



Frontispiece

GENERAL BRUCE DISGUISED AS A NATIVE CLERK.

UNDER TEN VICEROYS

THE REMINISCENCES
OF A GURKHA. BY
MAJOR-GENERAL NIGEL
WOODYATT, C.B., C.I.E.
COLONEL 7TH GURKHAS
WITH 16 ILLUSTRATIONS



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TO

MY WIFE

WHO, WITH HER BRIGHT COMPANIONSHIP, HAS EVER BEEN
THE LODESTAR OF MY LIFE ; AND WHOSE LOYAL AND
LOVING HEART, IN ALL THINGS GREAT AND SMALL,
HAS REJOICED IN MY SUCCESSES, CONSOLED
IN MY SORROW AND SOLACED IN MY
DISAPPOINTMENTS,
I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

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THE TEN VICEROYS

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UNDER TEN VICEROYS

CHAPTER I

WHY I BECAME A SOLDIER

"I'M damned if I do," said my father, with a stamp of his foot, and a chilling silence fell over the Vicarage drawing-room.

The Reverend Edward Woodyatt was in a bad temper; indeed, he was in what his mother, the last of the Drakelow Gresleys, used to call "one of Edward's little pets." His mother's darling and spoilt from his cradle he was, although the most lovable of men, not too practised in self-control.

I can picture that scene in the drawing-room now, after a lapse of forty years. My mother, very disturbed and fanning herself, for it was a hot June evening, my eldest sister looking pretty and bright-eyed with excitement, my father walking up and down in the dickens of a rage, but very handsome in his wrath, whilst I, the cause of this most unclerical outburst, sat in a very low chair, my feet well apart, my elbows resting on my knees, my hands on either side of my head and my eyes fixed upon the carpet.

My father was one of those men who, while possessing plenty of energy and initiative in the small things he liked doing, much preferred procrastination in anything big. In such matters he took as his motto, "Never do to-day what you can put off until to-morrow." Being myself the opposite and very adverse to hawering, I am afraid I must have been a dreadful thorn in his side. Yet we were great friends, and I enjoyed his whole-hearted delight in any

humorous happenings in our little village, where he was immensely liked and much respected.

He was an extremely good-looking man, with a neat figure. In his younger days a bit of a dandy, and to the end a great admirer of the fair sex. Dissent from the Church of England was becoming more general in my early youth, and very marked in our parts; yet, being broad-minded, he remained quite popular. I remember there was a good deal of discussion amongst the neighbouring clergy when, on the death of a local and prominent dissenter, my father invited the pastor of the deceased's persuasion to conduct the burial service in our churchyard.

I can recollect during the Russo-Turkish war, how he returned one day to luncheon bubbling over with merriment about a chance encounter that morning with the local tax collector. This man was an advanced Radical (classed, in those days, as we should now class an extreme communist), a rabid dissenter from the Church and possessing an extraordinarily good opinion of himself and his fund of general knowledge. The latter, derived entirely from the county newspapers, was pretty superficial, but he didn't in the least realise it. My father, being a practised public speaker, had often come up against this local politician and found occasion to put him right. This didn't change the man's views, but gave him a very sincere regard for the vicar's real knowledge and learning.

Well, they discussed the war, the stubbornness of the Turk, the endurance of the Russian, the probable outcome of the struggle, etc. Then, just before parting, the tax collector made the following enquiry, and this was what had upset my father's gravity so much: "And Measter Woodyatt, them Turks, I suppose, they're all 'Càrtholics'!"

My mother, one of the Yeomans of Woodlands, Whitby, was very clever and a great linguist, speaking French, German, Italian and Spanish. Her humour was most quaint, her fund of general knowledge prodigious, for she was a most voracious reader, and her memory quite extraordinary. For instance, her great-grandmother (Mrs. Hale, wife of John Hale who raised the 17th Lancers, as the 16th Light Dragoons) had twenty-one children, eleven sons and ten daughters. She only *once* saw them all together,

when she fainted! As most of the daughters married, here alone was a nice mix-up of cousins of sorts. Yet my mother remembered them all, their names, the number of children they had, where they lived, and how they prospered.

In addition to this she had the most wonderful spirits, making her a very delightful companion. No sickness, no pain, no trouble, daunted that brave heart. A few minutes before she died my brother Barney (Dr. Bernard Hale Woodyatt) came to her bedside. She was too far gone, poor dear, to either move or speak, but smiling at him she actually *winked*; just to show that her spirits were game to the very end. To my lasting regret I was in India when we lost one upon whose like we shall never look again.

At the time of which I am writing I was in the well-known Liverpool firm of Phipps & Co., coffee merchants. The head of the house lived at Chalcot, in Wiltshire, where he was Member for Westbury. His eldest son, Charlie, a junior partner, who later succeeded his father as Member for the same constituency, then lived in Cheshire, and went daily to business in Liverpool.

One day Mr. Phipps took away my father's breath by a letter asking if I would like to enter the firm as soon as I left Shrewsbury School. The offer was accepted, and my mother could talk of nothing but what her eldest son would do when he became a merchant prince.

But when the time arrived, it was found my destination was to be Rio de Janeiro, then notorious for its yellow fever. My parents, therefore, refused the appointment on plea of too extreme youth for such a climate. The result was that a boy from the Liverpool office was sent instead and I was given his post. Three months later he died of yellow fever, and my people thought they had chosen wisely.

Work in the Liverpool office was pretty strenuous, for we youngsters had to be at our desks by 9 a.m., and never got away before five o'clock. We received no salary for five years, during which period we were supposed to be learning the business. Indeed, we were thought to be lucky that our parents paid no premium for the supposed advantages their sons gained in entering the firm.

This might be quite right in cotton, where you got many

valuable connections outside, but coffee was quite another pair of shoes.

The work consisted mainly of book-keeping, letter-writing and checking bills of lading, while the correspondence, being mainly with New York, Pernambuco, Rio de Janeiro and Valparaiso, did not enable us to get to know anyone at all. Fellow clerks kept going out to Rio de Janeiro and returning. Men like myself, who had started in this firm doing five years' work for nothing, and then were "articled" for another five years on a moderate salary in the South American branch.

After two years I began to wonder what prospects the future held. I did not propose to be a clerk for ever, but there were dozens of sons, nephews or cousins of the name of Phipps, who would all be preferred for partnership before me. The life was by no means objectionable, but there was nothing tangible to look forward to. Many of my friends were soldiers, and I began to conceive a great hankering after the Army.

Another disturbing factor was the increasing influence of a newly-made partner, a German, called Gorstenhoffer, whom I detested so cordially that it seems now a sort of premonition of the feelings we should all bear, later on, towards his fellow-countrymen.

With these thoughts in mind and full of foreboding, I had journeyed home and selected this hot June evening to ask my father to sound Messrs. Phipps & Co. regarding my future prospects; adding that, if no definite promise of a partnership were forthcoming, I thought the Army offered me a much better career.

This was the bombshell which called forth the domestic storm with which my chapter opens.

In the end I got my way and, as Charlie Phipps explained in a very nice letter that it was impossible to make any promise as things then stood, I left the firm and entered the Cheshire Militia. Managing to pass the Army entrance examination at my first attempt, I was duly gazetted a lieutenant in the 1st battalion Dorset Regiment on 12th May, 1883. Unfortunately I was then over twenty-two years of age, and this was a dreadful set-back all my service.

In justice to my father I must confess that he had every reason to be upset, for my record to date had been such

as not only to cause him some anxiety, but also very considerable expense. During my two years in business he had been obliged to allow me £300 a year, which I had greatly exceeded. I had also been much addicted to hunting, football and running.

The first had his sympathy, but hardly his countenance because of its costliness. The last he detested because he considered the whole surroundings low, and unfit for one of our class to indulge in. As regards football, I am afraid I did let it interfere with my studies considerably.

Having given up the Rugby game, after playing it a good deal in Liverpool and London, I founded a "socker" club in our village, called the "Over Wanderers," which soon embraced the adjoining town of Winsford. This was, I believe, the beginning of real football in those parts, and I heard afterwards that later on the little club achieved some prominence. If this should catch the eye of Mr. Hamlet, of Winsford, it will call to mind the many jolly games we had together.

Living in the middle of the hunting in Cheshire, I had attended all "meets" anywhere near my home from my earliest years, commencing the riding part on a female donkey, bought to provide milk for a sickly baby brother—rather to the detriment of the milk!

She was really an excellent animal, but only went her best pace when one bestrode her extreme hind-quarters. The usual procedure was to beat her hard with the open hand while on foot and, when she got into a good canter, leap on behind; she would then gallop for about two hundred yards, when the process had to be repeated.

It is not everyone who has been "blooded" by old Reginald Corbet off a donkey, yet such was my privilege. The meet was not far from my home and my age about ten years. After finding in the nearest covert, hounds went off with a burst and the donkey and I were soon done to the world with the strenuous exertion required by our method of progression.

Riding homewards somewhat disconsolately, and when passing my father's churchyard, I suddenly heard the music of the hounds behind me, and they actually ran into their fox amongst the tombstones! It was not long before, pushing open the gates, I was in at the death, whilst very



shortly the M.F.H., "Old Corbet," as we boys called him, jumped the low wall of the churchyard, followed by his huntsman.

Having had a nice burst of twenty-five minutes and now a kill, he was in a high good-humour and, calling me up, blooded me very liberally, saying: "You're a damned good boy and that's a damned good donkey. Now go home and tell your father to give you a glass of port."

Having seen and spoken to me last at the meet, I firmly believe he imagined I had followed a considerable portion of the run.

We boys always knew what sort of a day Old Corbet had had when we saw him jogging home, for, if good, his cap was tilted backwards; but if bad, the peak was pulled right down over his eyes.

Many celebrities came Cheshire way. Amongst them the late Mrs. Cornwallis West caused me to fall in love before I was in my teens, for I thought her the most beautiful woman imaginable. She was not a hard rider, I remember, but she had a very large circle of admirers, who regularly jostled one another to see her home.

A great flutter was caused in the Tarporley Hunt by the attendance two seasons of the late Empress of Austria, piloted first by Bay Middleton and then Rivers Bulkely. She was a fine horsewoman, splendidly mounted and rode quite hard. Two other things about her I can recollect as striking me:

(a) Her marvellously fitting habit. (b) The extraordinary slimness of her waist. Mentioning these to a boy friend, he told me his eldest sister assured him she had worn tight stays since her cradle, and that her habit had to be done up with a button-hook after mounting.

No conveyances were ever seen at meets in those days, except perhaps a farmer's gig or a child's pony-cart, whose occupants hoped to see some of the fun by following tracks and by-ways.

People hacked to their hunting, sometimes a very considerable distance, and were content to jog home afterwards. There is no reason to suppose our forbears had more stamina than we ourselves, so when one hears a man talking of his father or grandfather hunting six days a

week through a season, one takes it with a large grain of salt.

The days I write of were those of the old Tarporley Hunt (whose members wore a green collar) in the sixties and seventies of the last century. I can recall quite easily the names and faces of such "green collars" as Corbet, my first M.F.H., Squire Wilbraham, Tom Cholmondeley (afterwards my Militia C.O.), J. Tomkinson (Jamie), etc. And many who were not "green collars," like Charlie Phipps, my business boss, "Monkey" Hornby, John Birkett, Harry Rawson, with John Jones (the First Whip and then Huntsman for a total period of thirty-three years), and many others. And later the younger generation, including Willie Court, Bo. Littledale, Will Higson and Mosley Leigh.

Tom Cholmondeley was a fine judge of a horse, and a great horse-master. Jimmy Tomkinson, on account of his hard riding, was always called "Tommy Jumpkinson," and was the only man I ever heard say he could catch hounds when they had once got a start. This, however, he was frequently known to do. Squire Wilbraham used to confess that his going entirely depended on his horse, because when he got near a fence he always shut his eyes until he landed on the other side. Mr. Rowland E. Egerton-Warburton, in his famous Cheshire ballad, "Farmer Dobbin," says of him :

"Squire Wilbraham of the Forest, death and danger he defoies,
When his coat be toightly buttoned up, and shut be both his oies."

Of Tom Cholmondeley he wrote :

"An' a chip of owd Lord Delamere, the Honorable Tum."

John Birkett I don't think I ever saw take a fence, but he was a great man down a lane. "Monkey" Hornby was a sort of privileged person and could go anywhere he liked, even into covert. In his early days he rode all sorts of crocks and got many croppers off them, for nothing stopped him.

I had an amusing morning one day with old Harry Rawson, who had lost his horse. I think he had meditated attempting to ford a brook. He certainly wasn't going to try and jump it. Anyhow I was some fields away browsing the

donkey, which I was getting too big for. I saw old Rawson's lanky figure on foot and the horse careering in front of me. Leaving the donkey for the old man to ride if he liked, and making a short cut, I caught the mare behind a wood, and getting up had a nice gallop towards hounds, who had turned their fox back to covert. Then very demurely I dismounted and led the mare back to her owner, who thanked me effusively, but eyed me, I thought, rather suspiciously.

As time went on and the donkey was discarded, I ran with the hounds for miles and miles, and later on got an occasional mount, while every fiver given me was spent on a hiring. Some very good animals I got, too. I think the fiver gave me the horse for something like seven days, and I am afraid he went back always very much finer than when I got him. My father had to feed him.

To lead up to the running mania, I must record that, before going to Shrewsbury School, I had been much bitten with it because of the enthusiasm of my old nurse's nephew. At his periodical visits to his aunt, I used to sit at his feet in the nursery, and listen to the wonderful performances on the running-path of Jack This and Billy That, until I knew quite a lot about it.

At school I took it up strongly, scoring many victories in the winter term "cross country runs," due probably to my early training in the hunting field. In my second or third year, though fully young for it, I had the temerity to enter for the Senior Steeplechase. It was a very barbarous performance in those days, as the course was three miles of stiff country over thorny hedges and other obstacles. Quick-set hedges, four feet to five feet high, were called "belly hedges," because you had to learn to take off some way in front, hurl yourself on your belly on top of the hedge, and then wriggle over.

The costume consisted of ordinary thick under-drawers and long-armed vest, with "fighting" drawers (sort of bathing drawers, as worn by boxers) over the former. Round the stomach was a broad wash leather waistbelt to keep out thorns, and on the hands stout leather gloves.

After donning these garments the sleeves of the vest were firmly stitched with stout thread to the gloves, the legs of the drawers to the socks, the waistbelt to the vest,

round the waist, and the edge of the fighting drawers to the lower pants, all round.

There were two very old traditions about this steeple-chase on foot, namely, that neither the boy who "broke" the first hedge (i.e. was first over) nor the boy who led across the cavalry field (a huge pasture of forty acres used for yeomanry training), ever won. You don't think of these things when excited, and I happened to do both without realising it at the time.

Then came a set-back. The next fence was a "belly hedge," at which I had never been good. Getting much too close before jumping, I never got on top at all, but slithered down to the near side. A run back for another attempt, and the same result. A third shot and I was over, but not before the whole field had passed me.

The favourite, Ffolliott Sandford, was now leading, and it was veritably a case of the "first shall be last and the last shall be first." At the same time a great feeling of sickness came over me, and I remembered how some blighter had persuaded me to swallow two raw eggs half an hour before the race as "very good for the wind."

General fitness and a long stride helped me to keep going and, after a couple of meadows, even to overtake two or three of the field. Then came the bend home, and though I felt I was catching up, still Sandford was a field ahead with two others at his heels.

