River St. Charles on its other side. Behind rose a chain of hills, almost inaccessible, called the Heights of Abraham, while across the peninsula between the two rivers was a line of fortifications where Montcalm was encamped with some ten thousand troops. The city itself was held by a garrison under the Chevalier Ramsay, the governor.

Despite the difficulties, Wolfe calmly went on with the work of preparation. First he dispatched Brigadier Monckton with four battalions to take Point Levi—a strong position within cannon-shot of the city. Monckton waited until night, then crossed the river and landed, tackled the heights and drove the French off, immediately afterwards raising a battery with which he began to fire upon Quebec.

Meanwhile Colonel Carleton had done the same at the western point of Orleans, and Wolfe settled down to wait for the

coming of Amherst. But Amherst could not come—he had his hands full at Ticonderoga. Wolfe, however, had no thought of giving up the task before him, but rather took heart and went on. The thing to be done was to tempt Montcalm to leave his strong position; but that general was a wily bird and refused to be caught. Only once he made a sally, and sent a strong force against Point Levi. But the batteries were too strong for them, and they had to recross the river.

Wolfe next endeavoured to force a general action, and determined to cross the River Montmorency. Admiral Holmes was sent up the other bank of the St. Lawrence with a number of transports, to lead Montcalm into thinking that an attack was contemplated in that direction. Then troops were landed near the Montmorency, and Brigadier Townsend led his men across the river by a ford which had been discovered, while Wolfe was to cross in boats at another point. The landing parties were supported by the *Centurion* man-of-war, which was to engage the battery that commanded the beach.

Townsend pressed on. Wolfe's boats attempted the passage, but, becoming entangled in the rocks, were unable to disembark their troops in time to effect a juncture with Townsend. The French were ready, too, and poured in a destructive fire both upon the boats and the fording men. The Grenadiers, though they had been ordered to wait for the arrival of the troops in the boats, fixed their bayonets and charged headlong at the French entrenchments. This meant that the English were in far too small numbers to achieve anything, and when Wolfe saw what havoc the French fire was causing amongst the Grenadiers, who could not get close enough to use their bayonets, he ordered a general retirement, and the attacking force went back the way they had come. A great thunderstorm broke out while the retreat was being made, and Wolfe found that to fall back was almost as difficult as to go forward, for the enemy dashed out after them and endeavoured to turn the retreat into a rout. The English were well covered, however, by the Fraser Highlanders, who turned and faced their attackers while

the army moved off, inflicting so much damage upon the French that they at last gave up the pursuit.

The episode put Wolfe in anything but a confident state of mind; he began to realise that the task was more difficult than he had even anticipated.

Once more, however, he tried to lure the crafty Montcalm. Admiral Holmes was sent off down the river as if seeking a landing-place, while Wolfe and the greater part of his force encamped on the right bank, apparently to wait until Holmes returned with his news. For several days Holmes passed along the river, and Wolfe waited hoping that Montcalm would at last issue forth and give battle. Montcalm refused to be drawn, and contented himself with sending fifteen hundred men to keep a watch upon the English.

By this time things had reached a critical state. Wolfe did not know what to do. Someone, however, suggested the idea of scaling the rocky precipice that led on to the Heights of Abraham—a thing which the French had never thought practicable. It was indeed, the keynote to the position, inasmuch as it overlooked the City at the point, and in view of its supposed inaccessibility was but feebly guarded.

Wolfe was on the sick list; disappointment and hardship had had the effect of undermining his constitution, but, weak as he was, he left his bed and began to make preparations for the bold attempt.

To carry it to a successful issue, it was, of course, essential that the plan should be put into operation during the night, and in order to throw the enemy off their guard Holmes was once more sent up the river, and Admiral Saunders made a demonstration near Montcalm's camp.

This naturally drew attention from Wolfe himself, and in the dead of night he put off across the river in flat-bottomed boats, at the head of the Louisbourg Grenadiers, Master Lovat's Highlanders, and four battalions of line. The night was very

dark, and the tide was flowing with such rapidity that the boats were carried somewhat out of their course, with the result that the troops had to land at a place some distance away from the spot Wolfe had intended.

The passage was not without incident, and the attempt was nearly nipped in the bud.

In the first place a couple of French deserters who had been taken on board one of the vessels under Saunders informed the English that Montcalm was that night going to receive some boatloads of provisions from another part of the neighbourhood. Presently the deserters caught sight of the English boats making their way across the river, and at once said that these were the boats carrying the provisions to the French.

Instantly the English captain ran out his guns to fire upon the boats, but just in time Wolfe came alongside the ship, having heard some commotion on board. He immediately inquired the meaning of it, reassured the captain, and so succeeded in preventing the cannonade that would not only have done great damage to the English force, but would also have aroused the whole city, and so put an end to the enterprise.

A second incident filled with the same possibilities also took place. Montcalm had sentinels posted along the bank of the river to keep an outlook for passing boats. Quietly the boats glided down with the tide. All at once a challenge rang out from the shore:

"Qui vine?"

"La France!" said a Fraser Highlander with great presence of mind he had served in Holland, and was able to speak French well.

"A quel régiment?" asked the Frenchman.

"De la Reine!" answered the Fraser, who fortunately knew that this regiment was posted at the place whence the provisions were to be sent and might be the one deputed to carry them.

Apparently he was right, for the sentinel simply cried:

"Passez, monsieur."

And the boats passed on.

Lower down, however, another sentinel challenged them, and received the same replies.

Apparently this soldier was more suspicious than the former one, and he therefore asked why the challengers answered so quietly. The Highlander replied that it was necessary, lest they should be overheard. Which was only too true, yet in a different sense than the Frenchman had in mind. He was satisfied, however, and the English once more passed on.

Though they were only the first detachment, Wolfe, who was the first to spring ashore, determined not to wait for the second, but to strike while the iron was hot. Above them towered the precipice, rocky, treacherous of foothold, and having at the top a French guard. Still, they had come to scale it, and they meant to try it whatever the difficulties. Pointing upwards, Wolfe turned to the Highlander commander, saying:

"I do not believe, sir, there is any possibility of getting up, but you must now do your best."

It was enough. The Frasers pulled themselves together, slung their muskets behind them, held their claymores between their teeth, and began the perilous ascent. Hand over hand they went, clutching roots of trees here, tufts of grass there, hauling themselves up by projecting crags, the foremost staying a moment to help another man behind—and all in such silence that the French watch on the summit never dreamed of their coming. Suddenly, however, when the summit was almost reached, the Frenchmen apparently caught a sound—perhaps a loose rock tumbled, perhaps a sword dropped. In any case the watch was on the alert at once, and, following the sound, fired down the rocks. The scalers returned the fire, instead of reserving their volley until they were on the summit, and of course the Frenchmen knew at once what was happening.

Before they had time to do any damage, however, the English were upon the summit. Scared out of their lives at the sudden appearance of the foe, whom they had never dreamed would attempt such a feat, the Frenchmen took to their heels and ran, followed by the Frasers, who quickly possessed themselves of a battery.

It was now easy for the remainder of Wolfe's force to mount the Heights, and when the morning broke the Frenchmen in Quebec were presented with the edifying sight of nearly the whole English army in battle array on the Heights which they had thought impregnable. Moreover, the British were advancing towards the city, and were taking up a position about three-quarters of a mile from the ramparts.

The news was quickly carried to Montcalm, who at first refused to believe it. But the eye must needs believe what it sees, and Montcalm at once realised that the time had come to give battle.

"I see them, indeed," he said, "where they ought not to be! But, as we must fight, I shall crush them!"

He therefore left his camp at Montmorency, pressing forward with all haste to take up a position against the English. In order to arrive as quickly as possible he sacrificed his artillery, which he left at Montmorency, with the exception of three small field-pieces. His Indian allies went on in front, well sheltered by the woods, with all the intricacies of which they were perfectly familiar. Hard upon these scouts went the main army; at first in close order, but later on, when they came within gunshot, opening out somewhat, and sending in an irregular fire.

Ere the French reached their intended position, Wolfe had made all his arrangements. His force was drawn up in two lines, the right wing of the first consisting of the 28th and 35th Regiments and the Louisbourg Grenadiers, under Wolfe himself, the centre being held by the 43rd and 47th, under Brigadier Muchelney, and the left by the 58th and 78th, under Brigadier Murray. The second line consisted of the 15th and two battalions

of the both, and was commanded by Brigadier Townsend, while as a reserve Wolfe had left the 48th, under Colonel Burton, the light infantry under Colonel Howe, covering the rear. Wolfe's left was the weakest spot, being more exposed to the enemy, whose Indians and some five hundred picked marksmen were hidden amongst the thickets. The right was well protected by the precipice up which the English had climbed, and so been able to bring matters to a head. For artillery he had to be content with one gun which a party of sailors had hauled up for him with great difficulty, and the four cannon that had been taken when the French watch fled.



QUEBEC
THE DEATH OF GENERAL WOLFE.

Wolfe's whole army was less than 5,000 men, against whom were opposed 7,000 Europeans besides a large number of Indians—in all over 12,000 men.

The French came on towards the English, whom Wolfe had ordered to lie down and reserve their fire until the enemy was close upon them. Montcalm's advance party got within forty yards, and then the order was given to fire. Taking steady aim, the English sent in a horrowing volley that made great gaps in

the advancing rank; then, before the French could recover, another and yet another volley was let fly at them, and soon the soldiers found it difficult to advance owing to the heaps of dead, and the French had to content themselves at that point with returning the destructive fire being poured in amongst them. They could not get past that cloud of bullets.

Meanwhile the Indians and the marksmen in the thickets had been tackled. They had been doing too much damage to be let alone, especially as their object was to strike down the English officers. "Mark well the officers!" had been the order.

At the same time Montcalm sent a force against the English left. Townsend's infantry received the foe with a drilling fire which sent them back quicker than they had come. The repulse affected the whole of the French line, which, half an hour before the battle began, was seen to waver. Their ranks broke, and men began to fly. Wolfe, quick to take advantage of this, put himself at the head of his men and urged them forward. The French left still held on, however, and Wolfe's right wing for some time found itself hotly engaged.

Wolfe, who had exposed himself to the hottest fire, was leading his men to the charge when a bullet shattered his wrist. Coolly binding up the wound, he still kept at the head of his men and urged them on and on, and when the French line began to waver, he ordered the whole line to advance. At that moment a second bullet caught him, this time in the groin. He still refused to fall back, though this second wound was a serious one, and caused him much agony.

The foe had marked him down for death, however, and almost immediately a third bullet bored its way into his breast, and the gallant Wolfe collapsed and staggered back into the arms of an officer just behind him. Even then he did not forget his brave men.

"Support me," he said faintly; "let not my brave fellows see me fall! The day is ours; keep it!"

But the English had seen the fall of their general, and, whipped into, a fury at their loss, they pressed forward with renewed vigour, the Highlanders especially infuriated.

"Claymore! Claymore! Dirk and claymore!" they yelled, and while Wolfe was being carried to the rear, the whole British line rushed headlong at the foe. The Frasers cast their muskets aside, gripped their claymores and dirks, and laid about them in the good old Highland style. Hand to hand English and French met; nothing could check the rush of the angry, gallant Britishers, and presently Captain Currie, the officer who had caught Wolfe, and who still supported him while he received medical attention, cried: "They run! See how they run!"

"Who run?" asked the expiring Wolfe, raising himself with a sudden burst of energy, as though he would like to be there, participating in the glories of victory.

"The French!" replied Currie in answer to his whispered question. "The French—they are giving way in all directions!"

"What, do they run already?" cried the dying hero. Then, giving his last order for the reserve to be sent to cut off the enemy's retreat, the gallant soldier turned over on to his left side, muttered "Now God be praised! I die happy!" and died—died in the hour of triumph.

Meanwhile the retreating French had also lost their commander, for Montcalm, while trying to rally his men for a last great stand, was struck by a shot which laid him low. For the moment he was saved; only to die in Quebec, whither he was quickly carried. When he was informed that he could not live, he cried:

"So much the better—I shall not then live to see the surrender of Quebec. I have got my death fighting against the bravest soldiers in the world, at the head of the greatest cowards that ever carried muskets!"

Whether or no the French were cowards, there is no doubt that the English were brave, and ere long the battle was over; the English had won.

Four days later the city surrendered to Townsend, on condition that the lives and properties of the inhabitants were respected, and that the prisoners should be sent home to France. The fight had cost England over 600. But it had cost France more than that—1,400 men and the Dominion of Canada, for the victory of Wolfe at Quebec was very soon followed by the capture of Montreal, and the English were masters of North America.

CHAPTER XV

SARATOGA

Where the Americans Struck a Decisive Blow for Independence

Sheer pluck won Canada for England; sheer obstinacy lost us what is now the United States of America. Ministerial pig-headedness, administrative shortsightedness, caused the American Colonies to revolt; but for a time it seemed as though British arms would remedy the state of things that British statesmanship had brought about. True, the Americans had declared their independence, but the defeat of a Colonial invasion of Canada, the capture of Philadelphia, and one or two other little events, combined to suggest that Britain was going to win. To follow up this advantage it was decided to strike a crushing blow. The crushing blow was struck—but not by England.

The plan of campaign was for General Burgoyne, a gallant and moderately able officer, to make an expedition into Canada at the head of seven thousand men, with the object of fighting his way along the Lakes, thence along the Hudson River, to join another army under Lord Howe at Albany.

The object of the campaign was to cut the communications between the various sections of the American army, which must ultimately have resulted in quelling the rebellion.

It was a well-laid plan; but it went wrong.

Burgoyne arrived in Quebec in March, 1777; in June he had collected his forces, and, reinforced by a number of Indians—which caused much anger and forebodings amongst the Americans, who knew the kind of warfare carried on by

these warriors—embarked on board the vessels waiting for him, and proceeded down Lake Champlain. He landed at Crown Point, and then proceeded to clear the way by compelling the Americans to evacuate Ticonderoga. This done, he swept down the Lake to Skenesborough, captured some American stores, and on July 6th began his march across country. It was an arduous journey; roads were bad, bridgeless rivers had to be crossed, and all this with a harassing foe cutting off stragglers. General Schuyler, commanding the Americans, having an insufficient force under him to oppose Burgoyne, fell back before the advancing British, who, a fortnight after leaving Skenesborough, reached Fort Edward on the left bank of the Hudson, having so far been able to carry their scheme into operation.

Schuyler had fallen back on Stillwater, on the right bank of the Hudson, and there waited until reinforcements came up. Meanwhile he had been compelled to send a detachment to relieve Fort Schuyler, which General St. Leger, who had crossed Lake Ontario at the same time that Burgoyne left Quebec, was besieging. St. Leger had to retire, leaving his stores behind.

Thus did the scheme begin to go astray.

Moreover, Burgoyne was in a precarious position. Many of his Indians, on whom he had placed a good deal of reliance, deserted him; his stores were well nigh used up, and it became necessary to put the men on short rations.

To remedy this he sent out a foraging expedition under General Baum to capture some stores at Bennington; the foragers were met by the New England militia, who defeated them and sent them scurrying off to Fort Edward again.

And Burgoyne got no stores.

Still more desertions followed; and all the time the Americans were being reinforced. There was nothing to be done but to wait at Fort Edward until stores could be brought up Lake Champlain.

Meanwhile Schuyler had been superseded in the command by General Gates, who took up a strong position on Bemis's Heights near Stillwater. Amongst his officers he numbered Benedict Arnold—a hoot in himself—Schuyler, and Stark. Having put his battle-force in order, he awaited the coming of Burgoyne; he wanted him to come quickly.

General Lincoln was in Burgoyne's rear. He made some skirmishes, did some damage, and then decided to fall upon the English flank.

Things were getting too warm for Burgoyne at Fort Edward, and on September 13th and 14th he made a bold move, crossing the Hudson by a bridge of boats, and encamping on the heights of Saratoga, five miles from the American position.

On the 18th he moved down to within two miles of Gates, and prepared to give battle.

We now come to the fighting round Saratoga, which had three phases, and it is necessary to describe all three in order to understand the campaign.

Early on the morning of the 19th, the two armies were face to face, each extending from the river westward over the hills. Gates commanded the main body of the American army on the right wing, the British left wing under Generals Phillips and Reidesel opposing him with a large force of artillery and infantry. General Poor commanded the American left wing, having Burgoyne himself opposed to him, supported by General Fraser and Colonel Breyman with their grenadiers and infantry.

The American centre under General Learned had the Canadians, Indians, and loyalists to encounter.

While Gates was bent on remaining on the defensive, Burgoyne determined to force the pace. Accordingly Phillips and Reidesel were ordered to march along the river and attack the American right while Burgoyne and Fraser manœuvred by separate routes round through the woods to fall on the enemy's rear, the centre simultaneously to attack the central outposts. As

soon as Burgoyne and Fraser effected a junction the signal was to be given to fall to.

Such comprehensive movements of the English troops could not escape the notice of the Americans, but, although informed of them, Gates showed no signs of pressing forward to the attack.

On the other hand, Arnold was eager for the fight, and did not hesitate to urge Gates to begin. At last Gates consented, and sent Colonel Morgan and his detachment of light horse to attack the Canadians and Indians.

Morgan needed no second bidding, and away his cavalry went, meeting the Canadians in a ravine. Bang through the crowd of warriors and colonists they charged, scattered them, and sent them flying in all directions. But so furious had been Morgan's charge that he found his own men scattered in the woods, and at the mercy of a detachment of loyalists under Major Forbes.

Charging down upon the woods, the loyalists succeeded in driving the Americans back, but Morgan rallied his men for a last great charge, and once more returned to the fray. The plunging horses, well-handled swords, and daring courage of the Americans eventually caused Forbes to fall back on his lines.

Meanwhile Burgoyne was pushing forward, and Arnold sallied forth to tackle him; he soon found that it was impossible to achieve any good, owing to the presence of Fraser's supporting division. He therefore fell back to obtain reinforcements, and then decided to cut Fraser off.

Between the two forces lay a dense forest which hid their operations from each other, and it was with mutual surprise that they suddenly came face to face—although this was their object.

But face to face they were, and no time was lost in getting hand to hand. At the head of his men, Arnold rushed impetuously to the attack, to be met by a terrific fire from the English. Through the hail of bullets Arnold went, bearing a

charmed life. Then bayonets were brought into play, and gradually the Americans were repulsed.

Fraser then assumed the offensive, and attacked the left flank of the American army. Here he met more than his match. For one thing he had to guard his line against an attack by Arnold when he should have rallied his men, and, moreover, the Americans subjected him to so galling a fire that his own men began to give way. There was no standing against the enemy, who, knowing the importance of preserving their line, stuck boldly to their posts in face of overwhelming numbers, and eventually caused the English to fall back in confusion.

The Americans, indeed, might have pressed forward and carried the day, but at that critical moment General Phillips and his large force of artillery appeared on the scene. With a roar the cannons opened fire upon the advancing Americans, tore great gaps in their ranks, and inch by inch forced them back. For an hour the heavy firing and fighting went on, and at last the Americans were compelled to retire on their lines, having fought stubbornly for every yard they had had to surrender.

For a while the battle ceased, but about three o'clock it was resumed with increased vigour. Between the two forces was a wood into which Burgoyne poured a heavy cannonade, and then sent his infantry at the charge toward the American lines.

Through the wood the English rushed, fired a volley as they emerged, and then charged, bayonets fixed. The Americans allowed them to come almost upon them; then, at the word, they were up and at it. Swords flashed, bayonets prodded, muskets spat out their deadly messages, and a battle royal ensued.

Now the English seemed to gain ground; now they were repulsed, only to come on again, to meet the same fate. For three hours the battle raged, and only ceased when the sun went down and made fighting impossible, although there were a few skirmishes even then.

The result of the conflict was that the English remained masters of the field, but the battle was an indecisive one, Burgoyne not having been able to advance.

Next day Burgoyne fell back on the river, although had he but known it he might have pushed his advantage and have won a victory, for the American left wing had all but exhausted its ammunition.

However, the vigorous resistance with which he had been met made him decide to rest upon his laurels until he could get news of Lord Howe, and he therefore occupied himself with strengthening his position; as also did Gates, who moved on to Stillwater.

Meanwhile Howe had been unable to carry out his part of the campaign, but Sir Henry Clinton moved up the Hudson with the intention of joining forces with Burgoyne. He had but three thousand men, and with these he had to clear away the forts which barred progress on the river. Clinton managed to send a messenger through to Burgoyne, who urged him to get to work at once.

On October 6th Clinton had been so far successful as to have reduced a couple of forts, destroyed a fleet on the Hudson, and was hastening on to Albany.

But Burgoyne did not know. He waited in vain for news, and at last, seeing his army daily reduced by desertions, his men growing weak from lack of food, and the enemy growing in strength every day, he decided that he must either advance at once or retire ignominiously.

He chose advance.

On October 7th, therefore, at the head of fifteen hundred men, two twelve-pounders, six six-pounders, and two howitzers, he advanced on the American right, now commanded by Gates.

Unaware of Burgoyne's intention, Gates himself had dispatched a detachment to attack the English rear, but as soon

as news arrived of the enemy's movements, he cancelled the order and drew his army up in battle array.

There was a sharp half-hour's tussle between the outposts, in which the English were forced back, but the battle did not actually begin until about half-past two, when General Poor and a large force bore down upon the English left. In face of a hot musketry and artillery fire they pressed on, reserving their own fire until they were well within range. Then they fired their volleys in rapid succession, opened out, and under cover of trees reached the foot of the ridge where the English artillery was placed.

Up the slope they scrambled, men falling on every side; but still they went up, and at last they were in the midst of the batteries.

Then began a gallant struggle for the guns; hand to hand, bayonet to bayonet, they fought, neither side giving way before the onslaught of the other. Time and time again one of the guns was captured; and time and time again was it retaken by the English, who, however, at last had to relinquish it.

The triumph put the Americans in good heart; cheering madly, they turned the captured gun on its former owners, poured in on them a stiff fire which sent them flying—one of their officers wounded and another in the hands of the enemy.

Almost at the same time that Poor attacked the English left, Colonel Morgan and fifteen hundred men fell upon the right. First Morgan attacked the flanking party sent out by Fraser, poured in on them a hail of bullets which sent them back in confusion, and then, swinging his column round, with a ringing cheer, led his men down upon Fraser's right flank with an impetuosity which fairly staggered the Britishers.

For a time they stood firm, giving shot for shot, and thrust for thrust, but, taken unawares as they had been, they were at a disadvantage, and presently they were in the greatest dismay and disorder.

As if this were not enough, a batch of fresh American troops appeared on the scene and fell to with such a will that the Britishers, demoralised as they were already, broke their ranks—and fled.

After them went Morgan.

But the English rallied at last. Earl Balcarras, sword in hand, gathered them together in some sort of order, put himself at their head, and led them back to the fight. Then they fought like demons, fought to win back the ground they had lost, fought to drive off the conquering Americans.

Thus the battle raged on the right and left, and meanwhile the British centre, held mainly by the Hessian and German troops, stood firm, waiting their turn.

It came—from an unexpected quarter; not even the Americans knew that it was coming.

Benedict Arnold, after the fighting on the 19th, had fallen into disfavour with Gates, who deprived him of his command, and refused him permission to fight. Impetuous fire-eater that he was, Arnold was like a maddened horse chafing at the restraining bit, and at last, unable to control himself any longer, he leaped into his saddle, and galloped off for the fray.

Gates immediately sent after him to order him back. Arnold but spurred his horse the harder, and placed himself at the head of three regiments which he had commanded before. He was the darling of his men, who received him with loud cheers, and at once followed him as he charged down upon the English centre. On they went; and at last the Germans' turn had come. They fought well and long, but Arnold was not to be denied. The first charge failed to break the British ranks, but Arnold quickly rallied his men, and, sword in hand, bore down once more. Muskets flashed and bayonets clashed as the foes met, and wherever the fight was thickest Arnold was there, urging his men on by word and deed. The onslaught was dreadful, and

brave men as they were the Germans at last broke their ranks, and went scurrying off towards their lines.

Meanwhile Morgan was still busy with Fraser. What Arnold was doing for the Americans, Fraser was doing for the English. He fought as Scotsmen know how to fight; he led his men as Scotsmen know how to lead. As fast as his lines broke before the onrush of the Americans he rallied them, and led them to the charge, or kept them firm to their ground.

As long as Fraser lived to encourage his force, there was little prospect of beating them back, Morgan quickly realised this, and decided that Fraser must die.

Without delay, therefore, he called up a batch of marksmen, hid them in a clump of trees, saying, as he pointed to the British general:

"That gallant officer is General Fraser. I admire him and honour him, but it is necessary he should die. Victory for the enemy depends upon him. Do your duty."

The men did their duty, for in less than five minutes a bullet found Fraser, and he dropped on the redoubt he had so bravely defended.

As Morgan had thought, Fraser's fall sent dismay through his force, which, a little later, finally broke and set off post-haste for their camp by the river. Very soon the rest of the British line began to waver, and presently the whole army turned and fled, hotly pursued by the Americans.

Fortunately, Reidesel and Phillips were at hand with their artillery, which although it did not stay the American rush at least made it less effective, and enabled the British to reach their entrenchments.

Heedless, however, of the artillery and musketry fire poured in amongst them, the Americans' pressed forward, practically the whole line advancing. Right up to Burgoyne's earthworks they went, and, arrived there, assaulted them with a vigour that would not be denied.

If the battle had been furious before, it was now almost incredibly fierce. The English knew that their last chance had come; the Americans realised that victory was within their reach, and for these respective reasons both sides fought like demons.

Once again, Arnold was to the fore. First he led his men against a strong redoubt held by the infantry under Earl Balcarras, carried it at the point of the bayonet, and attempted to force his way into the very heart of the camp. But numbers were against him, and he had to fall back, only to rush to some other point of the conflict.

This time he made for the English right flank, to reach which he had to pass between the cross-fires of the two armies. Meeting a brigade under Learned about to attempt to carry a redoubt held by Canadians and loyalists, he immediately placed himself at their head. Sending a small body to attack one side of the redoubt, he himself fell upon the front. The Americans won, the Canadians fell back—thus exposing Breyman's Germans to the attack.

Arnold at once called Morgan's and several other brigades to his help, and ordered a general assault on the earthworks. At them they went with a ringing cheer, broke through, received a volley from the Germans, who then took to their heels—filled with terror at the firebrand who had fallen amongst them.

Down went Arnold's horse; down, too, went Arnold with a bullet in his leg, but still bravely shouting to urge his men on. Then came the message he had been dodging for the last two hours! Gates's messenger, who had been trying to get near him, at last managed to reach him—only because the hero lay wounded on the field which he had won. He was ordered back to head-quarters, "lest he should do some rash thing!" One is tempted to say "Thank Heaven for the man who does some rash thing!"

So back to camp went Arnold—carried thither by couple of officers; but he at least had the satisfaction that, disobedient

though he had been, he had won the battle, for the Germans had fled, and would not answer to the rally, Breyman was mortally wounded, and, do what he would, Burgoyne could not prevail upon his retreating army to return to the fight.

Even then Burgoyne's crowning humiliation was still to come, for when night fell the Americans were so worn out by the hard day's fighting that they were unable to press forward and take advantage of the blow they had struck.

Lincoln, however, who had some time before found the main body, and had been commanding the right wing of the American army, appeared on the scene with fresh troops and took possession of the camp which Burgoyne had been compelled to forsake. The latter, fearing what the dawn might bring forth, resolved to retire further during the night, and next day had taken up a position at Wilbur's Basin, about a mile north of his previous camp.

The following day was spent in occasional stiff skirmishes, desultory firing, and the burying of the dead on both sides, and during the night and day after the royalist army marched off to Saratoga. It was the woeful retreat of a demoralised army; rain fell in torrents, the roads were sodden, the men were weary and battle-worn. Burgoyne had been so anxious to get into safety that he had left his wounded in camp, and there they were tended well by the Americans.

Gates followed as quickly as the wretched roads would allow, and on the afternoon of the 10th took up position on the heights above Saratoga, opposite Burgoyne's army, which was on a ridge on the other side of Fish Creek. Burgoyne's idea was to cross the Hudson by the ford near at hand, but he found this so well guarded that it was impracticable, and he therefore decided to follow the river till he came opposite Fort Edward. In this again the Americans foiled him, and kept up an incessant Cannonade which did great havoc in his ranks.

Burgoyne was helpless.

But a ray of hope came. Rumour led Gates to believe that Burgoyne had after all managed to get away towards Fort Edward, taking the main body of his army with him, and leaving only a small force to guard the camp. Gates determined to fall upon the camp, capture it, and then march off after the retreating British general.

Three brigades were therefore sent over the creek early in the morning of the 11th under cover of a fog. Hardly had they reached the farther side of the creek than they ran into the British pickets, who sent a volley into them, and did some amount of damage. The Americans quickly divined that the rumour was false, and that it was indeed only a trap to catch them napping. It almost succeeded, but Morgan, who was with the brigades, immediately sent a messenger to warn Gates of the ruse. A British deserter was captured as he was fording the creek, and from him Gates received corroboration of the suspicions which had been aroused. The order for a general advance was therefore cancelled. It was just in time, for the American troops had by now almost run into the British lines, the fog having hidden their danger from them.

The British immediately opened fire upon them, and were fired upon in return, but by quick manœuvring the American advance party managed to retreat in good order, and so saved themselves from almost certain annihilation; saved, too, their main army from defeat, for had Burgoyne's ruse succeeded he would undoubtedly have been able to break through the opposing lines and make his way to Albany.

But Burgoyne was doomed to failure.

The end was in sight. Desertions followed each other in quick succession; his men numbered but some five thousand against Gates's fifteen thousand; food was growing scarcer every day; men were getting weary of warfare that brought no success; Burgoyne himself was losing heart; and Clinton was dumb. Not a word of news came from him.

There was nothing to do but to wait—and to wait when one might fight is fatal. Two alternatives lay before Burgoyne—a general and dishonourable retreat, or a surrender on honourable terms. In view of the state of the roads, the idea of retreat was cast aside, and on the 13th Burgoyne called his officers together, and to the music of cannon and the accompaniment of musketry fire, it was decided to open up negotiations with Gates.

That evening a flag of truce was sent to the American lines, an appointment was made for early next morning; and the overtures for surrender had commenced.

On the 14th, therefore, Burgoyne's adjutant-general carried a message to Gates, who agreed to an armistice, proposing a schedule of terms, including the surrender of the British as prisoners of war, and the laying down of their arms in, their encampment.

"My army, however reduced," was Burgoyne's reply, "will never admit their retreat is cut off while they have arms in their hands. And sooner than this army will consent to ground their arms in their encampment, they shall rush on the enemy, determined to take no quarter."

Eventually it was decided that the British army should march out of their camp with all the honours of war, their colours flying, and then lay down their arms at the command of their own officers. Free passage was to be allowed to the troops from Boston to Europe upon condition of their not serving again in America. The treaty to be signed on the morning of the 17th.

Then, with the irony of fate, on the 16th Burgoyne received a message from Clinton saying that he had been successful in capturing several forts on the Hudson, and was hastening on Albany. Burgoyne's first thought was to postpone signing the convention of surrender, but Gates heard of this—heard, too, the reason for it.

His reply was much to the point. He immediately drew his army up in battle array, and early in the morning on the 17th sent a messenger to Burgoyne insisting that the treaty should be signed forthwith—else the American army would open fire.

Burgoyne signed.

His army, lined up for the last time, marched out of camp with their colours flying, piled their arms, and Burgoyne rode over to the American lines, met Gates, was introduced and said:

"The fortune of war, General Gates, has made me your prisoner."

"I shall always be ready to bear testimony that it has not been through any fault of your excellency," said the victorious American.

And these courtesies duly observed, victor and vanquished went to dinner.

Then the army marched off to Boston, a journey of three hundred miles, to find that, instead of being transported to England, they were kept prisoners of war.

And the effect of Saratoga?

The Americans won their fight for Independence—nations which till then had been neutral, took their side, and England became involved in a great European war, though she also kept up her fight in America; but at last peace was restored, and the Independence of the United States was acknowledged by England.

CHAPTER XVI

TRAFALGAR

Where England Won a Battle, but Lost her Idol— Nelson

Napoleon the Ambitious decided to invade England. But Nelson kept guard. After some trouble in chasing the French fleet across the Atlantic and back, he met the allied French and Spanish squadrons off Trafalgar, and smashed them—at the cost of his own life. As long as red blood runs in the veins of men the story of Nelson and Trafalgar will live; it is printed in the imperishable book of the world's history, and age will not dim the glory of the hero who, leading his men to victory, was met and conquered by the last great enemy—Death.

Nelson left Portsmouth on September 14th, followed by the blessings of the populace, whose idol he was. A fortnight later he was off Cadiz, where he kept watch for the French fleet. Admiral Villeneuve was in ignorance of his proximity; in fact, it was not known where he was, though it was reported that he was in London. It was Nelson's desire that his whereabouts should be kept secret, and this was admirably done.

Villeneuve, however, was rather nervous, and when he received orders to sail for Gibraltar, and sweep the English from the Mediterranean, he hesitated. But at last he had to sail, and on October 19th his fleet of thirty-three ships left Cadiz, and Nelson's scouting frigates signalled through the *Mars* to that effect. All that day the scouts kept up their signalling, and Villeneuve, realising what they were, though little dreaming that they were informing the man he dreaded of his movements occasionally sent a shot across their bows, for which the frigates didn't care a scrap, but dogged their foe relentlessly. And all the time Nelson was following too, sailing south-east, hoping to cut

off Villeneuve before he could reach the Strait of Gibraltar, yet keeping out of sight, and it was not until the 21st that the fleets came together.

The English fleet was in order of battle, two lines with an advanced squadron of eight fast-sailing two-deckers; Nelson, in the *Victory* led one column, Collingwood, in the *Royal Sovereign*, lead the other.

The one-armed, one-eyed hero and darling of his men paced to and fro on the deck of the *Victory*, giving an order here, an order there, and enthusing his men as only he could do.

About half-past eight Villeneuve ordered his fleet to draw up in such array and position that, if necessary, they could make for Cadiz, but the manœuvre was bad executed, and the fleet assumed a crescent-shaped formation right into which the English ship columns were sailing as fast as the choppy seas would allow them.

Nelson was eager for the fight; so were his men. So much depended on the striking of a crushing blow, and Nelson determined that it should be struck that day. But while Nelson was anxious to begin the battle himself, the officers on board the *Victory*, realising that an English victory probably depended upon the safety of the Admiral, would have been content to forgo the honour of opening the fight in favour of some other ship. The question was tactfully put to Nelson. Might not the *Temeraire* be allowed to take the foremost place the column?

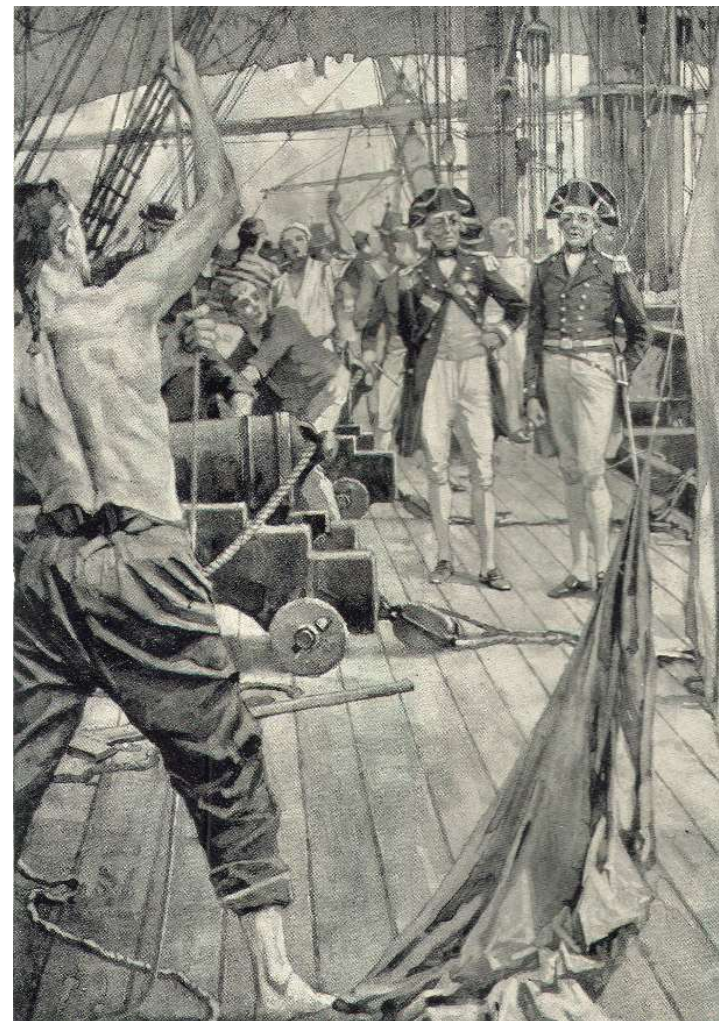
Divining their intention, Nelson replied:

"Oh, yes, let her go—if she can!"