Over the last "belly hedge" and my eye saw the final obstacle but one, in front of Sandford, and I knew it for a teaser of a fence, with a really wide and deep ditch on the near side. Away went the sickness, and I sprinted hard, for there was just a chance that the leader would miss his jump and fall back into the ditch, which was exactly what he did.

Not only that, but the two others, rather spent, did the same, and all three were in the ditch together, greatly impeding each other in their panting and clutching efforts to get out. Much exhilarated by the sight, feeling now absolutely fresh and putting on all the pace I knew, I jumped the whole lot clean—men, ditch, hedge and all—and once more regained the lead that I had lost.

It is impossible to say how it was done. It must have been the two eggs! There is little more to tell. Blind

with joy, I burst through the last fence anyhow—a stiff bullfinch—and rushed up to the winning flags. Even equipped, as we all were, with thick drawers, leather waist-belt, gloves, etc., I finished in tatters, and it took two men quite an hour to get the thorns out of my body and limbs. Brandy was then rubbed in, which, for a few minutes, made one dance with pain.

Good old Shrewsbury, with hundreds of years of tradition, quaint customs and old-world appearance. I talk as it was over forty years ago, and before the school moved to the beautiful site across the River Severn. Those were very happy days, though I fear I did little for the school in the scholar line. My one and only form prize was a classical one, my first term, obtained simply because of being put too low down at the time of entry.

Not satisfied with long distance running, I then took up sprinting, and at the annual school meeting managed to win both the senior hundred yards and the quarter mile. This fired me more than ever.

On going into business in Liverpool, I found my old nurse's nephew, Harry Ellis, had blossomed into a kind of professional trainer in charge of some running-grounds. During the following summer, getting some leave, I lived with him, for a six weeks' course of training, to the great disgust of my people.

Running was a good deal the rage then. It was the old days of Lillie Bridge, where the Amateur Championships were held annually. These took place the week after the Oxford and Cambridge Sports and generally resulted in University candidates carrying off several events.

These were the days also before the advent of the Amateur Athletic Association. Although the status of amateur was clearly defined and the professional debarred from competing at amateur meetings, still a great deal of betting went on, with crowds of "bookies" on every course; while, under false names and false entries, the "pro" was always trying it on.

When I got on to the back mark in the 120 yards and the quarter mile many such gentry were encountered, some of whom never saw their "number go up," but ran at shortened odds as "first past the post."

One "Sheffield handicap" runner, to whom I was con-

ceding six yards in the 120 and twenty-five yards in the quarter, at a meeting in Shropshire (attended without my trainer), waylaid me on the way to the railway station with two villainous-looking bookies, and treated me to the most insulting remarks. After a "set to" of three or four rounds, which it was quite impossible for me to avoid, he knocked me out badly by a smart left-hander to the jaw.

In the above races he had repassed me quite easily, just on the "worsted" itself, in the heats and finals of both events. His grouse was, that I had objected to him as a professional, and so the committee had refused him the first prizes until he proved his status.

As a matter of fact, I had not objected to him at all, but the third men in the quarter and sprint had objected to *both* of us, as professionals! Having no difficulty in proving myself an amateur, the two first prizes came to me eventually, after my friend had failed, within a month, to comply with the committee's demand.

Harry Ellis was looked upon as very up-to-date in his methods, eschewing, as he did, the old raw meat theory, and training his clients according to their temperament, physique and condition on arrival. For payment of about two pounds a week, I got his best bedroom and parlour, his frequent attendance, the use of the running-ground, the services of two "rubbers-down," and his personal attention at all races.

There is no doubt he made a bit on me at meetings later on; for, walking up the strings for the final of a sprint, I often heard the hoarse cries of the bookies, "Two to one bar one," "Two to one bar one; it's Woodyatt I bar," and then I knew he and his pals had been plunging!

Life at this training establishment was very dull for one's *mind*! Once asking an old "has been" in the Militia how he had felt when he was in good training, he said, "Splendid, just as if one was on wires." Well, my experience was exactly the opposite, for I felt deadly slack, and the slacker I felt the better I ran that day.

There were some queer people under Ellis's charge: runners, walkers, bicyclists, and even professional fighters. They came in all sorts of condition, some fairly fit, but the majority very gross; the fighters especially so, having

done nothing but "bust" since their last encounter.

Such men, having come to the end of their ready cash, had got some rich young Liverpool or Manchester "blood" to finance them, and put up the money for their next "mill." Ellis had no compunction about these men. Those who were fat and lazy he tied to the back of a dog-cart, and took out for a ten to twenty-mile "trek" every other day.

One boxer called Jim Crow had an insatiable thirst which he could never control. Failing any form of alcohol, water sufficed, but he would have liquid of some sort, and a great deal of it.

Crow was a good fighter with a substantial backer, and a big contest had been arranged. It was absolutely essential he should be got fit, but there was this terrible weakness to be watched, and dealt with. He used the most appalling language and remained in a veritable state of gloom when nothing but his modest glass of beer and a limited amount of water were to be obtained.

One day Ellis came to me saying he was much concerned about Crow, because he had been in such a good temper for a week; that he must be getting extra liquid somehow; that he had started a tremendous craze for shower-baths at all odd times, and that he (Ellis) was now going to put a suspicion he had to the test, by filling the shower-bath reservoir with salt.

That evening a "watcher," looking through a peep-hole, saw Jim Crow make a cup of his two hands below the shower-bath preparatory to taking copious draughts, as had evidently been his recent custom. His face and language when the briny substance reached his palate were too much for the watcher, who sank to the floor in an agony of suppressed laughter. But not so suppressed as to prevent the irate Jimmy from hearing him. Rushing out stark naked, he gave the spy such a hammering that he was soon writhing in another kind of agony.

My own daily routine was :

8 a.m. Breakfast of two lightly poached eggs, two pieces of toast with very little butter, one cup of tea.

8.30-9.30 a.m. Lie down for one hour.

9.30 a.m. Out walking, with Ellis beside me on a bicycle.

- Hands up, pace five to six miles an hour, distance ten miles. Clothes very light.
- 12.30 p.m. Reach running-ground, rubbed down by two men, first with rough towel and then by hand. Run 200 or 300 yards very fast, or practise twenty or thirty starts from a pistol. (This was before that splendid position of "off the hands" was invented.)
- 1.30 p.m. Dinner. Mutton chop or beefsteak, or cut off the joint, with toast, very few vegetables, and one small glass of beer; followed by milk pudding.
- 2-3 p.m. Lie down again.
- 3 p.m. Another ten miles as in morning.
- 5 p.m. Much the same as at 12.30, but varied.
- 6 p.m. Tea, one boiled egg. Watercress, toast, some butter with a little jam and two cups of tea.
- 9 p.m. Oatmeal gruel, and then bed.

Of all the routine, the after-meal "lie down" was the most hateful. Somehow there was little inclination to read, and though one was really very tired on going to bed, it was most difficult to get to sleep. Weighing was a daily matter viewed with much importance. Ten stone six pounds was the first record, which after three weeks came down to nine stone six, then the weight went up until after six weeks it was eleven stone four. The result of changing flesh for muscle, so Ellis said.

The last fortnight, the hard work, with little liquid, affected my kidneys pretty badly, and every night I was then given a small quantity of gin and water.

The first day I arrived at the running-ground, it was the case of running a full quarter mile, straight off. In vain I protested, and in vain I pleaded that I had just completed the orgy of an annual Militia training! Ellis insisted that it was to be done to enable him to gauge my powers, and not only that, but he was brutal enough to put out a man about 100 yards from home to—what he called—"pull me out."

So I stripped and ran, knowing I should be sick at the end, which I was, and so painfully, that no sea-sickness has ever been worse. The time was $58\frac{1}{2}$ seconds, at which, after such an effort, I was very disgusted, but Ellis seemed

quite pleased. That I vastly improved in style and pace at this establishment is proved by a quarter-mile run, after six weeks' training, at Birkenhead Football or Cricket Club Sports, when the record would have been beaten easily had the full 440 yards been completed.

In those days there were two records, one for a cinder track (49½ seconds, I think), of which there were then very few (though Lillie Bridge had one), and one for performances on grass (52 seconds). The Birkenhead track was a grass one. My start was five yards, with Schofield, the North of England quarter-mile champion, behind me at scratch.

There were over twenty starters, the limit being thirty-five yards. The favourite was a Winchester boy who, although he had just won his school quarter in wonderful time, had been given the limit of thirty-five yards. A cousin's wedding three or four days before had called me. There training was broken and all sorts of forbidden things eaten and drunk, both at the old-fashioned wedding breakfast, and for two whole days after it.

With the pistol I went off as usual, as if only running 100 yards, and was most lucky in the way I got through my men. A lot of them, being green, ran wide, and in these cases I slipped past on the inside, for "a foot from the ropes" was my motto, except when passing anyone. At half distance the whole lot had been collared, except the Winchester boy, who seemed to me as far away as ever.

Nearing the "straight" I found he was coming back very quickly, and half-way past the grand-stand I passed him, but heard frenzied cries from this stand of "Well run, Schofield; well run, Schofield." Naturally I thought I was being overtaken and, running "all out" to the worsted, looked round to find that Schofield was catching the Winchester boy, and that was what the shouting was all about.

Staggering off to the dressing-tent to lie down on the clean straw, it soon became evident that there was a great hubbub going on. Schofield, on coming in, was asked by someone if he had won, and I heard the reply, "How the devil could I win with the time over two seconds inside the record."

This set me thinking, and presently up came one of the

stewards with Walter Platt, of *The Field*, the official time-keeper and handicapper. With outstretched hands they beamed congratulations, which astonished me so, that I asked, "What for?" "You've just done $49\frac{1}{2}$ seconds, on grass, off the five yards mark," said Platt. "I most heartily congratulate you, and I'm now going to measure the track with a steep tape."

Unfortunately the length was found to be only 436 yards, or four yards short of the quarter mile. A pity, but still it was the best race I ever ran. The average pace for the distance of 431 yards I actually ran was over $8\frac{1}{2}$ yards a second, and so I should have been well within the record had it been a matter of going nine yards more.

Running in those days was very exciting, but my father objected to it strongly and was right in saying that it was somewhat low, and that he would not continue my allowance if I went on with it. At first no heed was taken, and Ellis found me plenty of cash by betting at the weekly meetings.

As a sprinter, however, I was never to be compared with my brother, H. C. Woodyatt, of the "United Hospitals" and "London Athletic Club" (now a doctor at Brockenhurst). "H. C." undoubtedly beat even time for the 100 yards on more than one occasion; but official time-keepers are, rightly, very chary of giving even ten seconds dead, if there has been the slightest advantage to the runner, such as a wind behind, a bit gained in the start, etc.

This brother of mine, during his time in London, won every challenge cup given for sprinting; beat the 100 yards amateur champion in a special scratch race at Crewe, and created an "United Hospitals" record for their 220 yards event (22 and $\frac{1}{3}$ th, or $\frac{2}{3}$ th seconds), which has not been equalled yet.

In the early morning, a Sunday, after my scrap, en route to the station, with the Sheffield handicap runner, in Shropshire, I arrived home, where I had practically been forbidden to go. I was in a somewhat knocked-about condition, and turned up just as my father was starting for early service. He didn't say much—though he looked a good deal—the only remark being, "You seem to have been in the wars; have you given up running?"

and when I answered, "Yes," he added, "Then I'm very glad to see you, and by the same token you'd better ask cook if she can give you a raw beefsteak for that left eye." That was the end of my career on the running-path.

CHAPTER II

THE CALL OF INDIA

IN December, 1880, I was gazetted a second lieutenant in the 1st Royal Cheshire Militia Light Infantry, a cumbrous title, changed next year to 3rd Battalion Cheshire Regiment.

We came out annually in Chester, the officers messing at the Grosvenor Hotel. The training had always to be arranged so as to close before the Chester Races on the plea that the town would otherwise be painted red by our gallant men! A large majority of these were Irishmen, with very many old soldiers amongst them. We did a certain amount of soldiering, but the whole thing was largely a big social county merrymaking, with enormous lunches, and cheery guest nights every week.

The Colonel was Tom Cholmondeley, a capital judge of a horse and a keen rider to hounds. The second-in-command was France-Hayhurst, of Bostock, and then came Tom Marshall, of Hartford, one of the keenest non-regular soldiers that ever stepped. As ardent a Volunteer as he was a Militiaman, everyone was delighted when in 1906 he was created a civil K.C.B. Amongst his many accomplishments was an expert knowledge of rowing. My father, who was at Christ Church just before or just after him, told me of his very peculiar case. Having broken down in training when bow of the Oxford eight, he was put in as *cox* on purpose to keep him in the boat. Then he became president of the O.U.B.C., an unprecedented honour for a man who had not actually rowed in the race.

A. N. Hornby (commonly called "Monkey") was one of our company commanders, the darling of his men and the leader in every kind of frolic. He was then thirty-five, and the picture of manly strength, health and good

looks. Hunting all the winter and playing cricket all the summer ought to keep anyone fit! Captain of England for cricket and football the same year, he was about the best-known man in the British Isles, and as popular in Chester as he was at the Old Trafford, or in Blackburn.

His father's mills were located at Blackburn, and he could have been Member for that constituency any day he liked. When put into the mills after leaving Harrow, he encouraged cricket amongst the hands to such an extent during the dinner hour that this period was often prolonged to two or even three hours. At last, in despair, his father gave him £500 a year to keep away!

We were great friends and I often stayed with him at his first cottage near Nantwich. Soon after joining, on account of my running reputation, I was put on the battalion annual sports committee, of which Hornby was president, and we set out one day to buy the prizes from a Chester jeweller. "Monkey" was very particular about the cup for the officers' race, which he informed me he invariably won. I am not sure he did not pay something extra for it out of his own pocket. Anyhow, he didn't seem too pleased when I managed to beat him, though I was nearly caught myself by a very speedy half-back called Forbes, of the London Scottish, who had just joined us.

Another skipper was Rhys Jones, who had been in the Regular Army, but then lived mostly by his wits. One big guest night, when over sixty were dining, he offered to bet anyone, or everyone, anything from a fiver to a pony that he would not "go as you please" seven miles round the Rhoodee (Chester racecourse, and, I think, one mile round) next afternoon in an hour. Nearly everyone took him on, and a lot of money was wagered.

Now almost every man you meet would say he could "get" seven miles in an hour. It does not sound very difficult, yet out of about fifty of us only seven managed to do it. Some began by trotting, then walked, then got behindhand and lost. Others began by walking hard, and then got such pains down their shins they couldn't run. All found, a thing *they* hadn't thought of, but Jones had (!), that the grass had not been cut for ages, and was abnormally long and rank. Those who won trotted all the way, though some of them very gently.

As mentioned in the last chapter, my commission, on passing into the Army from the Militia, was dated 12th May, 1883. It was great chagrin to me to be gazetted to the 1st Dorsets at Aldershot, and not to a battalion in India. Not that I then wanted the Indian Army, but desired so much to serve in that country. Nor could I get to the 2nd Dorsets at Peshawar, as there was no vacancy. In vain I waited nearly six months for one and then, taking my courage in both hands, went personally to the War Office. In those days the official to see on such matters was the military secretary, though I did not think he was at all likely to consent to see a humble lieutenant like myself.