Captain Hardy immediately hailed the *Temeraire* to give her instructions, but meanwhile Nelson was dodging about the decks giving orders that caused the *Victory* to leap forward and retain her place in the vanguard.

"There," he said quietly to Hardy as he came back laughing like a big schoolboy, "let the *Temeraires* open the ball if they can—which they most assuredly can't! I think there's

nothing more to be done now, is there, till we open fire? Oh, yes; stay a minute, though. I suppose I must give the fleet something as a final fillip. Let me see. How would this do: 'Nelson expects that every man will do his duty?'"



TRAFALGAR

"THE SOUL-STIRRING, EVER-TO-BE-REMEMBERED MESSAGE WAS SENT TO THE MIZEN TOP-GALLANT MASTHEAD."

Hardy, entering into the spirit of the thing, suggested that "England expects" would be an improvement: Nelson, realising that loyalty to the nation was to be preferred to loyalty to the man, agreed. The order was given; and the soul-stirring, ever-to-be-remembered message was sent to the mizen top-gallant mast-head.

No man ever before heard such shouts of enthusiasm as those that greeted the signal in Trafalgar's Bay; not a man in the fleet but vowed to do what England expected of him; not a man that did not wait with itching hands for the battle to begin.

"Now," said Nelson, "I can do no more. We must trust to the great Disposer of events and the justice of our cause. I thank God for this great opportunity of doing my duty!"

For all his apparent buoyancy of heart, Nelson had a foreboding of coming ill, and when Captain Blackwood left him to take up his place on the *Euryalus*, the Admiral gave him a hand-grip that was never forgotten, and said:

"God bless you, Blackwood! I shall never see you again."

Shortly afterwards the battle began.

It opened by the French ship *Fougueux* firing upon the *Royal Sovereign*, which was sailing straight for the allied column.

"Engage the enemy more closely," went up Nelson's last signal, and the fleet closed in upon the foe. Collingwood broke through their line astern the *Santa Anna*, reserving his fire until he was almost at the muzzles of the enemy's guns. Then, with a roar; the port broadside was let fly into the *Santa Anna*. Double-shotted, well-aimed and well-timed, the guns sent their messages of destruction and death; four hundred men fell killed or wounded, and fourteen of the Spanish guns were put out of action.

Simultaneously, the starboard guns spoke to the *Fougueux*. This time, however, owing to the smoke and the greater distance, the damage was not great. Still, it was a good

opening to a glorious battle, and Collingwood, standing on his quarter-deck, cried to his flag-captain:

"By Jove, Rotherham! what would Nelson give to be here?"

"And," says James in his *Naval History*, "by a singular coincidence Lord Nelson, the moment he saw his friend in his enviable position, exclaimed: 'See how that noble fellow Collingwood carries his ship into action.'"

Leaving the *Fougueux* alone for a while, Collingwood pressed still closer on the *Santa Anna*, and a battle royal began between the two great ships. Raking broadsides were poured in, rifles spat their sharp messages, men fell, and guns were disabled. But still the fight went on. Four other ships soon bore down upon the *Royal Sovereign*, so that she was very soon the centre of a ring of fire. The roar of cannon, the crash of shot, the splintering of decks and sides, were as so much music in the ears of the bulldogs of Britain, who fought on with dauntless courage.

So close were the ships to each other, and so incessant was the fire, that often cannon-balls met in midair, though oftener they fell aboard and did great damage. In one respect the *Royal Sovereign* was better off than her foes, for badly aimed shots passed over the gallant Britisher and found their mark on the decks of French or Spanish vessels, and presently the four newcomers veered off, especially as they noticed that other British ships were bearing down upon them.

With a crash the British *Belleisle* let fly a broadside at the *Santa Anna* as she passed; and then Collingwood found himself left alone with his foe. For over an hour the duel raged, and the *Royal Sovereign*, although she carried a dozen guns less than the *Santa Anna*, got the best of it; battered about, mastless, with hundreds of her men lying in pools of blood, the *Santa Anna* fought on, her officers refusing for a long time to strike their colours. At last, however, there was nothing for it but to

give in, and the Spanish flag fluttered down the mast. The ship was won.

As soon as the battle began the enemy started to fire at the *Victory*, which it was evident was Nelson's flagship. The English Admiral had made certain that he should not be lost sight of, either by friend or foe, for he had hoisted several flags in case one should be carried away. A shot passed through the *Victory's* maintop-gallant sail; then broadsides were hurled at her, but still she kept on.

Nelson was looking out for Villeneuve's ship, but for some time, it seems, he failed to find her. Southey says "the enemy showed no colours till late in the action, when they began to feel the necessity of having them to strike."

Nelson dearly wished to encounter the French Admiral, and so, despite a raking fire poured in upon him by the *Santissima Trinidad*—a Spanish two-decker which he had fought and beaten on another occasion he kept on his way, taking the *Victory* into the thick of the fight—always with his one eye on the lookout for Villeneuve, refusing even to have the hammocks slung higher lest they should interrupt his view, although they would have afforded some shelter from the enemy's fire. Men dropped here, there, and everywhere, shots bowled along the deck or bored their way through the sides, yet still the gallant *Victory* held on her way for the *Bucentaure*, which Nelson now knew carried Admiral Villeneuve.

Eight ships, however, surrounded the *Bucentaure*, and made it impossible for the *Victory* to be brought alongside, and these belched forth their heavy fire at her, smashing her wheel, hurling her mizen-mast overboard; her sails were shattered and torn into shreds. The wind had dropped, too; the *Victory* was almost brought to a standstill, and it was impossible to bring a single gun into action.

Pacing his quarter-deck Nelson waited for his time to come. A double-headed shot laid low eight marines on the poop; another, crashing through the launch, passed between Nelson and

Hardy, bruising the latter's foot, and tearing the buckle from his shoe. Both stopped in their promenade, looked anxiously at each other.

"This is too warm work to last long, Hardy," and then he praised the courage of the men who so calmly stuck to their posts under such a galling fire.

"The enemy are closing up their line, sir," said Hardy presently. "See! we can't get through without running one of them aboard!"

"I can't help that," said Nelson, "and I don't see that it matters much which we tackle first. Take your choice. Go on board which you please."

First, Villeneuve on the *Bucentaure* was made a present of a treble-shotted, close-range broadside, which disabled four hundred men and put twenty guns out of action, and so left the ship almost defenceless.

Then, porting his helm, Nelson bore down on the *Redoubtable* and the *Neptune*. The latter veered off, but the former could not get away in time to escape the *Victory*, which she therefore received with a broadside. Then, fearful that a boarding party would enter her here, the lower deck ports were shut, and never opened again during the battle. Meanwhile the *Temeraire* had fastened on to the *Redoubtable* on the other side, and the most momentous episode in that day's work began.

Depressing the guns so that they should not do damage to the *Temeraire*, the *Victory's* gunners worked like very demons, and broadside after broadside was poured into the plucky *Redoubtable*, which made a brave show. The two ships were almost rubbing sides, and men stood by the British guns with buckets of water in their hands which, immediately the guns were fired, they threw upon the hole made in the *Redoubtable's* side lest she should catch fire and so the prize be lost.

Up in the Frenchman's top riflemen were posted, and throughout that dreadful fight picked off man after man—a

practice which Nelson abhorred. It was from one of these high-placed riflemen that the English Admiral received his death-wound.

Suddenly, while pacing the poop deck, Nelson swung round as on a pivot and pitched forward on his face. A ball had entered in at the left shoulder and passed through his backbone.

Hardy, turning round, saw three men raising him up. "They have done for me at last, Hardy!" said Nelson feebly.

"Oh! I hope not!" cried Hardy.

"Yes," he replied, "my backbone is shot through!"

Quickly, but gently, his bearers carried him down the ladders to the lower deck. On the way, notwithstanding the fact that he must have been enduring awful agony, he had thoughts for nothing but the battle; seeing the tiller ropes, which had been shot away at the moment the *Victory* had crashed into the *Redoubtable* had not been replaced, he ordered new ones to be rigged up at once.

"Then, that he might not be seen by the crew, he took out his handkerchief, and covered his face and stars. Had he but concealed these badges of honour from the enemy England perhaps would not have had cause to receive with sorrow the news of the battle of Trafalgar."

Down into the cockpit they carried him, a wounded, dying idol of England, and there in surroundings resembling a shambles with its groups of surgeons and wounded, the former using the amputating knife and saw unmercifully upon the latter—there must we leave him for a while and return to the conflict overhead and around.

The men in the *Redoubtable's* top still kept up their galling fire, as also did the guns of the second-deck, and within a quarter of an hour after Nelson had received his wound, fifty of the *Victory's* officers and men on the upper deck fell killed or wounded.

Taking advantage of this, the French decided to board. It was impossible to do this by the bulwarks, so they lowered their mainyard and turned it into a bridge over which they scrambled on to the deck of the *Victory*.

To be boarded by Frenchmen was more than English flesh and blood could stand!

"Repel boarders!"

It was a cry like that of a wild beast, and it brought up untamed denizens from the lower decks. Half-naked, utterly unrecognisable owing to the blood and gunpowder with which they were besmirched, the Englishmen hurled themselves at the audacious Frenchmen. Pistol and pike, cutlass and axe in hand, the Britons fought with the ferocity that had made them dreaded so often in the past; fought, too, with hands, when other weapons failed; hurled the trespassers overboard; cut them down where they stood, in fact had their will on them—and that will was to see that no Frenchman stayed aboard the *Victory* any longer than it took an Englishman to give him a cutlass thrust or a good old English punch.

It cost the *Victory* thirty men, but it cost the *Redoubtable* more; and at last not a Frenchman was left alive on the decks of Nelson's flagship.

As we have said, while the *Victory* had been engaging the *Redoubtable* on one side the *Temeraire* had tackled her on the other, and the three ships hugged each other so that muzzles touched muzzles. Soon after the attempt to board the *Victory* the *Temeraire* lashed her bowsprit to the gangway of the *Redoubtable*, and poured in a raking fire until she was compelled to surrender, though not before she had twice been on fire and over five hundred of her crew had been killed or wounded.

The *Temeraire* next turned her attention to the *Fougueux*—or rather it was the *Fougueux* that turned her attention to the *Temeraire*, for during the fight with the *Redoubtable* the English ship's gaff had been shot away, and her

ensign hurled on to the deck. The *Fougueux*, looking around for a foe to tackle or a prize to take, thought that the *Temeraire* would easily come into the latter category, and so bore down upon her.

Captain Harvey was busy with the *Redoubtable*, but Lieutenant Kennedy was far from being in the mood to surrender, and quickly got together a band of men to man the starboard batteries. With these they opened fire at about one hundred yards—and the *Fougueux* knew it! Crash! Masts fell, the wheel was smashed, rigging shattered, and the Frenchman, which had not been expecting so vigorous an onslaught from a ship whose flag lay on the deck, was simply crippled, and so ran foul of the *Temeraire*. The starboard crew of the latter quickly lashed their foe, and Kennedy, a couple of middies, and less than thirty seamen and marines rushed aboard her.

It says much for the valour of the men of those days that such a handful should dare to attempt what Kennedy and his few followers attempted—and successfully too. Five hundred Frenchmen remained fresh for battle on the *Fougueux*, yet the Britishers did not hesitate a single moment. With a bound they were on the enemy's deck, and a second later were slashing and hacking at the crowd that came up against them. Back, back, and still back, that ridiculously small boarding party forced the Frenchmen, killing and wounding many, and compelling others to leap overboard to escape their fury. The remainder, scared at the ferocity of the dare-devils, scuttled away below, and the English clapped hatches on them; and the ship was won.

While engaging the *Redoubtable* on one side the *Victory* had been pouring a deadly fire into the *Santissima Trinidad* on the other. Through and through the Spaniard was raked; shot burnt a way through her sides, and swept her deck clear of men, until at last the Spaniards knew not how to escape them, and dived overboard, and swam off to the *Victory*, whose crew helped them aboard.

The *Belleisle*, as we have seen, had hurled her broadside into the *Santa Anna* at the beginning of the conflict, and was immediately after pounced upon by about half a dozen ships of the enemy.

From every side they poured in their fire, battering her sides, tearing her rigging to pieces, and sending her mizen-mast with a crash over the aft guns, effectually putting them out of action. Sixty men also had been sent to their account, but the rest fought on with dauntless courage, returning the enemy's fire as quickly as they could load the guns that remained in action.

The *Achille* bore down upon her and attacked her at her point of disadvantage, the *Aigle* tackled her on the starboard, assisted by the French *Neptune*, which aimed at her remaining masts and brought them to the deck.

Crippled but unconquered, mastless, almost gunless, wellnigh manless, and with nearly everything reduced to splinters, the *Belleisle's* few remaining men stood to their three or four guns, hurling defiance at the foe and pounding away for all they were worth. Not a man flinched; one thing only worried them—the flag had been shot away. That they quickly remedied; fastening a Union Jack to a pike head, they waved it over their heads, yelled out a cheer of defiant determination—and fought on and on. Helpless hulk though she was, the ship kept in action throughout the battle, refusing to strike her pikehead flag.

What the French *Neptune* had done for the *Belleisle*, the English ship of the same name did for the *Bucentaure*. It will be remembered that Nelson had led the *Victory* against this vessel at first, half-suspecting—then wholly convinced—that Villeneuve was aboard her, but after having given her a taste of what was coming had tackled the French *Neptune* and the *Redoubtable*. The English *Neptune* next assailed the *Bucentaure*, and sent her main and mizen-masts by the board; then the *Leviathan* came up, and, at a range of about thirty yards, gave the Frenchman a full broadside which smashed the stern into

splinters. A similar sally from the *Conqueror* completed the work of demolition and brought down the flag.

A boat containing a marine officer and five men put off from the *Conqueror* to take possession. Villeneuve and two chief officers at once tendered the marine officer their swords, but he, thinking that the honour of accepting them belonged to his own captain, refused the weapons, put the Frenchmen in his boat, pocketed the key of the magazine, left a couple of sentries to guard the cabin doors, and then pulled away to rejoin his ship, elated at the good fortune which had given him the French Admiral as a prize. For some time the little boat was pulled hither and thither in search of the *Conqueror*, which had meanwhile gone in quest of other prey. At last, however, the boat was picked up by the *Mars*, whose acting commander, Lieutenant Hennah, immediately accepted the surrendered swords, and ordered Villeneuve and his two captains below.

When the *Leviathan* had seen that the *Bucentaure* was crippled, she had hastened off to match herself with another foe. She quickly found one. It was the seventy- four gun Spanish *San Augustino*, which immediately opened fire at a hundred yards. The *Leviathan* replied with twofold interest, brought the Spaniard's mizen-mast and flag down to the deck with a crash, and then lashed herself to her foe. Clearing the way for boarders by a galling fire, the English captain sent off his boarding party. A hand-to-hand fight took place, but, fight though they did with great courage, the Spaniards were steadily but surely forced over the side or below, and at last the ship was won. Another prize to England!

The *Leviathan*, however, got more than she bargained for, for the French *Intrepide* saw the plight of her ally and bore down on the English vessel, sending in a raking fire as she came, and getting her boarders ready for attack. They had no chance to board; another of Nelson's ships, the *Africa*, pitted herself against the *Intrepide*, giving and receiving a tremendous fire which battered both combatants about pretty much. The former, smaller though she was, got the best of it, and despite the fact

that she herself was in dire straits banged away at the *Intrepide* until the Frenchmen were compelled to strike their flag.

Meanwhile the *Prince* and the *Swiftsure* were enjoying themselves with the *Achille*, which, having found the *Belleisle* too much for her, had veered off to tackle a less dauntless foe. Unfortunately, she jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire, for as she passed through the fighting line every English ship that could spare her a shot let her have it, so that at last her masts cumbered the deck, and the ship was a blazing mass. Unable to quench the flames because the fire-engine had been smashed, the crew set about cutting the masts, intending to heave them overboard.

Before they could effect this, however, the *Prince* gave her a broadside which did the cutting for them, and sent the wreckage down into the waists. Instantly the whole ship took fire, and the *Prince* ceased firing, and sent her boats to save the Frenchmen, the *Swiftsure* doing the same. It was a gallant but a dangerous act, for the heat caused the *Achille's* guns, whose men had left them to endeavour to conquer the flames, to discharge of their own accord, and several of the would-be rescuers perished as a result. Helpless blazing hulk though she was, the *Achille* still kept her colours flying bravely, her sole surviving senior officer, a middy, refusing to strike. Before the English boats could come up with their opponent the flames had reached her magazine, and with colours flying, she blew up, carrying her middy and two hundred men heavenwards.

It is time to hark back to the cockpit of the *Victory*, where Nelson, the greatest naval captain of his age, the greatest, too, England had ever known, lay dying, in agony, yet rejoicing that even in death he was victorious. The rank and file were kept in ignorance of his condition, though Nelson himself knew that the end was near, and urged the surgeons to give their attention to others. "He was in great pain, and expressed much anxiety for the event of the action, which now began to declare itself. As often as a ship struck the crew of the *Victory* hurrahed, and at

every hurrah a visible expression of joy gleamed in the eyes and marked the countenance of the dying hero."

Every now and then he would ask for Hardy. "Will no one bring Hardy to me?" he cried. At last Hardy came. The two friends shook hands in silence. Then Nelson spoke: "Well, Hardy, how goes the day with us?"

"Very well, my lord. We have got twelve or fourteen of the enemies' ships, but five of their van have tacked, and show an intention of bearing down on the *Victory*. I have therefore called two or three of our fresh ships round us, and have no doubt of giving them a drubbing."

"I hope none of *our* ships have struck, Hardy?"

"No, my lord; there is no fear of that."

"Well, I am a dead man, Hardy, but I am glad of what you say. Oh, whip them now you've got 'em; whip, them as they've never been whipped before!"

Hardy then left him for a while, and returning somewhat later reported that some fourteen ships had been taken.

"That's well," cried Nelson, "though I bargained for twenty. Anchor, Hardy, anchor."

Hardy suggested that Admiral Collingwood would now take upon himself the direction of affairs.

"Not while I live, Hardy!" said Nelson, raising himself with a mighty effort which left him prostrate. "Do you anchor."

"Shall we make the signal, sir?"

"Yes," answered Nelson, "for if I live I'll anchor."

For a minute or so Hardy stood and looked down at his Admiral in silence, then stooped and kissed him as requested.

"Don't have my poor carcase hove overboard," whispered Nelson as Hardy leant over him. "Get what's left of me sent to England, if you can manage it. Kiss me, Hardy."

Hardy kissed him again.

"Who is that?" asked the hero.

"It is I, Hardy."

"Good-bye. God bless you, Hardy. Thank God, I've done my duty."

Then Hardy left him—for ever.

Nelson was turned on to his right side, whispered that he wished he had not left the deck, and said that he knew he should soon be gone. Then, after a little silence sighed, struggled to speak and was heard to say:

"Thank God, I have done my duty!"

And then died. England's hero, her idol, her greatest sea-captain, had fought his last fight.

Hardy at once took the news to Collingwood, who assumed command. The new commander refused to carry out Nelson's instruction to anchor, because in view of the fact that a gale was blowing up, it would be quite unsafe to do so. The battle was over, the allied fleets had been defeated, eighteen of their ships were captured, and with these Collingwood stood out to sea. The enemy, however, recaptured four of the prizes, one escaped to Cadiz, some went down with all hands, others were stranded, and one was so unseaworthy that it was scuttled; and out of all those that were taken during the battle, only four were saved and taken into Gibraltar.

Besides Nelson England lost over fifteen hundred men, while the allies' loss has been stated at something like sixteen thousand.

And England rejoiced and mourned at the same time; rejoiced that Napoleon had received so crushing a blow, and mourned that the heroic victor of so many battles had fallen a victim to a French ball.

CHAPTER XVII

WATERLOO

Where Napoleon Fought Against Fate—And Wellington

The Star of France had fallen; the day of the Corsican had waned. Napoleon had been sent to Elba to spend the night that followed the splendour of a glorious day. And Europe knew peace.

But once again the day dawned, and the war clouds hovered low. Napoleon had escaped from Elba. Landing at Cannes on March 1st, 1815, he pushed his way through France to the capital, gathering in his veterans as he went. Paris was reached on the 19th, the day on which Louis XVIII. had fled to Ghent. Napoleon had returned for a last throw with Fate for the Empire which his genius had won. The nations joined with Fate, and England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia vowed not to lay down the sword until the Corsican was broken.

Napoleon knew what was before him, but felt secure in the knowledge that the men who had fought, and so often won, beneath his standard would once more fight; whether they would win was on the knees of the gods. Europe was up in arms against him—a million men lay between him and final victory, and to oppose them he had but some two hundred and fourteen thousand.

He harangued them as he loved to do; inspired them with the memories of past victories, minced not his words as he showed them what lay before, and urged them on to conquer or to die.

"Vive l'Empereur! Vive l'Empereur"

From rank to rank, from corps to corps, the shout of loyalty rang again and again, and, in the spirit that meant to conquer or die, the men of France marched after their Emperor.

He was going "to measure himself with Wellington." And Wellington was in Belgium, with one hundred thousand men, from England, Hanover, Holland, Brunswick, Belgium, Nassau. Blucher, "the favourite hero of the Prussian soldiery, and the deadliest foe of France," was in command of the Army of the Lower Rhine, which was to join forces with Wellington. The Austrians and Germans of the Confederated States formed the Army of (he Upper Rhine, the Russians, under Barclay de Tolly, that of the Middle Rhine. Napoleon knew that the latter army must be longer in coming than the others, and he determined by forced marches to encounter Wellington and Blucher independently, and so avoid the unequal conflict which would be inevitable if the two armies met and opposed him. Blucher kept guard on the Belgian frontier, stretching along the banks of the Sambre and the Meuse, from Liege to Charleroi; Wellington covered Brussels, his left almost at Charleroi, his right at Courtrai and Tournay.

Napoleon's objective was Brussels, and as a preliminary he advanced on Charleroi, drove in the Prussian outposts, sent Ney to attack the English at Quatre Bras, and himself marched on Ligny to oppose Blucher. Wellington had been at the Duchess of Richmond's ball in Brussels when the news came that the outposts had been engaged; he hurried on to Quatre Bras, beat Ney off, and when he learned that Blucher had been compelled to retire on Wavre, decided that instead of following up his own victory, it would be necessary to fall back towards Brussels.

On the 17th, therefore, he began to retreat, followed by the French, who did but little damage. He "sent word to the Prussian commander that he would halt in the position of Mont St. Jean, and accept a general battle with the French, if Blucher would pledge himself to come to his assistance with a single corps of twenty-five thousand men. This was readily promised."

The retreat was made under difficulties, for the rain poured down in bucketfuls, and the route was turned almost into a marsh. Soaked to the skin, shivering with cold, the army halted at La Haye Sainte to pass a miserable night, and to await the day of battle.

Wellington had chosen the position at Mont St. Jean (a village in the vicinity gave its name to the battle, Waterloo) because it lay directly in the path of Napoleon's intended march on Brussels. The battlefield is a valley of some two or three miles long, and about three-quarters of a mile in width at some places; the road to Brussels cuts right through this valley, and is in turn bisected near La Haye Sainte by the sunken road of Ohain, which, in some cases eight or ten feet below the surface, was bordered on both sides by hedges.

As regards the positions of the opposing armies, it would require a considerable amount of space to go into these in detail; suffice it to say that while Napoleon's army stretched from Papelotte and Ter La Haye, on the right, to Hougoumont on the left, in the form of a crescent, Wellington had arranged his army in a similar formation, taking care to keep his wings well guarded in order that they might not be turned. His first line lay along the sunken road of Ohain, La Haye Sainte being somewhat in advance of the centre, and well garrisoned by German troops. The second English line was the cavalry.

The French were on a ridge some distance to the south, Napoleon's headquarters being at La Belle Alliance.

Sunday, June 18th, broke. The rain still came down in torrents, but gradually ceased. Between nine and ten o'clock Wellington went out on his charger, Copenhagen, to inspect his line, making his way to Hougoumont, a most vital point, seeing that it guarded his right and acted as a buffer to the French left. It was held by the light companies of the Foot Guards, while the woods surrounding it were filled with Hanoverians, Nassauers, and Luneberg riflemen. Hougoumont was all right, but the woods—well, it is said that as Wellington rode off some "bullets

went whistling after him!" The foreign troops were not at all pleased with their position. "How can they expect me to win a battle with troops like those?" Wellington asked.

Soon after Wellington had left Hougoumont, the battle began with an attack by Prince Jerome on that chateau. A heavy fire was poured into the wood, and then Jerome sent column after column of light infantry to attack the defenders, drove them in after a terrible fight, and a short time after supporting columns of French hastened up to the chateau grounds, to be met by the fire of a German battery. The Hanoverians and Lunebergers fell back, but the Guards, rallied again in a hollow near by, charged with bayonets fixed, and won back the orchard. Almost directly afterwards the enemy was driven into the wood through a gate at the corner of the wall surrounding the garden. The French cavalry then advanced, but through the loopholes which had been bored in the wall, and from the scaffolds which had been erected behind the walls, the Guards poured in such a destructive fire that the cavalry was compelled to fall back.

Then the French infantry once more went to the attack; they passed through the wood, reached the loopholed walls, men dropping at every yard covered through that inferno of bullets. Those who did reach the walls fought as Frenchmen had never fought before, grabbing the bayonets sticking through the loopholes, and freely using their own clubbed guns when the battle became too fierce to allow of reloading. Time after time they hurled themselves forward; time after time were they hurled back.

The Guards found themselves outflanked on the right, and to avoid being cut off entirely, they quickly fell back and passed through the north gate of the chateau. This they tried to block up, but, so deep were the piles of dead, that they found it impossible to do so before the French threw themselves upon them. Leaving their work at the gate, the Guards turned to meet the foes, fought them with bayonets, bullets and clubbed muskets, fought them till well nigh every Frenchman who had come near was killed or wounded, and then, with a last bold

sally, thrust the remainder off and kept them at bay while the gate was got into working order.

The shells which had been falling incessantly did great damage, setting fire to the outbuildings, and burning many a wounded man alive.

So did the fight for Hougoumont continue throughout nearly all that dreadful day, and though, says Colonel Mackinnon, "the enemy were undaunted in their attacks, Hougoumont was defended with a calm and stubborn gallantry, that alone could have enabled so small a force to resist the repeated and fierce assaults of nearly thirty thousand men of whom the second French corps was composed. . . . The Guards, at no time exceeding two thousand men, exclusive of 1,100 Germans, maintained the post amid the terrible conflagration within, and the murderous fire of the enemy without."

But there were other places where the fight was being, waged, and we must now leave Hougoumont and hie away to La Haye Sainte in the British left centre, where Ney and D'Erlon were concentrating for attack. Ney had posted his battery of seventy-four guns on the right to the rear of the farm, and D'Erlon, under cover of a tremendous cannonade, moved forward eighteen thousand infantry and a strong body of cavalry under Kellerman. It was a concerted movement, La Haye Sainte and Papelotte being attacked simultaneously, for it was determined to try to turn the British left flank, push through and capture La Haye Sainte and Mont St. Jean, and so cut off Wellington's communications with Brussels and Blucher.

Blucher was a thorn in Napoleon's side. Everything depended upon Wellington being defeated before Blucher could arrive, and at the moment that the attack on the British left and centre was timed, the Emperor saw in the distance a large body of troops. Who were they? Soult thought they were Grouchy's column which was marching to Wavre, but any doubt was set at rest by the capture of a Prussian hussar, bearer of a letter from Bulow to Wellington. The hussar informed Napoleon that Bulow

was marching on Waterloo with thirty thousand men—the column in the distance was the advanced guard. Bulow was going to fall on the French right flank; Napoleon immediately sent off to Grouchy instructing him to attack Bulow's flank instead. Grouchy, however, did not receive the message in time to act upon it, and busied himself with attacking Wavre—according to a note which he had previously sent to Napoleon.

The Emperor saw that it was time to make his great attack. D'Erlon's infantry, therefore, moved forward—four divisions, in closely packed battalions. One of them, under Durutte, went against Papelotte, to hold the left in check, the others under Alix, Marcognet, and Dozelot, against Bylandt, Kempt, and Pack.

Papelotte was soon taken, but La Haye Sainte fought long and hard, though at last the French reached the top of the ridge before the English line; and there before them were Picton's men, waiting for the word which should send them on a mad charge into the ranks of the foe.

Marcognet sent his men across the road; Picton immediately placed himself at the head of his Highlanders, yelled the word at them, and, with a volley and a cheer, they were off.

With bayonets leveled they hurled themselves at the Frenchmen, burst in upon them with a shock that shook the line from end to end, scrambled and thrust, yelled and cheered, worked their cold steel in the good old Highland way.

"Charge! Charge! Hurrah! Hurrah!" cried Picton as he led them against the blazing French line; then without another sound he tumbled from his horse—shot through the temple. On went his men, over their fallen leader, infuriated, like wild beasts let loose, bent on avenging the death of the man they had looked on to lead them on to glory. And glory they found, revenge they took, for up the hill they raced at the foe, down the hill they forced them, plying clubbed musket and leveled bayonet with deadly effect. It was a tangled, shapeless, struggling mass that

fought on the death-strewn slope; it was a broken panic-stricken crowd that fled before the British bayonets, pursued by Highlanders whose Scottish blood was up.



WATERLOO

"SABRES FLASHED, HORSES PLUNGED, MEN FELL IN HEAPS, TO BE TRAMPLED BENEATH IRON-SHOD HOOFs."

As they fled Ponsonby's Union Brigade followed after them. Royals, Irish Inniskillings, Scots Greys, dashed into the retreating ranks, and in a moment there was a melee dear to British hearts; sabres flashed, bayonets swept along in a solid line, horses plunged, men fell in heaps; to be trampled beneath iron-shod hoofs. And the French were beaten back in dire disorder, leaving three thousand prisoners behind them and a couple of their much-prized eagles.

The 32nd nearly lost their colours, for a French mounted officer laid his sacrilegious hands upon it. The bearer immediately grabbed the silk, seeking to wrench it away from the foe. Meanwhile, Colour-Sergeant Switzer dashed into the fray, thrust his pike through the Frenchman, and so saved the flag.

"Save the brave fellow!" cried Major Toole, of the 32nd, as he saw the courage of the officer; but the cry came too late, for hardly had Switzer plucked his pike out, than Private Lacy leveled his musket and sent a bullet through the Frenchman's brain.

While the Union Brigade had been thus busy against the infantry, Lord Uxbridge at the head of the House-hold Cavalry had not been at all idle. Kellerman had sent his Cuirassiers down the left side of La Haye Sainte to support the infantry. But Uxbridge was ready. So far the 1st and 2nd Lifeguards, and the 1st Dragoons, had been silent onlookers, waiting for their turn. It came. The trumpets sounded, horses were mounted, the order was given, and away went the Household Cavalry at the speeding Cuirassiers, who had just reformed after attacking the Luneberg battalion at the farm, and compelling them to retreat into the buildings.

Down the slope of the ridge went the British troopers, and crash! the two forces met. Weight and freshness told; there was no withstanding the Britishers; a few moments' fierce hand-to-hand encounter, and then, with ringing cheers, the Household Brigade was through, riding down the fleeing Cuirassiers as they

tried to escape the whirlwind of plunging horses and far-reaching sabres.

In all directions the Cuirassiers scattered, the Guards chasing them. On went the Royals with a cheer that told of deeds to come; on went the Greys, with a "Scot-land for Ever!" that brought the echoes of the Highlands; while the Inniskillings went into the battle with a yell that set the blood a-tingling.

The 92nd had stood their ground like brave men, three hundred of them remaining to face three thousand. "Ninety-second, you must charge, for the troops on your right and left have given way," roared Sir Denis Pack, as he saw the French making progress; and with three ringing cheers the Highlanders burst down upon the French column. Four deep they went, sent in a volley, then brought their bayonets into play.

"While the regiment was in the act of charging," says the War Office Record, "the Scots Greys came trotting up in the rear of its ranks, when both corps shouted 'Scotland for Ever!' "The Highlanders opened out for the horses to pass them, some clinging to stirrup straps to enter the charge with them, and "the column was instantly broken, and in its flight the cavalry rode over it. The result of this dash, which occupied only a few minutes, was a loss to the enemy of two eagles and two thousand prisoners. . . . After this brilliant affair, Sir Denis Pack rode up to the regiment and said, 'You have saved the day, Highlanders, but you must return to your position; there is more work to be done.'"

"Those beautiful Grey horses!" said Napoleon as he saw the Greys gallop down upon his column;" but they must give way." They did not. They gave the Frenchmen beans instead, and took their eagles from them.

Regarding the capture of one of these, Sergeant Ewart wrote: "It was in the charge I took the eagle from the enemy. He and I had a hard contest for it. He made a thrust at my groin; I parried it off, and cut him down through the head. After this a lancer came at me; I threw the lance off by my right side, and cut

him through the chin and upwards through the teeth. Next a foot-soldier fired at me, and then charged me with his bayonet, which I also had the good luck to parry, and then I cut him down through the head. Thus ended the contest."

Thus did the Greys force back Marcognet's column; the Inniskillings and the Royals doing the same with Donzelot's. Yet were they not satisfied; on they went, making for Ney's artillery. Joining forces with the 2nd Lifeguards and the Dragoons, who had broken through the French infantry, they dashed down on the guns, sabred the gunners, killed the horses, cut the traces, spiked the guns, and so completely wrecked fifteen of them that they were of no more use during the battle.

They had done well, but it had cost much; scores of men had fallen in the fray, and Sir William Ponsonby himself had been slain. They had charged to glorious victory, but they had gone too far—they had overridden themselves, and do what their officers would, they could not reform them in time to get them away from Traver's Brigade of Milhaud's Cuirassiers and Jacquinet's Lancers, who bore down upon them and wrought terrible execution in their already thinned ranks. Vandeleur and his light cavalry quickly came to their assistance, and after a terrible hand-to-hand struggle the French were driven off, and the British cavalry fell back on their position.

Meanwhile the conflict round La Haye Sainte had been raging in terrible fury. The Germans had been forced out of the orchard into the buildings, round which shot and shell fell as fast as the guns could be fired. Flames burst forth ever and anon, only to be quenched by the brave Germans, who stuck to their post with a tenacity that caused the French to retire time and time again. Three times did the French attack them, only to be driven back by the galling fire; then came a fourth charge. This time it was more successful, for, ammunitionless as they now were, the Germans had to wait until the foe burst in through the door, and climbed on to the roof. Then they used their bayonet; but it was a handful of men fighting against an army, and at last

they had to surrender the farm, and they who remained alive fell back on the ridge.



WATERLOO

"NEXT A FOOT-SOLDIER FIRED AT ME, AND THEN CHARGED ME WITH HIS BAYONET."

Napoleon now saw that, although La Haye Sainte had been captured, his infantry charge had been futile to break through the British position, and he determined to bring his cavalry to bear.

While his cavalry, which consisted of forty squadrons (nearly five thousand men), were preparing for the charge, Napoleon massed his batteries, and these poured a dreadful fire into the English infantry, now in squares behind the ridge. Lying down as they were the shrieking shells of the French guns were far less effective than they might otherwise have been; as it was, they wrought fearful havoc among the battalions, sweeping through them like a scythe, and ploughing up the rain-sodden ground and half blinding the men.

Then on came the French cavalry, the Cuirassiers leading the way through a terrific fire of grape, canister and shrapnel which the British artillery poured in upon them. Double-shotted were the guns, and worked as quickly as they could be loaded. Men and horses stumbled and fell with a crash on the sodden ground; but still the Cuirassiers came on, confident of carrying the day—believing as they did, that, once past the artillery, they would find the British infantry in full retreat. Right up to the gun muzzles they rode, and then the gunners fled to the shelter of the British squares. Still on and on came the French, mounting the ridge then the gallop was sounded, and the cavalry charged down the slope—bang into a galling fire from the infantry which they had fondly imagined was retreating

Grim, determined, and watchful, the Allied ranks awaited the word to fire; up to within thirty paces the cavalry was allowed to come, and then: "Fire!" Both lines of infantry opened up, and the Cuirassiers were crumpled up, were scattered like chaff before the wind. They fell back; the English gunners immediately rushed to their guns again, and poured in another cannonade, before which the Cuirassiers recoiled, the light

cavalry, which by now had crossed the ridge, taking their place. They met with the same reception, and the Cuirassiers, who had quickly reformed, bravely returned to the attack. But the solid squares of British soldiers refused to be broken; as each wave of charging cavalry dashed down upon them, they poured in their relentless fire, wilting it and sending it back beyond the ridge, where the artillery immediately turned their guns upon them.

Finding that this first cavalry attack had been unsuccessful, Ney resolved to send yet a stronger force against the serried ranks below the ridge. Seventy-seven squadrons were therefore called up; Cuirassiers, Dragoons, Carabiniers, Heavy Cavalry and Horse Grenadiers.

"Like waves following in quick succession," says Siborne, "the whole mass now appeared to roll over the ridge (more to the westward, this time); and as the light curling smoke arose from the fire which was opened by the squares, and by which the latter sought to stem the current of the advancing host, it resembled the foam and spray thrown up by the mighty waters, as they dash on isolated rocks and beetling crags; and as the living mass separated and rushed in every direction, completely covering the interior slope, it bore the appearance of innumerable eddies, and counter-currents, threatening to overwhelm and engulf the obstructions by which its onward course had been opposed. The storm continued to rage with the greatest violence, and the devoted squares seemed lost in the midst of the tumultuous onset. In vain did the maddening mass chafe and fret away its strength against the impregnable barriers, which, based upon the principles of honour, discipline, and duty, cemented by the ties of patriotism and the impulse of national glory, stood proudly unmoved and inaccessible. Disorder and confusion, produced by the commingling of corps and by the scattering fire from the faces of the chequered squares, gradually led to the retreat of parties of horsemen across the ridge; and at length the retrograde movement became general. Then the Allied Dragoons, who had been judiciously kept in readiness to act at a favourable moment (Ney had kept no reserve, by the way),

darted forward to complete the disorganisation of the now receding masses of French cavalry."

"Four times were our guns in possession of the French cavalry," says an eye-witness, "and as often did the bayonets of our infantry rescue them. For upwards of an hour our little squares were surrounded by the elite of the French cavalry; they gallantly stood within forty paces of us, unable to leap over the bristling line of bayonets, unwilling to retire, and determined never to surrender. Hundreds of them were dropping in all directions from our murderous fire, yet as fast as they dropped others came up to supply their places. Finding at last it was vain to attempt to break our determined ranks, they swept round to our rear, and, rushing into the Nivelles road, attempted to cut their way back to their own lines; but the whole road was lined with our infantry on the sides, and the advanced part of it was an almost impassable barricade of fallen trees."

Twelve times did Ney send his cavalry at the charge; and twelve times were they repulsed, leaving well nigh two-thirds of their number on the field.

What of the Duke of Wellington? From the account given above it would appear that he had been only a silent onlooker, but far from that, he had been the directing genius of the British part of the battle. From square to square he rode in the face of a hot fire, encouraging his men in their courageous stand against the onrushing foes. "Hard pounding, this, gentlemen," he said to one square; "we will try who can pound the longest!" "Wait a little longer," he said to an Irish regiment which had got tired of doing nothing, "and you shall have your wish!" "Stand firm, my lads!" to another; "what will they say of us in England?" "My plan," he said in reply to an officer who asked for orders in case His Grace should fall—for he refused to seek safety out of the line of fire—"my plan is simply to stand my ground here to the last man!"

And Napoleon—what of him? He had seen the futility of his infantry attack; had watched the unavailing courage of his

cavalry; had replied to Ney, when the Marshal asked for more infantry, "Where can I get them? Do you wish me to make them?" and saw that there was but one hope now—and that was the Old Guard. Therefore the Old Guard, which had till now taken no part in the battle, was called up; but before we follow them on Napoleon's last grand attack at Waterloo we must look at the Prussian force.

Napoleon knew that they were coming; he knew that Grouchy could not stop them, and the battle had to be won or lost—before they could arrive.

At one o'clock they should have been on the scene; but the roads were bad, there had been a fire at Wavre which had had to be extinguished before the ammunition wagons could be trusted through the streets; and Blucher's Chief of Staff, Von Gneisenau, doubted Wellington's good faith, being under the impression that the Duke had not supported him at Ligny. It was not until twelve o'clock, therefore, when the sounds of the heavy cannonade at Waterloo reached Gneisenau and convinced him that Wellington was in earnest, that he resolved to bring up his whole strength.

At half-past four, then, instead of at one o'clock, Bulow's Corps appeared on the French right on the nearer side of the wood of St. Lambert, and Napoleon instantly dispatched a column of infantry and another of horse to hold them in check. For awhile they managed to do this, but the Prussians came on in overwhelming numbers, turned the right flank of the infantry, and then pressed on to Planchenoit in the rear of the French right, in the line of Napoleon's retreat. The Emperor, of course, realised the importance of keeping this village, and therefore sent the Young Guard to defend it. Bravely they did their duty, hurling back the masses of Prussians who came against them time after time.

Then it was that Napoleon had made his fourth attack, which resulted, as we have seen, in the capture of La Haye Sainte. Quickly the place was freshly loopholed, artillery massed

in front of it, and a heavy fire was sent into the British line at sixty paces. The Highlanders formed in position on the main line in front of La Haye Sainte, suffered terribly, but bravely stood to their post until they had laid the gunners low. The French skirmishers then "crept on their stomachs along the ditches and farm-banks, over which they fired from time to time with deadly effect; so it was resolved to attack them with the bayonet. For this purpose, Colonel Ompteda led on the 5th Germans, before whom they fled round the garden hedge, while a line of Cuirassier cavalry dashed upon their pursuers, every officer of whom was put to death, save one, who escaped by the speed of his black horse. Our 95th, who were anxious to succour the unfortunate Germans, suspended their fire for fear of destroying them; but the moment their slaughter was over, they let fly a deadly volley and swept the whole front."

Meanwhile, the Prussians were pressing forward. The time had come for the fifth and last attack from La Belle Alliance, where Napoleon had spent the day with his plans and maps, directing the operations that had proved so futile. Now, however, the moment had come when a last mighty attempt must be made by the Old Guard which had done him such service in the past. Down into the valley below La Belle Alliance they went, passing their Emperor on the way; earnestly he exhorted them—though the noise of cannon and the screams of the dying made it impossible to hear him; still, he pointed the way, and "*Vive L'Empereur! Vive L'Empereur!*" rang out above the din of battle.

They were a forlorn hope.

They were men who had fought and won the Emperor's battles in the heyday of his power; they were going to a trial of strength with men who had done deeds as great as they.

On they went, down between La Haye Sainte and Hougomont, both scenes of valour and of doughty deeds; down on to the right of Wellington's army, while at Hougomont itself and on the British left the attack was being kept up.



WATERLOO

"THE WHOLE LINE WILL ADVANCE I' CRIES THE DUKE, WAVING HIS HAT ABOVE HIS HEAD."

It was across a death-strewn ground they went, through a shell-filled air they pressed—into the jaws of death; yet without a waver in their two long lines. From behind them, their own

guns boomed, hurling shot and shell into the opposing English ranks. Soon it ceased, but the Guard still went on, and the English artillery, double-shotted, still belched forth its death-laden messengers. Up to within fifty yards of Halkett's brigade and the Foot Guards, they went, led by Ney himself; but they got no farther; the cannons kept them off, and then, at the word of command—oh, would that it were true that Wellington had said "Up, Guards, and at 'em!" the Guards and the 33rd and 69th sent in one volley, and then went for them, bayonets leveled.

Then it was thrust against thrust, man against man, life for life, red-coat against blue. They met, those heroes of two gallant nations; they fought, and fought, and fought again, and ever the red-coats won. The Old Guard could not stand against the men from across the Channel—and the first line of Napoleon's forlorn hope melted away before the steel of Wellington's Guard.

But the second was there, behind them, waiting for the moment when they, too, could come to grips. That moment came. The Guards had reformed after their victory, and they, with the batteries, at once opened on the left of the advancing second column, while the 52nd poured in as wilting a fire on the front and flank.

Four deep on the slope the 52nd stand, and then, after their volleys, down they come.

"Halt! Mark time!"

It is the preliminary to the charge.

"Charge! 52nd, Charge!" cried Sir John Colborne, and with three ringing cheers which drown the "Vivas!" of the Old Guard, the 52nd charge.

Down the slope they go, gripping their muskets, leveling their bayonets, eager to meet the foe. They met them—met them in the good old British style—met them with steel and hearts that failed not, met them with arms that knew well how to wield the weapon that had carried Britain to glory many a time before.

They failed not this time. Through and through the ranks of the Old Guard they went.

"Surrender!" was the cry.

"The Guard dies, but never surrenders!" yells brave Michel, and dies as he says it.

And the conflict goes on, until the Guard breaks up and falls back, followed by the triumphant, cheering, thrusting Britishers, who will not let them go till they have taken full tally.

Then, "The whole line will advance!" cries the Duke, waving his hat above his head; and the army moves forward. The Prussians had come up and completed Wellington's left; and the time was ripe to take the offensive.

Napoleon still had some battalions in reserve at La Belle Alliance, and with these and the remnants of the first column of the Guard, he endeavoured to collect a sufficient body to make a defence. Wellington sent Vivian and his Hussars at them; some French guns open fire on them—they stagger, but hold on their way. By Napoleon's side is his brother Jerome, who has just said, "It were well for all who bear the name of Bonaparte to die here!" For answer the Emperor cries, as he seems about to lead a charge:

"Here must we die on the field of battle!"

But Marshal Soult catches hold of his bridle, crying:

"They will not kill you—they will take you prisoner!" and Napoleon is forced to turn his horse—and flee the field where he had hoped to regain the prestige he had lost, and assume once more the role of Conqueror.

The battle is lost and won, and is now turned into a retreat, nay, a rout and a chase, though here and there a rallying square turned its face to the foe, and now and again some heroes of the Old Guard fought rather than flee, and the Young Guard put up a valiant fight against the Prussians who by now had arrived in full force.

Then the darkness of night fell; the last shot was fired, and Napoleon, making post haste for Paris, had fought his last battle.

And the field of conflict? One prefers to leave it to imagination; thirty thousand of the Allies, and forty thousand Frenchmen bit the dust at Waterloo and the battles that preceded it. All for the ambition of one man, who went from Waterloo to Paris, and abdicated; from Paris to the *Northumberland*; from the man-of-war to the lonely rock of St. Helena. Such was the rapid sequence of events following the trial of strength on the field of Waterloo.

CHAPTER XVIII

BOYACA

Where Bolivar Struck a Great Blow for South American Independence

It was 1815.

South America was a seething cauldron of rebellion. Venezuela, New Granada, Mexico, in fact wherever Spain held sway, the people were discontented. Spain helped things along by shooting colonists, imprisoning some of the best in awful dungeons, and when sending out her troops against a refractory town, placing patriots in front of their own ranks so that friends shot friends unknowingly.

At last New Granada took a firm stand, vowing war to the death.

King Ferdinand saw that something drastic must be done, and therefore sent twelve thousand of his best troops over to South America, under General Morillo. The Spaniard soon subdued Venezuela, and Simon Bolivar, who in 1815 had been proclaimed Liberator of Venezuela, had been forced to fly to Jamaica.

From Venezuela Morillo moved on to Cartagena, New Granada, besieged it for four months, captured it, then marched off to Santa Fe de Bogota, the capital.

Morillo was a brute; he was a ruffian. Wherever he went ruin marked his footsteps. Wherever he found colonists who could read or write, whether men or women, he put them to death, on the principle that it was the educated people who were at the root of the rebellion. The brave (!) general even emulated the deeds of the buccaneers of a previous age, who, on the

capture of a town, put its noblest families to the torture to make them confess where they had hidden their treasures. Thus did Morillo, who thought nothing of cutting off the soles of a man's feet, and then making him walk over hot sand. Women's ears and noses were cut off, their eyes gouged out, their tongues cut off.

But Morillo failed; such men as he have always failed, and thus it came about that instead of quenching what he called the "spirit of revolt," he merely fanned it into a fiercer flame, a flame that was destined to burn up the Spanish power in South America.

The rebels, infuriated at treatment that spared neither woman nor child, at last retaliated in kind, and the trees which bore the reeking members of colonists soon had other burdens—Spanish.

So for a time the dreadful warfare went on, while, safe in Jamaica, Bolivar was laying his plans for a great and crushing blow.

He found many sympathisers, English, American, Dutch, and French, and his popularity, his enthusiasm, his patriotism, made him a man feared by Spain.

From Jamaica to San Domingo the Liberator passed, found and made friends, amongst them being President Pétion and Brion, a wealthy Dutch shipbuilder. Ere long Bolivar found himself at the head of a squadron of seven schooners which Brion had fitted out, adding three thousand five hundred muskets to the gift. Bolivar enlisted the aid of English and German officers and men, artillery, lances, hussars, infantry—men who had been engaged in the great European wars, and who were wondering what on earth to do with themselves now that Napoleon was safe in St. Helena.

All arrangements made, Bolivar determined to attack the Spaniards in their weakest spot, namely, New Granada, instead of following the course hitherto adopted of meeting them in Venezuela, where they were strongest. General Santander, chief

of the patriots in the Province of Casanare, therefore received instructions to attack the frontier of New Granada, where Morillo had left General Barreiro in command.

Barreiro fell back before the patriots. It was the first step towards Liberation, and as soon as Bolivar heard of the success which had been achieved, he determined upon emulating Hannibal and Napoleon. He would cross the Andes, the South American Alps, break like a deluge upon the Spaniards in New Granada, and drive them out.

Confident of success, the Liberator issued his proclamation to the people of New Granada:

"The day of America has come; no human power can stay the course of Nature guided by Providence. Before the sun has again run his annual course, altars to Liberty will arise throughout your land."

Santander was now at the foot of the Andes, and Bolivar set out to join him, taking four battalions of infantry, one squadron of carabinieri, two of lancers, and a regiment called "Guides of the Apure," a band of herdsmen, led by Paez.

Arrived at Guadalupe, Bolivar rested awhile, and then on June 4th, 1819, set his face towards the Andes. In order to take his foes by surprise, he concealed his destination even from his own men as long as possible, but after a while his object was discovered, and large numbers of his soldiers deserted, afraid to face the terrors of the Andes at that time of the year. Two squadrons deserted en masse, but Colonel James Rook, who commanded the English legion, vowed to march on to Cape Horn if Bolivar found it necessary.

Undeterred by the desertions, Bolivar kept on until he met Santander at Tame on June 11th, from whence he set out across the plains with an army two thousand five hundred strong. Before the patriots lay a journey of many miles, across a water-covered plain, turned into a marsh, in fact, by the swollen rivers—for it was the rainy season. Roads there were none; even

in the dry season there was nought but cattle paths, but the rain, falling in torrents, had overflowed the rivers and submerged even these tracks. Rivulets had become rivers hard to cross; through these the warriors swam, carrying their munitions of war with them.

They were used to the water, so feared not the streams. Most of the way they were up to their knees, sometimes to their waists as they marched across the marsh; all day, all night, the rains fell, soaking them through and through. At night they camped where they could, sleeping on the sodden ground.

When the rivers were too wide or dangerous to swim, they ferried across in boats of hide. A dozen of them were forded, and ever had the warriors to look out for the long-nosed alligators or the voracious caribe fish that infested the waters.

Reaching the foot of the Andes on June 25th, the Liberator gave his men a well-earned rest, and then set them the task of crossing the giant mountains. Santander, knowing the mountain defiles, led the way. He chose one that led into the centre of the Province of Tunja, where Barreiro was encamped with two thousand infantry and four hundred cavalry, blissfully ignorant that the patriots were on the march. Who would have imagined that men would take so hazardous a route?

For hazardous it was. High above them the Cordillera reared its snowy peaks, and the rain poured in torrents.

The pass was a treacherous path on the top of a dreadful precipice. Here and there the swollen torrents rushed, barring the way; to pass them it was necessary to cross by bridges made of tree trunks, or if too wide aerial taravitas were used. These were bridges made of the long stems of tropical plants twisted into a rope, greased and fastened to trees on the banks. On these were suspended hammocks or cradles large enough to hold two, which were drawn backwards and forwards by long lines. In order to get the horses and mules across, it was necessary to suspend them by long girths round their bodies.

Sometimes bridges were not needed, the torrents being fordable, but in these cases the currents were generally so strong that the foot soldiers had to cross in twos, their arms around each others' shoulders. Even then it was perilous work, for to miss footing meant—death.

Higher and higher up the mountain the band of patriots went, and the higher they got the greater their difficulties became. Barren ice-clad hills around them; clouds rolling by below, while along the edges of the pass were grim warnings of the perils they ran—little crosses marking the graves of men who had fallen in trying to pass through the way they themselves were going. Cold, dreary, and desolate, the Andes became the resting place of many of that devoted band, for over a hundred died from cold and the rarity of the air. To make matters worse by the time they had reached the coldest part of their journey, provisions gave out, and the cattle which they had brought with them were unable to go any further. The way was so hard that everything that could be spared was dropped, even things that they could ill do without, the spare arms, and some even that the men carried.

Two days of such journeying, and ah! the summit—and the enemy. Three hundred men held the position, one which, had a brave battalion been there, a mighty army scarcely could have taken. But, driven to desperation by all their trials, vowing not to be checked now that they had come so far on their way, the vanguard under Santander hurled themselves on the outpost, rushed the position and sent the Spaniards flying.

It put new heart into the men, who were feeling the hardships and were beginning to murmur. Bolivar held a council of war, told his men that the end was not yet, either of their journey or their toils, asked them if they were ready to push on or willing to fall back and give up all hope of victory. The men chose the better part; on July 2nd they went forward, with renewed hope and vigour, bent on triumph.

On and on they went, still meeting all manner of obstacles, but steadily, surely, surmounting them and ever getting nearer the place and the day when the trial of strength would take place, when liberty would be either won or lost for ever. Men dropped here and there on the side, too weak to proceed further, but urging their fellows to press forward, promising to come when strength returned. Every horse was lost.

At last the valley of Sagamoso was reached; they were in the centre of Tunja Province, after twenty-five days of fearsome toil through the mountain passes. Bolivar at once sent back for the stragglers, rested his men, collected patriots and horses in the neighbourhood, and prepared for the coming conflict.

Before him lay the town of Tunja, which he was determined to take. Between the town and the patriot force rose the heights of Vargas, where Barreiro, who by this time had received the astonishing news that he had crossed the mountains at a time when all had vowed such a thing impossible, had taken up a strong position.

Barreiro's object was to prevent Bolivar's advance on Tunja, whence it would be comparatively easy for him to approach Bogota. For some days the two forces parried each other, but at last Bolivar forced Barreiro to a pitched battle.

On July 25th Barreiro had taken up a position on the heights of Vargas. The Spaniards attacked Santander, who was also on some hills, drove him back, then attacked the centre, and made the infantry give way. Colonel Rook immediately led his English infantry up the heights to the Spanish position. These warriors from the hills and plains of Europe dashed up the hills in the face of a raking fire, heedless of danger and death, and so impetuous was their charge that they carried everything before them, sending the Spaniards racing down the hills.

Rook's feat turned the tide, but meanwhile Barreiro had fallen upon the centre, and was pressing it hard, so Bolivar had to bring up his small reserves and hurl them at Barreiro's centre.

Calling on Colonel Rondon commanding the Llaneros, and pointing to the enemy he cried:

"Save the Fatherland!"

The Colonel placed himself at the head of his men, charged with reckless courage at the Spanish cavalry, broke through them and drove them back in great disorder. After them went the infantry, who laid about them with such good effect that the whole column was forced to fly.

Bolivar had gained the first trick, though the game was not over yet. Really, the battle had been indecisive, and the Liberator fell back on his last position.

For about eight days he rested there, receiving reinforcements of nearly a thousand men. Feeling that he must strike at once, he advanced, and Barreiro, who had been at Paipa, immediately moved his men to the Tunja heights. After marching for some time, Bolivar suddenly doubled, crossed the River Paipa, and on the 5th captured Tunja without any trouble, the troops having gone to reinforce Barreiro.

Such tactics disconcerted the Spaniards, who immediately considered it advisable to hasten off for Bogota. The patriot scouts dogged them every step they took, and, as soon as the royalists attempted to reach the road that led through Boyaca to the capital, hurried away to Bolivar with the news.

Bolivar moved forward with all speed, sending about two hundred of his cavalry in advance. These came in sight of Barreiro's advance guard as it neared the bridge at Boyaca, on either side of which were wooded mountains.

The royalists, imagining that they had only to deal with a small outpost, advanced to the bridge, and attempted to turn them back while the main army came on.

They made a mistake; instead of meeting merely a handful of scouts, they met many more of the patriots who had been close on the heels of the advance guard. The Spaniards,

after a stiff fight, fell back, while Barreiro was yet about a mile or so away.

Barreiro, meanwhile, stopped and had lunch—which was a mistake. He should have pushed on with all dispatch, for while he dallied the patriots were busy, and when the Spanish troops at last marched on towards the bridge, the foe was ready for them.

Lower down the river was a ford, and across this a large party of cavalry went, the infantry remaining in ambush amongst the woods. When Barreiro arrived and attempted to cross the bridge, lured on by the apparent smallness of the patriot force, the cavalry fell upon his flank, the infantry swarmed down upon his centre, and by the sheer suddenness of the attack, demoralised the Spanish troops. Barreiro managed to get some light artillery posted upon a hill, and this did great damage to the attackers. Rook and his English Legion cared not a rap for the guns, however; they went for the Spaniards in the way they had learned to fight in the great battles in Europe, and, backed up by the men whose freedom they had come to win, they simply hurled themselves at the foe.

For a while the Spaniards fought like brave men, but at last the impetuous rush of the patriots carried everything before it; the artillery was abandoned, and the troops turned to flee. But behind them was the patriot cavalry, which charged them again and again, till seeing that all was up, Barreiro threw his sword away rather than surrender it to Bolivar.

But he surrendered himself, and with him all the troops left alive—excepting about fifty who managed to escape. The battle had been a decisive one; the Spanish army was defeated and captured, together with all its stores and ammunition—of which Bolivar stood in great need—and the way was left open to the capital, whither, a day or so later, Bolivar betook himself, to find all the Spanish officials gone.

The Liberator was winning; the great blow for the Liberation of New Granada had been struck; Spain was finding that tyranny and bloodshed bring their own reward.

CHAPTER XIX

BALACLAVA

The Battle of Gallant Charges

To most of us the battle of Balaclava only means the Charge of the Light Brigade, but although that charge, both because of its superb courage and the remarkable blunder that occasioned it, stands out boldly, the battle has other claims.

A word first as to Balaclava. It was from this port that the English, arrayed against Sebastopol on the right (the French were on the left), received their supplies. Sir Colin Campbell was governor of the port, which had two lines of forts—"the inner, close around Balaclava, where the ground was steep and difficult, and these were manned by English marines, and armed with naval guns; the outer was a line of feeble redoubts encircling the Balaclava valley. The first of these on the right, just opposite Kamora, was on the hill known to our soldiers as 'Canrobert's,' the rest crowned the Causeway heights, a low range of hills across the crest of the great Woronzoff road into Sebastopol. These forts were of weak construction—a donkey might have ridden through them—their armament was inferior, and they were garrisoned by Turks, on whom too much reliance was not placed."

The 93rd Highlanders and sixteen hundred cavalry were the only British troops in the valley, Lord Lucan holding supreme command here, Lord Cardigan and General Scarlett respectively being in command of the Light and Heavy Brigades. The Highlanders were encamped under some cliffs, near the Turkish redoubts, and the valley was admirably suited to the movements of the cavalry.

It would have been very much to the advantage of the Russians had they been able to capture Balaclava, and with this

end in view it was decided to move forward a large body of infantry, some twenty-five thousand, thirty-four squadrons of cavalry, and about eighty guns.

Information of the impending attack had been given by spies to Lord Raglan, the British Commander-in-Chief, whose headquarters were some distance away, "but he gave no orders, took no steps to meet it, for he had been misled by spies before."

About seven o'clock on the morning of the 27th, however, he received a message that the Russians were on the move towards Balaclava, that they had indeed attacked the Turkish redoubts and were taking them in quick succession. The British 1st and 4th Divisions were immediately despatched to the scene, General Bosquet and two hundred Chasseurs d'Afrique following hard upon their heels. Raglan also sent word to Balaclava that the cavalry were not to engage until the infantry arrived to their support.

Meanwhile at Balaclava Sir Colin Campbell had been busy. As soon as he saw what was afoot he had called out the Highlanders, the cavalry were got ready, and the little force waited for the coming of the Russians. These, as they captured the redoubts and sent the Turks flying towards the port, turned the guns upon them, doing considerable damage. Those who escaped made their way to Campbell's Highlanders, on whose flank they were formed. Campbell had drawn up his Highlanders, five hundred and fifty of them, in a double "thin red line," instead of in square, the accepted method of receiving cavalry.

"Remember, men!" he cried to them as he passed along the line. "There is no retreat. You must die where you stand!"

As one man the thin red line replied:

"Ay, ay, Sir Colin! We'll do that!"

And they were ready for the Russians.

Canrobert's hill had been forsaken by the Turks; the Causeway heights were attacked by the Russians, and the

Turkish defenders, at the sight of the enemy, and at the thought that their compatriots on Canrobert's had fled, also turned and ran—before even the Russians reached them.

When the Turks dashed away, the Russian advance cavalry galloped down upon the thin red line of bristling bayonets. With thundering hoofs the squadrons pounded over the ground; with waving swords and leveled lances they came—and stopped. At the word of command, a withering fire had burst forth from the British rifles, emptying saddles, sending horses to the ground, pulling the whole squadron up in its charge. What had seemed to be a thin weak line had proved a line of fire through which the Russians could not pass. Off went the Turks in a panic, crying "Ship! Ship! ship!" as they raced to the port. "The Turks fled, but the Scots stood firm," said the telegram home; and at last the Russians perforce made their way back along the path they had come—a sadly diminished troop.

By this time the main body of the Russian cavalry had crossed the hills, preparatory to descending into the valley to charge on Balacava. All seemed clear before them, but suddenly Scarlett and his Heavy Brigade appeared in sight: the 5th Dragoons, the Scots Greys, and the Inniskillings, supported by the Royal and 4th Dragoons.

Scarlett at once determined to attack the Russian cavalry. Calling upon the men nearest to him, the 2nd squadron of Inniskillings and two squadrons of the Greys, he ordered them to advance, commanding the remainder to support him. With three hundred sabres, therefore, he moved forward at the charge, taking his place at the head of his men.

Before them were three thousand Russians. With "A Scotland for Ever!" and a rousing Irish yell, the Scots and Inniskillings dashed up the hill against the massed lines. With a terrific shock they were on them; with a clashing of swords, and a clatter of accoutrements, they had broken through the first rank and were lost in the sea of foes. Nay, not lost, but finding themselves in valour and glory, for steadily but surely the

Russians were forced back by the cheering Britishers whose death-dealing swords swept round and down with lightning rapidity, and as the supporting Heavy cavalry came up, and fell upon the Russian flanks, the soldiers of the Tsar broke in confusion and spurred their horses across the heights.

"Greys! Greys!" cried old Sir Colin Campbell, flushed with his own triumphant stand. "Gallant Greys! I am sixty-one years old, but if I were young again I should be proud to be in your ranks!"

"Well done!" was the message Lord Raglan sent to Scarlett.

The Russians, infantry and cavalry alike, had now retired to the end of the North valley, the six columns of infantry and six of cavalry being covered by thirty-six pieces of cannon, while on the slopes beyond moved masses of other Russian soldiers. Undoubtedly the cavalry which Scarlett had scattered should have been tackled by the Light Brigade under Lord Cardigan as it passed by on its retirement, yet for some reason or other this was not done; moreover, the Causeway heights were now a danger to the British army, and should have been retaken; but, again, this was not done.

But when the Russians seemed to be about to carry off the guns they had captured, Lord Raglan, who had witnessed the operations, and had sent orders which were disobeyed, at once issued a command that the Russian project was to be baulked. Captain Nolan was sent to Lord Lucan with the message, which was a written one, "directing the cavalry to advance rapidly to the front and prevent the enemy from carrying off the guns."

There has been much unpleasant controversy since as to what Lord Raglan meant. There was some argument between Lucan and Nolan. The former interpreted the message to mean that he was to attack the Russian guns down in the valley, and protested that it was sheer madness and uselessness to attempt such a thing. Nolan's reply was: "Lord Raglan orders that the cavalry should attack immediately."

"Attack, sir! Attack what?" exclaimed Lucan, who later, after the blunder which brought death and glory to the Light Brigade, said that Nolan's reply was:

"There, my lord," with a wave of the hand down the valley, "is the enemy. There are your guns."

It was enough; Lucan's interpretation of Raglan's order had apparently received confirmation from Nolan; the guns were to be attacked. He gave Cardigan the order to advance down the valley.

Cardigan replied:

"Certainly; but allow me to point out that there is a battery in front of us, and guns and riflemen on either flank."

"I know it," answered Lord Lucan, "but Lord Raglan will have it. We have no choice but to obey!"

Cardigan obeyed.

As calmly as if he were on church parade, he turned round to his men and said quietly

"The brigade will advance!"

Then, placing himself well in advance, of the men he was leading into the valley of death, he moved off at the gallop. After him came the 13th Hussars and 17th Lancers, behind them the 11th Hussars, close upon these the 4th and 8th Hussars—six hundred and seventy-three men riding to almost certain death.

Across the grass-grown ground between the British and Russian positions the Light Brigade rode, Cardigan brandishing his sword as he called on his men, every trooper with nerves at a tension, every horse with out-stretched neck, and gathering speed as the yards flew by. Now they were in the zone of fire, and at that moment Nolan, apparently aware that Raglan's order had been misconstrued as a result of his own impetuosity and ambiguous message, dashed to Cardigan's side, possibly with the intention of rectifying the mistake. He never did so, for even as he was pointing to the right side of the road where the guns were

that ought to have been charged, a shell burst at his side, a fragment struck him in the breast, his sword fell from his nerveless hand, and Nolan died with his hand still pointing the right way. His other hand still held the bridle, the horse still galloped on, till at last, feeling no restraint, it wheeled round and galloped back the way it had come.

But still the Light Brigade kept on its way to death; from front and both flanks the Russians opened up a terrific fire; shot and shell, shrapnel and bullets shrieked and sang through the air, mangled the devoted heroes, sent horses thudding to the ground, wrought havoc on every side. Horseless men sprinkled the ground, riderless horses held on their unguided way or wheeled about; and ever the men of glory and renown faced the foe, with ringing British cheers.

Then they reached the guns. Crash! They were through them. Gunners scampered away from these devils who feared neither shot nor shell; many of them were cut down, the guns were taken and passed—and then, on and on, into the massed cavalry behind the Light Brigade charged. There was no stopping that impetuous, hare-brained handful of heroes. Into a sea of foes they went, fighting like demons, cheering like schoolboys, hewing their way through plunging horses and raging, hacking men. Then at last, breathless themselves, with horses exhausted, they reined up; they had done all that mortal men could do—and the foes refused to be driven back.

"It's all up; threes about; retire!" yelled an officer, and all that was left of them wheeled about, lined up as best they could—and charged again! Back this time—still through the same forest of foes—still at the lance point—still with the sweep of the sword—still with the cheer of old Britain!

At last they were out, and then up the death-strewn valley, by ones and twos, by threes and fours, here and there in somewhat larger batches the remnants of the Light Brigade went back to whence they had come—to line up, two hundred and

forty-seven men short, four hundred and seventy-five horses missing!



BALACLAVA

"THERE WAS NO STOPPING THAT IMPETUOUS, HARE-BRAINED HANDFUL OF HEROES."

"Mon Dieu—it is grand! It is magnificent! But it is not war!" cried a French general who witnessed the glorious charge.

"Men, it was a mad-brained trick, but no fault of mine!" said Lord Cardigan as he looked over the remnants of his force.

"Never mind, my lord," replied some of the men. "We are ready to go in again!"

Of such stuff are heroes made; by such men has England become great.

Despite the blunder, despite the comparative ineffectualness of the whole thing, Raglan could not but admire the pluck that had carried it through; yet was he angry.

"What did you mean, sir, by attacking a battery in front, contrary to all the usages of war?" he demanded of Cardigan when the latter made his report.

"My lord," replied Cardigan, "I hope you will not blame me, for I received the order to attack from my superior officer."

No word of complaint; only the confidence of having done his duty. And so felt they all. They had had a glorious twenty minutes; they had charged as they loved to charge; they had fought as they loved to fight; they had brought to themselves glory, to their country honour.

As for the battle itself, it had not been decisive; the Russians managed to take away the guns they had captured—and that was all; while the spirit which had made the British infantry face the Russian cavalry unmoved, the spirit which had made the British cavalry tackle the overwhelming forces arrayed against them, increased the moral of the allied armies, and proportionately decreased that of the Russians.

CHAPTER XX

THE BATTLE AT THE EUREKA STOCKADE

The Only Battle Fought on Australian Soil

The story of gold-digging in the Southern island-continent teems with romance and adventure, and the episode of the Eureka Stockade is by no means lacking in either. It has been included here partly because it is the only battle which has been fought in the land of the Golden Fleece, and partly because it is in itself worthy of a place in a book of battles.

The affair of the stockade was in reality a rebellion against what the gold-diggers considered the tyrannical high-handed administration of the Governor of Victoria. In 1851 Governor Latrobe issued a proclamation, asserting the right of the Crown to whatever gold was discovered, and made it imperative upon all diggers to take out a licence, costing thirty shillings every month, such licence to be non-transferable, valid only within half a mile of the station from which it was issued, and to be produced upon demand.

The diggers of Victoria were no worse off in this respect than those of New South Wales, except that the officers charged with the issue and inspection of the licences were by no means as patient as they might have been, and reasonable protests against what the diggers regarded as an unnecessary imposition were received and replied to in a harsh and bitter manner.

The result was that many miners refused to take out licences, and to search out the offenders the Government instituted "digger hunts." These hunts were undertaken by the police, the majority of whom were ne'er-do-wells of wealthy families in the old country. Many excesses were committed by these officers, whose arrogance and insolence towards the

miners, many of whom were their social superiors, aroused the blood of the hard-working toilers.

The climax almost came when Latrobe decided to increase the fee to sixty shillings a month, but, wise for the time, on seeing the agitation his new proclamation had aroused, he reduced the fee to thirty shillings once more.

In 1853 Latrobe was succeeded in the Governorship by Sir Charles Hotham, who, to the petitions sent in by the diggers, only replied by issuing orders that the digger hunts were to be carried on with greater vigour.

It was the last straw. Bendigo and Ballarat were seething with discontent. Men spoke openly of armed resistance. Timothy Hayes, an Irishman, with all the fluency of the Emerald Isle, and chairman of a League which the diggers formed, rallied his fellows together at the big mass meetings which were held to protest against the tax, crying:

"Will ye fight for the cause, boys? Will ye die for the cause?"

Enthusiasm such as this was infectious. Three men were arrested on a charge of incendiarism, sent to Melbourne for trial, convicted and sentenced to prison. Appeals against the verdict were of no avail, and the diggers at once took stronger steps. A large meeting of about twelve thousand miners assembled at Bakery Hill, Ballarat, and passed resolutions in favour of reform. We must now introduce a new character into the drama: Peter Lalor, a young Irishman, who had arrived in Australia in 1852. Lalor, by his energy and denunciation of the tyranny under which they laboured, soon obtained a foremost place in the ranks of the discontented, and at the meeting on Bakery Hill vowed that the only way to obtain redress was by revolutionary means. The meeting acclaimed his speech, resolved that the diggers would pay no more taxes, intimated that it would be a matter for fighting if another digger hunt took place, and wound up by burning all the licences that could be found. At this meeting the insurgent flag was unfurled. It was the Southern Cross, the four

chief stars of the Southern Constellation worked in silver on blue.