In fear and trembling my card was given to the messenger, and very shortly I was admitted to the Presence. Now, in those days I had not the faintest conception of what a military secretary was like. Barring that his name was, if my memory does not fail me, Lord Edward Seymour, I was not sure of his rank nor did I know anything about him.

I had pictured to myself a somewhat brusque, but debonair, young officer who would hurl curt questions at me, and probably tell me to go to the devil. Instead of that I found a most delightful old gentleman in a frock-coat who, getting up from his revolving chair, shook hands warmly. Waving me to a seat, he said: "Sit down, sit down, and tell me what I can do for you."

It only remained for me to explain that I wanted to transfer to a battalion in India, and suggested the 2nd Cheshires, as I knew many of the officers.

"Of course, of course," said my friend, "and you have a claim, having done some years' service in the county militia, a very strong claim, and we are doing all we can to encourage the Territorial connection. Let me see" (consulting the Army List), "I notice that the last joined subaltern in the 2nd Cheshires is three months junior to you, and" (looking up at me) "I'm afraid we can't antedate you, and put you in over his head."

Hastening to explain that it didn't matter in the least, I deeply wondered, and have wondered ever since, what he would have said and done if I had *insisted* on being put above this officer, for he was such a dear, kind old gentleman.

After some talk about India I took my leave, and in December, 1883, shipped in the troopship *Malabar* to join the 2nd Cheshires at Peshawar.

It was when talking of India to this military secretary that the lamentable ignorance about that country in England, now acknowledged as a truism, was first brought home to me. Never having had a relation out there, I was pretty ignorant myself, but had talked to everyone available with any knowledge of the subject, and found I knew a good deal more about it than this War Office official.

When orders eventually arrived, no one at my home had any idea whether Peshawar was in Madras, Bombay, Bengal, or the Punjab. Hearing that a painter working in the house was an ex-soldier and had been to India, my mother rushed off to ask him if he had ever been to Peshawar.

"Oh! yes, mum, I was there two years," said the painter. "What sort of a place is it, and is it healthy?" she asked. "Well, mum, I don't rightly remember, except that we was always having so many funerals we christened it the Valley of Death!"

In connection with this ignorance an amusing story was told me by one of my generals, years later, about an incident at the War Office in the early eighties when holding an appointment there, obtained in a rather peculiar way, as follows: In the second Afghan War he had been a field engineer and accompanied Sir Sam Browne and the Political Officer when a ford over the Kabul river was reconnoitred for the passage of the 10th Hussars by night (31 March '79). The spot was selected and this young engineer said he would get the ford staked. This was not done, however, as the villagers objected and the general decided it was unnecessary.

But the sapper was not satisfied. He felt uncomfortable, and noting the decision in his pocket-book, gave it to the general to sign, as he said he would like to feel exonerated for the neglect of a very obvious duty. Rather annoyed, Sir S. B. scribbled his signature and the date.

As everyone knows, the 10th Hussars lost an officer and forty-six men crossing this ford. England, being horrified, rose in her wrath and said, "Who's to blame?" As a matter of fact, the ford was all right if correct crossing

taken, for some Indian cavalry went over first, and arrived on the other bank quite safely.

Enquiries were made, and the War Office eventually got on to the field engineer, who had evidently failed to carry out a most necessary precaution—a precaution, too, which was not only his particular work to see to, but moreover is specially referred to in our Regulations.

My friend sat quite tight until the last stage, when he was told it was proposed to remove him from the service, and what had he to say? His reply was to enclose that invaluable leaf from his pocket-book!

Not only was he *not* removed, but he was given a good appointment in Whitehall, and eventually rose to become Major-General G. E. Sanford, C.B., C.S.I., and to command the Meerut Division.

His tale about the ignorance relating to India, or rather, in this case, the assumption by the higher authorities of the universal existence of such ignorance, was as follows:—

In 1882, after his return from Malta, the late Duke of Cambridge, as Commander-in-Chief, assembled the War Office staff, and, after some conversation on various topics, addressed them, in most ponderous tones, with a very guttural accent, and a rich rolling of R's:

“Gentlemen, in conclusion, I want to tell you about Maltà, which I have just visited. I was very glad to see Maltà, and Maltà was very glad to see me.

“It was a great pleasure to me to see the trroops, who were looking very well, and the trroops had much pleasure in being inspected by me.

“You doubtless know that I also saw for the first time some Indian trroops.

“I saw them all—Sikhs, Gurkhas, Punjabis, etc. They moved well and are fine fellows, very fine fellows, but *black, gentlemen, you know, quite black.*”

A Devonshire friend of mine in the Indian Civil Service, and also a volunteer in India, was a very fine rifle shot, especially with the match rifle. He was shooting at Wimbledon in the eighties, when word was suddenly sent round to say the Duke of Cambridge was on the ranges, and would see all the competitors from India at the flagstaff in half an hour's time.

My friend, a stalwart Oxonian, struggled into his private's

uniform, and the batch was hastily dressed in line to await the approaching Duke. It consisted of officers, N.C.O.s and men, both regulars and volunteers, together with Indian orderlies, etc., all fallen in anyhow, a motley crew, for there had been no time to arrange anything in order.

The Secretary of the Association, meeting the Duke near the right of the line, was told to explain who each man was. The Indian Civil Service volunteer, being very tall, was on the right, and the secretary named him as "Mr. X, 5th Punjab Rifles." "Ah!" said the Duke, "A Punjabi, I know the Punjabis, I met them at Maltà, fine fellow, very fine fellow"—and passed on!

My only personal experiences of the famous Duke were, firstly, at a review at Aldershot in 1883, very soon after I had joined the 1st Dorsets; and, secondly, at Cannes, in 1901, when he was a very bent old man.

At the review, it was my misfortune to be the right guide of my company on the saluting base (the old drill). I thought I had gone past quite nicely, but the Colonel afterwards shattered my self-complacency by rudely enquiring why the blazes I moved my left arm when marching at attention, and whether I had been taught to do so in the Militia.

I then remembered that as I squinted to my right and viewed an enormous figure in a blue frock-coat with very large and high patent-leather boots and ample bosom covered with Orders, I had, at the same time, heard a loud voice calling out: "Who the devil is that officer swinging his left arm, who's that swinging his arm?"

I, then, had been the delinquent! It quite spoilt my afternoon as I sculled in gloomy silence up the Aldershot canal. In after-years it came home to me that I was only really a bit ahead of my time, for are we not now carefully enjoined in "Ceremonial" to swing the disengaged arm, when marching past, as at all other times?

I did not care for Aldershot in the summer. Having always been a rowing man, the excellent cricket was no use to me. Polo I could not afford, and that canal is a dull place to boat on.

It is a far cry to the old troopships, *Euphrates*, *Crocodile*, *Malabar* and *Serapis*, conveying troops to the East. They were commanded and officered by the Royal Navy, a duty

naval officers were said to loathe as being not only very irksome, but derogatory to their dignity.

My first experience, getting on board H.M.S. *Malabar* at Portsmouth during a cold evening in early December, 1883 (and accompanied by a prize-bred bulldog called "Muggins"), was rather an awkward one. Standing in my wake at the gangway was an offensive-looking person with a letter addressed to me. He turned out to be a representative from my tailor, hanging round to make me pay for my last suit of dittoes.

This was an unfriendly act I much resented, having just paid a very substantial bill for every mortal thing up to that one suit. Sarcastic enquiries as to whether the firm's prices justified the assumption that they did business for cash only, simply elicited the reply that "it was extremely difficult to get money out of gentlemen in India!" As the man kept following me about and was a perfect nuisance regarding his six guineas, the only thing to do was to get into uniform, and ask the ship's adjutant to put me on duty. It was then a simple task to order him off the boat; which I did promptly.

We subalterns were herded together at the bottom of the ship, aft, in a large space called the "Pandemonium," and not badly named at that in this particular instance. That is to say, although we were a merry crowd, we were certainly a lot of demons in our craze for mischief, and in our treatment of the officers of slightly higher rank who occupied thinly partitioned cabins, named horse-boxes, just above us. Pillow fights with them, or between ourselves, were of nightly occurrence. Then the purser, or his satellites, most inconsiderately refusing to renew our burst ones, we had perforce to refrain, and the majority of us found only greatcoats under our heads at night for the rest of the voyage.

We were, of course, always in uniform, with dinner in mess dress. In addition to the field officer and orderly officer of the day, there was a subaltern on duty for every watch, who, to his intense disgust, had to go and salute, on the bridge, a naval officer years younger than himself, and report "coming on duty."

For days, the main attraction at dinner was sampling the various continental wines, of which there was an enormous assortment, being tempted thereto by the

ridiculously low prices after the land charges we had been accustomed to.

Lieut.-Colonel F. C. Keyser of the Royal Fusiliers, a pioneer of the signal service and well known for years after his retirement as a zealous devotee of the English Turf, was Officer commanding Troops. So interested was he in all happenings on board, that he started a ship's newspaper called *The Malabar*, which teemed with wit and humour. How it was printed, I don't know; anyhow, it was not only printed, but illustrated with excellent caricatures (by Lovett of the Gloucesters) of all the celebrities on board, including "Muggins."

The latter, however, soon got into dire disgrace. There were some calves on board for Christmas veal, and one being led past Muggins, who was rather irritable with his enforced confinement, he fastened on to its muzzle. A dislodgment could only be made by means of an iron crowbar, which strained his jaws badly for many weeks to come.

The naval officers were very fond of a mild gamble, and every night after dinner some ten of us sat down to Nap, Loo, Van John, or Poker. Colonel Keyser occasionally looked on, and one evening was present when the writer was initiating the company into the mysteries of a very gambling but extremely simple and foolish game learnt in Liverpool, called "Yankee Sam." This was not quite to the colonel's taste and he disappeared quickly, but his only remark was: "I'm d——d if you are not the most versatile young gamblers I ever met."

Shortly before this voyage there had been a rumpus at the Malta United Service Club, caused by the rowdiness of a trooper's contingent. The old privilege of being honorary members during a troopship's stay in port had been withdrawn for some months. Colonel Keyser knew Malta well, and was most popular there. As soon as we got into harbour he began to signal, asking that we might be allowed to use the club, and he would be responsible. His request being granted, we were all solemnly warned that we must be extremely careful in our conduct. So serious was the situation held to be that at dinner when, someone saying something extremely funny, I burst into laughter, an emissary came at once from the O.C. at the top of the table to warn me that no boisterous laughter was permitted!

The men were very badly accommodated indeed on these troopships. They were dreadfully overcrowded, and no one seemed then to think of doing anything for their amusement. As "officer of the watch" one had to go round the whole ship, and the smell was so nauseating in the men's quarters that in quite calm weather many of us were violently sick. What it must have been like when nearing the East in September, or March, passes all imagination, for no troops were allowed on deck at night.

Besides the parades by sectional commanders, we had alarm rehearsals almost daily, and fell in, equipped with life-belts, opposite the boats allotted. It was understood there were rafts somewhere; but, although with practice the rehearsal alarms were splendidly performed, it always worried us as to how each boat could possibly carry the number of persons detailed for it.

CHAPTER III

INDIA IN THE EIGHTIES

AFTER about a month's voyage the old *Malabar* rolled into Bombay Harbour, and next day we were all free to disperse to our respective destinations. Many of us now became victims of that ignorance about India to which a reference has been made before. In the old days the whole of India was looked upon by inexperienced people at home as being intensely hot at all times. Now, on the contrary, visitors are enjoined to take exactly the same clothes they would wear in England, with bedding and linen in addition.

This is quite correct, for they may find themselves in the hills at any time, where all would be wearable, as they would be also in the cold weather of the Punjab and elsewhere. Really thin clothes, as necessary in the hot weather (and in places like Bombay, Madras and Calcutta, at all times), can be obtained easily and expeditiously on the spot.

Some of us were for the Punjab—myself for Peshawar—and it was the middle of January. A good adjutant would probably have warned his officers that sheets, blankets, pillows, etc., as well as a valise, were very necessary adjuncts to one's kit; that railways, hotels and dak bungalows¹ did not supply them; and that Peshawar was extremely cold in the winter. Anyhow, I got no hints at all, and with the exception of a rug had no bedding. A pillow, as described in my account of the "Pandemonium," I had learnt to dispense with. But the cold that first night in the train was so intense that a long stoppage next morning was utilised to rush into a native Bazaar and purchase two Indian pillows and a couple of rezais (species of wadded quilt). For months my bedding consisted of

¹ Rest-houses.

these only. It never struck me to get sheets and pillow-cases until happening, more than a year afterwards, to stay with some newly-made friends in their charming Simla home, my hostess made me feel entirely ashamed by explaining what a dirty person I had been!

At Ambala a halt was made at the one existing hotel, very different from the modern ones to be found at the present day in many parts of India. It had, however, one compensating advantage, the charge was only five rupees a day, or about one-third of the present rates. Still, for the sake of health, cleanliness and comfort a great debt of gratitude is owed to the late Mr. Wützer. It was he who became the pioneer of improved hotel management and catering in India by establishing his celebrated Charleville Hotel in Mussoorie.

About dawn the second morning after leaving Ambala, Peshawar was reached, intensely cold, but looking green and fresh with delightful flower-beds all down the Mall. Driving from the station a few British soldiers were seen wearing over their uniform, not the celebrated "British warm," but a *pink* double-breasted wadded pea-jacket, which looked most strange. I learnt afterwards that no British soldier in Peshawar was ever allowed out without this garment in the winter between Retreat, at sunset, and nine o'clock in the morning.

I liked the look of Peshawar and was very sorry to hear, on arrival, that my stay would be extremely short, as the battalion was leaving on the 1st February for Ambala. Anyhow it was a novelty to look forward to, as the relief was to be carried out by route-march. This meant a matter of forty-four stages, a total distance of 470 miles, covering a period of about seven weeks.

Meanwhile getting out my scatter-gun, I haunted the Artillery jheel,¹ frequently in the company of Jack Ramsay of the Cheshires, afterwards Sir John Ramsay, Agent to the Governor-General in Baluchistan. He was even then a very fair shot, while my average for a snipe must have been about fifteen to twenty cartridges.

Colonel H. C. Patton commanded the 2nd Cheshires, and a better C.O. never walked, though he would have owned to some prejudices and a few fads. He was a strict disciplinarian, a very good drill, and most keen on cleanliness

¹ A swamp in India.

and sanitation. Especially was this the case as regards the barracks and married quarters; whereby he proved himself a good deal ahead of his time. His weekly inspection of the quarters of our married people, invariably carried out at odd times and with little warning, was a matter of great ceremony and often of much tribulation.

The first time my duty, as orderly officer of the day, gave me the privilege of joining the solemn cortège of second-in-command, adjutant, quarter-master, sergeant-major, etc., which accompanied the colonel on his rounds, an amusing thing happened. It was when we were walking through the quarters of a certain sergeant's wife, well known for her ready tongue and contempt of authority. The C.O. had long held the firm belief that at these inspections, rooms having been tidied in a hurried and perfunctory manner, all *olla podrida* such as dirty clothes, soiled linen, slippers, etc., were tumbled into the bed and the quilt neatly drawn over them. Rather distrusting this Mrs. Sergeant, and disliking her for numerous cases of impudence, in which he had often come off second best, the colonel pulled down the quilt of the large double bed with a jerk. There was nothing there, but the lady, with a loud sniff and in front of us all, snapped out:

"P'raps you'd like to get into it next."

In these days it is much cheaper and more convenient to rail troops than to march them, but in former times it was almost the invariable custom for reliefs to be carried out by road, both to harden the men and to show them to the inhabitants.

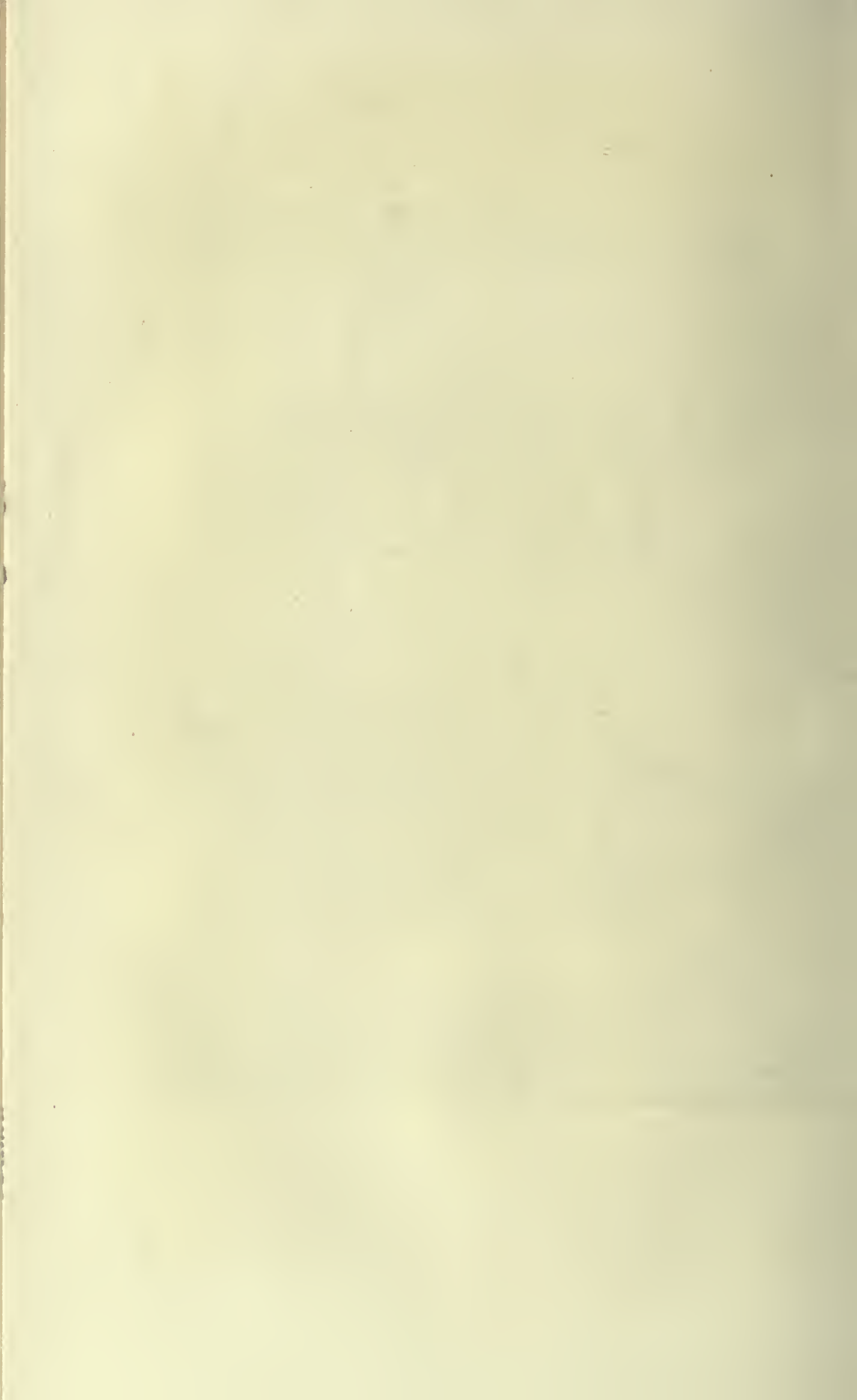
In 1884, the 2nd Cheshires, having been over fifteen years in India, had a very large number of old soldiers in the ranks who knew their way about, were as hard as nails and took everything as it came along in the jolliest kind of spirit. I was astonished to find so many officers, for we started on our long march with not less than thirty, many of whom had been in India some years. The colonel was new to the country, and a good deal in the hands of the quarter-master in all matters of interior economy.

The latter was a very knowing old bird and frequently asked me, on a guest night, after a generous share of wine, who I thought commanded the battalion? I maintained a discreet silence. He would then hiccough out:



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THE AUTHOR, WHEN G.O.C. LAHORE DIVISION, AND MOUNTED ON HIS HUNTER-CHARGER
"WARRIOR," WINNER OF SIX FIRST PRIZES IN THE RING, WINTER OF 1919-1920.



“ Why, the quarter-master, of course. 'Ow can the colonel move without me, 'ow can 'e send away heven 'arf a company, 'ow can 'e horder a single round on the range, without coming to me? ”

One night, being more confidential than usual, he informed me that a quarter-master's post was a very lucrative one, in something like the following words :

“ 'Ow do I carry on, you say, with a wife and seven childer, a hay-one bungaler, two ponies and a buggee? 'Oo der yer think pays the bungaler rent—me? Not much. Why, the punkah-coolie contractor does that, as well as supplying a cook, kitmatgar (table servant), bearer (body servant), bhistic (water carrier), sweeper (low-caste menial), ayah (woman servant), together with a mali (gardener) and two coolies for the gardin. Bread? 'Oo supplies that, you say? Why, the ruti-wallah¹; meat, the butcha; ponies' gram² and grass, the coffee-shop wallah, together with vegetables, flour, sugar, and all the mem-sahib wants for the 'ouse thrown in. No, Wudyet, I 'as to keep my pay for the childer. My four sons 'as to git into the Ryle Engineers or the Church, for John is to go to Hoxford! ” Most of which duly came off!

He was an excellent quarter-master for all that, both in barracks and in camp. The Cheshires never lacked for anything, everything was up to time, while his stores and accounts were models of neatness, accuracy and care.

In his cups he loved to be asked to sing. He had only one song, which had only four lines; and after thirty-seven years I can still bring to mind his great shining bald head and his jovial red face as he stood up and bawled out :

The Duke of York and 'e
 'Ad ten thousand min.
 'E took them up a 'ill
 And brought 'em down agin.

Repeated *ad infinitum*.

Our transport train was of enormous length, and consisted of elephants, camels and hired country carts. The men

¹ Really roti (bread) wallah, the last word denoting trade, profession or occupation.

² Grain for horses.

had what were called E.P. (European Privates) tents, sixteen men to a tent, with an allowance of six tents to each of the eight companies. An elephant carried one E.P., which weighed ten maunds (over 7 cwt.), and was never asked to carry anything else, because it was a doctrine that ordinary baggage was derogatory to his dignity.

On the second morning I happened to be orderly officer and, having to rise very early to inspect rations, I shall never forget the beauty of the camp as the sun rose and threw its rays across the green sward of this halting-stage named Pabbi. At the back was the large tent of the officers' mess with the colonel's Swiss cottage and neat Union Jack on one side, and the second-in-command's on the other, while other senior officers continued the line right and left. Behind were the servants' "pals," and behind them again all chargers, hacks, polo ponies and a small bazaar; lastly the rear guard.

The tents were beautifully pitched according to plan with every row of pegs in line and every corner a right angle. The colonel was dreadfully particular about this, and would have had even the huge mess tent down at once if improperly put up. But officers and men all knew this, and the latter, as I've said, were mostly old stagers, so there was no trouble. All the Government tents happened to be a new issue, being the Peshawar allotment of those manufactured to make good the losses of the second Afghan War. As the mess, and most of those of officers, were recent purchases, the camp looked delightfully white, and spick and span.

On one flank was assembled the heterogeneous transport, at this hour quite still, except the attendants. On the other, and some little further away, was a picturesque mass of brightly coloured bell-shaped tents, some blue, some pink, some red, some green, many striped in two or three colours and all, at this time, tightly closed. The evening before, this camp had puzzled me greatly, until my friend the quarter-master explained that it was the regimental establishment of native women who were marching with us to Ambala!

Shades of Exeter Hall! What would be said of such a practice in these days! Fortunately for me I am not called upon to uphold or condemn the policy which prompted

the existence of these establishments, and permitted their presence even in camp. I may add, however, that there was very little venereal indeed in the 2nd Cheshires. Also that, from direct knowledge, I can give testimony to the truly awful results which followed the abolition of these regimental establishments a few years later.

Such gaily coloured tents were, perhaps, a mistake, as was brought home to some of us at a halt when the second-in-command brought over his wife and some ladies to tea. It was then that a voluble spinster persistently enquired from a particularly modest subaltern: "But who lives in those charming little coloured tents?"!

When we got to the Beas river there was no road bridge, so we had to halt on the near bank. The next day the transport and baggage passed over the railway bridge, the battalion marching across it the day after. But the elephants had to swim the river, and it was amusing to watch them, for it is no joke for the mahouts at all. An elephant, in deep water, *may* take it into his head to dive, and stay below a bit, with only the tip of his trunk showing!

At Lahore we were camped near the historical Shalamar Gardens, and the next day being a halt, I tried to add to my stud by the addition of a decent polo pony, the maximum height being then 13'2. A waler (Australian bred) was then unknown on the polo ground, and even an Arab, as far north as Peshawar, was quite a novelty. When young George Wombell, of the 60th Rifles, brought one up from Bombay during my next sojourn there, some two and a half years later, we used to form parties to go and look at it! Lahore was a little dearer than Peshawar, where the average price for a likely country-bred was about one hundred and fifty rupees. I remember getting into terribly hot water in the mess because I paid Rs. 250 at the latter station in 1886 for something extra special.

Knowing nothing of the language there was a good deal of difficulty in bargaining at Lahore, but eventually a deal over a certain bay seemed settled, when on paying out the money (Rs. 125) it was evident there had been confusion between *pāchēēs* (Rs. 25) and *pāchāss* (50). Insisting on the former, the argument got so heated that the dealer went off in a huff. For the rest of the day the merits of

that bay kept coming to mind, until after dinner the yearning being so strong I set off alone to the city in a ticca gharry¹ to try and come to terms.

Arriving in the main serai about 11 p.m., my friend was soon found squatting with his syces in front of a row of some twenty ponies ; but, alas ! the bay had been disposed of already. The dealer tried to comfort me by the assurance that he would bring something even better to meet me at Ambala. He was as good as his word, for there a well-bred looking chestnut mare, capable of even time for four furlongs, became my property in exchange for two hundred rupees. It has been a matter of wonderment to me since, that no thought of any danger or unpleasantness in chatting at midnight in the main serai of Lahore City ever occurred to me then. Where ignorance is bliss !

We knew that a month or two after reaching Ambala, four companies and battalion head-quarters were to move on to the little hill station of Solon, thirty-one miles short of Simla. I was delighted to know, however, that my company was to remain down, for with my two quads I was much looking forward to commencing polo, and playing hard all the hot weather. Imagine then my dismay and disgust when the adjutant came to tell me that I had been transferred to B Company and was for Solon.

Demanding to see the colonel, I told him, almost with tears, about my purchases, how my own company was remaining down, etc., etc., and begged to be allowed to remain. He only laughed at me, remarking that, knowing my people, he was not going to be blamed later if I lost the pink out of my cheeks ! Pink out of my cheeks, forsooth ; I might have been a girl. However, he was adamant, and I had to console myself with the thought that I'd get the ponies into good fettle by trotting along the cart road, and perhaps there might be a chance of Ambala later on. Little did I realise what a damnably monotonous business is "posting" on a pony along a curly tonga road.

Among other units at Ambala we found the 9th Lancers and the 9th Bengal Lancers, the former commanded by Colonel (now General Sir Henry) Bushman, and the latter by Colonel Power Palmer, commonly known as "Long P."

¹ Horrible shaky four-wheeler cab.

The latter was afterwards Commander-in-Chief in India before Lord Kitchener. The former I see frequently at our club, looking wonderfully young and robust. He often reminds me of the fact that although he once sold me a horse at Ambala, we are still on speaking terms!

My chestnut mare proving pretty fast was put into training, and I received a lot of information from the 9th Lancers, especially from "Jabber" Chisholm, who was then adjutant, regarding the mysteries of the Indian Turf. The leading gentlemen riders were then Lord William Beresford, the Viceroy's military secretary, Frank Johnston, late of 10th Hussars, and Bertie Short, an ex-police superintendent, all three bold and fearless horsemen.

The night before each day's racing, "lotteries" took place, and a word about this method of gambling, now abandoned, may not be out of place. This system of gambling is quite unique, so far as I know, and is called "the double lottery." You needed to watch this name to prevent getting let in, for every bid you made at the auction meant double the amount named.

Lottery meetings used to be run somewhat as follows: The owners and punters having assembled after dinner, before the day's racing concerned, a prominent racing man was usually nominated to the chair with the race secretary beside him. The lottery was then filled, that is, a hundred tickets were usually sold at a price varying, at different meetings, from four to ten rupees a ticket.

The president, or race secretary, would call out, "Now then, gentlemen, fill the lottery."

If you were keen on a particular number, you tried to secure it, but one generally tossed for four or more tickets with dice. The loser paid for the tickets, but both equally shared the profits. Each punter usually kept a tally on forms provided by the race secretary, and placed all round the table. The race secretary, of course, kept the official record of all transactions and you had to call out to him the result of the tossings. For instance, I would toss Bill Beresford for ten tickets (that's nothing for an impecunious subaltern!) and, losing, would call out, "Woodyatt to Beresford, ten, numbers 24 to 33." Putting my name first meant I had lost, and would have to pay eventually, but we both shared profits equally.

When the lottery was full, the horses were drawn by putting their names in one hat, and the ticket numbers in another. We generally used gun wads, and the people drawing called out the ticket number, and then the name of the horse, both of which were at once recorded.

Then came the compulsory sale of horses. Supposing tickets had been ten rupees each, the chairman would call out: "A thousand rupees in the lottery and 'Pretty Polly' for sale."

Then you bid away so long as you had taken a ticket, and it was an ordinary auction with the peculiarity that, if your bid were successful, you had to pay the amount (that is were debited for it) twice over, namely, once to the lottery fund and once to the drawer of the ticket. The owner had a right of claiming half so long as he did so on the spot. That is to say, he got a half share of the purchase, and had of course to take a proportionate share of any profit or loss.

Several times when I had bid up higher than I meant to, and been successful in my last bid, I remember with what relief I heard the cry: "Owner half!"

At times one got splendid odds. Once at Simla I had the chance of winning over £150 on one race, and couldn't lose more than £5. Naturally I lost the fiver! One disadvantage of the system was that you did not know what the odds were until all the horses were auctioned. Anyhow, you got it then by putting the price of all the tickets sold to the auction total, and deducting the double price of the horse about which you wanted the odds. There would also be the lottery percentage, which goes to the race fund, to deduct. It used to be five per cent.

With no knowledge whatever of racing, everything was new to me, and the rather strange things that happened seemed very peculiar!