Seeing the pass to which things were now come, the Government were by no means idle, and detachments of the 12th and 40th Infantry Regiments were drafted into Ballarat from Melbourne. Then, immediately after the mass meeting on Bakery Hill, the authorities ordered another digger hunt, which was carried out by police and military combined.

As soon as the diggers saw them coming, they began to retreat, contenting themselves with throwing stones and firing a few shots at the oncomers. A number of miners were arrested and carried away.

This digger hunt was the signal for action. Peter Lalor called his men together, the Southern Cross was unfurled again, and, asking for volunteers, Lalor soon had round him about five hundred diggers, who, standing with outstretched right hands, cried:

"We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other and fight to defend our rights and liberties."

The next step was to drill his volunteers, and Lalor spent the rest of the day in that work. This was on November 30th, and next day Lalor and his men marched off to the Eureka plateau, and began the erection of the stockade which was to become famous in Australian history.

The stockade, enclosing a plot of mining ground about an acre in extent, was made up of wooden slabs and all kinds of carts, roped together to make them firm. It was situated so that it commanded the Melbourne road, via which military reinforcements were advancing on Ballarat.

As soon as the stockade was completed, tents were pitched, lances and pikes were forged in a blacksmith's shop, sentinels were posted, and everything was prepared to receive the troops which the insurgents knew must soon arrive. Appeals for help were sent out to various mining stations, a declaration of

independence was drawn up (but never issued), and munitions of war were laid in.

Meanwhile, in Melbourne the authorities were taking steps to prevent disaffection spreading, proclamations being issued against the insurgents, and people being warned against breaking the peace. A reward of £400 was offered for information leading to the apprehension of Lalor and his second in command, Alfred Black. Precautions were taken against a surprise attack by the diggers, but as this was not attempted, Captain Thomas, the officer in command of the troops at Ballarat, decided to make an attack on the stockade. Accordingly, on December 3rd, he moved his force of three hundred men, soldiers and police, out on to the plateau. The fact that he had learned that the diggers were even then unprepared for an attack helped him to come to this decision, and when, before daylight on the 3rd, he approached the stockade, he discovered that only about two hundred men were inside

Lalor had been unfortunate. Many of his volunteers had deserted, others were out seeking food and arms, and although he had given a watchword, "Vinegar Hill" (reminiscent of the 1798 rebellion in Ireland), strict discipline was not kept.

The troops advanced towards the stockade, getting within a few hundred yards before they were discovered by the sentinel, who, as soon as he saw them, immediately fired the alarm.

Instantly the diggers were on the alert. With a rush they were at their breastworks, pouring a steady fire into the attackers, who returned the fire with such good effect that several diggers were killed and wounded at the outset. Lalor, standing upon a barrel, directed his volunteers, ordering them to fire at the officers, and several officers were killed or wounded during the first part of the fight.

For some time the troops contented themselves with returning the fire of the diggers, but at last, Captain Thomas, realising that little was to be gained by this, decided to rush the stockade. While the diggers remained behind their barricade they

had the advantage, even although they soon ran short of ammunition, and had to load their guns with pebbles in lieu of bullets. The result was that their fire slackened—a fact which helped Captain Thomas to arrive at his decision to charge. The order to fix bayonets was given, the word of command rang out, and with a ringing cheer the soldiers and police hurled themselves on the improvised fort. For a few minutes there was a fierce fight, but, as was inevitable, discipline triumphed, and ere long the troops had clambered through the wooden wall.

This was the sign for a stampede on the part of some of the diggers, and many of them rushed to the furthest side of the stockade, bounded over, and were lost in the distance.

To their credit be it said, the majority of the diggers stood their ground, fighting for every inch, but nevertheless being compelled to give away before the better armed soldiers. Lalor, standing on the top of a shaft, exposed to the full fire of the oncoming soldiers, and using his revolver freely, suddenly reeled, grasping his left hand. A bullet had shattered the bone. Running towards a group of his supporters, he cried:

"Get away, boys, as quickly as you can!"

"Come with us," said one of the men.

"I can't go!" replied Lalor. "Get away and save yourselves."

Weak from loss of blood, Lalor dropped on to a slab near a shaft, and his companions, seeing that it was impossible for him to get away, made him get into the shaft, and covered him over with slabs.

Meanwhile the fight still proceeded. Step by step the diggers were forced back into the hollow holes of the claims which the stockade enclosed, into the tents and the blacksmith's shop, until, at last, all who had not succeeded in getting away or in hiding were taken prisoners. One hundred and twenty-five were thus secured, and, after firing the tents and pulling the stockade down, the troops returned to camp. Altogether, about

forty men were killed in the miniature battle, and a great many were wounded.



EUREKA STOCKADE

"INSTANTLY THE DIGGERS WERE ON THE ALERT . . . POURING A STEADY FIRE INTO THE ATTACKERS."

Of what happened afterwards we need not say much, except that, although the diggers had failed in their intention to found a Republic (the newspapers of the day make it quite clear that this was in the minds of many of them), yet they had not been altogether unsuccessful, for shortly afterwards a Commission of Inquiry was appointed and upheld the diggers in their protests against tyranny, saying "While in certain cases they had been guilty of excesses, they had been goaded thereto by bad laws that were badly enforced." The prisoners were acquitted, and although a reward was offered for Peter Lalor, no attempts were made to take him. His cause had been justified.

It may be interesting to mention that Lalor, after the soldiers had left the stockade, was smuggled away to a hut for the night, then taken to the house of a friend, where his arm was amputated. For six months he remained in hiding, although the authorities were well aware of where he was to be found. On the amnesty being proclaimed, he reappeared, and later on he was elected first member for Ballarat in the Legislative Assembly of Victoria, holding various posts in the Cabinets, and eventually becoming the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

And the results of the battle at the Eureka Stockade? A gold-digger has epitomised these thus: "The sacrifice at Eureka was a heartrending one, but beneficial effects ensued. When the torch of rebellion was finally extinguished, reforms were immediately instituted in Victoria, and to the progressive measures then adopted may be distinctly traced the liberal legislation that followed in the other Colonies of the Australasian group. The way was paved for constitutional government; the unpopular Executive Council resigned office; the Ballarat officials were either dismissed or transferred elsewhere; digger hunts terminated; manhood suffrage was established."

It was a battle worth fighting.

CHAPTER XXI

DELHI

The Victory which put the seal on Britain's Supremacy in India

The torch of mutiny had been lit at Meerut on May 10th, 1857; the mutineers rushed hither and thither slaying whom they would. The conflagration spread all over the land with a rapidity that told its own story. The 3rd Cavalry rebels carried the torch to Delhi. On the morning of the 11th they were seen coming, and Commissioner Simon Fraser ordered the gates to be closed. Too late; the mutineers rushed across the bridge over the Jumna, and dashed into the palace courtyard, the royal guards immediately joining forces with them. Captain Douglas, commander of the guard, who was in attendance on the King of Delhi, immediately went to the Calcutta Gate to quell the disturbance. He went in vain, and on being joined by Fraser and Collector Hutchinson, found himself surrounded by a surging, threatening mob of infuriated mutineers.

There was nothing for it but to fly. Douglas threw himself into the moat, but was severely hurt by the fall, and Hutchinson was wounded by the mutineers. While they were trying to get away to the palace, Fraser, who was in his buggy, had a final shot at quietening the mob. The rebels refused to listen, and rushed at him with their swords. Fraser shot the foremost man, and then, flashing round, he whipped up his horse, and went to the palace, where he met Douglas and Hutchinson, who were being helped inside. Once more Fraser attempted conciliation, but the rebels, growing madder every moment, thrust him out of their way—and out of life, too.

No one barred their way, and they rushed pell-mell up the stairs into the upper rooms of the palace. Douglas and

Hutchinson had been taken thither, and were being attended to by Mr. Jennings, the Chaplain, his daughter, and another young lady. Crash! the door burst open, and after venting part of their spite on the "white devils" by heaping indignities upon them, they hewed them to pieces.

The work had begun; the eyes of the mutineers saw red, and very soon the city was a shambles; men were shot down or hacked to pieces, women were mutilated, children were stuck on the ends of bayonets and tossed into the air. Away in his office the English telegraph operator heard the tumult, discovered its meaning, and at once set the wires working. "The sepoy have come in from Meerut," he wired to the military stations in the Punjab, "and are burning everything. Mr. Todd is dead, and, we hear, several Europeans. We must shut up."

It was his last message, and even as he sent it the mutineers, flushed with victory, dashed into the office, and cut down the brave clerk.

Meanwhile there was gallant work being done at the magazine, in which were stored thousands of arms, rounds of ammunition, three hundred pieces of cannon—all much coveted by the mutineers. Outside the city there was another magazine, in the cantonments, occupied by the 38th, 54th, and 74th Bengal Native Infantry.

As soon as the rebels entered the city Lieutenant Willoughby rushed off to the great magazine, and with eight fellow-countrymen (he could not rely upon his native troops) prepared to hold the rebels at bay. The outer gates were barricaded. He posted six-pounders, double charged with grape, and waited for the onrush of the mutineers. Some of the native soldiers were entrusted with arms which they accepted reluctantly, and a train was laid to the magazine, which it was decided to blow up rather than allow it to fall into the hands of the sepoy.

Very soon the mutineers appeared on the scene. The sight of the guns made them pause in their rush, but at last the

King of Delhi sent to demand the surrender of the arsenal. Not a word was said in reply; the brave Britishers had nothing to say to such a request. Finding that words had no effect the sepoy tried what deeds would do, and in a few minutes they were hurling themselves headlong at the magazine, carrying scaling-ladders which they planted against the walls. With a roar the double-charged guns were fired, mowing down the men who so rashly braved them. Man after man fell, dropping their ladders, but the latter were quickly seized by fresh carriers, and thus the walls were reached. Immediately the ladders were in position the native contingent inside deserted and clambered down to their friends on the outside. Those on the walls opened a terrific close-ranged fire upon the devoted Englishmen; two of these fell, but Buckley and Forrest worked the guns like demons, until they were wounded. Seeing that there was no chance against the swarming hordes, Willoughby gave the signal at half-past three. Buckley passed on the order to Scully, who stood with the lighted match, and with a hiss! hiss! the train was fired, and moment later, with a roar that shook Delhi to its foundations, the magazine exploded. Many women and children, who had taken shelter in the magazine were killed, but so too were some hundreds of the mutineers. But the brave Scully had also fallen a victim to his own courage, and his mangled body was flung heavenward with the debris of the arsenal. Four of the brave defenders escaped, and reached Meerut, but Willoughby, less fortunate, was caught on the way and murdered.

The native regiments in the cantonments were quickly got on the move by their commander, but arriving at Delhi, they too revolted, and joined with the 3rd Cavalry in shooting down their officers.

So did the day of blood pass on, so also did other days, until by May 16th the mutineers had swept out all the Europeans. But few managed to escape, and those who did had a terrible journey before them through the jungle, where many of them were waylaid and murdered.

With the incidents that daily took place during the next few weeks we have not space to deal, but at last, on May 27th, the army of retribution set out from Umballah. Consisting of 3,000 Europeans, 1,000 natives, and twenty-two guns, under the command of General Sir Henry Barnard, the army marched by night and rested by day to escape the broiling sun, and on June 7th reached Alipur.

Meanwhile a column had left Meerut to reinforce Barnard. Brigadier Archdale Wilson led the little army consisting of 60th Rifles, 6th Dragoons, fifty 4th Irregulars, a couple of companies of native sappers, and a battery of six guns. On May 30th they encamped near Ghazi-ud-deen, a fortified village some miles from Delhi. Scarcely had they taken up position than the mutineers opened fire with some heavy guns which they had placed on a ridge, barring the way to the city. In a moment the men were up and two-eighteen pounders belched forth their reply, while at the same time a battery took the rebels in the flank, and the 60th Rifles charged at the bayonet point. Gradually the fire of the sepoys flagged, then ceased altogether, and the 60th managed to capture several of the guns. The mutineers turned and fled, hotly pursued by the 6th Dragoons, who sent them off in great disorder, leaving their ordnance, ammunition, and stores in the hands of the victors.

But the little battle was not over, for next day the rebels returned to the scene, and determined to give a better account of themselves. The English were ready for them, and after a severe fight the sepoys were once more driven off, this time into Delhi, leaving a large number of their comrades on the field of battle. The English, too, lost fifty men and several officers.

Next day a battalion of Gurkhas reinforced the Meerut column, which soon after crossed the Jumna, and joined forces with Barnard at Alipur, having had to fight their way through the enemy, and having fought victoriously.

Barnard had forced the pace and left Alipur on June 8th, advancing in three columns and in order of battle. He found the

rebels strongly entrenched at Badli-Ki-Serai, which lay between him and the rocky ridge running northward and westward of the city, on which he intended to take up his position. Finding that his light artillery was useless to silence the enemy's battery, the 60th Rifles and the 75th (Stirlingshire) Regiment were called up, and with bayonets fixed, charged down upon the rebels, fought them hand to hand round their guns and slowly but surely drove them back. The rout was complete when a couple more brigades and a battery appeared on the scene, and, leaving their guns, the rebels took to their heels and fled into Delhi, followed hard by the British troops, who quickly surmounted the Ridge and forced its defenders into the city.

Barnard was now in a strong position, but he was confronted by a herculean task. Before him lay Delhi, strongly walled and defended by nearly one hundred and eighty guns. The walls were seven miles in circumference, and were built of huge blocks of grey free-stone, "crowned by a good loopholed parapet. At intervals along the circumference they were provided with bastions, each armed with ten, twelve, or fourteen guns. . . . The city had ten gates, strong, and aptly named after the cities or provinces towards which they opened, Cashmere, Cabul, Lahore, etc. The walls were about twenty-four feet deep, while in front ran a dry ditch, twenty-five feet wide and about twenty deep."

Against this city which was a fortress, Barnard had a force of a few thousand men, and realising that it was impossible to invest the place all round, he chose to confront the northern extremity, the Ridge affording an admirable position for the heavy siege artillery which was following him. The Ridge ran for about two miles and was sixty feet above the city level, the nearest point being about a thousand yards from the Cabul gate.

Strong as his position was, Barnard knew that he could do but little in the way of assaulting the city until his siege train arrived, and as a matter of fact the days of waiting were spent in repelling attacks by the rebels, who realised that the fall of Delhi and the probable consequent capture of its king would be a crushing blow to the mutiny.

They lost little time in opening their attacks, for the day after Barnard had taken up his position on the Ridge they issued forth from the city. Opposed to them were a corps of Guides who had but just arrived from the Punjab, having by forced marches covered five hundred and eighty miles in twenty-two days. March-worn and weary, they were nevertheless ready for the fray, and the sepoy found them a ticklish foe to tamper with. The Guides were camped at Hindo Rao's house on the right of the Ridge, near Cabul gate, and it was here that the rebels made their first attack. In swarming hordes they clambered up the slopes of the Ridge, but the Guides met them. As fast as a black face showed itself, a shot found a billet in it, and man after man was tumbled down. Then, with a rousing cheer, the Guides issued forth to take the offensive. Down among the rebels they charged, scattered them, charged again, and sent them flying into Delhi. Not content with having driven back the foe, the Guides pursued them almost to the very walls. A galling fire met them, made great gaps in their ranks, and compelled them to retire. But they had shown the enemy of what stuff the men who were come out against them were made.

Of the many heroic incidents of which the siege of Delhi was full, we can only stay to tell of one or two. Almost every day the rebels sallied out against the besiegers, and it was during one of these that Lieutenant Hills of the Artillery distinguished himself.

"He was on picket," wrote an officer who was present "with his two horse-artillery guns, when the alarm was sounded, and an order sent him to advance, given under the impression that the enemy were at some distance. He was supported by a body of Carabineers—eighty I believe, in number. He advanced about one hundred yards, while his guns were being limbered up to follow, and suddenly came on about one hundred and twenty of the enemy's cavalry close upon them. Disgraceful to say, the Carabineers turned and bolted. His guns being limbered up, he could do nothing, but, rather than fly, he charged them by himself. He fired four barrels of his revolver, and killed two

men, hurling the empty pistol in the face of another, and knocking him off his horse. Two horsemen then charged full tilt at him, and rolled him and his horse over. He got up with no weapons, and, seeing a man on foot coming at him to cut him down, rushed at him, got inside his sword, and hit him full in the face with his fist. At that moment he was cut down from behind, and a second blow would have done for him had not Tombs, his captain, the finest fellow in the service, who had been in his tent when the row began, arrived at the critical moment, and shot his assailant—by a splendid shot, fired at thirty paces. Hills was able to walk home, though his wound was severe; and on the road Tombs saved his life once more by sticking another who attacked him. If they don't both get the Victoria Cross, it won't be worth having!"

They got it.

One more account by an officer.

"I was out in one of our principal batteries with a party of my Guides, placed there to protect the guns; and I shall never forget the scene at two o'clock in the morning. The sight was a most magnificent one—all our batteries and all the city ones were playing as hard as they could, the shells bursting, round shot tearing with a whooshing sound through our embrasures, the carcasses (or large balls of fire) flying over our heads, the musketry rolling and flashing, made the place as light as day. The noise was terrific, though the roar of the cannon was frequently drowned in the roar of human voices, for when the whole city turned out, there could not have been less than twenty thousand voices all screaming at once. The mutineers' yell of "Allah! Allah! Allah Akbar! Allah Akbar!" was answered by our jolly English hurrahs, and the din was most frightful. I never remember seeing such a beautiful sight or hearing such a noise. The mutineers, though they tried very hard to take our batteries, could not succeed, though some of them got up near enough to throw hand-grenades into them. The grand attack lasted about two hours, when the enemy gave in a little, though they did not

retire. The fighting went on all the rest of the night, and up to two o'clock next day, when both sides retired."

On June 23rd, the anniversary of the day when Clive won his glorious victory at Plassey, and the day on which the soothsayers had said that English rule in India was to end, the rebels sallied forth in great strength to bring about the fulfilment of the prophecy. Maddened with bhang and opium, urged on by their priests and astrologers, they surged out of the city against the British outposts, who met them with cool courage and a raking fire that sent the mutineers back post haste into Delhi.

One more episode, and we must away to the assault that was to carry Delhi and bring the siege to a successful close.

Sir Henry Barnard died in July, and on the 11th Brigadier Archdale Wilson took over the command. By some means or another the rebels had received information that the siege train was coming, and that it was under a feeble escort. Five thousand of them, with eight guns, accordingly issued forth to stay its progress farther than Nujufgurh, twelve miles out of Delhi.

But there was a man named Nicholson, a gallant Irish officer, whose name was to live in the annals of British India. He had done good work in the Punjab, which he left to go to Delhi in command of the movable column. Delhi was reached on August 14th, and on the 24th Nicholson led his men, consisting of two thousand Europeans and a thousand natives, out towards Nujufgurh. Through pouring rain and water-soaked roads and paddy fields, the column moved on at the rate of ten miles in seven hours, and then had to call a halt. Three officers were sent to reconnoitre, and returned with the news that the enemy were encamped at Nujufgurh. "The rebels fronted the nullah, their right rested on a village where nine guns were placed, their left was on rising ground, and in the centre was the old serai, the key of the position, armed with four guns."

They were in great numbers and their position was strong, but the siege train must be saved. Nicholson determined to save it. Turning to his Europeans he said:

"Now, 61st, I have but a few words to say. You all know what Sir Colin Campbell said to you at Chilianwallah, and you must also have heard that he used a similar expression at the Alma—that is, 'Hold your fire till within twenty or thirty yards of the battery, and then, boys, we will make short work of it.'"

The men responded with gusto. The nullah was forded, and says an officer:

"Our guns went away to the flank. We got 'Fix bayonets, and trail arms; quick—march.' On we went, and we got within some fifty yards of them, when the men gave a howl, and on we dashed, and were slap into them before they had time to depress the guns. It was bayonet to bayonet in a few moments, but we cut them up and spiked the guns. . . . On we went after the brutes, and cut up a heap at the serai and behind it. We then drew up in line, rallied, and went at the camp, took it, sent a party to take the village, and then we went and took the guns at the bridge, over which the enemy was bolting in thousands. Here we took six guns more. Up came our guns and blazed away at the enemy, and off they went, leaving a host of stores, etc., all along the road."

The fight was continued next day, and it was not until about two o'clock that the victors could think about returning to camp, which they did with a good supply of stores and after having routed utterly the rebels, killing and wounding some eight hundred, and blowing up the bridge, so that the enemy could not adopt the same tactics against the siege train, which lumbered into headquarters on September 3rd, each of the one hundred and sixteen guns drawn by twenty pairs of bullocks.

The Engineers immediately began raising the batteries on the Ridge, and that night they worked like very demons, exposed to a terrific shower of grapeshot from the rebel guns. Coolly and steadily the work went on, and by the morning of the 5th,

Battery No. 1 was in going order at Hindo Rao's house. It consisted of six nine-pounders and two twenty-four pounders, which belched forth their shells with such rapidity and directness that the Engineers were able, under their cover, to erect Battery No. 2, ten guns, at a distance of about five hundred yards from the Cashmere gate.

The third and fourth batteries were also quickly placed, and later two others were erected, one of them, under Major Tombs, being near the river bank, and consisting of ten mortars.

Then on September 11th the siege began in earnest; the great siege guns hurtled their shot and shell at the city, tumbling great masses of stone to the ground, smashing bastions, crumbling walls as if they had been made of cardboard and doing great execution amongst the defenders. The Moree bastion was very soon nothing but a heap of ruins, the Shah bastion near the Cabul gate was little more. Ten minutes of this tremendous firing had the effect of silencing the enemy's guns, which had been fought with great bravery. But even then the rebels did not give up. Their bastions useless, they actually ran several big guns out into the open, placing batteries at Kissengunge and on the opposite bank of the Jumna, from which they poured in a terrific fire at the batteries, at the same time sending in a hail of musket shots, which did great damage to the besiegers.

After two days of this heavy work, the Water gate and Water bastion and the Cashmere bastion were regarded as being sufficiently breached to warrant a direct assault, and at three in the morning everything was ready for the attack.

It was to be delivered at four points: against the Cashmere bastion Nicholson led the first column, a thousand men, with the 75th Foot in the van; against the Water bastion, Brigadier Jones, the second, with eight hundred and fifty, the 8th Foot leading; Colonel Campbell, the third, with nine hundred and fifty, the vanguard consisting of the 52nd Foot, went against the Cashmere gate; and Major Reid, the fourth, eight hundred and fifty, headed by the Sirmoor Ghurkas, was deputed to attack

Kissengunge, and support the main attack by entering in at the Cabul gate after its capture. Brigadier Longfield was in reserve with thirteen hundred men.

Precautions had been taken to make sure that the breaches were large enough to allow of the assault, and the work of investigation was undertaken by Medley, Home, Lang, and Greathed. At ten o'clock on that moonless but starlit night the four adventurous men stole out of the camp, making their way to the breach near the Cashmere bastion. Medley and Lang dropped into the ditch without being discovered, but presently some sepoys appeared near at hand—not twenty yards away, and an anxious hour was spent by the spies waiting for the men to retire. The Britishers had found out what they came for, but dare not move away.

At last, tired of waiting, and knowing that the camp would be anxiously expecting them, the spies started to return, but had hardly moved ere they were discovered. Shots whizzed past them, but no one was hurt, and they returned to make their report, on the strength of which the attack was decided on.

It was a bold undertaking, for the attacking force consisted of only about six thousand men, and they knew that inside the city was an army of at least thirty thousand mutineers—not a mere rabble, but well-trained soldiers. But what they lacked in numbers they made up in courage and determination, and, spurred on by the words of their commander, "No quarter should be given to the mutineers!" they issued forth from the positions, and each column moved towards the spot allocated to it.

At the moment the attackers started the great guns ceased their terrific fire. The Rifles led in skirmishing order, sending out a ringing cheer and a raking fire and behind them came the columns, making for the ditch. The mutineers were ready for them, and before the soldiers had gone far they were subjected to a galling fire from the walls, and many of them bit the dust. The Engineers and the men with the ladders reached the glacis, but

so hot was the fire that for some time it was impossible to lower the ladders into the ditch. At last hurling the ladders over, the men clambered down after them, placed them in position on the other side, and swarmed up one after the other. Brave Nicholson reached the top first, and after him his men scrambled. They were up! With bayonets fixed they dashed into the breach, stumbling and falling over the debris which the big guns had cast down, but ever keeping on their cheering way. The rebels met them; steel clashed on steel, musket answered musket, sword crossed sword, men fell and were trampled on, but step by step the mutineers were forced back until at last they took to their heels and ran. The Cashmere bastion was won.

Meanwhile Brigadier Jones had led his men at the Water bastion. He was met by the same galling fire, the same difficulties, the same resistance, but was equally successful in driving the rebels off. And the Water bastion was won.

Losing no time, Jones led his men along the ramparts towards the Cashmere bastion, and, meeting some of Nicholson's men, they hurried off along the walls to the Moree bastion. With a rush they were on the gunners; red bayonets were worked with a vengeance, the gunners were killed or sent flying. So was the Moree bastion won.

So far we have forgotten Campbell at the Cashmere gate. But he had been busy. Under the cover of the 60th Rifles a company of miners and sappers had rushed towards the drawbridge leading to the gate, which they reached in safety. Lieutenant Home, Sergeants Smith and Carmichael, led the way, carrying bags of powder with which the gate was to be blown up. This gate was of great strength, and the wicket was guarded by a number of picked marksmen. Almost by a miracle the British reached the broken drawbridge alive, and clambered across it towards the gate. By a miracle, too, they managed to get up to the gate and deposit their bags, though shots sang past them and missed them by mere fractions of inches.



DELHI

"BURGESS RUSHED TO THE POWDER BAGS, FIRED THEM, AND FELL MORTALLY WOUNDED."

Quick as lightning they slipped off the drawbridge into the ditch, making way for the firing party, who followed hard upon their heels. Led by Lieutenant Salkeld and Corporal

Burgess, they dashed across the splintered bridge. Down went Salkeld with a shot in his arm and leg just as he was in the act of firing the fuse; he immediately passed the match on to Burgess, who rushed to the powder bags, fired them, and fell mortally wounded. Sergeant Smith, fearing that the match, held in the limp hand of Burgess, had failed, rushed forward to complete the work. But the task was done, and with a terrific roar the masonry was split into a thousand pieces, and stones and bodies of rebels were hurled into the air. The gate was down, and Bugler Hawthorne sounded the advance three times, lest the noise of the explosion should drown it the first time. Then, dropping his bugle, Hawthorne calmly walked over to Salkeld and bound up his wounds under a sharp musketry fire from the walls.

At the sound of the bugle Campbell's column came on, led by the 52nd, with Captain Bayley at their head. Bayley fell, and many another, but at last the whole column rushed into the breach, and fought their way through the galling fire of the mutineers. Soon they were hand to hand, with Campbell at their head; and, reckless of danger, spurred on by their commander, the British forced their way through the teeming sepoys, cutting them down by scores. They were in the city! On, on they went, and then with a cheer the English bayonets dashed into the Chandnee Chouk (Silver Street). Here, however, they met with a stubborn resistance.

Outnumbered, they were slowly driven back the way they had come, for nearly a mile, until they were almost at the gate by which they had entered, and might, indeed, have been driven out altogether had it not been for the supports which came to their aid at the critical moment.

Meanwhile the fourth attacking column had not been so fortunate as the others. Read's objective was the Cabul gate, but in order to reach it he had to pass through the suburbs, which afforded admirable shelter to the sepoys, who poured in a fire which almost cut up the advancing party, and caused it to fall back, leaving the leader on the ground. So vast were the numbers of the sepoys and so determined were they, that it almost seemed

as if they would manage to turn the English flank, but at that critical moment Hope Grant came on the scene with his cavalry brigade, and after a stiff fight the rebels were turned back.

It is time to return to Nicholson and Jones, who had raced through the city and taken the Cabul gate. A portion of the first column halted here and proceeded to occupy the houses round the Cabul gate, while the remainder continued the pursuit. These advanced somewhat into the city, but met with a stern resistance; after a while, however, they sent the foe flying, occupied the houses round about, while others pressed on against some guns arrayed before them. One gun was taken, but so terrible was the fire that the captors had to relinquish it and take shelter in houses. Once more they issued forth, captured the gun, and went on their way towards the others. Major Jacob fell, wounded to death, and refused to be carried behind, urging his men to advance; other officers were shot down, and the men began to waver. At the psychological moment Nicholson appeared, roared furiously at the men, and, placing himself at their head, urged them on. A step—and he fell, shot through the chest. Ordering them to take and place him beneath the shelter of a tree near by, Nicholson said he would wait there till the city was taken. He didn't, for his friends carried him back to camp, and though he lived to see the capture of Delhi, he died on September 23rd. Jones now took command, and finding that the enemy was in great strength, decided not to advance farther, but contented himself with keeping Cabul gate.

When the night came on the British had to enumerate a loss in killed and wounded of sixty-six officers and eleven hundred men, but they still held all the places which had been captured in the assault. Those who survived and held the posts for a while gave themselves up to drink, which the wily sepoys had left about in abundance. But drink though they did to their full, they fought with a will, and day after day the assault on the city was continued. The guns outside still roared, the magazine was stormed and captured on the 16th, and Kissengunge was evacuated by the rebels. Two days later the Burn bastion gate

was captured, and on the next day two more gates fell, and that day, too, the palace gates were blown in and the victors rushed to the throne room—to find the King of Delhi gone.

So was Delhi won.

But the work was not yet done. The king was still at large, and Lieutenant Hodson set out for the tomb of the Emperor Humayoon, where he had taken refuge, brought him back through a hostile crowd of natives, returned the next day, and captured the princes who had been responsible for the outrages committed, and shot them.

CHAPTER XXII

SOLFERINO

Where Napoleon III. beat back the Austrians

Victor Emmanuel of Sardinia was fighting for Italian unification, and seeking to wrest Italian territory from Austria. To his help went Napoleon III, who placed himself at the head of the allied armies of France and Piedmont. He landed at Genoa on May 12th, 1859, in a week had beaten the Austrians at Montebello; passed on to Palestro and beat them again, and then on June 4th met them and forced them to retire from Magenta. The Austrians retreated to a strong position to the east of the River Mincio, doubled while the French were pursuing them—in the wrong direction—and on June 24th met the foe where they least expected to see him, for he had crossed the River Chiese, whereas the Austrians had hoped to fall upon him before he could do so.

There was nothing for it but to give battle. The Austrians took up a position running from north to south through the villages of Pozzolengo, Solferino, Carriana, and Guidizzolo, the first three being on the upland to the south of Lake Garda, the last one being on the plain of Medole. The First Army, under Wimpffen, held Guidizzolo, and the Second Army, under Schlick, was spread over the upland position.

The French, unaware that the Austrians were thus encamped, were hurrying as fast as their transports would allow to take up those identical positions. They were coming from various quarters. Baraguay d'Hilliers, with the First Army Corps, was advancing on Solferino; McMahon and the Second Army Corps was making for Carriana, between Solferino and Guidizzolo, on which latter place Niel, with the Fourth Army Corps, was marching, via Medole, where the Third Corps, under

Canrobert, was to take up position. The fact that the Austrians had already secured the various places naturally altered things, and the first intimation that Niel received of having been forestalled came to him when his advance guard ran into an outpost of Austrian cavalry near Medole. The French pushed on, however, cleared the cavalry out of the way, attacked Medole and, after a sharp fight, stormed and took it, sending the Austrians off.

News reached Niel that McMahon had found a large force opposed to him near Cassiano, and that all he could do was to launch his batteries at them, and so endeavour to prevent them sending out a large body against the First Corps. Niel was to leave Medole at once, and hasten off to the assistance of d'Hilliers, as McMahon himself did not dare to do so.

Niel agreed to do this after he had captured Medole, and on condition that the Third Corps, which was following him, should take care that his flank was not turned. The Third Corps, however, was busy keeping guard on the French right, which was threatened by a body of twenty-five thousand Austrians, whose possible appearance kept Canrobert at his post, unable to march on Medole, and so enable Niel to go to the help of d'Hilliers.

That general, meanwhile, pushed on his way towards Solferino, making every effort to capture the village. He had to fight for every inch of the ground he covered, and he found that to take Solferino, perched on a hill as it was, was no easy task. By dint of hard fighting and heavy firing of artillery, he managed at last to secure the lower slopes of the hill; but the Austrians, safe on the hilltop, were able to hold out against the many determined attacks made to gain the village. It was a fine position for artillery, which simply mowed down the infantry that assailed the old tower, and sent them back on their line. D'Hilliers next tackled the cemetery and convent, sending his infantry at them. With many brilliant rushes the foot attempted to carry the position, but were each time hurled back by a galling fire. Then d'Hilliers brought his batteries to bear. At three

hundred yards the great guns opened fire, poured in a terrific hail of shot and shell which battered in the walls and so made an opening, through which dashed the French infantry, with bayonets fixed, and possessed of grim determination not to be turned back again. In they went, met the foe hand to hand, and after a sharp tussle, during which the Austrians put up a bold stand, turned the defenders out of the stronghold.

Finding that Solferino was not easy to take, the First Corps of the French Imperial Guard, posted at Castiglione, about three miles to the left of the village, was sent to reinforce McMahon. The Chasseurs de la Garde, therefore, moved off towards Solferino, reached McMahon's line, and in dense columns charged at the hill. "*Vive l'Empereur!*" burst from every throat, answered by the fierce cheers of the Austrians; and in a perfect transport of military frenzy the whole mass sprang up the hill. On every side the men dropped cruelly fast; the dark forms of the Chasseurs were marked by the glancing of the sunbeams on their sword-bayonets. The supporting columns pressed on. As they neared the village the puffs of Austrian smoke became more frequent. Now the French reached the first houses, and for a moment the column wavered; then with one mad rush the Chasseurs swept the white-coated linesmen and the Tyrolese jagers before them into Solferino; and the edge of the village was won.

But the village itself still remained in the hands of the Austrians, and in order to get near it the French had to fight their way past and through houses, gardens and vineyards, every one of them filled with Austrians who potted at them from the shelter of walls and windows. It was a case for the bayonet again. With ringing cheers the French went at the charge, cleared the houses and gardens at bayonet point, and pressed on and on until at last, after a terrible fight, the village was won.

Meanwhile, Niel was having his hands full. Unable to go to d'Hilliers's aid, and with Canrobert behind him, and with no likelihood of receiving help himself against Wimpffen, who was sending large forces against him from Guidizzolo, Niel had to do

the best he could. Wimpffen's advance party was making for Casa Nuova, a farmhouse about two miles from Medole, and for a long time Niel had to content himself with long-range firing against skirmishers. Finally he received reinforcements in the shape of some heavy artillery, and with these he moved on Casa Nuova. He found that the Austrians had turned the place into a very fortress.

Niel set all his artillery shelling the farm, and a terrific fire was poured into the devoted place, which the Austrians bravely defended. At last things reached a critical stage, for with Austrian reinforcements coming out against him, Niel knew that he must press on with the assault of the farm and carry it at the bayonet point.

Sending in a few more rounds as a preliminary clearing, the French infantry moved off towards the farm at the double. In the teeth of a cruel fire which made great gaps in their ranks, they raced at the hedges and ditches, scrambled through them or leaped across them, met the foe hand to hand, bayonet to bayonet, forced them back on the house inch by inch, and then went for the house itself.

The Austrians inside kept up a steady, gaffing fire, which worked great havoc, but did not keep the Frenchmen off. Crash! doors were smashed in, strongly barricaded windows were burst open, and then, through doors and windows, the Frenchmen went like so many monkeys. At last they were in, but they found that every room was a fortress, and every Austrian a host in himself, seeing that he was behind doors or furniture. But nothing could withstand the imperious rush of the Frenchmen, and soon the farm was won, was re-barricaded and made fit to withstand attacks by those who had recently been ousted.

Although Niel had successfully attacked Casa Nuova he was by no means in an enviable position. The fight for the farm, and the fights which took place for its recovery, very soon turned the Fourth Corps almost into a rabble, which the Austrians left him no time to remedy. Time after time the latter

hurled themselves at the French, threatening to turn them back. Fortunately, reinforcements had come from the Emperor, and then, feeling better able to take the offensive again, Niel sent a couple of regiments of cavalry at the enemy. Down upon the Austrian ranks dashed the Hussars, straight as an arrow to its mark. The ground shook beneath the hoofs of horses; now and again horse and rider went down in a heap, but still on and on, like the wind, the gallant Hussars rode right into the opposing infantry. With a sickening crash they were through, dealing death and destruction around them, and shaking the Austrian line from front to rear. If the charge effected nothing else it enabled Niel to rally his men into something like order. Losing no time, he followed up the advantage he had just gained, and before the Austrians could recover from the shock of the cavalry charge, he sent a large force of infantry against them at Guidizzolo.

Seven thousand Frenchmen, therefore, went out against an overwhelming number of Austrians. Boldly and fearlessly, impetuously and bravely, they hurled themselves at the outskirts of the village. The Austrians were ready for them, met them with a fire that sent their front ranks tumbling to the ground, and then, following up their advantage, rushed upon the Frenchmen, and sent them back whence they had come.

Wimpffen now, by order of the Emperor, moved three of his corps against Niel—reversing the process, as it were. Niel had massed his troops at Casa Nuova, and had received Canrobert's reinforcements. The Austrians literally surrounded the farm, sending their cavalry at the charge in an attempt to turn the French infantry back. Like automatons the French rifles spoke death to the advancing horsemen, then, when the latter arrived, French bayonets did the rest and hurled the cavalry back. So during all that afternoon the fight raged round Casa Nuova, now one side gaining some advantage, now the other, but still the French would not be turned out, and at last Wimpffen had to send to his Emperor, who was at Carriana, the news that he must fall back, having twice failed in the attack, and having used up all his reserves.

D'Hilliers had taken Solferino, Niel Casa Nuova, but meanwhile what of McMahon? That general had been compelled to take the defensive, since Niel had not been able to come to his assistance, and for several hours an artillery duel raged between him and the Austrians round Cassiano. McMahon had the best of it, because he saw to it that his batteries were massed in large numbers, whereas the Austrians worked theirs singly. It was weight that told, and gradually the French were able to march on Carriana. The march resolved itself into a series of hand-to-hand fights, the Algerian troops, or Turcos, finding themselves very much at home on top of the hills. At Monte Fontana they met the Austrian infantry—came upon them before the latter realised it. Lithe and supple, they leaped from rock to rock, sprang hither and thither to secure cover, and burst in upon the Austrians with bayonets fixed, hurling the defenders down the slopes. The hill was won. But it was quickly lost again, for the Austrians immediately returned to the attack, met bayonet with bayonet, fought their way up to the top, and turned the victors out. The hill was won again. Yet once more was it lost, for the Turcos, furious at being robbed of the position they had fought so hard to win, once more sprang up the slopes, fell on the defenders, and with a terrible rush, scattered them. The hill was won at last, and won for good.

The French immediately hurried their batteries up to the crest, but it was hard work. Horses were practically useless, and men took their place, and tugging and pulling, cheering and cursing, they heaved and heaved until the guns were in position and shelling Carriana.

But not only were the artillery attacking the village: the infantry were also bent on securing it. Onward they pressed, fighting, firing volley after volley at the enemy in front of them, and then charging at the double with bayonets fixed. It was hard work, but it told, for in about half an hour Carriana was taken.

To all intents and purposes the battle was now won, for while the French had been so successful at Solferino, Carriana, and Casa Nuova, the Piedmontese, under Victor Emmanuel, had

pressed on towards Pozzolengo, where Benedek was encamped. Advance parties were sent out, reached San Martino, where Benedek had posted a goodly force, and attacked the Austrians. Bravely and boldly though they fell on, the lack of organisation rendered it impossible for them to achieve anything of value. Up the hill at San Martino, however, they scrambled, only to be driven down after a fierce fight. Later in the day the advance parties received reinforcements which enabled them to attack the village. Pressing forward with great vigour, they hurled themselves at the defenders, forced them from the outskirts, won farmhouses, vineyards, and the church. Then rallying themselves they dashed down upon the solid main line, which was supported by a battery of heavy guns. It was a gallant attempt, but a particularly hopeless one, for the Austrians reserved their artillery fire until the Piedmontese were within about two hundred yards, and then sent in a shattering musketry fire. Immediately afterwards the big guns opened up. Loaded with grapeshot as they were, they wrought havoc in the advancing ranks, mowing down men by the dozen, making great gaps in the columns, and sending the foe back in confusion. Who could stand against such a galling fire?

Finally they rallied, and, nothing daunted by their recent terrible experience, prepared to advance once more on the Austrians. The King sent off all the remainder of his force, instead of moving them on to Solferino as arranged before the battle, and thus reinforced, the Piedmontese marched off on San Martino. The heights they had been compelled to surrender after desperate fighting they once more captured, though not before they had been hurled back again and yet again. Then at the village they dashed, this time with better success, for in the face of a raking fire they reached the Austrians, fought them at close quarters, forced them back, and the village of San Martino was won. Benedek's cavalry, meanwhile, had come at the charge; steady, solid and determined, the Piedmontese waited for them. They came—they staggered—swerved—turned round and went off after their retreating infantry.

The Piedmontese had done their share of the fighting, had paid their part of the price, for of twenty-five thousand who had attacked San Martino over four thousand five hundred were killed and wounded. But they had fought for country and for king, and they had won!

Solferino, Casa Nuova, Carriana, San Martino had been captured, the Austrians were forced back at every point, and when Wimpffen sent his message to the Emperor Francis that he would have to fall back, the latter reluctantly issued a general order for retreat. Gradually, therefore, the Austrians drew off, making for the Mincio, about three miles from Pozzolengo.

At last, however, a battle of the elements began, and put an end to the battle of men's passions, for the storm made it impossible for the French to follow up their advantage as they would have wished, and the Austrians were able to cross the Mincio.

On July 11th, after some shilly-shallying, a treaty was signed, by which it was agreed to create an Italian Confederation, Austria ceding Lombardy to France (to be transferred to Sardinia), and various other arrangements made.

CHAPTER XXIII

PALERMO

Where the Famous Thousand Fought and Won

Francis II of Naples was standing out against Garibaldi's dream of a united Italy, but, as with all other obstacles to the realisation of his dreams, Garibaldi resolutely determined to remove this one, and with that end in view he took the field against Palermo, which Francis was holding in a state of siege.

The revolutionary committee at Genoa was in communication with the Sicilian Committee of Liberties, whose revolutionary ambitions were distinctly disliked by Francis. He instituted martial law in the city.

Yet the fire of insurrection burned none the less fiercely for being held in check, and at last the committee determined to be rid of the armed hand of the tyrant. But the plot failed at the last moment, and the tyrant hand still held sway.

On receiving information of the uprising, however, Francis took immediate and strong steps to have it put down, and in a short time thirteen thousand troops were massed in and around the city.

Meantime, in Genoa, Garibaldi was making active preparations to afford the patriots assistance, and on April 10th one of his messengers landed secretly at Messina. Escaping the vigilance of the Neapolitans, he visited the various villages at night, wrote his soul-stirring message on the walls, and departed.

"Viene Garibaldi! Viva Vittorio Emanuele!" ("Garibaldi is coming! Long live Victor Emmanuel!") flamed on the walls before the exultant gaze of the inhabitants on the morning following his visit, and at last the news filtered through to Palermo. Young and old felt the inspiration of the message, and

if the grown-ups managed to hide their joy, the youngsters, safe in their helplessness, yelled after the sbirri (police), "Garibaldi is coming!"

Of course, Maniscalco, the chief of police, heard, heard too that on a set day all who were in sympathy with the revolution were to *walk on* the Via Maqueda promenade. The chief of police made arrangements against the demonstration, sending soldiers and sbirri to uphold the authority of Francis, killing the citizens as they gathered to make unarmed demonstration.

But the spirit of revolt was not dead, for that night men went round the city and blazoned their war-cry on every wall: "*Viene Garibaldi!*" and four days later the greater message came: "Garibaldi has landed at Marsala!"

Sure enough, on May 11th, Garibaldi and his Thousand volunteers landed in Sicily. Two steamers had brought them from the north, and from these, almost under the very nose of some Neapolitan vessels which lay off the island, the patriots disembarked with all munitions of war. If Garibaldi did not do as Cæsar did, burn his boats behind him, he left them at the mercy of the royalist ships; then, with the foe before him and retreat cut off behind, he began his march across the island.

At the telegraph office they found that the clerk had just wired the news of their coming: "My mistake—they are two of our own vessels"—the insurgents wired in amplification of the message!

At Salemi, on the 15th, Garibaldi proclaimed himself Dictator of Sicily in the name of King Victor, met the royal troops at Calatafini next day, and after a vigorous pitched battle—in which the brunt of the fighting fell on the Thousand—drove them back towards Palermo. As the royal army made its retreat, the *picciotti*, the native insurgents, perched on the hills overhanging the road, calmly picked off men as they hurried away in confusion. In revenge the soldiers pillaged the villages through which they passed.

Garibaldi's Thousand was now reduced to some seven hundred and fifty, though the *picciotti* still numbered two or three thousand. At the head of these he held on his way to Palermo, and on the 18th was on the hills and looking down on the city. That night they bivouacked in the drenching rain, rested the next day, and on the 10th the outposts advanced to within a mile of Monreale, five miles from Palermo.

Garibaldi now brought his strategy to bear. The way to Palermo lay through a plain on which the royal troops were massed; to pass through, even in the dead of night, would be impossible; nay, not impossible to the Patriot, but, rather, difficult and costly. He therefore decided to lead his volunteers round the mountains in a wide detour, leaving the *picciotti* on the hilltops to deceive the enemy into believing that the insurgents were all in one place.

Garibaldi was on the west, where the royal troops were encamped in force; he intended to get round to the south. Cannon were dismounted, taken up piece-meal by the men and carried on their backs, and, after a march of many hours through the darkness and a heavy rain, over rocks and bridle paths, the little band reached Parco, almost exhausted, but exultant at having so far outwitted the enemy, who seeing the camp fires gleaming on the hills in the west, little dreamt that the Terror was flying by night.

For hours on end, drenched to the skin, and toil-weary, the volunteers slaved at getting into position along the winding road leading up to Piana, six miles from Palermo. Then, when the evening of the 22nd fell, rest—well-earned and much-needed rest.

At daybreak Garibaldi and the Hungarian Turr, a fellow-spirit, looked down on Palermo; before them lay a panorama of armed forces: fifteen or twenty thousand men, with reinforcements arriving every hour. A sight to make the heart of many a brave man quail, even with a large force at his back. But Garibaldi, with only eight hundred men on whom he could rely

he was compelled to regard the *picciotti* as broken reeds—quailed not; rather he determined to go on and win.

While the two leaders looked out over the plain, some four thousand royal troops moved out of Palermo towards Monreale, intent on ousting the insurgent force. While they kept to the plains they were fairly safe, but as soon as they reached the hills, their difficulties increased, for the *picciotti*, ensconced behind rocks and bushes, were in their element, and did great damage to the advancing soldiers. All day and far into the night the conflict waged, and still General Lanza, in command of the Neapolitans, could not dislodge the rebels.

At last, finding it impossible to drive them out by direct movements, he decided upon surrounding them and sweeping them out of the vicinity. He therefore moved the corps on to Piana and Parco, having by this time discovered Garibaldi's ruse.

Garibaldi immediately sent Turr off to Piana, where, with carabinieri and *picciotti*, he was to hold the enemy in check, and so save what few pieces of artillery they had with them, the General himself following as quickly as he could. Arrived at Piana, Turf's men were assailed by the royalists, who outnumbered them by three to one. The *picciotti*, fine men as they were in the guerilla warfare in the mountains, were no use to oppose a force in the open, and as soon as they were attacked, fled in disorder, leaving Turr and two small companies to hold the place.

While the skirmish was proceeding, Garibaldi was hurrying up with his whole force, and about half-past two arrived in Piana, where, late in the evening, he held a Council of War, suggested another stratagem which met with the approval of his companions, and proceeded to carry it out.

It was decided to make a feigned retreat. Colonel Orsini, with the baggage, artillery and fifty men, set out along the road to Corleone, many miles inland from Palermo, accompanied for half a mile by Garibaldi and the rest of the army. The ruse succeeded; vedettes instantly rode into the camp and reported

that the enemy was in full retreat. General Lanza immediately sent a large body of troops after them under Von Mechel. Orsini kept on the march, drawing the pursuers after him farther and farther away from Palermo, while Garibaldi and the remainder of his little force, under shelter of the night, turned off into a path that led into Marineo.

By seven o'clock in the morning the insurgents were at Marineo, where they remained all day, setting out again at night, and reaching Misilmeri, a few miles east of the city, at ten o'clock. Here they met a few thousand *picciotti* and some of the Sicilian Committee of Liberties, who were sent into the city with the joyful news that Garibaldi would attack on the 27th, in the early morning.

The little army kept its secret well—so well that although the royal guards were almost within bugle call they did not dream that the patriots were anywhere in the vicinity. In the evening of the 26th the last stage of the march on Palermo began.

Thirty men, three from each company of the gallant Thousand, led the way, commanded by Captain Misorì and Colonel Tukery; behind them the first corps of *picciotti*, supported by the first battalion of the volunteers under Colonel Bixio. Then Garibaldi and his staff, followed by the second battalion of the Thousand, the second corps of *picciotti* bringing up the rear.

Picture them: seven hundred and fifty heroes, backed up by an uncertain army of *picciotti* of say three thousand; before them, Palermo and eighteen thousand trained soldiers. And they were going to win through.

Almost as silent as the grave—for upon the suddenness of their descent depended the success of the venture—the little army made its way "down the side of the ravine which led to the valley opening on the highway. It was eleven o'clock when they arrived at this point. Tukery halted his men to see if order was being kept in the rear. The *picciotti* had completely disappeared.

A false alarm on the mountainside had sent them flying. Two hours were needed to reform the line, when it was found that their numbers were now reduced to one thousand three hundred men. With all these delays, at half-past one in the morning they were still three miles from the city."

Still the royalists were unaware of their advance, and it was half-past three ere the patriots had reached the outposts, who immediately fired, and so gave the signal; and then fell back. It gave the alarm in the city, but it also played havoc with the nerves of the *picciotti*, the majority of whom took to their heels and fled into the mountains.

Garibaldi's vanguard immediately rushed for the Ponte dell' Ammiraglio over the Oreto, held by four hundred soldiers. Picking their way from tree to tree along the roadside, those thirty-two men poured in a running fire at the defenders, then, with bayonets fixed, dashed pell-mell at the bridge. A fierce fight raged, the defenders making a bold stand, so bold that Bixio had to hurry up with his first battalion, followed hard by Turr and the second battalion. With a rush they hurled themselves at the bridge, carried it at the bayonet point, and sent the defenders flying to the right, though Tukery fell wounded to the death.

"Forward!" cried Garibaldi, "into the heart of the city!" and on went the insurgents.

At the same instant a strong body of royalists came out against them on the left. They were met by thirty volunteers, who held them in check while their comrades rushed by with bayonets fixed, carrying everything before them, and passing the Ponte delle Teste, and so crossing the Oreto.

They were now on the road to the city, which was separated from them by suburban houses and gardens, and down this road the Thousand—or what was left of them—raced. Garibaldi stayed for a while to rally the *picciotti*, who had fled into the gardens for shelter; at last they were got together again, and were persuaded to face citywards.

The Porta Termini was the point for which the patriots were making, and arrived there, they found that although the gate itself had been pulled down some time before, the royalists had erected a strong barricade, commanded by two guns in the Via Sant' Antonino, and that behind it were a crowd of troops.

Then Garibaldi arrived.

"Into the heart of the city!" he cried again.

The insurgents threw themselves at the barricade, heedless of the gun fire, heedless of the rifle fire sent in amongst them. With fierce stubbornness they tore the barricade to pieces, sent the defenders flying, and the Thousand rushed through.

The *picciotti*, however, were scared to death, and it needed the urging of a raw youth to make them brave the guns. The youngster seized a chair, rushed with it into the zone of fire, and showed the *picciotti* what pluck was, showed them what bad marksmen the Neapolitans were! Seating himself in the chair, and waving the tricolour flag, he called his comrades to come on.

The *picciotti* were shamed; at last they gained courage, and by ones and twos, threes and fours, they raced into the zone of fire, and tore through the breach in the barricade, following hard upon the heels of the Thousand.

Garibaldi went through the city into the old market, sent out about two hundred of his men to rally the citizens round him, and then began work.

The citizens hailed him with enthusiasm; they came in their scores, armed with knives, swords, iron bars, and anything that would serve as a weapon pending the arrival of rifles. The tocsins were sounded, and more people gathered round the Liberator, who had meanwhile sent out men to erect barricades. Mattresses, paving-stones wrenched up from the roadsides, all things handy, were heaped on the barricades, from behind which the patriots fired upon the royalists, who had not been slow in attacking them.

The story of the next three days is one of street fights, in which the patriots, despite the bombardment of the town by the ships in the harbour—many houses were set on fire—were always victorious, until at last the royalists were forced into the district round the royal palace. Round this barricades were erected, the stones and bricks from the wrecked houses being of much value for the purpose.

General Lanza had managed to get all his troops into this district, but before they had left their camping place outside the city they had been attacked by a large force of *picciotti* who had arrived on the scene from another direction. They were braver this time, and they did a great deal of damage, and reports ran through the city that far from having only a small body of men, Garibaldi had a large army with him. Which did not in the least help Lanza.

The bishop's palace was attacked, and the royalists compelled to evacuate it; the prisoners broke out of gaol, and joined forces with the insurgents; yet through all this turmoil Garibaldi, who had created a Provisional Government, kept law.

On the 29th the palace itself was attacked; but the royalists were in great numbers, and better armed, and drove the attackers off. For a while it seemed as though the Liberator's efforts were going to be in vain. A messenger hurried to Garibaldi with the news.

"I must go myself!" he cried, and with a handful of men—fifty only—he dashed off to the scene of conflict.

His appearance gave new courage to his men, who, rallying themselves for a last great stand, held out against the royalists, then charged down upon them with such reckless courage that the soldiers were compelled to fall back upon the palace.

Lanza was now feeling the pinch of hunger; the insurgents had invested him so closely that he could get no provisions. He opened negotiations with Garibaldi, and an

armistice was arranged to last one day—which was a good thing for Garibaldi, who was in dire need of ammunition.

While this was in progress Von Mechel returned from the false chase of Garibaldi. He was furious at finding that he had been deceived, and arriving at the gate through which the Liberator had entered the city, he found it in possession of insurgents. He immediately fell to; the patriots held their post with tenacity. Presently an officer arrived to inquire the reason of the tumult, seeing that an armistice was in force. Von Mechel was angry, and for a long time refused to obey orders and desist from fighting. As a matter of fact, had he managed to break through the barricade, and had Lanza broken his word with Garibaldi, the rebellion might have been quelled. But to his honour be it said, Lanza held to his word, and after a great deal of persuasion Von Mechel called his men off; and for a time quietness reigned once more.

Garibaldi took advantage of the lull in the fighting to manufacture ammunition and to strengthen his position, while Lanza, when the day's armistice expired, conferred again with the Liberator, and the armistice was extended to four days, at the end of which time the royalists agreed to evacuate the town, on condition that the garrison in the forts might depart with all the honours of war. This was agreed to.

And Garibaldi had won Palermo, while he had less than five hundred muskets left!

CHAPTER XXIV

GETTYSBURG

The Doom of the Confederates

If, on the one hand, the defeat of the Confederates at Gettysburg on July 1st to 3rd, 1863, practically settled the question at issue between North and South, on the other it was probably the last chance that the Federals had of winning a decisive battle.

General Lee, the Napoleon of the Southern States, commanded the Confederates, and had determined to make another invasion of Maryland and Pennsylvania. He had under him some eighty thousand men, and by careful manœuvring succeeded in getting into the neighbourhood of Gettysburg, where also General Meade had concentrated the Federal force. Meade was a fine old soldier who had succeeded to the Federal command in place of General Hooker, who had been defeated at Chancellorsville. He had realised the importance of striking a decisive blow and so stopping Lee's progress, and it was in order to do this that he had moved his army from Frederick City towards Gettysburg, which his advance guard reached on June 30th.

This advance guard of cavalry under Buford seized Gettysburg, and reconnoitred the country through which Lee was expected to come. Lee had made his headquarters some miles from the town, having thrown out advance guards into Heidelsburg, nine miles off.

On the morning of July 1st, Buford's cavalry was attacked by Hill at Chambersburg. He determined to do his best to hold the enemy in check until he received reinforcements. After a time General Reynolds came to his aid. Reynolds disposed his force along the hills known as Oak Ridge, and set

himself the task of holding the post until the main body of the Federals could take up a position south of Gettysburg. He immediately dispatched a messenger urging Howard, commanding the 11th Corps, to hasten to his assistance, and then engaged the enemy. The Federals showed a valiant front, but received a severe blow when Reynolds was killed by a bullet from a rifle. General Doubleday immediately assumed command, and did his best to drive the Confederates off. They refused to be driven off, however, even when Howard arrived with his 11th Corps at one o'clock in the afternoon.

Howard at once took supreme command, and in the endeavour to cover as much ground as possible, and so obviate any flanking movement the enemy might make, he fell into the very trap he was trying to avoid. His force was not large enough to do what he wished, and the result was that his line became weakened, with large breaks that afforded the Confederates an admirable opportunity—which they were quick to seize. They had received reinforcements in the shape of Ewell's Corps. This had attacked the Federal right, while at the same time General Rodes attacked the centre, broke through it, and seized Oak Hill, the commanding point of the field of battle. Howard's force was thrown into confusion, and the whole line began to retreat in the greatest disorder, falling back on Gettysburg.

At this critical point General Hancock arrived. He had been hurried forward by Meade to assume command and to decide upon the position which the army should take up when it arrived. Hancock was a man of great personal magnetism, and very quickly succeeded in rallying the disorganised Federals. He quickly placed them in a strong position on Culp's Hill, south of the town, sending word to Meade to hurry up with the main body and occupy the range of hills known as Cemetery Ridge. This ridge runs due south of the town, but just near it "trends back to the east, thus forming a salient angle, or crotchet." The point where the ridge bends is known as Cemetery Hill, and Culp's Hill is on the extreme right.

No better position could have been found, for Cemetery Ridge is strongly defined, and ends three miles off in a well-wooded peak called Round Top, while a little distance to the north is another peak known as Little Round Top.

Meade soon arrived on the scene, and the whole Federal army of about one hundred thousand men quickly took up position: the right under General Slocum at Culp's Hill, the centre under Howard at Cemetery Hill, and the left under Hancock along the southern ridge, supported still farther south by General Sickles and the 3rd Corps. Meade had the 5th Corps under General Sykes in reserve on the right, although later it moved to the left. On the day of the first battle it was about twenty-three miles away, but by a forced night march it came and took up its position. Sedgwick, in command of the 6th Corps, was some thirty-six miles away when the battle began, but he also by a march lasting twenty hours arrived on the battlefield at two o'clock on the second day.

General Lee, who had arrived on the scene almost at the same time as the Federals had been driven back on Gettysburg, had taken up an equally good position on the west of the town, where the Seminary Ridge runs almost parallel with Cemetery Ridge. Lee had arranged his force thus: Ewell's Corps held Gettysburg and the ground between it and Rock Creek, thus opposing Slocum; Hill's Corps was in position along Seminary Ridge, so covering the Federal centre; while four miles in the rear was Longstreet, who had received orders to make a detour and attack the Federals on the left. This was to be the opening of the battle, but Longstreet for some reason or another was long in coming, and it was about four o'clock before he arrived on the scene.

This upset Lee's plans, for he had counted on falling upon the Federals before they could complete their arrangements. This lost advantage was made up to him by a blunder on the part of Sickles, who having taken up position on the Round Top Hills—really the key of the Federal position—moved most of his force on to another and less advantageous

point, some quarter of a mile off. This left Little Round Top practically undefended, and Lee was quick to grasp the situation.

Longstreet was accordingly ordered to attack at once, and he opened a heavy cannonade upon Sickles. He tackled the centre and the right simultaneously, Ewell at the same time opening fire on the left. Hood, on the right, was bent on securing Little Round Top, and Sickles was hard put to it to maintain his position. At the head of his Texans, Hood picked his way carefully, feeling confident of being able to secure possession of Little Round Top; but he had reckoned without his host.

As luck would have it, General Warren, a chief engineer of the Federals, was posted on Little Round Top for signalling purposes, and realising the crucial character of the position he resolved to save it if possible. Ordering his little force to make a bold stand, he made off for Sykes's 5th Corps, which was hastening to Sickles's assistance. On his own initiative, he detached a brigade of this corps and told it to hasten down on Little Round Top.

It was in very truth a race on the result of which much depended. Hood had by now seen that he must hurry or he would lose his prize, and the Texans therefore pressed forward with all speed, while the Federals charged down on the peak. At the moment that Hood's force rushed into the ravine between Little Round Top and Round Top, their foes reached the former peak and took up position, dragging their battery with difficulty up the hill.

Nothing daunted, the Texans charged into the ravine in the face of a raking fire. The fight instantly became fast and furious. Up the hill the Texans scrambled, only to be cast down with great slaughter; up again, to meet the same reverse. Then changing his tactics, Hood set his men to rush the ravine. With bayonets fixed they tore through the rocky glen, and actually succeeded in turning the Federal left flank, only to be driven back, however, by a counter bayonet charge.

Little Round Top was saved; the blue-coated Federals remained in possession.

Sickles, however, was in a tight corner. He signalled for reinforcements, and three brigades were hurried off to his assistance, Meade himself leading one of them. But, do what they might, the Federals could not hold the position, and at last Sickles was driven back by Longstreet's grey-coated soldiers. Still the Federals fought on, hoping to regain their lost ground, but Longstreet pressed forward, refusing to be driven back. While he was still advancing, another Federal brigade pounced upon him with such force that he was compelled to fall back a little way. At that moment, however, Hood returned from his attack on Little Round Top, forced his way through the Federal line, turned their left, while at the same time their right was driven back by Hill's Corps. Sickles therefore had to fall back from what had really been an indefensible and unimportant position.

Lee's idea in attacking Sickles had been to drive the Federals from Cemetery Ridge, and in order to prevent the Federals from sending reinforcements to Sickles, he had ordered Ewell to attack Culp's Hill. For some reason Ewell delayed attacking until sunset, but although this left the Federals free to throw corps against Longstreet, yet it also gave him the advantage of having a less formidable line to attack.

The result was that, although he still had to withstand a heavy artillery fire, Ewell dashed bravely up the hill, at the same time sending General Early with another division to attack Cemetery Hill. Early failed to capture this latter, but after a stubborn resistance the Federals on Culp's Hill were forced back, their earthworks carried at the bayonet point, and held by the Confederates.

This closed the second day's battle, and to all appearance the action was going in Lee's favour. Meade had lost many thousand men, but although he had also lost Culp's Hill and the insignificant position in the south, he did not despair. Lee, on the

other hand, was confident of victory, for even although he had failed to carry Cemetery Ridge, Ewell on Culp's Hill was right in the midst of the enemy's line.

On the next day, the 3rd, Lee therefore resolved to renew the battle, although his losses had been so severe as to cause the question to be raised as to whether the army should fall back on the Potomac. During the night Lee had strengthened his position, having brought up strong field-batteries, with which at the break of day he opened a searching fire on Culp's Hill. He then sent out his infantry to carry the position at the point of the bayonet. For four hours the fight raged, men on both sides being mowed down by the opposing artilleries. Although Lee had strengthened his line at this point, the Confederates were still outnumbered, and at last, after a terrible fight, the Federals regained the position they had lost on the day before, and their line was pretty much the same as it was at the beginning of the battle.

This disaster made it necessary for Lee to alter his plan. Instead of attacking the enemy's wings, he determined to try to force the centre at a point where the ridge was easier of assault. With this object in view he massed his artillery of one hundred and forty-five cannon on Seminary Ridge, a work which it took several hours to do.

Meade, on his part, quickly made arrangements to match his artillery against Lee's. Eighty guns were brought up and lined along the crest of Cemetery Hill.

With a blazing sun overhead, and a blood-soaked ground beneath, the artillery duel began at one o'clock, and lasted for two hours, at the end of which time the Confederate fire began to slacken, owing to ammunition running short. Meade immediately held his fire in reserve, ready for the Confederate infantry which he knew would soon advance.

Sure enough, as the thick clouds of smoke lifted, a column of some fifteen thousand grey-coated men were seen marching out from the Seminary Ridge, making for the Union lines. Red battle-flags floated in the breeze, and bright bayonets

flashed in the sunlight. Leading the advancing body was Major-General Pickett's five thousand Veteran Virginians, the pick of Lee's army, who had been tried in many a battle and never found wanting. They now advanced boldly in the direction of the Union lines. One thing at least was in their favour: they had only arrived on the battlefield that morning, and so were fresh and ready for the fray. Supporting them were several divisions drawn from various parts of the Confederate force.

When they had covered half the ground between the opposing armies, the Federal artillery opened fire. Shells tore through the air, fell into the midst of the compact advancing line, tore great gaps in their ranks, which, however, were quickly filled up. Forward and still forward the gallant grey-coats pressed; not a man of Pickett's brigade looked behind, although their supporting divisions fell back somewhat before the terrific cannonade that was directed against them. Then on and on, with ever-thinning ranks, though still in steady and regular formation, they quickened their pace and rushed at the hill.

As if this had been the sign the Federals were waiting for, the whole crest of the hill showed as one great sheet of flame, "and the hurricane of bullets flew in the faces of the Confederates. Pettigrew's division, which was supporting Pickett, was flung backward, leaving two thousand prisoners and fifteen standards with the Union army. Wilcox's supporting brigade had fallen behind, so that Pickett and his heroes were left to face the deadly sleet."

It was one of those charges that will live in the history of the world's battles; and it was not yet finished. Leveling their rifles, the heroes sent in a stinging volley, then, shouting their battle-cries, they were on the move once more, rushing up the hill, and carrying the crest at the bayonet point.

They had won a temporary victory—it could necessarily not be more—for the Federals immediately turned their artillery upon them from every side, and poured in a terrific cannonade that threatened to annihilate the whole corps. A short-lived

victory and a costly one. Three thousand five hundred of the five thousand had been killed, wounded or captured, including most of their officers. Some of them had dropped to the ground to escape the fire directed against them, and others had taken refuge in flight. Pickett, finding himself deserted by his supporting columns, gave the word to retreat, and, like the gallant cavalry at Balaclava, "all that was left of them" made their way back to the main body.

The Confederates thought that Meade would immediately order a general advance, and prepared to receive him. Meade, however, saw that his army was far from fit to undertake so difficult a task as to try to dislodge the Confederates, and, moreover, most of his ammunition was spent.

As it was, Lee knew that he had lost, and that he would have to retreat from Gettysburg, and that night his army began falling back, Meade following him very carefully. On July 12th the Federals came in sight of the Southerners at Williamsport, on the Potomac, where Lee had taken up a strongly entrenched position. Meade decided that he would attack him on the following day, but when dawn came the enemy was gone, and Meade had to rest content with the victory at the battle of Gettysburg, which, as an American historian has said, "Was the life and death struggle of the Southern Confederacy. . . . The battle had been fought, and the Confederacy was defeated; it was now doomed."

CHAPTER XXV

KÖNIGGRÄTZ

The Battle By Which Prussia Asserted Her Right To First Place Among The German-Speaking Nations

The battle of Königgrätz was the great conflict in the Seven Weeks' War between Prussia and Austria, fighting for the possession of Schleswig-Holstein and for first place among the German-speaking nations. Of the progress of events which led to the war and the early episodes in the struggle it is not our intention to speak. On June 18th, 1866, Prussia declared war; the die had been cast, and Moltke, the master-soldier of his day, had moved the Prussian troops into Bohemia, where Austria was massing her strength.

Moltke had sent his warriors forth in three great armies: the first army, about ninety-three thousand strong, under command of Prince Frederick Charles, the king's nephew; the second, numbering one hundred thousand, commanded by the Crown Prince, son-in-law to Queen Victoria; and the third, totalling some twenty-eight thousand men, under General Herwarth von Bittenfeld. Starting from different points, the three forces converged on Gitschin.

Meanwhile the Austrians, two hundred and five thousand strong, under command of Marshal Benedek, had not been idle. Great efforts had been made to stop the advance of the various Prussian armies, but all without avail. Steadily, relentlessly, the stolid Prussians marched on their way, and Benedek, realising that it was impossible to escape a great decisive battle in which the three sections of the Prussians would take part, fell back on Königgrätz, beneath the shelter of whose guns he waited for the

foe. Among his troops he had those of Saxony and Hungary, men who would give a good account of themselves—the latter especially, their cavalry being reckoned the best in the world.

On June 30th King William I., Moltke, Bismarck, and von Roon left Berlin for Gitschin, where they arrived on July 2nd. Six miles on the right of Gitschin lay Prince Charles Frederick, the Red Prince, as his men called him, from the colour of the uniform of the Zieten Hussars, in which he usually dressed; to the left, at Koniginhof, lay the Crown Prince. Herwarth was on the extreme right, some ten miles from Milowitz.

It was Moltke's first idea to allow his force a day's rest before beginning the battle—a decision all the more readily come to because the precise whereabouts of the Austrians was then unknown. It was thought that they were on the left side of the Elbe, their right and left flanks respectively resting on Josephstadt and Königgrätz, two fortresses which made a strong position.

In the evening, however, a messenger arrived, bringing news that the main body of the Austrian army was, after all, massed at Königgrätz, on the right side of the Elbe, and on the further side of the brook of Bistritz, running parallel with the Elbe. It was a strong position, but by no means as strong as the one Moltke had thought they occupied, and so, instead of carrying out his first plan, he determined to attack the enemy first thing in the morning, bringing his three armies into operation in the endeavour to inflict a crushing blow and end the war at once.

Lieutenant von Norman was sent off to the Crown Prince telling him to bring his army up. His was a perilous journey. It lay through the ranks of the Austrian outposts, and ere he had gone far a squadron of cavalry espied him and set out in pursuit. Putting spurs to his horse, von Norman raced away, followed hard by the Austrians, who, however, failed to stop him. The Crown Prince received his orders and Herwarth his, which were

to attack the flanks of the enemy while the Red Prince assailed their centre with his batteries.

Little sleep had the Prussian soldiers that night, for as soon as the plan of campaign had been decided upon, orders were issued for the troops to move on toward the Austrian position, and the morning, which was wet and dismal, found them waiting for the order to begin. Moltke and his staff had joined the Red Prince at Dub before five o'clock, to be joined later by the veteran king and his retinue. In his greatcoat, with goloshes over his boots, and his field-glass round his neck, King William, mounted on his mare, moved among his troops, to be received everywhere with enthusiasm and devotion.

Though, as has been said, the Austrian position was by no means as strong as the one which it was supposed they had taken up, yet it was far from being a weak one. In front of them ran the Bistritz brook. All around them were woods, villages, and farmsteads, which afforded admirable cover for their infantry; while beyond the brook rose a ridge which formed a base for their artillery. It was a natural fort, as also was the rising ground near the village of Chlum, in which the Austrians had hidden further batteries, blocking the road with trees and branches.

The army of the Red Prince, of course, was the nearest to the Austrian position, and, fearing that Benedek might attempt to fall back over the Elbe, he decided to begin operations at once without waiting for Herwarth and the Crown Prince to come up.

The battle therefore began, the Prussian batteries pouring in their deadly hail. Battery after battery was brought into action, concentrating upon the Austrian centre, which replied just as effectively. Really Benedek, knowing the country, had the best of it, and as the batteries in every village opened fire almost simultaneously, concentrating well, his cannonade did terrible damage to the Red Prince's force.

So far it was but a battle of the guns; but at last the Red Prince put his infantry into motion, sending them down towards

the brook for the purpose of charging the villages in which the Austrians had taken up strong positions. From Sadowa the road crosses the Bistritz, and, Sadowa taken, there would be little trouble in getting over the brook and striking right into the heart of the Austrian army. Sadowa, therefore, and Dohalitz and Dohalicka, on the right, were the points of attack.

While the infantry was thus moving towards these villages, the hamlet of Benatek, on the Austrian right, caught fire, and Prince Charles dispatched the 7th Prussian division to effect its capture. With a rush they poured in on the burning village, but the Austrians, scorning to fly from the fire, stood their ground and made a stubborn resistance. Volley after volley was poured into the Prussians from behind the burning buildings. Then at last a second Prussian division attacked in the rear. The foes met in the midst of the flames, and there ensued a terrible hand-to-hand fight, the first in the battle.