Bill (Lord William) Beresford wielded an enormous influence on the Indian Turf. Possessed of a very charming personality, he was a universal favourite in spite of a very rough tongue when his somewhat hasty temper was roused. Personally I always found him most helpful and kind, but if a man got the wrong side of him he could be extremely nasty. The arbitrary way in which he ruled the roost at

lotteries, when he always took the chair, was very astounding. Some plunger bidding up a pony whose chances Bill himself wanted to secure, would be asked sarcastically if he wanted to buy the pony outright. If a young speculator, he would then probably dry up altogether.

Ambala was then the Aintree of India, with fences like fortifications. The first chase I saw rather astonished me as I stood next Jabber Chisholm, with glasses glued to eye, on the lower steps of the Grand Stand. There were about seven starters, and when the field had covered about half distance, and were on the farther side of the course opposite the Grand Stand, there were only three in it. These were horses ridden by, let us say, A, B, and C. A and B were leading nearly abreast. C was about three lengths behind. At this stage I could see with my glasses that A and B were having an animated conversation. Eagerly calling Chisholm's attention to so strange a proceeding, he merely remarked, quite unperturbed :

"Of course they are, it's blue ruin to either of the three to win, and they are discussing what sort of ramp they can put up. Very interesting indeed, very interesting." I gasped, but it was too exciting to say more.

On rounding the bend into the straight, A ran out into the paddock. B and C took the last fence together and B *deliberately* threw himself off. Now, I thought, what the devil will C do, for even I knew that he was desperately hard up, and there wasn't another horse within two furlongs of him, while his own mount was full of running. Down the straight he sailed—no occasion for glasses any longer, but what on earth is he doing? Is he trying to unfasten his girths? No, he was only busily engaged in *throwing away his weights!*

Frank Johnston was a smart-looking fellow with a very fine tenor voice and with command of about the best vocabulary of Billingsgate imaginable. After singing "Come into the garden, Maud," with a pathos which brought tears to one's eyes, he would, without a moment's hesitation, launch out into the most blasphemous abuse of the native servant because of the weakness of his brandy and soda!

Poor fellow, I last saw him, some ten years later, doing superintendent to a small agency that ran pony tongas from a railway terminus to a hill station. Very ill and worn-out

he looked, but as debonair as ever and wearing a roth Hussar tie. He died shortly afterwards.

Bertie Short went to Bihar, where he soon gave up riding, became correspondent for the *Planters' Gazette*, and lived no one quite knew how. I refer to him again later on.

CHAPTER IV

THE DUFFERINS AT SIMLA

SOLON was dull—very dull—especially as my sporting friend Major Sheringham had gone off on six months' shooting leave. Some two months later I was allowed to follow him, and meanwhile Simla itself was to be avoided as the centre of poodle-faking which was abhorrent to me. Nothing would have made me willingly go near it. Imagine then my horror when I was *ordered* up, with a field officer and a captain, to represent the battalion at the 24th of May (Queen's birthday) levee and birthday ball.

It was there I met my first Viceroy, Lord Ripon. My recollections of him are a stout little man with a beard and eyeglass; who, after the levee, moved freely amongst his guests at Peterhoff¹ whilst they consumed, myself included, large quantities of champagne, quail-in-aspic, *pâté-de-foie-gras*, etc. He did not seem very popular, and I have some sort of vague recollection of the dislike we had for him and Sir Courtney Ilbert,² his Legal Member of Council, for trying to pass a measure called "The Ilbert Bill."³

¹ Formerly the Simla residence of the Viceroy before the present Viceregal Lodge was built, and now allotted to the Legal Member of Council.

² Afterwards Clerk of House of Commons, 1902-20.

³ To amend the code of criminal procedure 1882, and named after the Member who introduced it. It proposed to remove the bar by which native magistrates were precluded from exercising jurisdiction over European British subjects.

The matter is of peculiar interest at the present moment, because it undoubtedly started that racial antagonism which is so dangerous a feature of to-day. Indeed, the bill created such a ferment, especially in the East of India amongst the planters on one side and the

So strong was the feeling over this that the wilder spirits among the indigo planters of Bihar had decided, so rumour had it, to try and kidnap the Viceroy and convey him out to sea in the vicinity of the Andamans until he saw the error of his ways.

However, he and Lady Ripon were very munificent hosts. With plenty of money at their disposal, they set an example of lavish entertainment which was somewhat hard on their successors, blessed with very much less adequate means. In those days the Governor-General, Governors, and even Lieutenant-Governors, held levees in the name of the Queen with very much the same ceremonial, even to the consecutive pens, or barriers, as at St. James's Palace. Bill Beresford, acting as Lord Chamberlain, read out the name of each person as he came up and before he made his bow.

Putting up at an hotel and dining there, I remember being extremely uncomfortable at the function, for the only conveyance of any kind I could get to take me to Peterhoff was a palanquin. This is a kind of bed with prolonged poles carried by four men who shook me up and down in the most unmerciful fashion as they shuffled along.

The next summer I was participating again at another Simla levee and birthday ball. This time the visit was spent in a nice house, was responsible for a change of opinion as regards the attractions of the place, and finally resulted, two years later, in my marriage to the eldest daughter of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue.

Lord Dufferin was the new Viceroy—my second—and combining, as he did, a charming personality, mature judgment and a kind heart with the manner of a grand seigneur, was one of the best of Governors-General. He appeared really to like doing nice things, and many such acts are easily recalled.

To the writer he was always particularly kind. The day Bengalis on the other, as entirely to destroy the mutual trust and cordiality which had been gradually built up since the Mutiny.

It was referred to local administrations for their views, and its utility is best summed up by the terse endorsement written by a district officer in Madras: "Probably quite innocuous, but at any rate entirely unnecessary." A compromise was eventually reached by which European British subjects could claim trial by a jury, at least half the members of which were to be Europeans. This is the law in India to-day.

after my engagement was announced, we happened to go to a small dance at Peterhoff. Lord Dufferin spotted us in the Lancers and, leaving his partner, walked across the room to shake hands and make his congratulations. Now subalterns like that kind of thing from a Viceroy.

On another occasion when Horace Hayes, the horse trainer and vet., was giving an exhibition of horse taming at Anandale,¹ I took a long walk, not caring to pay a gold mohr (sixteen rupees) to see it. Below the present Viceregal Lodge I met the Viceroy walking with his Persian instructor, who always accompanied him. "Hullo," he said, "why not at Anandale?" Telling him I thought sixteen rupees was a great deal too much to pay for a show I could see any day in a remount depot for nothing, he took me by the arm and said I was to go with him. Very interesting it proved to be, for during the walk down he told me all sorts of stories about other countries, and at the exhibition displayed a knowledge of horses I had not dreamt he possessed.

He could be quite *acid*, though, when necessary. I was near once when a lady said to him she had been walking over the new Viceregal Lodge that afternoon, which she described as "the new palace you are building." "Palace," said Lord Dufferin, "it is only a modest house that any country squire might aspire to."

At a fancy dress ball there, given as a house warmer, we were received by His Excellency and Lady Dufferin, the Viceroy wearing ordinary *dress clothes*, with Orders and his G.C.S.I. sash. About half-way through, I was dancing with a Mrs. Langtry (wife of the C.O. of the 8th Hussars), who was looking particularly well that night. At the end of the music and as we were walking away, up came an Arab and began to talk.

"Oh! Come along, never mind that old Arab," I said rather irritably. "He's thinking of 'Lillie Langtry,' his donkey at Port Said."

As she didn't budge, though still holding my arm, but seemed embarrassed, I looked more closely at the intruder, and recognised Lord Dufferin! There was nothing for it but to leave them to proceed to *my* "Kālī jagah" (dark,

¹ A recreation ground, formed by cutting away the hillside, and situated below the residential part of Simla. Much enlarged in later years, mainly by the energy and zeal of Lord William Beresford.

sitting-out place !) together, while I took solace in a drink !

There is no doubt His Excellency was a great ladies' man. A good tale is told of how, assembling his personal staff soon after his first arrival in India, he explained his wishes regarding ceremonial functions and the attention necessary to all guests at Government House. "I want you to quite understand," he said, "that I expect you to devote your energies to the elderly ladies. You need not trouble about the young and pretty ones, I will look after them myself !"

For some years the Dufferins had a cousin, Miss Thynne, out in India with them, and in the chronicles of their movements one always read in the papers : "His Excellency the Viceroy, with Lady Dufferin and the Honourable Miss Thynne, and attended by, etc., etc." Lady Dufferin rode a mule at Simla, as being safer, and this was stabled at Viceregal Lodge. The mule, a very big and specially selected one, was provided by a mountain battery at Jutogh, four miles from Simla, and the men there, on account of its employment, had christened it "The Begum." At the end of the season two gunners, sitting one day on a wall just outside the Cantonment of Jutogh, saw the mule being led back to the battery and in very bad condition. Said No. 1 :

"I say, Bill, 'ere's 'The Begum' coming back."

"'Begum,' you say," remarked No. 2, "I should call it the honourable Miss Thin !"

Lady Dufferin caused it to be announced that it was quite impossible for her to get to know people if they simply wrote their names in the Viceregal books and then ran away. Further, that she, with Lady Helen Blackwood, would be At Home from twelve to two twice a week, and that callers were expected to come inside. This meant a morning-coat for us, besides a terrifying ten minutes in a drawing-room, and great was the tribulation.

However, it had to be done, and punctually at noon the next Tuesday I entered the portals. But there was nothing terrifying at all. Happening to hit off a shooting trip I had made in the Himalayas the year before, my ten minutes lengthened into twenty, and it was only the arrival of a whole batch of people which stopped my tongue. After that I always seemed to be quite at home at Peterhoff and thoroughly enjoyed going there, which was very often.

Many short visits were paid to Simla that season. One morning, asking for leave to "sleep out" and return next day, which was Thursday and in India a *dies non*, the adjutant told me I couldn't go at all as the colonel had decided I was not to be allowed to visit Simla any more. Utterly mystified, I asked why, and then discovered that the C.O. thought I was getting what he called "entangled," and would probably become engaged to be married and then want to go to the "Indian Staff Corps." This was a very sore point with, and anathema to, all commanding officers of British units.

I had not up to then contemplated such a thing, but in those days the only way to enter the Indian Army, then called "Indian Staff Corps," was through the British Service, under certain conditions. This was very hard on British units. Not only did they lose a number of their best officers, attracted by the glamour of an Indian career, but they frequently lost several at one and the same time, rendering the duties of those who remained very heavy until they could be replaced. This was often a matter of many months.

This refusal of sleeping-out leave was extremely awkward, as I was engaged for a lot of dances that night and had made all arrangements to go, including the deposit of my dress clothes, etc., at the Simla United Service Club.

But how was it to be done? The colonel might send for me, and he never went out until 4 p.m. He then invariably drove up the cart road away from the Simla direction, which was an advantage. The Government tonga was not allowed to start from Solon after 4 p.m. on account of arriving in the dark. Finally, I had no leave to be absent for a night!

At breakfast a brilliant thought struck me. I had two ponies and the adjutant one. He was a good fellow and a great friend; so, asking the loan of his pony for the evening, I sent off one of mine immediately to a stage nine miles away and the other to within ten miles of Simla, arranging to ride the adjutant's for the first twelve-mile portion. By this means I rode the thirty-one miles to Simla, attended the dance, and rode back in the very early morning in time for breakfast.

This I did nine times during that summer, but had to give it up in the monsoon season, for my last ride was a

dreadful nightmare. Leaving the dance about 3 a.m. in a torrential downpour, I changed at the club and started an hour later, knowing that I must be at orderly room in khaki uniform before nine. The night was pitch dark and the rain so heavy that, having with difficulty manœuvred the Combermere Bridge below the club, I knocked up a small tailor's shop, opposite Hamilton's, the jewellers, to borrow a piece of tarpaulin to tie over my knees. The act of dismounting, of course, soaked my saddle through and through, which did not add to my comfort.

There were some oil lamps burning dimly near the post office, but past Army Head-quarters it was very dark and, moreover, my pony, hating the journey, stopped and reared at every cross-road. Down to the left below Gordon Castle I could see absolutely nothing. My mount, not being out to help me at all, made matters very difficult. It was only by reaching out with my crop to hit the railings on the left and kicking out my foot continually to feel for the wall on the right, that it was possible to tell at all how one was progressing.

Solon was eventually reached at 8.30 a.m. and I was saved. Of course everyone but the colonel knew all about it. At least I *thought* he was in ignorance, until seeing him at Lymington twenty-four years later he told me, roaring with laughter, that he also knew! Simla was much amused. Lord Dufferin, when the dance or entertainment was at Peterhoff, invariably came up and, with his head on one side and a merry twinkle in his eye, would say:

“I trust the cart road is in good order, Woodyatt!”

At this time I met my first Commander-in-Chief, in the person of Sir Donald Stewart, and a more magnificent man I had never seen. Someone told me it was the correct thing to give him a bow at levees after passing the Viceroy, and there was certainly no difficulty in spotting him, for he was head and shoulders above everyone else. His family, too, inherited his good looks, his four daughters, Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Eustace, May and Norah Stewart, being quite the belles of Simla at a time when beautiful women there were very plentiful.

A great celebrity also in the Summer Capital then was Major Dalbiac, commanding a horse battery at Ambala and commonly called “The Treasure.” To a neat and handsome person was added a firm seat in the saddle, a

matchless effrontery, a marvellous capacity for making love, and some system for obtaining unlimited leave which was the bewilderment of the authorities and the envy of all his contemporaries !

At the end of July, finding I could get two or three months' leave, which I fondly hoped to spend in Simla, I approached the adjutant with my leave form. Looking it through, he explained that it was utter waste of time putting Simla in the application at all, as there was not the least chance of it being passed by the colonel !

Being also very keen to get down to Sitamarhi, in Bihar, to stay with an old school pal, my destination was altered accordingly. I begged, however, I might first go to Simla for a short time to collect my clothes, raise the wind for my journey, etc. I suppose this took me some time, for, after a fortnight or so, I got an official from the adjutant to say that if I did not leave Simla very shortly and get on to Bihar, the remainder of my leave would be cancelled ! So I had to go.

The famous Bertie Short was there, still doing a little riding and busily reporting for the *Planters' Gazette*. The first night of the lotteries my breath was taken away by the chairman, Paddy Hudson, rising to say :

"Before we commence business, gentlemen, I think it right to say that Mr. Bertie Short is amongst us, but if anyone objects he will withdraw."

I suppose the poor fellow was a defaulter in some way ; anyhow no one objected and the selling began. His face, one not easy to forget with its good-looking oval shape, fearless blue eyes and dare-devil expression, remained quite calm and unruffled during this preliminary. Very different to what it looked next day when he was "bucked" off in the paddock by a waler pony mare on the signal to mount.

CHAPTER V

LORD DUFFERIN AND THE AMIR

MY battalion had a pack of hounds at Ambala drawn along in camel shagrans (species of covered wagon), and we hunted regularly on Thursdays and Sundays. In the winter the battalion went to Delhi for a big camp of exercise. We were camped for a time on the Ridge alongside the Chief's camp, where a lot of foreign officers were staying. They used to ride round with the Chief, and it was an extraordinary thing how the men disliked the Russian representatives and would whisper amongst themselves in the shelter trenches:—

“Them's the ruddy Roosians, them's the fellars we're going to fight, the beggars in the white caps.”

It was here that a linguistic sapper officer, who was helping to look after them, and remarkable for his marvellous agility in walking under a rope and then jumping over it, or hopping on to the mantelpiece and remaining there, got very lively one night. In his light-heartedness he insisted on continuously calling out: “I want to hop that ruddy Russian round the table.” This caused much consternation: the Chief heard about it, and he had to leave Delhi next day.