Meanwhile Sadowa and the other two villages had been attacked. It was at the first place that the fiercest fight raged. The immediate vicinity of the village was well wooded, and here the Austrians had taken up a strong position. The road was narrow, and the village sheltered the Austrians, who were thus able to execute dreadful damage. The Prussians, however, boasting the new breech-loading needle-gun, poured in a hail of bullets. The Austrians returned it with interest. The infantry made a bold stand, and being helped by the tremendous fire from their batteries above and behind them, mowed down rank after rank of the advancing Prussians; but nothing could stop their wild onrush. They meant to come to grips, and with bayonets fixed they pressed forward over the writhing bodies of comrades and through the death-dealing shower of shells and bullets. At last! The combatants had met, and then, with few shots but many thrusts of the blood-stained bayonets, the hand-to-hand conflict began, and a melee such as seldom happens in the days of modern warfare ensued. The wood of Sadowa was turned into a shambles; rain and blood fell together, soddening the ground and making it slippery and difficult to keep a foothold. For an hour

or more the battle raged, and at last the Austrians were driven back. Sadowa was won. It was the first-fruits of the victory that was to come. It was a hard-won victory, for of one Prussian regiment of 3,100 but 400 remained in line after the battle.

What had happened at Sadowa had been repeated in measure at Dohalitz and Dohalicka, and by eleven o'clock, after a frightful carnage, the three villages and the wooded slope above Sadowa were in the possession of the Red Prince.

Shortly after this, and while the Austrians were forming a new line in the woods near Lipa, the Prussian artillery crossed the Bistritz and opened fire upon the new position, causing tremendous damage. Prussian infantry also crossed the brook and attacked the wood. Man after man fell before the raking fire of the Austrians, but, like a relentless wave of human passion, the Prussians swept on, and charged the wood at bayonet point. Back into the centre of the wood they forced the Austrians; then the fight became stationary. The Austrian artillery came into play, dismounted most of the Prussian guns, and almost drove them back. Reinforcements were quickly pushed forward; across the river they rushed, into the wood, passing through a destructive fire which threatened to drive them back. Torn, battered, mangled out of all recognition, the men fell, but still their comrades pushed on and kept the fight going.

Meanwhile, what of the Crown Prince; what of Herwarth? The Austrian flanks still remained to be assailed, and Bismarck and the Red Prince were apprehensive that if the reinforcements did not soon arrive the battle must even now be lost. Moltke, however, had faith in his generals and in his well-laid plans. He had no doubt as to the result. He had, indeed, assured the king of victory. His majesty, speaking of the prospects of the fight, had been told, "To-day, your majesty will win not only the battle, but also the campaign!"

Bismarck, it is said, became infected with the quiet confidence of Moltke through an apparently insignificant

incident. Offering his cigar-case to Moltke, he noticed that the latter carefully and deliberately made his choice, taking the best.

"H'm!" said the man of the "blood-and-iron" policy to himself, "if he is calm enough to do that, we need not fear after all." Events justified that reflection.

Nevertheless, Bismarck kept his glass trained on the direction from which the Crown Prince must come, and after a while pointed to certain lines afar off, suggesting that they were the lines of the Prince's advancing troops. Those to whom he communicated this information refused to believe them anything but furrows.

"No," replied Bismarck, "the spaces are not equal; they are advancing lines."

Bismarck was right, and just as the Austrians were driven out of the wood of Sadowa the Austrian right batteries opened fire, sufficient evidence that the Crown Prince was coming.

The news ran like wildfire through the Prussian force: "The Crown Prince is coming!"

It was the signal for a more vigorous onset by the Prussians, for it was necessary to keep the fight going until the Crown Prince arrived. The reserves were therefore called upon, and for six miles, from centre to left, there was a general engagement of the opposing artilleries. It was an awful, awe-inspiring scene; overhead, the clouds hung low, and the rain still continued; below, death and destruction were being dealt on all sides; the shrieking shells hurtled through the air; the cries of mangled, crushed men made the air hideous; while here and there terrible conflicts were being waged by the infantry at close quarters; and Sadowa wood was finally carried and the battery beyond stormed and captured.

The Austrian troops were hopeful of victory, however. They regarded the calling of the Prussian reserves into action as a sign that Moltke was finding his task no easy one, and as Benedek passed through the 6th Corps, which had not yet taken

part, ringing cheers were sounded and the Austrian National Anthem burst forth from the bands. But Benedek had other thoughts; he knew that the battle had but just begun, that the end was not yet. Hence it was that he gave his exulting men the following advice:

"Not yet, my children; wait till to-morrow."

Up to now, except that the three little villages and the wood had been captured, the Austrians were showing a steady front; but suddenly Benedek noticed that something untoward was happening at the village of Chlum. What was it? He soon found out. Hastening to inquire, he discovered that the Prussians under the Crown Prince had made a forced march from Königshof, and, coming upon the rear of the Austrian right, had engaged them with such vigour, that it was soon turned, despite the gigantic efforts of the Austrians to withstand the shock of the impact of the Prince's hundred thousand men.

Benedek's fears had been well founded. The right was turned; the left, where the Saxons were posted, attacked by Herwarth with relentless vigour, very quickly suffered the same fate.

Crushed and broken, the Austrians now began to give way in all directions before the steady advance of Moltke's great united force, which, forming a semi-circle, closed in upon the retreating foe.

The cavalry of the Red Prince's army now moved *en masse* and charged and completely overthrew the Austrian cavalry.

Benedek fought for every inch of the way to Königgrätz, on which he was now falling back, and his cavalry did some splendid work, but all in vain. Once, indeed, the 3rd Prussian Dragoons were driven back by a Cuirassier brigade, led by an English officer, Beales, who charged them in the rear. The Austrian squadron smote the dragoons hip and thigh, and but for the fact that the Prussian Uhlans came to their assistance with

couched lances, the dragoons must have been totally destroyed. As it was, the Cuirassiers were compelled to fall back in turn, seeing that the Red Prince's Zieten Hussars also attacked them in the rear.

Meanwhile the King, with his suite, was following his victorious army—not out of the danger zone, but, like the brave old man that he was, riding into the places of peril, taking his share of the risks he had asked his soldiers to face. Once, indeed, he became exposed to such a counter-fire of bursting shells that Bismarck had to remonstrate with him—fruitlessly, however, for the King refused to regard his position as dangerous.

"Does your majesty think they are swallows?" said Bismarck, referring to the shells.

A bold speech of a subject to a king, but Bismarck was a bold man always. Finding that the King would not budge, he brought his own horse up behind his majesty's, "gave her a sly kick with the point of his foot, and made her bound forward," taking her precious rider out of the fire-zone.

The meeting of the King with the Crown Prince was most affecting. The latter rode up, reported his presence on the field of battle, kissed his father's hand, and was embraced. Then, almost overcome by emotion, his majesty congratulated him on his success, commended him for his ability, and presented him with the order "Pour le Merite."

Meanwhile the retreat was proceeding. Step by step the Austrians fell back, and at last the battle was over, lost and won. Lost at the cost of twenty thousand killed and wounded and as many taken prisoners; won at the sacrifice of about ten thousand of the flower of Prussia's manhood. But it was worth it: Prussia had proclaimed her supremacy.

CHAPTER XXVI

VIONVILLE MARS-LA-TOUR

A Battle of Death Rides

This battle, one of the most sanguinary of all those that were fought during the Franco-Prussian war, took place on August 16th, 1870. The French, defeated all along the line, had fallen back on Metz, whither the Prussians were hastening. Field-Marshal Count von Moltke was pulling the Prussian war-strings, and, clear-sighted strategist that he was, saw that the French at Metz were intending to leave that fortress and make for Verdun, where Marshal MacMahon, commanding the 8th Army Corps, had been compelled to retire, and there, with united forces, give battle to the victorious Prussians.

Moltke determined to frustrate this plan.

In order to do as he wished, Moltke had to make a wide detour in order to cross the river Moselle, and so take up a position between Metz and Paris in the hope of being able to drive the retreating Frenchmen back on Metz.

In the early hours of the 16th Napoleon III. had left Metz under escort of two cavalry brigades, leaving Marshal Bazaine in command of the army at Metz, with orders to hurry the departure of the troops. It was one thing for Napoleon to issue orders, another for Bazaine to carry them out, for the road to Verdun was blocked with baggage, and while the left wing of the army was ready, the right was not. Wherefore, Bazaine postponed departure until the afternoon.

But the afternoon was too late. Already Prince Frederick Charles, the Red Prince of Königgrätz fame, had sent forward his 3rd Army Corps, the Brandenburgers, across the Moselle. At ten o'clock in the morning the right wing, consisting of the 3rd

Army Corps, under Stülpnagel, had reached Gorze Glen, which led on to the Verdun road, and General von Alvensleben, who was at their head, was filled with delight to see in front of him a large French force. It told him that the retreat from Metz had not been completed, and that he was in good time to make it impossible. The left wing, comprising the 5th Corps, under General Buddenbrock, was advancing on Tronville for the same purpose—that of intercepting the retreating French.

Meanwhile, advancing from Mars-la-Tour towards Vionville, the Rheinbaden horse batteries had surprised the French dragoons, who, engaged in cooking, and by no means expecting the advent of the Prussians, were totally unprepared. The result was that the shell-fire of the Prussian batteries sent the dragoons off pell—mell, leaving their infantry to meet the intruders into the culinary preparations. The French foot, taking in the situation, quickly formed themselves into battle array, and standing steady beneath the fire from the German guns, prepared to receive some cavalry which were now swooping down upon them. So fiercely did the French fight, that what seemed likely to be a complete and immediate victory for the Prussians turned out to be a temporary repulse, for the cavalry were compelled, after a short, sharp tussle, to retire behind some copses which were conveniently at hand.

Fortunately for them, the Brandenburgers appeared on the scene, and, although convinced that they were about to come face to face with the whole French army, flinched not, rather resolving to do their very utmost to hold Bazaine in check until reinforcements, which they expected would shortly arrive, should come to their aid.

At Gorze, some eight miles south-west of Metz, the French had taken up a strong position on the wooded hills, and it was here that the fight between the infantry began. "The Prussians," says the Daily News correspondent, "pushed into the woods, gradually, by dint of numbers and sheer hard fighting, driving the French skirmishers from them. . . . The French position here was a most formidable one, and the wonder is not

that it took the Prussians seven hours to take it, but that they ever got it at all." From Gorze the woods extend to within two miles of Gravelotte, behind which and at Rezonville the French lay. The Prussian position was backed by some thick woods.

"The plain on which the battle was fought extends from the woods to the Verdun road, about one mile and a half, and is about three miles in length. On the French right the ground rises gently, and this was the key of the position, as the artillery, which would maintain itself there, swept the whole field. . . . From the woods to Rezonville, on the Verdun road, there is no cover, except one cottage midway on the Gorze road. This cottage was held by a half battery of French mitrailleuses, which did frightful execution in the Prussian ranks as they advanced from the wood."

Fighting for every inch, the Prussians advanced into the plain. Fifteen thousand men were sent out against the fortified heights on the French right, which had been hastily strengthened by an earthwork. With pitiless, raking fire, the battery opened upon the advancing Prussians, who, in the very teeth of death, attempted to carry the all-important position. Time and time again they essayed the task, and each attempt was frustrated. Men fell by the score, shattered and broken. Baffled, repulsed, the Prussians still held on, and after an awful three hours they drove the French from their position. Up the hill the Prussian batteries raced, gunners using whips and spurs frantically; and at last the Krupp guns were in position, and the French were galloping away to a hill on the right. Five hundred yards only separated the two positions, and for a long time an artillery duel ensued.

The carnage was dreadful; horses fell kicking and struggling; men dropped, broken beyond all recognition; guns and gun-carriages strewn the hills on both sides. At last the French moved off once more, this time to another hill farther off, the Prussians immediately taking up the position their adversaries had forsaken. And the conflict began again, shells

shrieking overhead, or ploughing up the ground, killing men and horses in dozens.

Little vignettes of isolated incidents must now suffice.

Buddenbrock's division of the Brandenburgers advanced toward Mars-la-Tour, wheeled to the right, and, in the face of a rain of shot and shell, carried Flavigny and pushed on toward Vionville. Stülpnagel's division "fought its way to the front with desperate courage, but with varying fortune. One regiment in particular—the 52nd—lost heavily in recovering some ground which had been wrested from it by the French. Its first battalion lost every one of its officers; the colours were passed from hand to hand as the bearers were successively shot down by the bullets of the chassepots, and the commander of the brigade, General von Doring fell mortally wounded."

Flavigny taken, the Prussians pressed on past Vionville, poured in their heavy artillery fire on the right wing of the 2nd French Corps, turned it, and sent it post haste on Rezonville. To retrieve this disaster, the French Cuirassier Guards bravely turned and charged the Prussians as they advanced on the heels of the fleeing corps. It was a veritable death ride. Drawn up in a long line, a couple of companies of Prussian infantry stood and waited for the oncoming cavalry, which they allowed to get within two hundred and fifty yards and then opened fire all along the line. It was a terrible volley, and it crumpled the Cuirassiers up; waving plumes waved no more; flashing swords dropped from nerveless hands; and cheering men fell from their horses. The charge had failed.

The cavalry opened out to the left and right, but as they galloped away they found themselves faced by more infantry, whose withering volleys did still more damage to their already decimated ranks. Then, as they turned to retire, Prussian cavalry charged at them; and the work of death once more began.

For a while, the Prussians, unchecked, pursued the flying Frenchmen on towards Rezonville, but presently a battery opened out on them, and tore ugly gaps in their ranks. But they

faced the battery as the French had faced the infantry; the cavalry charged down upon the guns and sabred the gunners, leaving only a few mounted officers alive. One of them is Bazaine himself. At him the Prussians go, and he is almost captured, when a company of French Hussars charge the attackers, rescue their general, and for a while hold the Prussians in check.



MARS-LA-TOUR
"IT WAS A VERITABLE DEATH RIDE."

But at this moment another Prussian cavalry division dashes up, and in a flash the scene is one of flying hoofs, sabring and stabbing men, while at the same time a further body of Prussian cavalry charge the French infantry. Again there is a death ride, and again the cavalry is driven back, staggering beneath the murderous fire poured in upon them.

Despite the fact that the Prussians had so far managed not only to hold their own, but even to drive the French back some distance, the position of affairs was assuming an alarming aspect, for Alvensleben's force was far too small for him to win

the day with; his task was to keep the French engaged until he could be reinforced by the 10th Corps. About two o'clock, after the setback following the pursuit of the French right wing, the battle resolved itself into a duel between the opposing artilleries, and the Prussian left was suffering very much as a result.

To put a stop to this, the 7th Magdeburg Cuirassiers and the 16th Uhlans were ordered to charge a great battery, behind which were masses of infantry. Unlike Balaclava, it was not a blunder; it was deliberate. Like Balaclava, it was glorious.

At the word the little squadron formed into line, and the next minute with a mighty ringing cheer they were tearing over the intervening ground, swept by the bullets and shot from the opposing French. On they went, with never a look back; but with ever thinning ranks. With a crash and a clatter they were upon the guns, rendering them useless for lack of men to work them. Then on again, this time at the infantry. Like a tornado they went through, sending the Frenchmen in all directions. Even then they had not done; there was another line of infantry in front of them; at these they went without hesitation. Through again. It was a ride to death, but a ride to glory, too. It demoralised the Frenchmen; the infantry scattered, the artillery of the second line even began to limber up preparatory to beating a retreat.

But their impetuous courage had carried the Prussians too far; they were without supporters, and they were well within the enemy's lines. Exhausted and blown as they all were—all, that is, who had not fallen in the brilliant charge—they prepared to withstand the shock of an onset by a mass of French cavalry who were coming towards them. The thudding of hoofs, the clank of accoutrements, and then—crash! The foes had met! It was thrust and parry, parry and thrust; screaming horses and shouting men mingled together in the death-struggle, and the remnants of the brave Cuirassiers and Uhlans fought their overwhelming foes as though they were fresh to the battle.

But the odds were against them: they had done their duty, and all that was left of them turned in their tracks—making for their own line.

The order was given to the bugler to sound the rally:

"And he took up the trumpet, whose angry shrill Urged us on to the glorious battle, And he blew a blast—but all silent and still Was the trump, save a dull, hoarse rattle;

"Save a voiceless wail, save a cry of woe That burst forth in fitful throbbing A bullet had pierced its metal through, For the dead, the wounded was sobbing!"

They had charged into the French ranks; they now had to charge out, and they did it with the same courage, did it with the bullets whizzing past them, did it with the shot hurtling about them, did it with the cavalry hanging upon their heels. But they won through—a sorry remnant, though a glorious one.

While this brilliant, magnificent charge had been taking place the infantry had been able to rest awhile, and the Prussians had brought up their reserve artillery, and for a couple of hours the cannonade was terrific. This duel of the batteries effectually kept the French at bay, and so saved the Prussians from almost certain annihilation. They had been hard put to it on their left, and had been, indeed, compelled to draw off, although the right advanced somewhat and so kept the French from outflanking.

About three o'clock some of the 10th Corps arrived on the scene, and the battle, which seemed likely to go against the Prussians, assumed a different aspect, and with the arrival of the remainder of the 10th, events moved in quick succession.

With the 10th Corps came the Red Prince, whose presence was as a tonic to his men. He forced the pace, hurled his infantry at the French line, and spared no effort to drive back the foe, who stood stubborn as a wall, and met every attack with a withering fire. All along the line the battle raged, so extensive that it is here impossible to follow it. Yet everywhere both

French and Prussians fought with relentless vigour and cool courage.

One incident must be told, because it was typical of the conflict. As General von Wedell's Brigade of the 10th Corps pressed on to the scene of battle it found itself opposed by the 4th French Brigade of Infantry at Tronville. Von Wedell had only five battalions; he sent two regiments on in advance, bringing the remainder of his men up to support them. The advance guard was well nigh annihilated; three hundred of them were captured, and the French immediately sallied forth to press on their advantage. In overwhelming numbers they poured down upon the German left, threatening to turn it—which would have been fatal. But the 1st Dragoon Guards were ready for them. Straight as an arrow, they dashed at the Frenchmen, who pursued the remnants of the two brave regiments they had almost annihilated. They broke the French ranks, rode through and through them, sabring in all directions, and turning the attackers back. The left was saved; but at a terrible cost—a hundred and thirty dragoons were killed, and many more were wounded.

Hardly had they fallen back on their own line than the French cavalry were seen to be mustering for a further attack on the Prussian left. There were five regiments to five—though the French were in greater numbers, and the Prussians were still yet unrecovered from their strenuous march during the day. On went the French at the gallop; the 13th Uhlans rode out to meet them. The French thundered down upon them, broke through the 13th with a shock that staggered them, and hurled themselves at the supporting second line, but ere they could reach their quarry, the 10th Prussian Hussars rushed upon them, met them steel to steel, and turned the Frenchmen back. Then the two opposing cavalry columns met in one gigantic tussle. Five thousand mounted men fought and cheered, stabbed and thrust, struck and were struck in return. The struggling mass was hidden by the dust thrown up by the plunging, trampling horses, and for a while none could tell how fared the battle.

Soon, however, the Prussians had forced their way through the French, who, fighting every inch of the way, fell back upon their right wing, which now assumed the defensive. Presently the French fell back about a quarter of a mile, where they remained in position until the end of the battle.

The end soon came now. Both armies were fagged out with the tremendous fighting beneath a broiling sun. With the coming of night, the fire gradually slackened on both sides—as a matter of fact, ammunition was giving out, and the battery horses were so tired and so few that the artillery was able to execute but little manœuvring.

But, tired though he knew his men were, weakened though he knew his army was by the terrible slaughter, the Red Prince determined to make a grand assault on the French, and endeavour to drive them back on Metz. The whole weary Prussian line advanced—fruitlessly and at great cost. The French refused to be moved, and poured in a heavy fire, which still further reduced the numbers of the Red Prince's army.

But although the Prussians failed to shift the French from this last position, they had won the battle, which had gone on incessantly for twelve hours. Bazaine had been unable to escape to Verdun; he was still before Metz, and that was what the Prussians had wanted.

Two days later the battle was renewed at Gravelotte, and there again the Prussians were successful—more successful than before, in fact, for Bazaine was forced to withdraw within the fortifications of Metz. Here he was besieged until October when he was forced by famine to capitulate.

CHAPTER XXVII

ISANDHLWANA AND RORKE'S DRIFT

A Story of Tragedy and Heroism

At the end of 1878, Cetewayo got into trouble with England, and as he refused to make reparation for certain offences, war was declared, and on January 12th a British army crossed the Tugela and met and forced the Zulus back at Inyezane.

On January 10th the centre column of the British force, under Colonel Glyn, had encamped at Rorke's Drift, on the right bank of the River Buffalo. Two days later a portion of the army moved off to reconnoiter, found the enemy at Sirayo, and put them to flight. On the 20th Lord Chelmsford and Colonel Glyn led the greater part of their force on to Isandhlwana, leaving two companies of the 1st battalion of the 24th Regina and two of the 2nd battalion to hold Rorke's Drift. Isandhlwana had been chosen because there was plenty of fuel in the neighbourhood, besides which it was a fairly strong position.

To the west the hill is precipitous, but on the east it slopes down gradually to a watercourse. "At both ends are ridges or spurs that connect it with the smaller undulations of which the more level part of the landscape consists. Over its western ridge passed the track from Rorke's Drift. On the immediate right was a kopje, or group of small hills, and others, covered with huge grey boulders, were seen rising in succession away to the Buffalo River. To the left of the camp, at a mile's distance, a long ridge ran southward, and towards the east opened an extensive valley."

On the 21st Chelmsford sent out a couple of parties under Major Dartnell and Commandant Lonsdale to attack the Zulu chief Matyana, who was in a good position about twelve

miles from Isandhlwana. Dartnell had with him mostly mounted Natal Volunteers and Police, while Lonsdale's force was composed of two native battalions, which were by no means to be depended upon. Dartnell decoyed Matyana from his position, but found him so overwhelmingly strong that it was considered advisable to fall back to where Lonsdale was awaiting him and send for reinforcements.

As soon as the Commander-in-Chief received the news of the Zulus' strength, he ordered the 2nd battalion of the 24th, the mounted infantry, and four guns to be ready for the march in the morning, and at daylight the column, commanded by Chelmsford himself, moved off to join Dartnell.

In order to strengthen the camp, Colonel Durnford, who had been lying between Rorke's Drift and Isandhlwana, was ordered to move on to the latter place, bringing the Basuto horse and the rocket battery. Pending the arrival of Durnford, the camp was left in the hands of Lieutenant-Colonel Pulleine, who had with him six companies of the 24th, about eighty mounted men, two guns of the Royal Artillery, and four companies of the Native Contingent.

An hour or so after the main army had left the camp, outposts rode in to report that the enemy were approaching from the north-east, less than a mile away. Without loss of time, everything was put in battle order, and by the time this was done Durnford arrived with his reinforcements, and took over command of the camp.

The guns had been placed in position on the left of the camp, the Native Contingent had been sent off to the hills on the left, and the remainder of the troops waited for the coming of the foe.

Though they knew it not, for the reports which kept coming in from the outposts contradicted each other, the little body of men were slowly but surely being surrounded by the enemy. Durnford, however, took the precaution of sending out a troop of the Natal Native Contingent to bring up his baggage-

guard, sent out Captains Barton and Shepstone to take up position on the hills to the left, and he himself with two troops and the rocket battery rode off to the left front. The rocket battery could not keep up with the mounted men, and was soon left behind, but Durnford went on for about five miles, and then fell in with a large body of Zulus. A dozen men deep, they pressed on towards the little party, firing as they came. Man after man of the British force dropped, and Durnford at last saw that his only hope was to fall back on his rocket battery, and there make a stand. So, inch by inch, his troops retreated, pouring in a heavy fire as they went, and making their way back in good order.

The battery was reached; but too late! All around it lay the dead gunners, and a goodly number of Zulus. With startling rapidity the foe had fallen upon the battery, surrounding it so that escape was impossible, and rushing upon the gunners with cruel ferocity. Hand to hand they fought, but the British were appallingly outnumbered, and at last not a man of them remained alive; rifles and assegais had done their work.

Thus did Durnford find the battery; it was ominous of what was to come. Still back and back he fell, followed by the Zulu horde, who, with battle-shouts ringing through the air, pressed forward to complete the work they had begun.

Meanwhile, what of Chelmsford?

About nine o'clock in the morning, while the column was on the march away from the camp, an orderly rode up and reported that the Zulus were advancing on the camp. A couple of officers, deputed to view the camp from the top of an adjoining hill, reported that all was quiet, and the army marched forward again, driving Zulus before them.

It was a tragic mistake. As events proved, the retirement of the Zulus before the army had been part of a prearranged scheme to lure Chelmsford away from the camp, but at last the general noticed the mass of Zulus gathering on the plain behind him, and determined to fall back, leaving part of his force

encamped. He still did not realise the necessity for hurrying, and so the march back was rather leisurely.

At about half-past three, however, when Chelmsford was still some six miles away from the camp, a solitary horseman was seen riding as fast as his jaded horse would carry him.

"The camp is in possession of the enemy, sir!" he cried as he approached, and the story he had to tell sent consternation throughout the force.

Returning to the camp, he had been staggered to hear a shot ring out, and to feel a bullet whiz past his head. Looking up, he caught sight of the Zulu who had fired upon him, and then—then, going in and out of the tents went men in red uniforms—but with black faces, blood-dripping assegais in their hands. In a moment the officer grasped the situation, wheeled his horse round, and flew like the wind, dozens of bullets singing past him, but all missing their mark. He was going to warn Chelmsford, who, unless warned, must undoubtedly fall into the trap which had been cunningly laid for him.

On receipt of the news, Chelmsford immediately sent back and ordered the guns and the 24th to come up. It was six o'clock when they arrived, and then the little force, travel-worn from marching under a broiling sun, battle-worn from fighting the Zulus in their path, commenced their sadly late march on camp.

"Men," said Chelmsford as the soldiers shouldered their rifles and fell into step, "whilst we were skirmishing in front the Zulus have taken our camp. There are ten thousand in our rear, and twenty thousand in front. We must win back our camp to-night, and cut our way back to Rorke's Drift to-morrow."

"All right, sir, we'll do it," was the answer, followed by a ringing cheer which boded ill for Cetewayo and his hordes.

Night came on, and they were within half a mile of the death-strewn camp. The guns immediately opened fire; no

answering shots came. The British were dead; the Zulus were gone.

And Isandhlwana—what of Isandhlwana, the tragedy spot of the Zulu war?

After finding the corpse-surrounded battery, Durnford had fallen back step by step until he reached a donga (or stream) about half a mile from the camp, and there, reinforced by about forty Natal Volunteers, he made his last great stand.

The Zulus had formed their line of attack in their usual manner, that of a half circle, the left horn of which faced Durnford, and the right attacked Cavaye, Mostyn, and Younghusband, drove them back, and so pushed on to the road leading to Rorke's Drift, thus effectually cutting off the direct line of retreat from Isandhlwana.

On came the Zulus at Durnford's devoted little force. The two guns flung out shells which whistled through the air and swept through the crowding horde, as a scythe sweeps through the gold-touched corn; and hundreds of Zulus bit the dust. Still they came on, heedless of the death-dealing shells; heedless, too, of the bullets the infantry scattered amongst them; heedless, also, of the case-shot which, when the blacks were at close quarters, the guns poured in upon them.

"Fire away, my boys!" cried Durnford; and the boys fired till their rifles became jammed and ammunition ran short. Then men were sent to the camp for more, but never brought it, and at last Durnford gave the word to fall back on the camp.

The Native Contingent had fled, and the camp was held by the 24th and the remnants of Durnford's horse. Well nigh ammunitionless, they kept the fight going as well as they could while the enemy held off; but suddenly with a shout that curdled the blood, the Zulus slung their rifles, poised their assegais, and dashed in on the camp through the gap left by the cowardly Native Contingent.

The British line kept steady, dropping in their volleys; dozens of the Zulus crumpled up, but the rest came on through the hail of bullets, bang into the ranks of the doomed men. So sudden had been the rush, that but few of the soldiers had time to fix their bayonets.

They clubbed their rifles instead. And then—confusion!

Mostyn's and Cavaye's companies of the 24th were killed to a man; Younghusband's managed to fall back on a ridge to the left, where, back to back, they faced the surging foe, faced them till they had not a shot left, and then, fixing their bayonets, charged. They charged as did the men of old, but they charged in ones and twos, and fought the foe hand to hand, fought from the wagons, fought them on the ground; and died like valiant men.

Meanwhile, in the centre of the camp the fight was going on with just as little hope. The guns had been limbered up, useless because of the thronging Zulus; the gunners were assegaied to a man. Trampling horses, stabbing blacks, clubbing whites, mingled together in a scene the like of which has seldom ever taken place. "Kill the white men!" yelled the Zulus. "Hurrah!" cried the British, whole companies of whom fell where they stood, refusing to turn their backs on the foe.

Those who *did* try to escape, pressed on with their faces to the foe, hewed their way through with bayonet, sword, and butt of rifle. To reach Rorke's Drift and Helpmakaar was their object now; some sought Rorke's Drift by the track which they had come; others tried to get to Helpmakaar by crossing the Buffalo River. The former found their way blocked by the foe, and were slaughtered on the spot. The latter, mounted and foot, were hotly pursued by the Zulus, who, fleet of foot, quickly caught up the unmounted men and assegaied them before they reached the river. As for the horsemen, many were shot as they attempted to swim across, and but few of them managed to reach Helpmakaar, some miles in the rear of Rorke's Drift.

So the carnage, the massacre went on, the 24th standing their ground like stones, piling up the Zulus around them, but with ever-diminishing ranks.

Colonel Pulleine, realising that all was lost, thought of the colours; the honour of the regiment was at stake, the colours must be saved.

"You as senior officer," he said to Lieutenant Melvill, "will take the colours and make the best of your way from here."

With a shake of the hand he dismissed Melvill on his perilous journey, turned to the men around him, and cried:

"Men of the 24th, here we are, and here we stand to fight it out to the end." And to the end they fought it out.

Melvill, obeying orders—though who knows, he might have wished to stay and fight to the finish?—took the colours, cased in their waterproof covering, and setting spurs to his horse dashed through the foe, followed by Lieutenant Coghill and Private Williams. Off in the direction of the Buffalo they tore, fighting their way through by sword and revolver.

They reached the river almost by a miracle, plunged in, Melvill still gripping the precious colours. Williams was swept away by the current and drowned, but Coghill reached the further bank in safety. Turning to see how Melvill fared, to his horror he saw that the latter's horse had been carried away, and that, cumbered with the flag, he too was being gradually swept down the stream.

Another officer was also in the water helpless. Back into the river went Coghill to their aid—his horse was shot as soon as he entered the river—but ere he could reach Melvill the colours had been carried away by the current. Panting and blowing, struggling against the stream, the three men managed to reach the further side and then set out on foot.

Up the adjoining hill they tore, but behind them came the Zulus in a pack. Exhausted, the three men turned and faced their foes. They could go no further. Two of them only had revolvers;

the third was weaponless. The Zulus were within twenty yards now; the revolvers spoke—two Zulus died. They spoke again—two more black fiends bit the dust. And so, with their backs to a rock, the heroes stood—and died.



ISANDHLWANA

"MELVILL, SETTING SPURS TO HIS HORSE, DASHED THROUGH THE FOE."

Later their bodies were found—pierced through and through, from the front, and the Queen's colours they had tried so hard to save were picked up down the river.

The tragedy of Isandhlwana was over; Durnford lay dead, surrounded by scores of his valiant men and hundreds of Zulus. Over eight hundred soldiers of the Queen died that dreadful day, while the colonial volunteers had suffered a no less terrible loss.

To such a scene did Chelmsford return. He had left a camp filled with hale and hearty men; he came back to find it tenanted with their mutilated corpses.

About three o'clock the same day a couple of horsemen dashed down to Rorke's Drift, were ferried across, reported the disaster at Isandhlwana, and warned Lieutenant Chard, in charge of the pontoon across the river, that the Zulus were advancing on Rorke's Drift.

The messengers were Lieutenant Alendorff, of the Native Contingent, and a Natal Carabineer. The latter dashed off to give the warning at Helpmakaar; the former stayed to bear his share of the fighting at Rorke's Drift; every man was going to tell.

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Bromhead, in command of the garrison in Rorke's Drift, had also received tidings of the coming of the Zulus. The first idea was to fall back on Helpmakaar, but after consultation it was decided to fortify the place and hold it against the Zulu hordes, and so for a while check their advance into Natal.

A Swedish mission station, a quarter of a mile away from the Drift, had been turned into a military depot. The church was now a storehouse; the missionary's house a hospital; there were also a couple of stone kraals, and a cookhouse, and in front of the post was an orchard.

As soon as it was decided to hold the station, the work of fortifying it was begun. With the force at his command Bromhead knew that it was useless to attempt to hold it all, and the outer kraal was left outside the line of fortifications. But the inner kraal, just to the right in front of the storehouse, was included. The hospital and the storehouse were loop-holed and barricaded, the windows barricaded with mattresses and blankets, and, as the two buildings were about thirty yards apart, a barricade connecting them was made of mealie bags, wagons, biscuit-boxes, and meat-boxes. This improvised wall was but four feet high, though it proved of priceless value to the heroic little band.

The pontoon guard was called in, and at 3:30 p.m., an officer and about a hundred of Durnford's Native Horse, who had managed to escape from Isandhlwana, appeared on the

scene. They were sent off to act as outposts, but on the appearance of the enemy fled like the cowards they were, as also did Captain Stephenson and a detachment of his Native Contingent—followed by a volley from the disgusted defenders of the Drift.

At half-past four the foe came on. Five or six hundred of them swooped round a hill and dashed down upon the mealie bag wall, on the south.

Within the little fort were a hundred and thirty-nine men, thirty-five of them being sick and in hospital, where half a dozen men were stationed to guard it and to attend to the sick.

The Britishers were ready, and as the Zulus hove in sight let fly at them a heavy fire which bowled over man after man. Not a shot was wasted; not a man bungled his job, but, steadily and coolly, each picked off his man. So pitiless was the hail, so sure the aim, that when within fifty yards of the wall the Zulus broke their ranks, scampered away in all directions, and took cover in ditches, behind bushes and in caves—wherever shelter was to be found. Then, reinforced by over two thousand of their comrades, they surrounded the fort, for a while contenting themselves with firing volleys at short range.

Then they were up and at it again, this time swooping down upon the north-west wall below the hospital. Down they came, and down they went, for the fire of the defenders was fast and furious, and again the rush was broken—but only for a time, for, rallying together, the Zulus made a determined dash which carried them up to the parapet.

Then a fierce hand-to-hand conflict took place; on one side a great mass of Zulus, on the other a determined little knot of British fighting for dear life.

And how they fought! Few though they were, they wielded their bayonets with force and usefulness; rifle-bores spat forth their leaden messages; clubbed rifles crashed into many a

Zulu skull, while all around fell native assegais, and Zulu bullets sang, and the deadly broad-bladed bangwana flashed.

Boldly daring were the Zulus—perhaps numbers made them so; they even grabbed the bayonets and wrenched them from the rifles.

Boldly daring, too, were the defenders—British pluck made them so; they leaped upon the parapet, and bayoneted Zulus who ventured near.

But the numbers of the attackers were too overwhelming to allow of the defence of the somewhat lengthy line of the wall, which, besides being attacked in front, was exposed to a fire from the Zulus on the hill lying to the south.

Fortunately, a biscuit-tin entrenchment had been erected from the corner of the store to the mealie-bag wall on the north, and about six o'clock the order was given for the men to retire behind this. Step by step they went back, potting at the Zulus who climbed on the parapet as their foes retired, and then, with a rush, they were through the gap which had been left.

Like a devouring wave the Zulus crossed the parapet and prepared to rush across the enclosure. But the fire from the Martinis was hot—so hot that the enemy were compelled to fall back for a while.

The result of the retreat to the inner enclosure was that the half-a-dozen men left to guard the hospital were now all alone, face to face with an overwhelming horde of natives. All during the fight the Zulus had concentrated on the hospital, and many were the stirring charges which Bromhead led against the attackers. Some of the patients left their beds and took part in the defence, but there were some who could not do so.

These men handicapped the defenders; but the latter were there to guard them and to save them if possible, and right bravely did they fight. But one idea obsessed them; they must reach the inner entrenchment, thirty yards away. To go out by the door, where the Zulus were pressing in large numbers, was to

court disaster. From their quickly-made loopholes the British picked off the natives as they rushed towards the devoted little place; but fire though they did till their arms ached, and their rifles scorched the hands that held them, they could not keep the Zulus off. Presently they reached the walls, set fire to the thatched roof, and so made things decidedly uncomfortable for the defenders.

The building was divided into several rooms, partitioned off from one another by walls made of mud bricks, and the connecting doors had been barricaded. Privates Hook and "Old King Cole"—a cheery soldier loved by his comrades—had charge of a small room containing one patient. Cole set off after a while to join the defenders at the parapet; a shot met him as he issued from the door and doubled him up. He had fought his last fight.

The leaping tongues of flame and the dense clouds of smoke made the room untenable, and Hook at last had to abandon it—and also the native patient whom it was impossible to save.

Hook passed from his room into the next, where he found nine sick men who needed his help. Hardly had he entered than Private John Williams rushed in through a hole he had knocked in the wall, with the news that the Zulus were swarming all over the place, having broken down the door. Williams and Private Horrigan had bravely held their room for over an hour, but at last the Zulus had burst in the door, and hauled three men out and slaughtered them on the spot.

Hook and friends now found themselves in a tight corner; the door was barricaded and the Zulus were hacking and shooting at it in the effort to break through. Williams quickly set to work with a navvy's pick to make a hole in the wall big enough for a man to get through, while Hook stood guard over the door. By this time the Zulus had effected an opening, but as only one man at a time could get through Hook was able to hold them at bay. But it was stiff work; there was scarcely time to

load, and many a time Hook almost lost his rifle, which the Zulus seized and tried to drag from him. But Hook was more than a match for them; quick as lightning he wrenched his rifle back, slipped in a bullet and let fly point-blank; and Zulu after Zulu went down. And all the time Williams was hacking away at the wall, or dashing off to cut down a Zulu who tried to get through the hole by which he had made his way into the room. At last the hole was made. Williams pushed and dragged eight of the sick men through the hole, and the time had come for Hook to leave the door.

But there was still one man to be saved—and he had a broken leg. Hook, around whom the assegais were falling thick, and who had been piling up the dead in front of him, suddenly rushed for the hole, slipped through, grabbed the wounded man, and pulled him through without any ceremony—and broke his leg again in the doing of it! But the man was saved.

So did they go from room to room, fighting at the doors and holes like fiends, but always with success, and always managing to make their retreat, though now and again an unfortunate wounded man had to be left to the "mercy" of the butchering Zulus. At last they reached the end room which looked out on to the inner entrenchment they were so anxious to enter.

Meanwhile in another room Privates William Jones and Robert Jones were having a battle royal with the Zulus at the back of the hospital. They had eight patients to care for, and they fought like lions until seven of these were removed to the end of the hospital. Then Robert dashed back to fetch the eighth—Sergeant Maxwell—but he was too late; the Zulus were hacking and stabbing at him as he lay on his bed.

The brave defenders now left the hospital; thirty yards away was the entrenchment, and that thirty yards was being swept by the bullets of the Zulus, who, however, were kept off by the heavy fire of the men behind the biscuit tins. One by one the wounded dropped out of the little window, bruised and

maimed by their fall; some ran as best they could; some crawled, some were carried by the courageous defenders; Most of them reached the entrenchment, though some were caught by spears and bullets.

Meanwhile the storehouse had been as pluckily defended, and one would like to recount the deeds of heroism performed there; Commissary Byrne met his death while ministering to a wounded man; Commissary Dalton, badly wounded in the right shoulder, and unable to use his arm, still directed operations at the parapet; Chard and Bromhead encouraged by deed and word the men who were fighting for life; wounded privates served out ammunition; and every man of the gallant little band performed glorious deeds of courage.

The wounded were placed behind a redoubt formed by mealie bags, behind which also marksmen were placed to keep up a fire on the attacking Zulus, whose onset became so fierce that Bromhead had at last to reduce his stronghold still further, drawing his men off from the outer wall of the stone kraal, leaving him only the inner wall, the storehouse, and the redoubt.

Here they kept up their stubborn resistance. Time after time the Zulus charged—only to be withered up by the terrific fire poured in upon them. Night had fallen by now, but the light from the flaming hospital was all in favour of the defenders, who were able to take good aim, though half-a-dozen times the Zulus got to the barricades—breaking through them. But with bayonets fixed, with ringing cheers that British soldiers give when they are in a tight corner, the red-coated, blue-trouserred heroes charged them, and every time hurled them back dispirited and discomfited, leaving many of their warriors dead, and leaving the defenders with twisted bayonets and broken butts.

Their reception of the charges worried the Zulus, who could not pluck up courage enough to try it any more, so for several hours the fight resolved itself into a duel between musket, assegai, and rifle.

With the going out of the hospital fire, however, the Zulus relaxed their fire, and by four o'clock it had ceased altogether, and the battle-worn, smoke-covered, blood-bespattered defenders heaved a sigh of relief. They could thank their own brilliant courage which had held the enemy at bay—and, indeed, had sent them over the hills and far away.

But they took no idle risks; they quickly patrolled the neighbourhood, collected the arms of the fallen natives, and strengthened their position lest the attack should be renewed ere help could come to them. At last the signallers flagged the message that Chelmsford was coming.

Isandhlwana had been a disaster; but Rorke's Drift had been a glorious episode in the story of British arms. But Chelmsford had been full of anxiety for the fate of the little post, and as soon as morning broke, had set out with the troops still left him. They pressed on with all speed, fearful of what their arrival should show them. It showed them the British flag waving triumphantly over the gallantly held post; it showed them red-coated men moving amidst the ruins; it brought them the sound of a ringing cheer.

CHAPTER XXVIII

KASSASSIN AND TEL-EL-KEBIR

Desert Fights in Egypt

Aribi Pasha, the rebel, aimed high. Resenting the growth of English influence in Egypt, his resentment carried farther than he at first intended, so that finally his ambition was to become Dictator in Egypt.

At Alexandria the Europeans were massacred, and the British fleet lying off the city were surprised to find that Arabi had begun putting the outer forts into warlike array. The guns were trained upon the fleet, which Sir Beauchamp Seymour regarded as an unhealthy sign. Arabi was therefore warned that if he took any further steps in this aggressive direction the British fleet would open fire upon him. To which the bold Arabi replied by mounting more guns, boasting that he could hold the city against all the fleets of Europe. An ultimatum was issued: either surrender the forts or be bombarded.

Arabi chose bombardment.

Seymour prepared for action, and on July fifth, 1882, the British fleet opened fire on Alexandria, and after an action which will ever remain memorable in the annals of the naval history of Britain, Alexandria fell, and Arabi the boaster went into his desert.

Into the desert after him went the British army under Sir Garnet Wolseley, a force of some forty thousand men, from England, India, Malta, Cyprus and Gibraltar. Even before leaving England to take up command over this force, Sir Garnet had mapped out his plan of campaign, had fixed the limits of Arabi's power, and had decided where he was going to inflict

upon the Egyptian the blow that should knock all the boasting out of him.

"There," said Sir Garnet, pointing to Tel-el-Kebir, "shall I about September 13th meet and beat the army of Arabi Pasha."

Which he did, as we shall see.

Arabi was put down as much by the military science of Sir Garnet as by the courage of the troops under him. The Pasha had sixty thousand men at his command, as against the forty thousand of English, but Sir Garnet led Arabi into believing that the army would land at Alexandria, and probably give him battle at Kafr Dowar, although it was left delightfully vague as to where the actual blow would be dealt. The result was that Arabi really did not know what to do, and deemed that the safest course was to be prepared at all the most likely places, and so he split up his army into three sections, one near Alexandria, one at Cairo, and the third at Tel-el-Kebir, lying between Ismailia, on the Suez Canal, and the capital. Arabi commanded at the latter post.

Naturally, this distribution of forces weakened Arabi's striking power.

As a matter of fact, Sir Garnet, to give colour to the reports spread about as to his intentions, landed a large force at Alexandria and gave the rebels a good deal of trouble; whereupon Arabi thought that the whole British army was landing. What happened, however, was that one night, instead of disembarking at Alexandria, the fleet of transports and ironclads stole away east, passed into the Suez Canal, and on August 10th disgorged their army at Ismailia.

The first task that confronted Sir Garnet was to secure an adequate water supply, for to be waterless on the scorching deserts of Egypt was to be powerless. There was plenty of water, because the Fresh-water Canal running from the Nile to Ismailia was at hand; the trouble was that Arabi might, and probably would, unless prevented, cut the supply off. To obviate this, Sir

Garnet immediately sent forward an advance force to Kassassin, where, twenty miles in the desert, there was a lock, the key to the water supply.

Out into the desert the vanguard went, General Graham leading it. At Mahuta the Egyptians came out against them; they quickly retired, for the two thousand men, consisting of Royal Marine Artillery, the Yorks and Lancasters, some mounted infantry and a few guns, and the Duke of Cornwall's Regiment, simply hurled themselves at those who would have barred their progress, and swept them before them.

That obstacle overcome, Graham pushed on to Kassassin, where he immediately entrenched and prepared to hold the post until reinforcements appeared.

Graham had to fight for it. Arabi well knew that if the lock remained in English possession all hope of cutting off the water was gone, and he therefore determined to do his utmost to drive Graham back before the main army arrived. The rebels made several attempts to do this, but failed in each case.

Before the great skirmish on August 28th, Arabi sent forward Mahmoud Fehmi, his second in command, to reconnoitre Graham's position.

Fehmi had set out from Tel-el-Kebir in a train, and, arrived at Mehsameh, alighted to have a look round. While he was doing this, the engine-driver became aware that the English were in possession, and, putting on full steam, sped away, leaving Fehmi to his fate. Almost at the same moment that the train departed Fehmi made a similar discovery; till then he had not been aware that the English were at Mehsameh, and was therefore somewhat taken aback to find himself almost within arm's reach of General Drury Lowe, who was in command of a cavalry brigade, consisting of the 7th Dragoons and three squadrons of Household Cavalry (drawn from the 1st and Lifeguards and the Horse Guards). Taking his courage into his hands, Fehmi boldly marched up to the General and entered into

conversation without the latter being in the least aware of his identity.

Whilst this was going on, a batch of Egyptian prisoners passed by, and one of them cried out:

"That man is Mahmoud Fehmi, Arabi's second in command!"

It was now Lowe's turn to be taken aback, but, like Fehmi, he acted promptly; and the Egyptian was immediately made prisoner. It was a great coup, for Fehmi was Arabi's right-hand man in everything, his master engineer, and it is said that the Pasha later attributed his failure to turn Graham out of Kassassin to the fact that Fehmi was taken prisoner.

The day after this Arabi sent forward a large force toward Kassassin, where Graham had taken up positions on either side of the lock. As soon as General Lowe heard the booming of the guns in the distance towards Kassassin he ordered an advance, but ere they began their march a message came from General Graham that the firing was "inexplicable, except upon the supposition that the Egyptians were fighting amongst themselves." Lowe therefore waited, but not for long, for before twelve o'clock the signallers at Kassassin sent word that Arabi was coming, and that Lowe was to move his men forward to help on the right flank at Kassassin.

Meanwhile, Graham had sent forward Major Hart and some mounted infantry to reconnoitre the sandhills where it was evident the rebels were taking cover. Major Hart therefore made his way in the direction of Tel-el-Kebir, and, two miles from Kassassin, ran into a body of Arabi's men who had come down the railway, bringing a couple of guns of large calibre. The men immediately dismounted, and returned the fire, standing their ground well for a time, but being compelled at last to fall back upon the base. They had suffered no harm, however, for the rebels were bad range-finders, and their guns had been useless, the shells falling short and plowing up the sand instead of mowing down men. Four thousand Bedouins appeared,

extending over a line of two miles, but instead of rushing to the attack, as was expected, they retired, the two guns going with them.

When Lowe arrived, therefore, it was only to find that the prospect of a good fight was "off," and as Graham wanted him to be in reserve and not to engage unnecessarily, the cavalry was sent back to Mehsameh.

As soon as the Egyptians had retired, Graham also withdrew his men from exposure to the sun, which all day had been blazing down upon the desert sand, half blinding, scorching, and parching the waiting troops. Nowhere was there shade to be found except under canvas, and men fell by the dozen, sun-struck. But none flinched from the hardships, none thought of aught but the fray.

All through that scorching afternoon the troops lay waiting for the foe to return, and at last, about 4:30, Arabi's artillery again opened fire. Twelve guns, this time, and eight battalions were coming against them, concentrating upon Graham's right flank. It was just what Graham had hoped they would do, for while he had taken up a very strong position on the left, he had allowed his right to appear weak in order that the enemy might imagine it an easy prey, whereas it was only a bait, for Lowe was to come from Mehsameh and fall upon the attackers. As soon as he saw that they had fallen into the trap, Graham dispatched a messenger to Lowe to tell him that he was "to take the cavalry round by our right, under cover of the hill, and attack the left flank of the enemy's skirmishers." Instead of that message, however, the one delivered was to the effect that Graham was only just able to hold his own, and that Lowe was to attack the left of the enemy's infantry skirmishers. Lowe, whose men had barely had time to unsaddle their horses and sit down to partake of a much-wanted meal, gave the order to saddle again at once, and the cavalry set out over the desert towards Kassassin.

Meanwhile Graham was busy. The intense heat of the day had cooled off, and the men were feeling more fit for the warm work that was in front of them. Slowly but steadily the Egyptians advanced, pounding away with their Krupp guns, pushing their infantry forward in the hope of being able to rush the English position. Graham determined upon a counter-attack. The whole line advanced, therefore, and for a time kept up a good reply to the Krupp guns. Unfortunately, however, the transport service had been unable to keep the artillery supplied with ammunition, owing to the difficulty of getting the wagons through the sand.

Matters had reached this critical stage when Graham saw that on the right a detachment of Royal Marine Artillery had been able to mount a Krupp gun which had been taken from the enemy somewhat earlier in the day, and with this Captain Tucker was pounding away for all he was worth, doing good work. The Egyptians soon noticed that Graham's fire had slackened, and that only Tucker's gun was directed against them, and, realising what advantage this gave them, pushed forward more energetically, the artillery doing their utmost meanwhile to put Tucker's little battery out of action. Shot and shell fell thick around the devoted little band, but, heedless of danger and fearless of death, the men stuck boldly to their task, keeping up the fire till the end of the engagement.

Despite his lack of guns, Graham still pushed forward, in face of a heavy fire, and while this was going on Lowe and his cavalry appeared on the scene. They had had a terrible journey in the face of a hot wind which swirled up the sand into their faces, choking them, blinding them, and hiding everything from them. Into the zone of fire they rode. Away in the west the sun had gone down in a blaze of glory, and now only the moon gave light, though the intermittent flash of the enemy's guns told Lowe in which direction his way lay.

At the gallop he led his men on towards the Egyptian line, whose artillery was backing up the infantry, though a good distance from them. As soon as the enemy located Lowe and his

men they opened a terrific fire upon them, and shells hurtled past them and over them, shrapnel bullets tore up the road on either side. But not a man fell; every one of them seemed to bear a charmed life. A quick sharp order, and the squadron had moved to the right, so throwing the Egyptian gunners out of range; then on again, beneath the screaming shells, which once more sailed high. Now the infantry begin, and rifles flash and bullets ping; a man and a horse go down, but the rest ride on, until, calling a halt, Lowe orders his artillery to unlimber and pour in several rounds of shell. This done, the order was given to charge, and, led by Colonel Ewart, the Household Cavalry dashed off for the Egyptian lines.

Quickly they had disappeared into the darkness, Sir Baker Russell crying:

"Now we have them! Trot—gallop—charge!"

And charge they did. With naught to guide them but the flashes of rifles, and the roar of the big guns, Ewart led his men bang into the Egyptian infantry. Hacking sabres and trampling horses did awful work amongst the foe, who, scared and dismayed, broke and fled, falling back upon their guns. But the cavalry had not done with them yet; down upon the artillery they charged, sweeping right "through a battery of seven or nine guns," said General Lowe in his dispatch, cutting down the gunners, and putting the guns out of action for want of men to work them.

Then, their work done, and the foe driven back, they reformed their ranks, and, heroes all, rode off into Kassassin, having won glory and renown. Not all returned; how could it be? Some were dead, others were prisoners, while yet others had lost themselves in the darkness. The guns they had silenced were not captured, for during the night the Egyptians returned and took them into their camp.

After this abortive attempt to rush the British position at Kassassin, several other skirmishes ensued, but the only one with which we can deal here took place on September 9th. Sir

Garnet had meanwhile been busy getting his stores up to Kassassin, preparatory to his advance on Tel-el-Kebir, a work which, seeing that it entailed the laying down of a branch railway, took some little time. Arabi hoped to reap the benefit of this delay, but Graham had by this time received large reinforcements, including the 13th Bengal Lancers, the Royal Irish, several battalions of Royal Marines, the Naval Brigade, and two battalions of artillery.



KASSASSIN

"EWART LED HIS MEN BANG INTO THE EGYPTIAN INFANTRY."

On September 9th Arabi made his great effort to upset Wolseley's plans, at the head of eight—some say thirteen—thousand men and twenty-four guns. The Pasha had made his arrangements well, and nearly succeeded in taking Graham by surprise. Colonel Pennington and thirty Bengal Lancers, however, riding out at five o'clock in the morning to post vedettes, almost rode into three squadrons of cavalry and a column of infantry, Arabi's advance guard. These, as soon as they sighted the Bengals, began pouring in a heavy fire from their saddles, but made no attempt to charge, although they were in such vast numbers, and behind them came another and yet

stronger line of cavalry. Pennington at once saw that some great movement was afoot, especially as in the distance he could see the smoke of several trains coming from Tel-el-Kebir.

Without the loss of a moment Pennington sent off two of his Lancers post haste to Graham, warning him of the impending attack. This done, the order was given to dismount, and, taking shelter behind a sandy ridge, these twenty-nine men from India matched them-selves against the coming army. Firing as quickly as they could load, they put up a bold defence, so that the enemy should think that a large force was at hand. Pennington's object was to gain time, in order that Graham's artillery and infantry should be able to turn out. Shoot though they did till their rifles grew hot and their hands ached, the enemy came on steadily, and at last Pennington found himself surrounded.

But he had accomplished his self-set task. Graham was ready. Into their saddles the Bengals sprang, and at the sharp word of command charged into the thick of the line of cavalry behind them, bent on cutting their way to Kassassin.

Crash! They were on them. Lance thrust and tulwar sweep laid many an Egyptian low. There was no stopping these Indian warriors. A medley of struggling horses and hacking men: a headlong rush of Bengals in blue uniform faced with red—and they were through, racing across the desert to Kassassin, where Graham was already formed in battle array.

While the outposts had been thus engaged behind the sandhills, Arabi had been quietly working his main body round towards the right flank of the English force, where Pennington's lancers were stationed.

By the time that Graham was in the field Arabi had posted his artillery on the sandhills. Some directed their fire on the camp, others on the advancing columns. Through the camp shells screamed and shrieked, throwing tents to the ground, stampeding the horses and cattle, and all was confusion.

Graham was losing no time. To have done so would have been fatal. As quickly as possible his artillery took up a strong position, unlimbered, and turned their attention to the enemy's guns, returning shot for shot, so that in the centre of the two lines an exceedingly fierce artillery duel was fought.

Pennington, meanwhile, was having a hot time. Thousands of Egyptian cavalry were pressing down upon his turbaned lancers, while behind them came column after column of infantry—extending for at least three miles—all intent upon outflanking Graham. Pennington fell back step by step; Graham's infantry on the right were in great danger of being outflanked, for Arabi had crossed the canal and attacked in the rear.

Matters had assumed a serious aspect, but it was left to Drury Lowe once more to turn the tide of battle. Pushing forward with all speed, he made for Arabi's left flank, where so far his plan for overlapping Graham had been successful. But the memory of that glorious charge on August 28th evidently still lingered amongst the Egyptians, and not staying to give Lowe a chance of repeating it, the enemy's cavalry fell back, though they still continued to try to circumvent Lowe, trusting to their light artillery to make him desist from charging them.

Lowe's appearance had a marked effect on the battle; the outflanking checked, the British artillery were able to concentrate, and very soon they began to get the upper hand. Superior aim, quicker firing, both these helped to this end, and presently Arabi's firing slackened. Graham immediately moved five regiments of infantry forward. In the face of a heavy but ridiculously ineffective hail of bullets they swept over the sands: grimly determined to advance at all costs, they stopped for nothing, and at last Arabi's infantry fell back. His second great attempt had failed, and, resolving to wait for the grand assault which he knew Sir Garnet would shortly make, he retreated to Tel-el-Kebir again.

Kassassin was saved. Water was assured.

We need not detail the movement of the British army; suffice it to say that on the day of this last attack Wolseley went up to Kassassin, his army having preceded him. Critics said that he should have brought matters to a head there and then; but whether they were right or wrong it is not for us to say here. Tel-el-Kebir was reconnoitred. Arabi had made entrenchments and earthworks over four miles long, behind which he had twenty-two thousand men. These works were strong; they had been made under the supervision of Mahmoud Fehmi, who was a skilful engineer, and they bade fair to be difficult to carry.

Sir Garnet had about seventeen thousand men and sixty-seven guns, and after giving them a rest-day on the 11th, he determined to advance. Experience had taught him that the yellow sands of Egypt were best traversed at night, when his men would suffer less from thirst and heat. At half-past six tents were struck and baggage piled up along the railway to be brought up to Tel-el-Kebir later. Wolseley had decided on a night attack, and no bugles sounded, no fires were allowed, smoking was prohibited, and silence was ordered.

At half-past one in the morning all was ready. The order was given to advance, and, each man supplied with a hundred rounds of ammunition, the army moved forward.

General Willis commanded the first division, on the right, having Graham under him in charge of the Royal Irish, Royal Marines, the York and Lancasters, and the Royal Irish Fusiliers; and the Duke of Connaught led the Brigade of Guards (Grenadiers, Cold-streams and Scots).

On the left, General Hamley led the second division, its front being commanded by Sir Archibald Alison, at the head of the Black Watch, Gordon Highlanders, Highland Light Infantry and the Camerons, backed by the King's Royal Rifles and the Duke of York's Infantry. General Goodenough and his artillery of forty-two guns rode between the two divisions. Drury's Lowe gallant cavalry supported the right flank, while on the other side of the Fresh-water Canal, supporting the left, came the Indian

contingent, under General Macpherson, consisting of Bengal cavalry, Seaforth Highlanders, native infantry, and several mountain guns.

With almost uncanny quietness the great army passed over the desert; the darkness favoured them, although for a while it impeded their progress. Then, whilst Arabi nursed himself in the belief that sir Garnet was camping, if not sleeping, safely at Kassassin, the British were marching towards him, silent but of the swish of a moving body of men or the clanking of a scabbard, or the chain of a gun-carriage. During the day finger-posts had been put up to mark the route, but the darkness was so intense that these were practically of no use, and except for the stars of heaven the British had nothing to guide them. Now and then there would be false alarms, and more than once friends mistook each other for foes, and but for a hastily whispered word of reassurance would have hurled themselves at each other. Five miles off lay Arabi's lines, and until these were reached not a man was to fire a shot; the lines were to be carried at the point of the bayonet. Five miles! It took five hours to cover them—five hours of painful silence, of twitching nerves, of alternating hopes and fears!

Then, just as the stars began to fade away and tell of the approach of dawn, a shot rang out. It killed a man, but it effected nothing else. Still silent as the grave the columns moved forward. A bugle sounded within Arabi's camp, and immediately there came the flash of rifles and the singing of shots. They were discovered.

Silent as ever, except for the clash of steel on steel as bayonets were fixed, the British marched on. Not a shot did they fire. They were but two hundred yards from Arabi's entrenchments now, and then there rang out the word to charge. They charged.

Two hundred yards; a man to a yard fell. The Highland Brigade were first. Rushing at the ditch that lay between them and the foe, they dropped into it and scrambled up the other side,

a parapet of ten feet high. Private Cameron, of the Camerons, mounted first: a gasp, a clattering rifle, a falling body—and Cameron was no more.

With their pipes skirling their battle-song, the Highlanders kept on surging upward: they met a worthy foe. At this point the best fighting men of Arabi were posted, but Scottish bayonets worked havoc amongst them. "Five or six times we had to close on them with the bayonet," said Sir Archibald Alison, "and I saw those poor men fighting hard when their officers were flying before us. All this time, too, it was a goodly sight to see the Cameron and Gordon Highlanders—mingled together as they were in the stream of the fight, their young officers leading in front, waving their swords above their heads—their pipes playing, and the men rushing on with that proud smile on their lips which you never see in soldiers save in the moment of successful battle."

The Highlanders had seen that a front charge was fruitless, and so they had swerved round and taken the foe at the flanks. The Black Watch had reached the crest of the works, but the Highland Light Infantry, "reeling under the flank fire, fell back for a moment. Then it was good to see how nobly Sir Edward Hamley, the division leader, threw himself into the midst of his men, animating them by voice and example, and amid a storm of shot led them to the charge."

"Scotland for ever!" cried a battery of artillery as it rushed past them to tackle Arabi's big guns. And Scotland won this first entrenchment.

Meanwhile Graham had been busy. He had posted his artillery on a ridge five hundred yards from the enemy's left flank, where they seemed more prepared for attack than on the right. Their whole line burst into fire, to which Graham's artillery replied with good effect. Then came the turn of the Royal Irish. Led by Major Hart, they dashed across the few hundred yards between them and the Egyptians, hurled themselves upon them in a terrific bayonet charge, curled the

works with an Irish yell, and completely turned the flank of the position.

Behind the Royal Irish came the Royal Irish Fusiliers, followed hard by the 94th (2nd Battalion of the Connaught Rangers). By joining forces they hurled themselves down upon the Egyptians, who, thick as bees, swarmed their redoubts. Into their midst the British leaped, butt-end and bayonet being freely used, and many a fellahkeen received a good old British punch in lieu of a bayonet thrust of steel. Down, down were they hurled from their redoubts and sent flying off to their second line of entrenchments, where lay twelve heavy guns, and, beyond these, line after line of shelter-trenches.

There was no time for rest; the battle was not yet won, though resistance was now feeble, for the almost miraculous appearance of the British and their fearful rush had demoralised Arabi's men.

On the extreme left Macpherson and his Indian contingent, etc., had been no less successful. The Seaforths led, advanced steadily towards a battery, stormed it at the bayonet point, cut down its gunners and captured the guns. The Bengal Cavalry set out in pursuit of the foe, chasing them right through Tel-el-Kebir itself. The Royal Marine Light Infantry pressed steadily forward up the slope of the redoubt in front of the enemy's northern position, fired a volley, fixed bayonets and charged. A nine-foot parapet they scaled, scrambling, cheering, ever pressing upward, until at last the top was reached, and, with bayonet and butt, scattered the Egyptians in all directions, chasing them four miles into Arabi's headquarters. Arabi had gone—in haste.

The Naval Brigade, crossing the canal by pontoon at three o'clock, marched along the opposite bank into position, sinking ankle deep into the sand, toiling like giants to get their heavy pieces through the soft sand.

"Heave, heave!" they cried. "Hurrah, there she goes!" and away for a few more yards the gun would go. To their right was

Tel-el-Kebir, where Arabi's artillery was beginning its heavy cannonade. Lashing their mules and pulling like devils, they dashed off for Tel-el-Kebir. Cavalry intervened. The guns were swung round, sighted, and worked; and hundreds of bullets from these death-dealing Gatlings sped through the air, bringing down horses, emptying saddles, and finally turning the whole squadron back, spurring their horses like mad.

Limbering their guns, and once more lashing their mules, the brigade rattled towards the enemy's lines. Within easy range they halted, swerved round, and swept the parapets with a leaden hail, silencing the Egyptian fire.

With a cheer the Naval Brigade broke into a run and dashed over the redoubts. Before them were the flying foe, utterly cowed. The right flank was turned.

All along the line the British had been victorious, and the Egyptians were flying in all directions. The battle was won, and all that remained was to ensure the dispersion of the foe. The Bengals, the Seaforths, the Cavalry Division and the Mounted Infantry saw to this, and ere long the battle of Tel-el-Kebir was over and Arabi hastening away to Cairo, where, on October 14th, after several other engagements, he surrendered. The boaster had lost.

CHAPTER XXIX

OMDURMAN

Where Kitchener beat the Khalifa and his Dervish Hordes

In 1884 Gordon had been besieged by the Mahdi in Khartoum; in 1885 the Mahdi had captured Khartoum and killed Gordon, and two days afterwards a relieving force had arrived too late by forty-eight hours to do any good. Before the year was out the English had left the Soudan to the dervishes, with the tragedy of Khartoum unavenged.

A word as to the Mahdi. He was a fanatical Mohammedan, whose self-made mission was to sweep the infidels from the Soudan, and his wars were therefore Holy Wars. The Mahdi died, and the Khalifa Abdullahi, one of his Emirs, took his place at the head of the dervishes. The Khalifa worked for the establishment of a dynasty, and cared little for the religious principles which had underlain the warlike enterprises of his predecessor. The Khalifa was not strong enough to bring his dreams of power true, and early in the nineties his throne began to totter, though his tyranny increased proportionately.

Then in 1896 Sir Herbert Kitchener, as Sirdar of the Egyptian Army, set out to smash the Khalifa and to avenge Gordon's death. With his victorious progress through the desert we are not now concerned, and must hasten on to the battle of Omdurman, where he inflicted a crushing defeat upon the dervish hordes.

Omdurman on the Nile was the sacred city of Mahdism, and from being a small village of no importance had in ten years become a great town where the Khalifa held his court. In 1896

he began to fortify it against the coming of the Sirdar, enclosing the central portion of the town by a well-built wall, something over a mile in diameter; another wall was about a mile long from north to south, and the river side of the city was protected by batteries, while the island of Tuti in the river opposite Omdurman was protected in a like manner, as also were the ruins of Khartoum, and the north and south of the city.

The Khalifa had massed his troops, numbering at least fifty thousand, on the north side of the town, and against these came the Sirdar with twenty-three thousand British and Egyptian soldiers.

Up the Nile went a flotilla of gunboats to tackle the batteries, while the army marched along through the desert and took up its position outside Omdurman. The Sirdar meanwhile sent word to the Khalifa that if he tried to defend the city it would be bombarded, and that it would be as well for him to remove the women and children. The Khalifa took no notice.

On August 31st Colonel Broadwood led some cavalry and a small battery out to reconnoitre, the 21st Lancers doing the same in another direction. The dervishes swarmed out upon them in thousands, and the British fell back on their camp. Meanwhile the flotilla had advanced up the river to take observations, incidentally shelling a dervish camp and sending the defenders scampering off into Omdurman.

The Sirdar's army was in camp at Agaiga, a few miles north of Omdurman, and September 1st was spent in attacking the river batteries and in placing the guns in position. Admiral Keppel took his gunboats across the river and disembarked near Halifya a detachment of nearly two hundred men to act as escort to the 37th Royal Artillery howitzer battery. Major Stuart-Wortley and his army of friendlies at the same time marched on Halifya; the village was shelled and taken, the battery was placed in position and began to fire on Omdurman. The gunboats then moved off and silenced a fort on Tuti Island, then passed along the river and opened out on the forts in front of the city.

These also were silenced, and the town suffered great damage from the heavy firing to which it was subjected, the Mahdi's tomb being wrecked, and the palace getting a shell in its central building.

Let it not be thought that the dervishes left their batteries without a struggle. Pluckily did they stick to their guns, though shells fell thick around them and mangled and broke their bodies! But the fire was too hot for them to last long, and eventually Keppel was able to steam up the river towards Khartoum, where he quickly sent the garrison of a fort flying into Omdurman.

Meanwhile the army had been busy, and the Sirdar had sent out his scouts to keep watch on the dervishes. The Khalifa also had been at work. He began to realise that to sit and wait for the infidels to tackle Omdurman seriously was to court disaster; those howitzers were far too damaging! He therefore decided to move out of the city and give battle in the open, preferring to be the attacker rather than the attacked. His idea was to wait until night fell and then to move his troops against the enemy.

His plan miscarried, however, for he received the impression that the Sirdar himself was going to march under cover of the night and attack ere the sun rose; and the Khalifa became nervous, for he had had experience of such movements; Ferkeh and Atbara had been fought thus. The Khalifa decided to wait.

That night, therefore, the two armies lay under arms. Keppel's gunboats kept their searchlights working to guard against any surprise attack, much to the dismay of some of the dervishes, who positively refused to fight against a foe that could use the sunlight—so they looked upon the searchlights—and they accordingly deserted.

At half-past three the Egyptian army was called from its sleep; the bugles sounded breakfast time, and there, under the star-spangled sky of the desert, the soldiers partook of what was for some of them their last meal.

While they are thus occupied let us take a look at their battle array. The line was a mile and a half long, and arranged in the form of a semi-circle, with its ends resting on the bank of the Nile. Between the bank and the line there was a large space of some thousand yards wide, in the centre of which was the village of Agaiga and the field hospital.

On the right, facing north, was MacDonald's brigade; in the centre, behind a shelter trench which they had dug, were Lewis's and Maxwell's brigades of the Egyptian army; on the left, Lyttelton's and Wauchope's brigades of the British division, their front covered by a zereba hedge of thorn bushes. With Lyttelton were also the Maxim battery, the 32nd Battery of the Royal Artillery, and two Egyptian field batteries, while other batteries and Maxims were placed amongst the Egyptian brigades. Collinson with the 4th Egyptian Brigade was in reserve on the right, inside the battle line. On the extreme right, and well away from the line, were Broadwood's Egyptian cavalry, the camel corps, and the horse battery.

Along the river were the gunboats, well-equipped with quick-firing guns, forming a tremendously useful support to the Anglo-Egyptian army, which at sunrise was ready to march out on Omdurman. The Sirdar's plan was to move down on the Khalifa, but his scouts brought him news that that gentleman was getting to work, and would shortly be coming forth to give battle. Kitchener at once cancelled orders to march, and prepared to receive the foe—a much better plan than taking the offensive, for the position and arrangement of the army were in every respect admirable for withstanding an attack. "It was a good piece of luck for the Anglo-Egyptian army. They would be able to meet the dervish host with every chance of success in their favour—an open field of fire extending for nearly three thousand yards to their front, over which no troops in the world could successfully advance in the face of modern weapons and civilised discipline, and with their flanks resting on the river and protected by the quick-firing guns of the flotilla. The Khalifa was throwing away every chance by attacking our troops while

they were still in their camp. Even if he had waited till they were on the move, he might have met them in the broken ground between Kerreri and Omdurman on less hopelessly disadvantageous terms."

Soon after six o'clock the cavalry outposts fell carefully back on the camp. Behind them came the dervish horde, drums beating, standards flying, voices raised in imprecation and battle-cries. Midst them all, a dark patch in a moving mass of white jibba-clad men, was the black flag of the Khalifa, round which the day was to see such a terrible struggle.

The Khalifa's force came on in two lines, between two and three miles long, the first formed of five great columns many deep, riflemen and spearmen flanked by cavalry. With them they brought out three Krupp guns and an old Nordenfeldt; evidently they were relying upon getting to close quarters.

The Anglo-Egyptians waited for the dervishes to cross the ridges that ran some two miles in front of their line. On came the Mahdists, shouting their battle-cries still, and beating their drums, here and there firing a shot, but generally reserving their fire until they were within better range.

The time had come.

The Royal Artillery on the left opened the ball with a round of shrapnel which bowled over a dozen or so dervishes in the front rank. It was the signal for general artillery firing, and the great guns boomed out their death-messages. Thick and fast fell the shells, tearing great gaps in the advancing hordes. Then the left of the British line of infantry opened fire at two thousand seven hundred yards, and their Lee-Metfords spat death. "The Guardsmen standing close to the zereba hedge opened fire with volleys by sections, and the other regiments of Gatacre's division carried on the firing away to the left. In the huge moving mass in front of them they had a target against which even at such a distance the volleys could hardly fail to be effective."

Big guns, Maxims, Lee-Metfords, however, could not stop the charge of the Mahdists, whose pluck and determination won the admiration of their opponents; then the gunboats opened fire, then the centre and the right of the line, but still the dervish spearmen raced over the sands, striving to reach their foe. Hundreds fell before the galling fire, yet they got to within eight hundred yards of the Anglo-Egyptian line. They had got their Krupps into action, but these were badly placed and badly aimed, and so did no damage at all.