It was here also that the celebrated ball at the Delhi Club took place, when all of us were very merry, down to the last joined subaltern. This joviality was partly owing to the high spirits of everybody at the apparent certainty of a war with Russia, and partly because our fitness, after a hard camp life on short commons, made the wine take effect very easily. The Cheshires had a meet next morning at 6.30 a.m., and my duties of whip necessitated a rapid change into hunting kit immediately after the ball. The long jog to covert, a good run and a search

until 3 p.m. for two hounds, lost when rioting after pig, effectually worked off any excess in champagne the night before.

It was here, again, that I made up my mind to go into the Indian Staff Corps (the old term for the Indian Army), to my colonel's intense disgust. This necessitated very early action with the proper authorities encamped on the Delhi Ridge, as I was already over age.

I had put down for cavalry, as that was the arm I wanted, but then taking fellows a very long time to get, owing to paucity of vacancies. I realised, however, that the first thing to do was to get into the Indian Army somehow, and trust to luck about the mounted branch later on. Enquiry taught me that a colonel, called Collett, then deputy adjutant-general, was the man I wanted, but that the interview might be unpleasant! Fortified by the thought of my success with the War Office Military Secretary, I judged a bold course the better one, and next day sent my card into his office tent. Being duly admitted, the following conversation took place:

Self. "I've come to say I want to enter the Indian Staff Corps."

D.A.G. "All right, then, send in the necessary papers."

Self. "Yes, that's being done, but unfortunately I'm over age."

D.A.G. "Then, I'm afraid I can't help you."

Self. "I came into the Army late, having been in business first, and as promotion in the Indian Staff Corps is by length of service, I don't see how I can do harm to anyone."

D.A.G. "Humph! Fond of shooting?"

Self. "Yes, sir, very."

D.A.G. "All right, I think it can be managed and I'll get you posted to an Assam battalion."

Now I had little idea of where Assam was, but fancied it had something to do with the Andamans. The thought flitted through my brain, that here I was trying to enter the I.S.C. for the specific purpose of marriage, and running a risk of permanent appointment to a unit in the wilds. Hence my reply after a longish pause.

Self. "Well, sir, I know beggars can't be choosers, but I think I'd rather give up the idea."

D.A.G. (who had been very patient). "Oh! well, I

daresay I could post you to a Bengal regiment, on one condition, and that is that you join immediately you get the telegram. Do you agree?"

I knew nothing of Bengal regiments, but this seemed splendid, and I agreed at once.

Before the troops dispersed there was a big review and march past, with Lord Dufferin taking the salute, and all the foreign officers present—French, German, Russian, Austrian, Italian, American, etc., etc. The morning broke beautifully fine and about 8 a.m. off we started to take up our position in line, dressed in review order, red, and officers in Wellington boots and straps. All went well until the Viceroy returned to the saluting base from his ride down the line, when the rain began to fall in torrents. A water-proof was pressed on Lord Dufferin, but he waved it aside, and for three long hours sat on his horse in the pitiless down-pour. Drenched to the skin he was, indeed, but he had for ever endeared himself to the soldiery, who cheered him lustily whenever and wherever he was seen.

This episode was recalled to my mind thirty-one years later by a very courteous act in heavy rain by General Padma Shumsher, of the Nepal army at Abbottabad, where I had the pleasure of supervising the training of over six thousand of the Nepalese contingent, in addition to my other work as a brigadier.

For some time the general had wished to give me a ceremonial parade of the whole contingent on the brigade review ground *four* miles from his camp. At last, a day being fixed, eight o'clock saw me riding up to the saluting base to receive the general salute. Hardly was this over, and just as the troops were moving to march past, one of those torrential showers, so common on the North-West Frontier, commenced. In two minutes we were wet to the skin, with water bubbling over the top of our boots, and I soon saw my wife's car near the flagstaff standing in inches of splashing rain.

Galloping up to General Padma, I told him to dismiss the men to take shelter in some empty adjacent barracks and at the same time begged him to ride home quickly and change at once. As he still delayed, after giving the necessary orders about the men, I repeated my request, when he remarked, "But I must pay my respects to Mrs. Woodyatt first, after her coming down to see the parade." Saying

I would explain and that she would never expect it in that awful shower, I trusted he would ride away. But no! instead of that he galloped off to the car, where he actually got off his horse and stood in the slush for several minutes in animated conversation with my wife.

"Blood will tell," I said to myself. "That's a very gallant and courteous act, denoting the true gentleman."

And so it was in Lord Dufferin's case at the Rawalpindi Review. But the parade had to go through, rain or no rain. For ages we infantry seemed to stand facing the saluting base, while the cavalry and artillery went past, the elephant batteries squelching the mud into regular furrows. I saw the red from the tassels of my sash running in crimson streaks down my overalls, while the pipeclay from my white helmet poured in pale streams along my chest and back. When eventually we got near the flagstaff, the going beggars description. It was all one could do to keep one's feet, let alone keep pace to the drowned strains of "Wha Winna Fight for Charlie," the old Cheshire "March Past," symbolic of Sir Charles Napier and Myanee.

Some of the native infantry in those days wore shoes. Dozens of odd ones were lying in the mud everywhere. The native ranks of one unit (the 39th Bengal Infantry), looking upon their loss as a very serious matter, many men actually fell out to recover them. Indeed the native officer carrying the Queen's Colour was said to have fished his up with the top of the pole. Anyhow, the unit was entirely disgraced and eventually disbanded.

This episode was the talk of the whole camp for days, the indignation being intense that this should have happened in front of all the foreign officers. It was somewhat of a relief, therefore, to hear later that the offence had not been overlooked, and that the Chief had assembled the foreign officers and told them so.

Our men were splendid, and grave as could be, for the good name of the old "two twos" (22nd Cheshire Regiment). I myself saw one man near the right flank of the company in front slip badly some twenty yards before reaching the Viceroy. Recovering, he regained his balance indeed, but had lost the hold of his rifle. The man on his right, however, catching it deftly, carried this rifle past, as well as his own, while the unarmed private fell in line with the supernumerary rank and went by like a Trojan.

In the meantime Lord Dufferin had brought off his famous conference with the Afghan Amir, Abdūr Rahmān, and off we went to Rawalpindi where a large concentration of troops took place. It was always raining, and raining hard.

Camped some three or four miles away we started one morning at 4 a.m., in great-coats over our full dress, to line the streets for the Amir's arrival. Of course at 8 a.m. the sun came out, and the order was passed down the line to take off great-coats and stack them in rear. Sheringham and I had failed to put on our red tunics at all! It appeared a pity to sweat in them under our overcoats, and it looked a dreadfully threatening day! We could not very well stand alongside our men's tunics in great-coats, so after some very severe remarks by the C.O. we were ordered to hand over the company and go back to camp. Feeling very dejected we trudged off. When the battalion returned about noon we learnt that the Amir had never even arrived! The fact was that at Peshawar he had refused to get into so strange a thing as a railway carriage!

In the afternoon orders came that the streets would be similarly lined the next day. Luckily it didn't rain and the Amir *did* arrive.

At a conversazione given by the Viceroy, a chance came to me of studying Abdūr Rahmān very closely. Sitting out with some girl in a kind of boudoir tent, in walked the Amir, entirely by himself, looking very bored. Plumping himself down on a couch he remained buried in reverie for a long time, with a stout walking-stick between his legs. He wore a black astrakhan cap with a diamond star in front, a kind of frock-coat and long untanned leather boots.

Of a large and stout figure, he had a very strong face, covered with a thick beard dyed red, his upper lip and a small portion of the lower being clean shaven. It looked as if he had retired bored to death, and though various equerries and people came and peeped at His Highness now and then, he gave such a vicious snarl at the sight of them, that they promptly disappeared.

What we were chiefly concerned with, however, was the Grand Review, but the rain being so persistent, the new parade ground on the far-away plain was unfit for use on the appointed day. It was arranged, therefore, that the

review should take place in Rawalpindi itself, by marching units up to the cricket ground by one road, whence they formed to the left, marched past and then, forming again to the left, returned to quarters by another road. This went off very well, and some forty thousand cavalry, artillery, and infantry went past by troops, sections and companies. When asked by Lord Dufferin, however, what he thought of it, the Amir looked knowing, but only said, "Very clever!"

It took some hours to make out exactly what he meant, and then it transpired he was firmly convinced that only about five thousand troops had taken part at all, the same units having marched round and round eight or nine times. This is what he meant by "Very clever." In vain the Viceroy, through his interpreter, endeavoured to clear his mind of this misapprehension. The Amir pinned his belief mainly on the indisputable fact that a "*ghāgrā paltan*" (kilted regiment) had gone past several times. He politely brushed aside Lord Dufferin's assurance that there were four or five different Highland battalions in camp.

Towards the end of the Conference, the Viceroy held a grand Durbar at which the Amir, after a speech by the Viceroy, received a sword of honour, and his suite and family numerous other presents. Each was brought in separately, and announced by the Foreign Secretary, who, making an obeisance, would say: "A pair of guns for His Highness' eldest son, the etc., etc., etc." This took an interminable time, until it really appeared as if everyone of his numerous relatives in Afghanistan was getting something. The Durbar tent was packed and, for the first time, ladies were permitted to be present. On receiving the sword of honour, Abdūr Rahmān was heard to say a few words which the interpreter translated in a loud voice, as follows: "With this sword I shall kill the enemies of Queen Victoria." Being received with acclamation, the Amir looked up very quickly and suspiciously at the novel sound, to him, of hand-clapping.

During this concentration the 'Pindi Club was crowded to suffocation. There would be rows six to eight deep in the evening trying to get a drink. One night Sheringham and I tried to dine there before going on to the lotteries, but it was precious little we got to eat and nothing at all to drink. There were some shocking incidents as regards

“chits” signed for drinks with fictitious names. This and bad management and the fact that many drinks were not signed for at all, caused a heavy loss to the club instead of a big profit as should have been the case. In face of this it is extraordinary that, over twenty years later, the club in Lahore at a big gathering should have still maintained the “chit” system instead of cash vouchers, and with, I regret to record, exactly similar results. Many vouchers were, in this last case, signed “Bishop of Lahore,” and these, that best of good fellows, Bishop Lefroy, is said to have redeemed.

Outside Rawalpindi we were camped by brigades mostly along the main road. Exactly opposite the Cheshires’ quarter guard was the camp of the 4th Gurkhas, which had the reputation of being the best dressed unit amongst Gurkhas. Colonel Hay was the C.O. and Mercer the adjutant. My delight in these little men was mingled with regret that, firstly, I could not get them to understand a word I said, though they smiled, which was something; and secondly, that I was never likely to serve with them. Not only was I down for cavalry, eventually, but vacancies in the Gurkhas appeared to be reserved for sons of distinguished Indian Civil Service and military officials, or the relatives of other great men.

Outside Assam and Burma there were at that time only five regular battalions of Gurkhas, with nine British officers apiece, including the M.O. Great was my delight when I was asked to dinner with the 4th, and little did I think that five years later I should be offered the adjutancy of a recently formed 2nd Battalion to the 4th, or that thirty-four years afterwards I should have this same old battalion, under the command of my great friend “Eliza” Tillard, as one of the units of my division in the field. Mercer was very busy after dinner selecting the tartan for streamers for the pipes they were just starting, and I thought what a keen, earnest, good-looking fellow he was.

CHAPTER VI

SIR FREDERICK (AFTERWARDS LORD) ROBERTS

SOON after our return to Ambala I got orders to join the 33rd Bengal Infantry at Agra. It was an awful wrench leaving the dear old Cheshires where I had been so happy, and I liked to feel that the regret appeared to be mutual.

Before I had been at Agra very long the desire for Indian Cavalry became so strong that I wrote to Colonel Revel Eardley-Wilmot, D.Q.M.G., Simla, and begged him to help me, with the result that within ten days I was appointed squadron officer in the 11th Bengal Lancers at Sangor. At the same time I had applied for, and obtained, six months' leave to study the languages and, taking the usual ten days' joining leave always allowed on a transfer, off I went to Simla. There I came in for my third birthday ball in two-and-a-half years, and also made the personal acquaintance of Sir Frederick Roberts.

The Chief, having apparently noted my appointment to the 11th Bengal Lancers, and being a friend of the girl I was to marry, told her to send me to see him the next time I came up. Interviewing Colonel Pole-Carew, his military secretary, on the matter, he said I was to go to Snowdon at 11 a.m. the following Tuesday in uniform.

Sir Frederick was very kind, saying I mustn't mind his pointing out that few men who went to the Indian Army were men of means; that he understood I intended to get married; that I was in a very expensive regiment, with my chargers and polo ponies to keep up, etc., etc., and did I think I could manage it all? Explaining that I hoped to get along with help, he asked why I didn't try for Gurkhas, which would give me a permanent hill station. Telling him I had no chance whatever, never having had a relation out in India, he astounded me by saying that

he intended raising some new battalions, and would try and fit me in if I liked.

Of course I jumped at it, but on asking if I could get Gurkhas from cavalry, he said: "Dear me, no! That would be looked upon as an awful job; you must go back to infantry for a time." Then seeing my face fall, he added, "But I'll see you get a good Punjab regiment."

Walking back to Ranken & Co.'s shop, the great military tailors of India, where I had changed, I was horribly concerned about payment for the undress uniform I was wearing and all the rest that was on order, but only "basted" and once tried on, up to date. It was a most expensive kit, the eleventh, with a very elaborate mess waistcoat embroidered with gold lace, which alone cost over £20. Imagine my relief then when the head partner told me that, being stock size, they would say nothing about it if I gave them the order for my Gurkha outfit. Very handsome indeed of Ranken & Co., I thought it was.

I think it was at this year's State ball at the new Vice-regal Lodge that a rather awkward incident occurred. The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab was to have taken Lady Roberts in to supper, but got ill, or pretended he was ill, and went home before it came off. By some mistake the Viceregal Staff omitted to allow for this, and when the exalted guests trooped off to supper, Lady Roberts was left stranded. This I happened to notice myself as, passing the dais just afterwards, I saw her standing there alone, fanning herself furiously and looking very cross. I missed, of course, the opportunity of a lifetime, for had I only rushed up, offered my arm and taken her in, I should have got a lucrative appointment on the staff within a fortnight.

However I didn't, and although Lord Dufferin himself came back from the supper-room and escorted her in, when the dreadful mistake was discovered, a considerable time elapsed before she was rescued. Next day the Viceroy went over to Snowdon personally, to make his apologies, but the lady was very sore and not to be comforted. He is supposed, when expressing his deep regret, to have said she could imagine what his feelings were like by thinking of her own, had such an unfortunate incident occurred at Snowdon. Lady Roberts replied tartly that it *couldn't possibly* have happened at Snowdon!

On the occasion of their silver wedding the Chief and Lady Roberts gave a fancy dress ball in the Snowdon ballroom. Two men from every regiment that had taken part in his famous march from Kabul to Kandahar were present, in pairs, round the ballroom and approaches. The decorations were very fine and what people thought so nice on the part of the Robertses, was the fact that on many of the banners were the words, "Kandahar to Kabul," as a compliment to the late Chief, Sir Donald Stewart. There were plenty of people there who knew the significance of this, for Sir Donald had carried out his march under great difficulties with a very scratch lot of transport. On the other hand, for Sir Frederick Roberts, all Divisions had been denuded of their best mules, carts, camels, etc., so that he should start as well equipped as possible for his marvellously successful leap in the dark from "Kabul to Kandahar."

This ballroom was still further enlarged later on. For the benefit of those who do not know, it may be added that Snowdon is situated at the opposite end of Simla from Viceregal Lodge. Built on a narrow spur, it has very small grounds and not a great deal of accommodation. It was Lord Roberts' own property, but sold by him to Government for the official residence at Simla of the Commanders-in-Chief in India.

At this particular fancy ball, not seeing why ladies should have the monopoly of the simple disguise called *poudré*, I adopted that dress myself. As it only entailed powdering one's hair, putting on a little rouge and adding a few patches, it was both inexpensive and easy to don. While waiting in the hall for a partner, I was astonished to see the Indian policeman on duty inside the door wearing his native shoes. Such a breach of the ordinary customs of the country and such want of respect so roused my ire that in my best, and recently acquired, Hindustani, I told him what I thought of him and requested him to remove them.

Although the Hindustani was crude, I knew it was perfectly intelligible to any ordinary native, yet he didn't seem to understand a word. I noted he was of slight build with a good-looking, well-bred face, and appeared honestly distressed that he could not make out what I wanted. Wondering what I should do next, as he was

not in the least obstructive or objectionable, up came Charlie Hume, one of the A.D.C.s. Explaining the reason for my indignation he burst out laughing and told me the quasi policeman was Ava (Lord Dufferin's heir who was afterwards killed in South Africa). He certainly scored one here, and was prouder than ever of his disguise.

My language leave being in order, off I went to Poona and, working hard, managed to pass the Higher Standard in the autumn. Meanwhile my transfer to the 30th Punjabis at Peshawar had been gazetted, so I soon found myself in that frontier station for the second time and attached to a Punjab battalion of the highest distinction. The second-in-command being at home on leave, I was offered his charger to keep, which I found to be a nice-looking, cobby waler up to great weight. But the horse, having been much neglected, had a long scrubby tail, heavy coat, bad corns and a mangy-looking mane. Having doctored him, cut his tail, and hogged his mane, he looked quite smart, but I heard afterwards that his very unwieldy and untidy owner, on his return, refused at first to take him over or believe it was really the confidential charger he had left behind! There is no accounting for tastes!

Amongst the troops, and in addition to the gunners, I found the 1st Bengal Lancers with Gartside-Tipping commanding; a battalion of the 60th Rifles with Kinloch, the big game hunter, as C.O.; a battalion of the Wiltshires and my own unit, the 30th Punjabis, with Colonel Campbell at its head and C.R.A. Bond acting as Adjutant. Gartside-Tipping was the M.F.H., but was shortly leaving the station. Kinloch, who never wore a sun-hat between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., was getting peculiar. In the evening he used to come to the club dressed entirely in khaki mufti, with a sola topee, in a khaki cover and khaki-coloured canvas shoes.

To advertise the new fast-dyed drill, Kinloch got one penny in the pound from Lieman and Gatty, the producers, which he said brought him in about £600 a year. He also said that without it he could never have afforded to take command of a battalion of the 60th. The Government had just negotiated a contract with Lieman and Gatty for the supply of the new drill to the whole Army, but, before this, units had made their own arrangements to dye, locally, a suit or two per man of the Government issue of white.

The Cheshires were very particular about the *shade*, and at an inspection at Delhi, on one occasion, General Dillon, commanding the improvised Division for manœuvres, called out to our colonel: "How well your men are turned out, colonel; what is the dye used?" "Cow-dung, sir," replied Colonel Patton in a loud voice—which was quite true!

The 1st Bengal Lancers had a wonderful yellow cloth tunic for full dress, a very effective, but at the same time, most expensive garment. In the early nineties, one of their subalterns went to a levee at St. James's in his new coat. While waiting at one of the barricades an old gentleman, covered with orders, and evidently one of the Court officials, touching his tunic, said: "I suppose this is what you call khaki in India!"

Major-General Sir Hugh Gough, V.C., was commanding the Peshawar District and had as his senior staff officer, termed D.A.A.G., Major Brunker of the Cameronians. Sir Hugh had known me before and, meeting him at the club, told me I was to come and see him next day. At this interview he informed me that quite recently there had been a meeting at the club regarding the Peshawar Vale Hunt, when a monstrous proposition had been put up by "Jackal" McCall, of the 60th, with a considerable following, that the Hunt should be abolished. The reason given was that now polo was being so much played, officers could not afford to keep animals for both.

"Now," said Sir Hugh, "you have had hunting experience with the Cheshire regimental pack, Gartside-Tipping is shortly leaving us, and I want you to do all you can to help this Hunt to flourish. I should die of shame if, after all these years, the P.V.H. ceased to exist during my tenure here."

I told him I would do all I could and would be very glad to act as whip, but that neither my years, experience, nor pocket justified me in aspiring to M.F.H. The result was that I whipped for a short time to Gartside-Tipping, and later carried on with Oliver Nugent of the 60th, who succeeded him. My fellow whips were Markham of the 60th (a Brigadier in France during the War) and J. E. Capper, a Sapper (now the Governor of Guernsey).

Gartside-Tipping was about the best M.F.H. we ever had in India; for, coupled to a wonderful eye for country, a firm seat, sound judgment and perfect hands, he was a

real hound lover, with a voice that seemed to go to the heart of every hound in the pack, whether outside or inside covert. He was *always* "talking" to them, but musically and ever so quietly. I once saw him, as a stranger, take out the Meerut pack, which had been showing very poor sport, and the way those hounds answered to his voice at the end of one morning was a revelation.

One run in the Peshawar Vale comes to memory very clearly, though I forget the names of places. Anyhow, we had a sharp burst of about fifteen minutes, and being put down at a gridiron (two or more ditches with some six feet of earth between each), I only caught hounds at a check. The "jack" (jackal) was in a basin of red soil on the edge of the Nagoman River (a tributary of the Kabul) with his back to the bank and all the pack in front of him, but not one plucky enough to tackle.

Having got his wind the jack, snapping right and left and rushing through the whole lot of them, made for the water and started swimming across with the hounds at his brush. The river was pretty broad, but did not seem otherwise formidable, and had a nice shelving bank on the near side. Close beside me was Davis of the 1st Lancers. I looked at him, he looked at me, and together we turned our horses to the river and walked them in. At this moment the native huntsman called out that it was a bad stream and there was a bridge close at hand. It was too late, however, and on we went, while the Master and all the field dashed round to the bridge. It was rather difficult landing and I lost a stirrup, owing to forgetfulness to cross them over my mare's neck, but the worst of it was that the hounds were soon at fault on the far side and we never killed that jack. I mention this run because, from the accounts I read, it seems very much the same spot as the one where poor Irvine, the M.F.H., was drowned in 1919. Probably Davis will remember.

Brunker, the D.A.A.G., was very fond of practical jokes and "leg pulling." Having pulled Bond's, and also mine, badly, we thought we should like to get even, but the result was most disastrous! There was to be a "field firing" of the whole garrison, and Brunker had specially timed it so that the musketry inspector would be away in the Malakand. He disliked this musketry inspector intensely, and mainly because he was not under the Peshawar Dis-

trict in any way. The scheme was quite a big one and worked out by Brunker to the minutest detail.

Now Brunker messed with us (30th Punjabis), and as he was dining out the night before the manoeuvre, it struck us that evening it would be a splendid "leg pull" if we sent him a letter purporting to be from the inspector, to say he had managed to come after all. We added he was staying as usual with Thompson of the 1st Lancers, and would Brunker kindly send him all the detail of to-morrow's parade with general and special ideas, description of targets, route, arrangements for clearing ground, etc. Brunker was entirely taken in, went back early from dinner to his quarters, and, as in duty bound, sat up till very late writing out and putting together all the necessary detail.

Next day, Bond and I went with the battalion to the rendezvous, where such an unconscionable delay occurred that we strolled over towards the District head-quarters and heard Sir Hugh, who looked very cross, tell Brunker to send for Thompson. When he appeared, Sir Hugh called out:

"I say, Thompson, where the devil is that d——d musketry man?"

Thompson denied all knowledge of him, saying he had not seen him since he stayed with him two months before.

"But he wrote to Brunker last night to say he was staying with you," blustered Sir Hugh.

"Very sorry, sir," said Thompson, "but I know nothing about it."

Bond and I began to feel a bit uncomfortable, although we realised there was nothing to be done. As we sneaked back, for the show was then to begin, we heard Sir Hugh say he would report the matter to the Chief.

That evening in the club we saw Brunker reading out my letter, *supposed* to be the inspector's, to an interested crowd, and at dinner he told us that Sir Hugh was writing to the Chief next day reporting the whole thing. Bond then got nervous and it was arranged in our room at midnight that we should both go and confess to Brunker at his office next morning and that *I* was to be the spokesman! We went at 10.30 a.m. and the following conversation ensued:

Self. "Who do you think, major, wrote that letter from the inspector?"

Brunker. "The musketry man, I suppose."

Self. "No! Bond and I concocted it to pull your leg, as you are always pulling ours."

Brunker. "Then I'm d——d sorry for you, because Sir Hugh is furious and wrote to the Chief about it this morning."

Brunker looked very gruff, so we left him, but we heard afterwards that he went off to the general the moment we disappeared and got the letter stopped. Our colonel was ordered to give us an official wiggling and Sir Hugh regularly cut Bond and me everywhere. I tried to find out his feelings through his daughter May (now Mrs. W. G. Hamilton), but she only said she did not know what I had done to her father, for only a few hours before she had proposed my name as a guest at dinner when the Chief and Lady Roberts came in a few days, and he had scratched it out at once.

A few days later, Bond and I drove up to Flagstaff House to write our names in the Chief's book. Sir Frederick and the general happened to be in the verandah and we heard the latter say: "Halloo, here are the arch fiends," at which the Chief said: "Why, that's young Woodyatt, what's he been doing?" Sir Hugh replied: "Oh, I'll tell you what it is as we drive to hospital." This was all said very cheerily, but as the "cutting" continued unabated, Bond persuaded me to write to the general after about ten days more and ask that we should be forgiven!

I still have Sir Hugh's reply, which runs:

"DEAR NIGEL,—

"Little boys shouldn't play with edged tools!

"Joking apart, you not only pulled Brunker's leg, but you pulled my leg and were within an ace of pulling the leg of the C.-in-C.

"However, except as a joke, it is all forgotten and, as a joke, I don't think you had the best of it!

"Yours sincerely,

"(Sgd.) HUGH GOUGH."

Shortly afterwards Sir Hugh was promoted to the command of the Lahore Division and Peshawar knew him and Lady Gough no more, to the infinite regret of all the station.

Much mention has been made of the Commander-in-

Chief in this chapter, who was then at the beginning of his seven years' command. His cold weather consisted of an extended tour, including a few weeks in residence in his quarters in Fort William, Calcutta.

No Chief, not even Lord Kitchener, made such a systematic business of his cold weather touring as Lord Roberts. His immediate successor, Sir George White, the most gallant of soldiers, found it much too irksome and soon dropped it, until his winter developed into a vast shoot. The published itinerary of his inspections, until you knew, made you think what a towelling the stations were getting. You would read an entry like this: "Meerut arrive 5 hours 5th December. Depart 17 hours 19th December." The unwary would conclude that the garrison was going to be turned inside out for a fortnight. Instead, one unit would possibly be looked at on the 5th, on the way from the railway station to some mess for breakfast, preparatory to proceeding to a camp in the old bed of the Ganges for snipe and duck shooting. On the 19th one more unit would be inspected, on return from the shoot and en route to the railway saloon.

But he was a grand fellow, Sir George, and a great sportsman, one of his last actions being to break his leg paper-chasing in Calcutta. It must never be forgotten that it was he, in 1894 or '95, who, by a scratch vote in Council, got the first increase to the Sepoy's pay. The finance member unwarily mentioning that he had a big balance to the good, Sir George pounced on this immediately, and carried the grant of better pay, which was so badly needed.

He held all sorts of records for runs and walks round Jakko, to which was added a further achievement in that his wife presented him with a baby during his tenure as Chief! Not to be outdone, the Viceroy's consort (Lady Elgin) did the same! Perambulators are not usually required at Viceregal Lodge and Snowdon.

There was a British soldier, a batman, at Snowdon, who was sacked by Sir G. White for using His Excellency's hair-brushes. Lady White, however, had found this man so invaluable that the Chief had to reinstate him. Snowdon could not be run without him!

When visiting a station, Lord Roberts saw every unit, every hospital and every transport corps. In addition, days and hours would be told off for seeing officers. Any

officer, however humble in rank, could ask for an interview, and generally got it. We soon learnt to know, therefore, how great an interest he took in his officers, how deep was his sympathy, and, although he could be firm enough on occasion, how kind was his heart. He made a point of knowing everyone and, in fact, took immense pains to ensure full recollection of officers' names, faces and history. He had that wonderful gift of recognising people in an instant, and he not only cultivated it, but was glad of any assistance, if at fault. Let me illustrate this by an anecdote.

I was once on temporary duty on his staff at Meerut on the occasion of a garden party given by Lord and Lady Roberts to the whole garrison. For a lengthy period Lord Roberts stood at the entrance to the camp receiving his guests, with his favourite aide-de-camp, Neville-Chamberlain, beside him. There was a hiatus in the guests' arrival, when up drove a stout man in a dog-cart, and the Chief asked his A.D.C., quickly, who it was exactly, as he thought he knew him. Like a shot N.-C. answered somewhat as follows :

"Major Jones, sir—Punjabis, conspicuous in the attack on the Peiwar Kotal, wife had triplets last year, all lived, etc., etc." Then the Chief took a pace or two forward, shook Jones warmly by the hand, called him by his name, referred to the Peiwar Kotal and asked after the triplets. All to the enormous gratification of Jones.

Lord Roberts had also, in a most marked degree, the attribute of *sympathy*, which, coupled with a wonderful magnetic personality, endeared him to all ranks. This was the case with the Indian Army to quite an extraordinary extent. The majority of Indian officers are very fine fellows and possessed of acumen, perception and sound common sense far above their fellows, or they would not be where they are. To see a batch of them talking to a man like Lord Roberts, or Birdie,¹ or a Divisional Commander they know, and have tested, will always be a revelation. It must surely be a source of enormous satisfaction to be the recipient of such confidence and trust.

"Birdie," as the Anzacs—or any troops he commanded—will tell you, is never so happy as when making friends with his men. Years ago he took the trouble to learn

¹ General Sir William Birdwood, Commander of the 5th Army in the Great War, and now G.O.C.-in-C. Northern Command, India.

“Khas Kura,” the *lingua franca* of Nepal. This last summer, when on tour in his command, he was actually able to talk to the Gurkhas at Abbottabad in their own language. The surprise and delight of the Gurkha officers and men at hearing their own dialect spoken by an officer of such high rank, and the way their faces lighted up, would be ample reward for the trouble taken over “Khas Kura.”

It is no exaggeration to say the men *adored* Lord Roberts, and would have done anything for him. Indeed, “Bobs Bahadur” was so popular in India that it was really difficult to keep the ranks steady on parade when he was present. Other leaders have had the welfare of the troops ever so much at heart. They have honestly tried to be just, upright, and liberal in all their dealings; but, with the exception of Lord Roberts in the old days and Birdie in the present, none that have come under my ken have been able to communicate from themselves to others that wonderful bond of sympathy which attracts, influences, and finally enslaves.