The Sirdar's right wing was subjected to an attack by the dervishes under the Khalifa's son Osman, who, pouring over the Kerreri Hills, swept down upon Broadwood's cavalry. Sheer weight of numbers made it necessary for Broadwood to retire somewhat, in order to cover the camel corps in their retirement along the river bank. Broadwood dismounted some of his men and, carbines in hand, for a time they held the fanatics in check, a horse battery helping them. At last, however, he was compelled by superior numbers to leave the camel corps to the protection of the gunboats, which, by a hail of shells from their quick firing guns and storms of bullets from their Maxims, turned aside the dervish horde which threatened the destruction of the camel corps.

Broadwood meanwhile pushed northward, fighting his way against the dervishes, whose spearmen and cavalry in turns charged down upon him. Now dismounted, now mounted, the Egyptian cavalry faced the foe, blazing at them with their carbines, or charging them with great courage. The horse battery did dreadful damage in the dervish ranks. They were having a battle on their own, well away from the main army, which, be it said, felt the effects of having several thousand dervishes attracted from itself. Eventually, however, Broadwood found himself less pressed, and after a while was able to retrace his steps, and, marching along the river bank, made his way to the main body again.

When Osman had tackled Broadwood he had placed his force between the cavalry and the infantry and the artillery, and

by this manœuvre he was able to inflict much damage on the latter. Men fell all round the guns, struck down by a galling rifle fire; horses fell, too, so that it was only possible to fully horse four guns, the other two being divested of their breech locks, etc., and left.

All along the line the fight was now in progress. From eight hundred yards the dervishes moved to five hundred yards distance from the British line, seeking to get to close quarters. Their riflemen poured in a heavy fire at the men behind the zereba hedge, but did little damage. Mass after mass of them pressed forward and ever forward, but the sharp fire from the British line kept them at a distance. As one man fell another took his place—there seemed no end to the horde. Right in the front rank flew the Khalifa's black flag, a splendid mark for the foe. Of bearers there were plenty, and man after man fell a victim to devotion to the standard, but as fast as one fell another gripped the staff and kept the flag floating above an increasing pile of dead.

Within an hour after it had begun the battle was all but won. Gradually the dervishes ceased their mad rushes to death—leaving hundreds of dead and wounded on the ground. For one short moment they gathered themselves together for a mighty effort, withdrew themselves from the attack on the British front, and swept down on the Egyptian portion of the line, firing as they went, and being fired upon. In solid masses they came, in scores they went down—the ranks filling up with almost incredible rapidity. But they never got to grips; the hail of bullets pulled them up, and at last the mad rush was over the dervishes began to fall back on the ridges.

But the fight was not yet over. The wreck of the Khalifa's army still lay between the Sirdar and Omdurman—and Omdurman was to be occupied.

The order was given to advance, pouches were refilled with ammunition, and the Anglo-Egyptian army moved out from its camp. Lyttelton's brigade led the way, followed on its right,

somewhat to the rear, by Wauchope's. Still farther to the right came Maxwell and Lewis with their Egyptians, MacDonald's brigade bringing up the rear, with the Egyptian cavalry and camel corps marching along the rivet bank, a brigade under Collinson acting as reserve and escort to the transport train.

Now took place one of the outstanding episodes of that day of battle. The 21st Lancers had so far taken but little part in the fighting, but when the army began its march on Omdurman, orders were given for them to take the van and reconnoitre the farther slope of the ridge that ran down from Jebel Surgham whither large numbers of the dervishes had retired; their orders were to see if the enemy had rallied with an intention of opposing themselves to the oncoming army, in which case they were to cut off their retreat on the city and turn them across the British front into the desert.

Out went the gallant Lancers, with Colonel Martin at their head—three hundred and fifty men to clear the way for a victorious army; three hundred and fifty men to meet—what?

They did not know; they did not care; they hoped they would meet the enemy and be able to add something on their own account to the tale of the day's fighting.

Their hope was realised.

Up the death-strewn slope of Jebel Surgham they went, catching sight of a few dervishes to the south-east but caring little for the pot-shots that these had at them; they were out for bigger fry.

When they were about half a mile south of the ridge their scouts rode back to report that two hundred or so dervishes were in hiding in a hollow running down to the river, while beyond them was a bunch of cavalry. This was something like, and Colonel Martin immediately gave the order to charge. The bugle call that then rang out was better than the noblest music ever played; lances were leveled on the instant, and away across the

desert sand the Lancers went, their khaki-clad bodies and their wiry Arab horses lost in a whirl of dust.



OMDURMAN

"ONE AFTER ANOTHER THE BEARERS WERE SHOT DOWN, YET ALWAYS
THERE WAS A HAND OUTSTRETCHED TO GRASP IT AND KEEP IT
FLOATING ABOVE THE DEATH-STREWN HILLSIDE."

On they went, every second bringing them nearer the hollow, and for a while the foe made no sign of resistance. Presently, however, there were spurts of smoke, flashes of fire—and bullets sang past the gallant little troop. Here and there a man dropped from his saddle; here and there a horse and rider went down with a crash and a clatter; but the rest rode on. Three hundred yards away the enemy were caught sight of—but instead of a few fugitives as had been anticipated, there were at least fifteen hundred of them! Those two hundred had been simply a lure—a favourite dervish dodge. Little cared the Lancers; there was no thought of pulling up in their headlong charge. Rather did they spur their horses harder.

Crash! another man down; crash! yet another. But nothing could stop them, and at last, riding like the wind through a storm of bullets, they had reached the near side of the hollow, breaking through the two hundred who had lured them on, scattering them in all directions and then, crash! they had leaped down a three-foot bank into the hollow—into and through a twenty-deep mass of dervish riflemen and spearmen.

As can be imagined, such a charge was not without its thrilling heroic incidents. As the hollow was reached horses tumbled headlong into it, drilled through by dervish bullets, or stuck by dervish spears, or hamstrung by dervish knives.

In a minute there was a *mêlée* such as the Lancers loved. The Soudanese stuck to their posts like brave men, unhorsing men and that tackling than with their spears. Captain Fair's swami was broken off at the hilt on the coat of mail of a dervish chief—he flung the hilt full in the enemy's face. Lieutenant Molyneux's horse fell dead before ever the hollow was reached; disentangling himself, the officer rushed into the fight on foot, gripping his revolver. A couple of dervishes set on him at once; one went down with a bullet in his brain, but the other swept down his sword and almost severed Molyneux's right arm. The revolver dropped, the officer, helpless as he was, turned and ran for a little distance to get near some of his comrades. After him went the dervish, and must have done for him but for the fact

that just then the Lancers, who had broken through the ranks, turned back and dashed for them again. A corporal at once saw the plight of his officer, gave him his stirrup-leather, and managed to get him away safely.

Another officer, Lieutenant Grenfell, was fighting on foot; he emptied his revolver into the crowd that thronged about him, and then struck madly at them with his sword. The spearmen pressed in upon him, pierced him through and through, and at last his gallant stand was over, and a mangled body lay upon the ground. Captain Kenna and Corporal Swarbrick had seen Grenfell thus engaged, and worked their horses through the struggling mass, trying to get to him in time to effect his rescue, or failing that, to recover his body. They were too late; they arrived to see the dervishes hacking at the fallen man, and all they could do was to drive them off and lift the body on to a horse, which, however, dashed away with its burden. Grenfell's body was recovered later in the day, and laid to rest beneath the desert sand.

Incidents such as these were many; officers were saved by men, men by officers. Nearly every trooper was injured, yet not one of them but was ready to go at the charge again. Lyttelton, however, refused to give the order for this, and the Lancers were drawn up, several dismounted and opened a carbine fire upon the dervishes, and forced them to cross the British front, whereupon the artillery and infantry poured in a raking fire upon them and forced them back towards the hills. Few of them succeeded in escaping unharmed, and hundreds of them were left dead beneath the broiling sun.

Meanwhile the main body of the army was marching forward, firing but little as they went, for there was no enemy to speak of in front of them. But away behind the hills the Khalifa was busy rallying his disorganised army for a last great stand. MacDonald's Egyptian Brigade of three thousand infantry and three field batteries on the right were attacked first. They had not got their guns in position before the enemy burst down upon them; the infantry opened fire upon them while the guns were

unlimbered and placed, and then bullets and shells together flew towards the oncoming dervishes, who once again came on to the sound of drums and with their flags streaming. It was a gallant charge, but it was pulled up short by the terrific fire poured in upon them. At the same time another column dashed down upon MacDonald's left; calmly and coolly part of the Egyptian force swung round to face the new foe, and thus the line assumed a wedge-like shape, both sides facing thousands and thousands of the jibba-clad foe. It was three thousand to twenty thousand, and force of numbers enabled the dervishes to get fairly close up to the stubborn half-square—so close, indeed, that they were able to hurl their deadly spears. Resolute, determined, the Egyptians stood their ground, poured in their fire with deadly effect, and held the horde at bay until the 32nd Battery brought their fifteen-pounders to bear upon the foe. They were just in time, for many of the riflemen had but half-a-dozen cartridges left, and it might have gone ill with them but for the timely reinforcement. Then came the Maxims and Collinson's Brigade, while Maxwell and Lewis advanced on the dervish left and forced them to draw off. When the gunboats opened fire as well the foe began to fall back in all directions—the battle was well nigh over—the crisis had come and had passed. The Khalifa's cavalry made a noble effort to turn the fortune of the battle, but the wall of fire that opposed them sent them galloping back with great gaps in their ranks.

The Khalifa and his brother Yakub, who had attacked MacDonald, had taken up a position on the north slope of Jebel Surgham, where, with the black flag flying bravely, they made a stand before the oncoming victors. Presently the Khalifa made off towards Omdurman, but Yakub and four hundred noble dervishes stood bravely to their post. The black banner was stuck in the ground, and the four hundred gathered round to guard it to the end. The honour of the flag is the same in all soldiers, and these brave men were no exception. The 15th Egyptians and Lewis's brigade were coming towards them, bent on securing the flag; one after another the bearers were shot down, yet always there was a hand outstretched to grasp it and keep it floating above the death-strewn hillside. To hold the banner was to die,

and one by one the noble four hundred and Yakub perished in its defence; but even with their death the black banner floated defiantly, for the last man to hold it retained it in his death-grip.

Never had men fought so bravely for the honour of the flag.

It was quickly seized by the 15th Egyptians. An orderly took it to the Sirdar, who had ridden up to the scene of the struggle. Almost immediately a shell from the gunboats screamed overhead, the English thinking the Khalifa's men still carried the banner. "Down with that flag!" cried Slatin Pasha, the Austrian officer who had done and suffered so much for Egypt. Quickly was the flag lowered, and the gunboats ceased their fire in that direction.

Meanwhile the victorious conquering army was forging ahead, driving the dervishes before them. Here and there crowds of the foe would make a gallant stand, but ever were they swept away, until at last, by eleven o'clock, the battle of Omdurman was over; the Khalifa was defeated; his reign was over.

The line halted awhile for rest; then once again the march was resumed, and after some desultory firing the Sirdar entered Omdurman, to find that the Khalifa had fled into the desert. He was pursued but not caught. Two days later the Sirdar entered Khartoum, and the following day, to the salute of the guns on the gunboats and the playing of the National Anthem and the Khedive's March, the Union Jack and the Egyptian flag were hoisted side by side on the ruins of the palace where the gallant Gordon had met his death eleven years before. Khartoum was avenged, and the tyranny of Mahdism was at an end, though there was still some work to be done; with which, however, we have no time to deal.

But to-day the Soudan is peaceful and prosperous.

CHAPTER XXX

TSUSHIMA

The Greatest Naval Battle of Modern Times

The Russian Bear and the Land of the Rising Sun were engaged in waging the most extensive war since the period of the first Napoleon. Great wars there had been previously, but the Russo-Japanese war must be given first place in many respects because it brought into play all the developments in scientific warfare which the ingenuity of man for centuries had been able to devise.

As all the world knows, the war was brought about as a result of the conflict of Russian and Japanese interests in Manchuria. Japan struck the first blow—an effective one, and all along the line her armies and navy were victorious. Defeat after defeat did they inflict on the Russians, whose land forces were held in check, their ships crippled.

Like a forlorn hope the Baltic Fleet left Cronstadt on September 11th, 1904, making with all haste for the theatre of war, intent upon striking one crushing blow, and so reversing the fortune of war. With the incidents of the voyage into Japanese waters we have no time to deal; our story begins with the Baltic Fleet in the Pacific Ocean at the opening of the Tsushima Straits, through which Admiral Roshdestvensky had decided to pass on May 27th. His fleet was made up of the first, second, and third squadrons, and the fact that the latter only joined the main fleet on May 9th rendered the execution of manœuvres very difficult.

As a matter of fact, instead of being an effective striking power, the Russian fleet was a mere conglomeration of war vessels; they had been hastily dispatched, without having collectively practised the art of war.

On approaching Tsushima, Roshdestvensky's fleet was on the *qui vive* for the Japanese, who in their turn were keeping a strict look out for their foe, rumours of whose coming were reaching them. Togo expected them by about the 25th, and undoubtedly thought that they would make for Chin-Hai Bay, in Korea. He knew that Vladivostok was the destination of Roshdestvensky, and it was his intention to meet him and crush him before that object could be achieved. Standing on the bridge of his flagship, the *Mikasa*, Togo waited for the message that should tell him that Roshdestvensky was at hand. There was not a man in all his fleet who was not thinking the same thoughts as filled his admiral's mind; would the Russians come that day, would the great battle be fought at once? Moreover, not a man of them but looked forward with confidence. They were going to win.

All the evening of the 26th and during the small hours of the 27th the ether-waves had been bringing silent messages from here and there, yet none could give news of the enemy, until at 5 A.M. a guardship to the south sent the thrilling message:

"Enemy's squadron sighted in No. 203 section. He seems to be steering for the East Channel."

So Roshdestvensky was coming.

At full speed ahead the Japanese fleet cut through the waters, making for Tsushima, Togo keeping up wireless communications with his vedettes.

Meanwhile, what of the Russian fleet? During the night of the 26th and the morning of the 27th, Roshdestvensky had been carefully steaming up to the Straits. A thick mist favoured him, and he hugged himself in the belief that he would give Togo the slip. From the wireless messages which he intercepted he knew that the Japanese were as yet unaware of his proximity. But Fate played him a bad trick; at five o'clock Togo's auxiliary cruiser, the *Sinano Maru*, loomed out of the mist. In a moment her captain had grasped the situation, and across the ether the wireless message sped, sending Togo off post haste for Old.

Roshdestvensky was discovered; he could not slip by the waiting Japanese.

The Russian admiral immediately ordered the *Almaz*, *Ural*, and *Svetlana* to protect his transports in the rear, at the same time sending out scouts to keep a watch on Japanese movements. Every now and then these scouts hurried up with the news that ships were in the vicinity, and fearing that Togo's whole fleet was near at hand, Roshdestvensky desisted from sending out cruisers to attack them. He realised that he would need all his strength to meet Togo in the mass.

There is no need to go into the details of the passage up the Tsushima Straits. By half-past one in the afternoon the two fleets were within sight of each other. Togo, on the *Mikasa*, led the Japanese fleet, followed by the *Fuji*, *Shikishima*, and *Asahi*; and the armoured cruisers *Kasuga* and *Nisshina*; behind these came the armoured cruisers *Idsumo*, *Iwate*, *Yakumo*, *Adxuma*, *Asama*, and *Tokiwa*. Togo had previously dispatched his protected cruisers to attack Roshdestvensky's rear.

Roshdestvensky had formed his fleet into three sections: a right column, composed of his four best battleships, the *Kniaz Suvaroff* (flagship), the *Alexander III.*, *Borodino* and *Orel*; a left column consisting of four sections, the first made up of the battleships *Ossliabya*, *Sissoi Veliky*, and *Navarin*, and the armoured cruiser *Admiral Nakimof*, Rear-Admiral Folkersahn leading in the first of these. The second section consisted of the battleship *Nikolai I.* (Rear-Admiral Niebogatoft) and the coast defence ships *Apraxin*, *Seniavine* and *Oushakof*; the third, commanded by Rear-Admiral Enquist, had the protected cruisers *Oleg*, *Aurora*, *Svetlana*, and *Almaz*; the fourth, consisting of the six special service steamers, a converted cruiser, and two armoured cruisers, Dmitri Donskoi and Vladimir Monomakh.

As soon as he sighted the foe, Togo gave the order for his whole fleet to engage. Like the Nelson of England at the Trafalgar of the nineteenth century, the Nelson of Japan at the

Trafalgar of the twentieth century gave his ships a signal. Togo's message ran:

"The fate of the Empire depends on this event. Let every man do his utmost."

And in his heart every man vowed to do his utmost for his country.

One by one Togo's squadrons loomed out of the mist. Heading south-west, Togo's own squadron seemed to be intent upon crossing the enemy's course. Suddenly, however, the course was changed due east, and with his cruiser squadron following, Togo bore down in single column diagonally on the head of the Russian column.

To Roshdestvensky and his staff it seemed a foolish course; it meant that to take up the position Togo evidently had in mind, each of his ships would have to pass the others, and so be unable to fire.

Taking advantage of this, Roshdestvensky immediately opened fire at a range of about 9,000 yards. It was the signal for the whole Russian fleet, which thundered forth a tremendous fire, although an ineffectual one. No damage seemed to have been done, and still the Japanese proceeded with their manœuvre, holding their fire until four or five of their ships had taken up the position for which Togo was working.

Eight thousand yards and still no reply; seven, and not a Japanese shell had sped through the air; six, and with a roar the Japanese gins spoke forth their messages of death.

The first shells went over the Russian vessels; the next fell short, but at the next try the range was found, and thereafter seldom lost. The big calibre guns of the Japanese ships hurled their four-feet shells across the water, pitching here and there and everywhere upon the Russian vessels. Crash! the first hit found the funnel of the *Kniaz Suvaroff*, battered it, and set fire to everything near it. Immediately the men with the hose were ready, and were working hard to cope with the flames. They

worked in vain, for as they conquered in one place another shell burst somewhere else, and smoke and flames called them to renew their efforts.

One by one the Japanese crossed the Russian bows, and by the time the manœuvre was completed, the terrific firing had worked such havoc on the Russians that the *Kniaz Suvaroff* and the *Ossliabya* were both in flames. The latter leaked and was compelled to retire, but the former, though she refused to answer to her helm, kept up a vigorous fire as she left the line. Handrails, funnels, cabins, derricks—all were wrecked; decks were plowed up by shells that exploded on the least resistance, and seemed little less than deadly mines; iron ladders simply crumpled up, and guns were lifted bodily from their mountings. Dead men lay piled upon the decks, wounded were being carried below by the dozen; and everywhere the flames were triumphing.

The Japs fired with fiendish accuracy; their cannonade was much heavier than the Russians, and it soon became evident that the latter were far out-classed. Faster, too, the Japanese were able to outwit Roshdestvensky every time he changed his formation. Single-column ahead, the Russians changed their direction from east to west, and for a while the two fleets steamed in opposite directions. The Russian manœuvre was fatal; Togo changed his course, seeking to head the foe off to the west, and shortly afterwards the Russian armoured vessels found themselves exposed to a cross-fire from Togo's battleships and armoured cruisers. A terrific fire was poured in upon them, and several other vessels caught fire. The *Kniaz Suvaroff* was now all but helpless; her Admiral was wounded, of all her complement of guns but one or two were serviceable, and what men were fit kept them working. One by one they fell; sometimes in more than ones; yet still the guns blazed away.

The smoke was now so thick, that, together with the fog, it was almost impossible for the gunners of either fleet to fire, and so for a time Togo's men held their fire. From across the

water where the Russians were steaming came ever and anon the sound of explosions as fires reached ammunition.

Presently the firing began again; remorseless, pitiless, dogged in their determination to strike the blow that should crush Russia's fleet, the Japs kept up their cannonade whenever the fog and smoke lifted and gave them a ship to aim at. On the Russian ships the men were in a panic; those shrieking shells that dealt out death and destruction almost drove them crazy, though some were still ready to return shot for shot, as far as their inferior guns would allow.

Let it not be thought that to the Russians alone fell all the losses, despite the fact that the Japanese shimose shells were much more effective. A Russian writer has said that these shells raised the temperature one and a half times higher than pyroxyline, and that one of them did twelve times as much damage as a Russian, even if the latter burst well which it seldom did.

However, Togo had to register some injuries; the *Kasuga* had three guns put out of action; the *Asama* had her steering gear injured, three shells struck her near the water-line, and, leaking badly, she was compelled to leave the fighting-line. Working like slaves, her engineers fixed her up temporarily, and presently the *Asama* resumed her place.

Leading the van, the *Mikasa* met the full fire of the Russian ships; shell after shell passed over her; shell after shell fell upon her, and one of them fell on the ladder of the bridge where Togo was directing the battle. Shell case and splinters flew in all directions. With a crash the iron cover of the compass was smashed, and an iron splinter struck Togo on the right thigh. Absorbed in his observation the Admiral seemed not to notice his danger! Fortunately, he was unhurt.

At three o'clock the Russians had been forced in a southern direction; aided by the fog and smoke they suddenly headed north in an endeavour to pass by the rear of the Japanese line. Lead by the *Nisshin*, the latter's main force squadron turned

to port, the armoured cruisers following. Directing a heavy fire upon the foe, the Japanese forced them southwards again, and the move was frustrated.

Ten minutes after three the *Ossliabya's* difficulties increased. Dead shots that the Japanese gunners were, they concentrated upon the vessel which, as we have seen, was early in the fight disabled. All day the sea had been rough, heeling the ships over on their sides, and making a good mark to the gunners. The Japs aimed low, and at last three shells in succession struck the *Ossliabya*—struck her on the water-line, gouged a great hole in her side—and the ship was doomed. With a rush the water poured into her; water-tight compartments were useless, and the vessel listed heavily. With startling suddenness—almost before her crew could tell what was happening—the leviathan heeled over, turned turtle, and, with a hissing of steam and the roar of exploding boilers, found a grave beneath the waves.

Meanwhile the *Kniaz Suvaroff* was nearing her end. With a heavy list to port, a fire in her upper battery, and swinging round and round helplessly and hopelessly, she made a fine mark for the Japanese. A rain of shells descended upon her, smashing her last forward turret gun; and then Togo's torpedo craft was sent to complete the fiendish work. Through the water went the speeding death; yet for some time not one of the torpedoes reached the mark. At last, with a terrible impact, one of the deadly tubes hit the ship on the port side astern. Almost by a miracle the once proud giant of the seas kept afloat, her remaining gun spitting forth its vengeance, and the torpedo boats, "seeing that this strange-looking, battered vessel could still show her teeth, steamed off to wait for a more favourable opportunity."

Roshdestvensky was still aboard her—wounded, dazed; sitting alone on the box in the turret, he refused to say how severely he was wounded. The *Alexander* had by this time taken the lead, and she was in almost as bad a state as the Admiral's flagship. A heavy fire was directed upon her, and after a time

she and the ships immediately following her steamed away, great pillars of water rising heavenward as shells missed her.

Out of the mist and smoke there suddenly loomed the image of a torpedo boat.

"Torpedo boats ahead!" The cry rang out over the *Kniaz Suvaroff*, and the solitary gun was ready. It was a false alarm, for although it was a torpedo boat, it was only the Russian ship *Buiny*, coming to find out how matters stood with the Admiral.

Quickly her officer was commanded to take the Admiral off. But Roshdestvensky was adamant; he refused to leave his turret. At last, desperate and anxious, some of his officers took him bodily and began to carry him to the side. As soon as he was lifted the Admiral fainted; and the task of getting him away, became easier.

But there was another difficulty. Neither the *Suvaroff* nor the *Buiny* had a boat left in which he could be taken off. Several of the sailors quickly rigged up a raft of scorched hammocks and rope. It was never used; the *Buiny* suddenly ran alongside the *Suvaroff*—a most difficult and dangerous move, for the sea was rolling heavily—and just as a wave swung the *Buiny* beneath one of the ports, the Admiral was "lowered down, half thrown on board the torpedo boat."

As quickly as possible several other officers managed to reach the *Buiny*, which afterwards steamed away. It is said that some of them "completely lost their heads, and when they saw the ship was doomed, held back the men while they themselves escaped."

All the time that the Admiral was being taken off, some of the Japanese cruisers were pouring heavy fire into the ships; but the *Buiny* and the Admiral escaped. Wallowing in the waves, the *Suvaroff* lay almost a helpless hulk, that little gun of hers still keeping up a brisk fire. At 7:20 the end came: a third Japanese torpedo section sped out towards her. Her funnels gone, but one mast remaining, round which was clustered what

was left of her gallant crew, she was made the mark of another torpedo. Creeping up to within a hundred yards, the *Murasame* discharged an eighteen-inch torpedo at her. It missed! Nearer still the torpedo boat came; and once again there was the spurt of the horrific missile. This time the aim was truer. Straight as an arrow from the bow it went, then—with a resounding crash, it hit the mark. The *Suvaroff* was doomed. She was crippled. High in the water her stern rose, hung for a moment in the air, and then—the *Suvaroff* was gone!

In the cabin of the *Buiny* Roshdestvensky lay helpless, his skull fractured. His last words before he once more swooned away delegated the command to Niebogattoff on the *Nikolai I*. This officer, seeing that it was fruitless to try to escape to the north, led his battered fleet southwards, pursued by the Japanese. "They are soon hidden by the fog, and at 5:30 Admiral Togo realises that they have cleverly turned on their tracks, and that he himself has for some time been steaming in the wrong direction. There is yet time to repair the mistake, and, accordingly, Togo himself turns north with his main squadron, and dispatches Kamimura with his armoured cruisers to assist the protected cruisers in the south.

Less than a quarter of an hour afterwards Togo's squadron met the auxiliary cruiser *Ural*. It was like a mouse meeting an elephant—the elephant was sure to win. One round and the *Ural* went to the bottom to keep the *Suvaroff* company.

Off to the north-east, six Russian vessels were seen striving to get away. After them sailed Togo. It was a stern chase, but the Japs won. Coming up with them, Togo steamed side by side with them, pouring in his deadly broadsides, forcing the Russians to change their course to the north-west. There was no escaping those Japs. The *Imperator Alexander III* dropped astern, unable to keep up the fight. Fires raging in every part, men shattered by shells and crushed by falling masses as funnels and masts were hurled headlong from their places, she gave a heavy list, turned turtle—and the third Russian ship was at the bottom of the Sea of Japan.

It was the *Borodino's* turn next. The deadly shimose shells fell upon her thick and fast. Bursting here, there, and everywhere, they set fire to everything combustible; hammocks flared up; cabins were shattered; the bridge was wrecked; men with hose were bravely fighting the flames, but all in vain. For three-quarters of an hour the fire raged, and at last reached the magazine, then with a terrific explosion the ship blew up. Her grave was marked by the troubled waters.

Away in the south the combating cruisers had been hard at it all day. At 2:30 Togo had sent his cruisers south to attack the enemy's rear, and by four o'clock, after a stiff conflict, they had managed to throw the Russians into complete disorder. All formation was lost. One special service steamer was sunk, another almost sent to the bottom. Then the Russian rearguard was strengthened by the battleship *Nikolai I* and the three coast defence ironclads *Apraxin*, *Seniavine*, and *Oushakoff*. Nothing abashed that reinforcements had come out against them, the Japanese fought on, though both their flagships were hit below the water line, and one of them, the *Kasagi*, was so much battered that she had to hurry off to a convenient bay, and was unable to take part in the battle the next day.

While Togo was hastening northwards after the fleeing Russian main squadron, Kamimura, as we have seen, was sent south to assist the protected cruisers, and, coming up when the fighting was in a critical stage, drove the enemy off, sending most of them flying to the north. After them the Japanese steamed, working much havoc. The repair ship *Kamchatka* was sunk. She had been in much the same position as the *Suvaroff*. Steering gear almost gone, she had been a helpless hulk, wallowing about aimlessly. A shell swept across the bridge, carrying her captain and three officers overboard; her masts were shattered, her stern gouged open; listing heavily, there was no hope for her, and what remained of the crew were lowered into the boats. Just in time! With a sudden lurch, her bows rose high in the water, her boilers exploded, and all that remained was a seething whirlpool of foam.

The daylight fighting of May 27th was over, and the honours were to the Japanese. But the battle was by no means over. His main squadron being drawn off, and his cruisers being successful in driving the enemy northward, Togo, as if the day's fighting had not been enough, sent out his torpedo craft. Six sections each of torpedo boats and destroyers "all stood out before sunset, regardless of the state of the weather (the wind was strong and the sea running very high) and each vying with the other to take the lead, approached the enemy."



TSUSHIMA

"TOGO, AS IF THE DAY'S FIGHTING HAD NOT BEEN ENOUGH, SENT OUT HIS TORPEDO CRAFT."

From every side these small, but deadly craft bore down upon the fleeing Russians. Nervous and apprehensive, they worked their searchlights, seeking to locate the foes who raced upon them and let go their hidden danger. Steaming to close quarters, the Japanese kept up a continuous attack in the face of terrible broadsides. Forging ahead, they threw the Russians into confusion, broke up their formation, and scattered their vessels

in all directions. After them went the torpedo boats. The *Sissoi Veliky*, the *Admiral Nakimoff*, and *Vladimir*

Monomakh were struck by torpedoes and put out of action. Three Japanese torpedo boats went to the bottom, four destroyers and three torpedo boats were battered about and put out of action.

Farther away to the north-east, another torpedo-boat section sighted two ships, one of them the *Navarin*. Out from the sides of the torpedo boat the tubes of death sped; no less than four struck the *Nevarin*; through the holes in her sides the water poured in, and yet another Russian ship went below the waves.

Daybreak on the 28th. The last scenes in the drama of the Sea of Japan are about to be played. The *Sissoi Veliky*, drifting aimlessly about, was found by a Japanese special service steamer. She was on the point of sinking. The Japanese took off the crew, and made a great effort to tow the ship. The night torpedo attack, however, had been only too sure; and the *Sissoi Veliky* sank.

The *Nakimoff* met a similar fate. A special service steamer came up with her. The captain, Rodionoff, had already sent off seventy of his crew to Tsushima, close to where the ship had drifted. The Japs boarded her, and tried to drag the captain from his post. Brave man that he was he refused to budge, as also did the chief navigator. Listing heavily, the vessel seemed about to turn over, and the would-be rescuers perforce drew off. Almost immediately the ship went down, taking her captain with her. When the tumult of the waters was over, the Japanese eagerly scanned the surface for the gallant captain. They found him, locked in the arms of the navigator, and almost unconscious the two heroes were hauled aboard.

The *Vladimir Monomakh* also went down off Tsushima. An effort was made to tow her, but she was leaking so badly that it was impossible to do so. Hardly had the cables been slipped than there was a loud explosion; the *Vladimir Monomakh* had

blown up, and in a few minutes, to the sound of a parting salute by the Japanese buglers, she settled down beneath the sea.

What remained of the Russian fleet—six ships only—was speeding away north. The Japanese main squadron steamed after them, heading east in order to cut off the retreat, the cruiser squadron coming up behind. By 10:30 the enemy were completely surrounded. They consisted of the *Nikolai I*, the *Admiral Apraxin*, *Admiral Seniavine*, the *Orel*, and the *Izumund*, the remains of a fine fighting force. "Five ships in all. Another cruiser was seen far southward, but she passed out of sight. Not only had these remnants of the enemy's fleet already sustained heavy injuries, but also they were, of course, incapable of resisting our superior force." So says Togo.

Almost shattered by the terrific cannonade and torpedo attacks of the previous day and night, weary from their labours, and well nigh broken-hearted in the consciousness of their helplessness against such an overwhelming force, the Russians sent up the white flag of surrender, "for," says Togo in his official dispatch, "soon after our main squadron and armoured cruiser squadron opened fire upon them, Admiral Nebogatoff signalled his desire to surrender with the force under him. I accepted his surrender," says Togo in his official dispatch, "and as a special measure allowed the officers to retain their swords."

One of the ships did not surrender, but managed to slip away, although the protected cruisers chased her for a long time, and the *Chitose* pursued her. In Vladimир Bay, however, she was wrecked, and added one more to the tale of destruction.

While this surrender was taking place, the *Admiral Oushakoff* came into sight. She had become separated from her section, and seeing the smoke of the Japanese and Russian vessels, her commander supposed that it betokened the presence of his squadron. Judge of his dismay, therefore, when he found that it was Togo's main squadron into which he was running. Putting about, the *Oushakoff* steamed off with her boilers at full pressure. Togo immediately dispatched the armoured cruisers

Yakumo and *Iwate*, his fastest cruisers, to overhaul her. By eleven o'clock they were within range, but before opening fire signaled to her to surrender, saying that Nebogatoff had already done so. The watching Japanese saw a signal, then they saw it drop and almost at once there came a boom of a gun and a shell sped dangerously near. The foe was going to fight to the very last! And fight they did—to the very last, for in less than thirty minutes the two cruisers had poured such a hail of shot and shell that the iron clad went hissing down beneath the sea. The Japanese immediately hastened to the spot and succeeded in saving over three hundred men from drowning.

Three other protected cruisers, the *Oleg*, *Aurora*, and *Jemchug*, managed to escape, and, steaming to the south, made Manila; the cruiser *Almaz*, battered about, reached Vladivostok, where a destroyer also arrived. A destroyer and two special service steamers fled to Shanghai.

Of the thirty-eight ships with which Roshdestvensky had entered the Sea of Japan, these eight ships alone eluded the shot and shell of the Japanese.

And those that remained?

Although the battle proper was over, several of them made the best of a bad job and showed a valiant resistance when face to face with the foe in the last phases.

At ten o'clock in the morning of the 28th, the *Svetlana* was attacked by the Japanese cruisers *Otawa* and *Niitaka*.

Fighting against hope, she made a brave show for over an hour, at the end of which she went to keep her sister ships company at the bottom.

Fresh from her victory, the *Niitaka*, accompanied by the destroyer *Murakomo*, sped over the waves in chase of the Russian destroyer *Buistri*. Fast as the fugitive steamed, the pursuers steamed faster, and at last, baffled and cornered, she was driven ashore.

The climax of this the most tremendous battle ever fought came in the evening when Roshdestvensky himself was captured. When night fell on the first day's fight, the *Buiny* had become separated from the rest of the fleet, but early in the morning the *Biedvi* and the *Gromky* hailed in sight, and it was decided to transfer the Admiral to the former. During the day the *Gromky* was sunk, but by three o'clock in the afternoon two Japanese destroyers sighted the *Biedvi* and another destroyer hurrying away to the east. After them went the Japanese, overhauling them about an hour later. As soon as they were within range, the battle began. For a time the Russians showed fight, and eventually one of them managed to escape, but the *Biedvi*, running short of coal and water, was at last compelled to run up a white flag.

The Admiral had surrendered!

Until they boarded her the Japanese did not know that Roshdestvensky was aboard, but one can imagine their gratification at finding him there. In view of his injuries, he was allowed to remain on his ship, which the Japanese immediately took in tow, and after a dangerous voyage, during which the tow-rope twice broke in two, captive and captors arrived at Sasebo. Here the Admiral was put into hospital, and after a while was so far recovered as to be able to telegraph an official report of his defeat to the Tsar.

The *Dimitri Donskoi*, steaming away to the north, was sighted by several destroyers, which immediately set off in pursuit. Japanese reinforcements quickly came up, and surrounding the hapless foe, poured in a terrible cannonade which almost crippled the *Dimitri Donskoi*. When night fell she was still afloat, but drifting about aimlessly; the morning, however, showed her near the south-east coast of Ulneung Islands, slowly settling down. Fortunately, what remained of her crew had landed on the islands, and were afterwards taken off by the Japanese.

To sum up the battle of Tsushima in such a way as to exhibit the triumph of one side and the complete shattering of the other, it is but necessary to say that Togo lost only three torpedo boats, 116 killed, and 538 wounded; while his adversary, out of thirty-eight ships, lost six battleships, sunk, and two captured; three armoured cruisers, all he had, went down; one protected cruiser was sunk, and another wrecked; one coast defence ship fell a victim to Japanese shells, and the other two were captured. Five of the nine destroyers were accounted for, the *Ural* auxiliary cruiser was sunk, as also were four special service steamers; the two hospital ships were captured, although one of them was released. And, last of all, between two and three thousand men were killed, and over six thousand captured.

Such a tale of woe as the world had never heard of. Russia's forlorn hope had failed, and though the war went on a little longer, it was evident that Japan had been triumphant; the Land of the Rising Sun had tackled and defeated the Great Bear.