I have mentioned one or two personal instances which brought this home to me so forcibly, I will briefly refer to one other. Lord and Lady Roberts and their eldest daughter made a short stay at my hill station of Almora when he had been Chief three or four years. His A.D.C. (Oxley of the 60th) asked, in the little club one evening, if any one wished to see the Chief next morning. In pure chaff I said, “Yes, I do,” and when he enquired the subject, I took his pocket-book and drew a sketch of myself on my knees before Lord Roberts, with the words “very badly placed,” underneath. The next morning, when at the tail of a procession walking up from hospital, I heard my name called. Hurrying to the front, to my horror, the Chief took me by the arm, saying, “You wanted to see me.” I was dreadfully taken aback, but that horrible pocket-book incident flashing across me, I stammered out something about wondering whether I could get an adjutancy anywhere.

It is necessary to explain that the custom then was, for this most interesting of all appointments to be released, automatically, by an officer on getting his troop or company, after twelve years' service. The next subaltern then took it on, if he was in any way fit for it. There was usually little *selection*. So it sometimes happened that in one case

a man held it for eight *years* and in another for eight *months* ! The man just above me was September, 1882, whilst my commission was May, 1883, so I could only hold the appointment for the latter period. The Chief understood this and told me King-Harman, commanding the new 2nd Battalion of the 4th Gurkhas, had mentioned to him in Calcutta, a few days previously, that he didn't know what the devil to do for an adjutant, and advised me to apply. Thanking him profoundly, I walked off, grateful indeed to have escaped so easily, but with no intention whatever of applying, as I did not want to leave the 3rd.

However, after breakfast, I got a little note from the Chief himself, saying he was writing to Colonel King-Harman and should he mention my wish to be his adjutant ! The fat was now in the fire, so hurrying off to Barry Bishop, my C.O., I told him the whole story and he agreed I *must* say "Yes," or else it would be a second case of "leg-pull." So "Yes" it was ; but before it actually came off a new second battalion was raised to the 3rd Ghurkas, and I got the adjutancy of that instead. Still, it was nice of the Chief, and it was things like that which endeared him so to all ranks.

He was an early riser and always rode before breakfast. Being fastidious about his clothes, he was invariably beautifully turned out, and once told me that he owed a good deal of his successful career to being always well dressed and well mounted.

I saw him frequently just before the Great War, when he was very busy with his National Service League, a movement that would have had much more moral and material support from many distinguished soldiers, if they had not felt, rightly or wrongly, that the time to press for a modified form of conscription was on his return from South Africa in January, 1901, when at the height of his popularity and fame. Their contention was that, after so much shame and humiliation out there, a definite announcement by him then, that the sacrifice *must* be made, would have carried the people, and *ipso facto* the politicians with him.

Most people have heard of Lord Roberts' antipathy to cats and how the presence of one in the same room made him downright ill. This is quite true, and I can give an example. In 1882 he was Commander-in-Chief in Madras,

and dined one night with the old 44th (1st Essex Regiment) in Fort St. George. Knowing of his antipathy to cats, the only one in barracks, a large Persian cat belonging to Captain Orman, the adjutant, was tied up with a cord in Orman's quarters. In the middle of dinner, Roberts put down his knife and fork, saying he could not carry on because there was a cat in the room. The colonel said this was impossible, explaining what had been done and referring the general to the owner of the only cat, who was sitting on the other side of him. "Very sorry," said Sir Frederick, "but I feel there is a cat in the room, or close to, and I must go away if it is not removed."

Search was then made and there was no cat in the room. In Fort St. George there are two ante-rooms adjoining the dining-room at either end. When searching the first of these, a cupboard was seen ajar, and there sure enough was the Persian cat, fast asleep, with a broken cord attached to his collar! Visit the M.C.C. pavilion on the occasion of any first-class cricket match, and the owner of that cat will corroborate my story.

We had a good hunting season at Peshawar that year, but although the Artillery jheel was stiff with jackals, so much so that hounds always got split up in cover into half a dozen packs, there were many bits of lovely grass country further afield devoid of "jacks" altogether.

During the season I went to Agra, and it was suggested I should bring back some "bagmen" with me. Sixteen were eventually secured the night before I was due to leave, by a very early train next morning. Seeing them about 8 p.m. in a long box with partitions, allowing for one "jack" in each, I was disgusted to find that all their mouths had been sewn up. Quickly cutting all the stitches, water and food were given and they appeared quite happy, but about midnight set up the most appalling row you ever heard and continued it the whole night long.

Fortunately I was off too early to meet my future mother-in-law next morning, but I heard a good deal about it later on. Booking them to Peshawar as "pets," under a concessional railway clause, I felt fairly satisfied as regards their safety, for, on from Tundla, where we changed, ran a through carriage and through van all the way to Peshawar.

Just as I was beginning breakfast at Tundla, a railway guard came to me in the refreshment room to say

that one of my "pets" was loose in the Agra van and would I please come and catch him. Off I went and outside ran into Archdeacon Tribe with his daughter (now the Duchess of Bedford), who enquired why I was in such a hurry. "Catching jackals," I called out. "Come and help." Now catching jackals by hand is not a pleasant experience at any time; but when it means hunting one with a blanket from corner to corner in a semi-dark railway van, while your breakfast is getting cold, it is more than damnable. We had to keep the door open a bit to get any light at all, and as I stalked the beggar Miss Tribe held the doorway, and when he rushed from one corner to another, she bobbed down to fill the open space to prevent his escape.

Eventually I had him by the nape of the neck through the blanket, carried him to the waiting van for Peshawar and, with much difficulty, got him into his partition again. Not that it very much mattered, for I then noticed that nearly all of them had eaten through the walls to such an extent that they must soon be free in the van. This I pointed out to the guard, and suggested he should warn his relief not to put in anything else. However, he forgot, or his relief forgot, and next night at Rawalpindi a prize ram was bundled in, with the result that he was killed and eaten by my pets before reaching Peshawar. The owner tried to make the Hunt pay an enormous price for him, but was referred by me to the railway authorities who, as common carriers, I maintained were bound to take the requisite precautions.

The first two jackals we put down, not running a yard, were ignominiously chopped in covert at one afternoon's meet. Jogging home with the pack, Colonel Green of the 13th Cavalry rode up alongside me and after a few remarks, said: "I would not like to suggest what we were hunting to-day, but if you take off an inch of the brush with a very sharp pair of scissors on turning down, then a jack, or a fox, will run quite straight till he drops, and the occasional drip of blood helps the hound." Then he disappeared. I never neglected this in future, and the result was wonderful.

There is another tip which will be useful to those who get several bagmen at once and have to keep them. Make a pit in dryish soil about fifteen to twenty feet deep and of suitable breadth. Put in the bagmen and let down their

food and water. They soon burrow, but at night and at other odd times they are continually trying to get out, which keeps them in hard exercise, and makes them extraordinarily fit.

Just before importing the sixteen jackals, a jemadar¹ of the 1st Lancers brought us a wild young black buck caught near his village. Taken out in the commissariat bread van, with a little aniseed rubbed on his tuft, on release, he gave us four or five very fast runs before coming to an untimely end. One nuisance was that if he got on a road or track, he would follow it, until frightened off by something like a pedestrian, or bullock cart. He was quite wild, in that he would allow no one near him; but being kept in cantonments on a long rope did not tend to give him the wind and stamina of a jungle buck.

When uncartered he would generally graze until he heard the music of the pack, when he bucked off at a great pace, much too fast for the hounds. Then he would trot, uncertain where to go, until they got closer, and then buck off again and so on, each pause making him wilder and more excited. Until really tired, he could always get clean away; but when quite done, with his tongue out, he would make for a village, where some of us managed to whip off the pack and get him caught and roped until arrangements could be made for his return to Peshawar.

One day, at a distant meet, this village habit was his undoing. Some excited Pathans, undoubtedly thinking they were doing us a good turn, broke his leg with a stone and he had to be shot. One haunch of venison was given to the general, one to the chief civil officer, and the rest of him the hounds ate.

One amusing incident happened that winter in connection with my hunting. The colonel did not quite approve of so much of it as two days a week for a young officer just joined, especially as one of them happened to be an orderly room day. In the 30th Punjabis, orderly room was held twice a week and was called "Durbar." There were seldom any prisoners, but an hour or so was spent by all the British and native officers discussing such regimental matters as the C.O., or others, brought up. I used to ask leave of absence for hunting days, but on my third or fourth attempt the adjutant told me the colonel disapproved of so many

¹ Indian officer of cavalry.

absences and I must be present the next time, which was two days ahead.

At the club that evening, happening to meet Sir Hugh Gough, he asked me what hour I was starting for the next meet as he would hack out with the hounds. I told him unfortunately I was not going. "Not going," he roared, "what do you mean by not going when you are a whip?" I then explained the reason. The result was an urgent circular letter to all commanding officers next morning to say the general wished every facility to be given to officers to hunt.

In the evening the adjutant told me the hour of Durbar had been altered and I must attend for half an hour, which would give me ample time to get to the meet. He added that I might come in mufti. The C.O. was generally before his time, and when I arrived he was in his chair with all the native officers round him. Now my mufti happened to be the hunt uniform which none of those present had seen me wearing before. My rather elaborate white stock, pink coat, grey helmet with red pugri and gold cord, as well as immaculate leathers and mahogany tops, were too much for the old boy, and I was never told to attend again.

CHAPTER VII

I JOIN THE GURKHAS

WHEN on leave at Agra, the time the sixteen jackals were procured, Brunker, with his propensity for leg-pulling, sent me a wire from Peshawar to say I had been appointed to the 3rd Gurkhas. Much was my delight, but on return to Peshawar I found it was all a hoax. He did much the same thing to Bond, the acting adjutant of the 30th Punjab Infantry, who was most anxious not to give up such interesting work on the return from leave of the permanent incumbent, and this fact Brunker knew very well.

Besides new battalions of Gurkhas, the chief was also raising some of Sikhs. Hearing of this, Brunker concocted some cock-and-bull story about a brother officer of his having been offered the command of one of the latter, and asked Bond if he would like to be adjutant. Bond jumped at it, and while he went about saying what a lucky fellow he was, Brunker pretended he was fixing it all up.

Then we heard, accidentally, that the man Brunker had mentioned for C.O. was a perfectly impossible person quite unfit to command anything. This made us suspicious, and shortly afterwards we discovered it was another leg-pull! But the curious thing is that months afterwards both of us were actually appointed as Brunker had accidentally anticipated. That is, I went to the 3rd Gurkhas, and Bond got the adjutancy of a new Sikh battalion. He could not possibly have known, because in my case there was no vacancy in the 3rd, at the time he wired.

Having now waited in Peshawar seven months without any news of Gurkhas, I was beginning to feel rather uneasy, but in May welcome orders came that I had been appointed officiating wing officer in the 1st battalion 1st Gurkhas at Dharmasala. Sending off my ponies and heavy kit, I spent

the usual ten days joining leave at Simla. At 7 a.m. the first morning, when about to get up, Ian Hamilton, who in the absence of Pole-Carew on leave, was acting as military secretary, walked into my room. Scenting danger at once, I leapt out of bed with : " Any bad news, major ? " " Yes," he said, " I'm afraid it is," and proceeded to explain that he, in conjunction with Colonel Harris, the new D.A.G., had posted me to the 1st Gurkhas, without telling the chief. That my arrival would adversely affect another youngster called Watson who was junior to me. That on the way to the shooting range behind Jakko, the afternoon before, he had told the chief, who was exceedingly angry, and directed that the appointment was to be cancelled at once.

He said, quoted Ian Hamilton, " I never heard of such a thing. Young Woodyatt has never had a relation in the country, and got Gurkhas entirely through favour, whereas Watson is the son of my old and tried friend, Sir John, a very distinguished soldier who did immense service for India and the Empire. I won't hear of his son being interfered with." Finally Ian Hamilton said plaintively : " I don't quite know what to do, but I never saw the chief so angry. Anyhow, come down to office this morning and we'll see if Colonel Harris has any proposal to make."

Eventually, owing to the accidental entry of a superintendent in the adjutant-general's branch, who knew the ropes, I was posted to the 1st battalion 3rd Gurkhas, in the seconded vacancy of Major H. D. Hutchinson, the new second-in-command, but with some time still to run as a garrison instructor. It was necessary, however, for me to join the 1st Gurkhas until fresh orders were issued, so to Dharmsala I went. My arrival on a Monday, knowing I was leaving about Friday, made me feel an awful fraud, especially when partaking, as a regimental guest, of the usual dinner given to the newly joined.

Then came a journey to Almora in the Kumaon Hills, the permanent station of the 1st battalion 3rd Gurkhas, with which regiment (i.e. 1st or 2nd battalion) I remained twenty years. Only nine, however, in Almora itself, the remainder being spent at Lansdowne, or on the staff. This little station of Almora, which was to be our home for the happy years of our early married life, and was to become the birthplace of our only beloved son, is enshrined in our hearts as no other place ever can be. It is difficult to know



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AN 18-POUNDER R.F.A. GUN CROSSING A RIVER ON A RAFT PROPELLED BY TWO HORSES SWIMMING.

to what, exactly, one can attribute its charm. The climate is certainly equable, not too hot in the summer and delightful in the winter, but I think it is really its simplicity and old-world atmosphere that make it so attractive to everyone.

On first arrival I found, as a resident, Major-General the Honourable Sir Henry Ramsay, commonly called the "King of Kumaon," and until recently the Commissioner of Kumaon and Garhwal, an appointment he had held for thirty-five years. As a friend of his son Jack in the Cheshires, I got to know Sir Henry and Lady Ramsay very well and often stayed with them at Khali and Binsur, eight and sixteen miles from Almora respectively. At both places the late Commissioner had built himself houses where he cultivated apples and potatoes, moving to one or the other according to the season of the year. Binsur was a most beautiful place, on a mountain 8,000 feet high covered with oak and rhododendron. Above the house was, according to Sir John Strachey, a former Lieutenant-Governor, one of the finest views of the snows obtainable anywhere.¹

Sir Henry was a relation of that seven years' Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, who ruled India between 1848 and 1856, and annexed more territory than any other Governor-General before or since. An erstwhile adjutant of the 3rd Gurkhas, a participant in the Mutiny, the Controller of the Prince of Wales' tiger shoot in 1875, and the omnipotent ruler, for years, of a province bigger than Belgium, Sir Henry was extremely interesting to talk to, and the old man loved to talk and to reminisce. He soon told me what a free hand he had to start with, soon after the Mutiny, and how irksome he had found the orders of the local government later on. So much so that if he did not like them he returned the paper endorsed in red ink, "Not applicable to Kumaon"!

Meeting him out for a walk he would *stand* for an hour or two and tell me the most enthralling stories of his life, stories you never see in books, and stories you could listen to for ever. How the Prince of Wales stayed up so late at night that on the second evening, in his shooting camp, Sir Henry approached him at 11 p.m. and asked special permission to retire always at that hour, "as I can't burn the candle at both ends." How, in the first day's shoot—

¹ See p. 41 Sir John Strachey's *India: Its Administration and Progress*.

though there were plenty of wild tiger—it had been necessary to introduce a few tame ones to make the bagging of at least two or three by the Prince an absolute certainty. How, when the huge “ring” of three hundred elephants was closing in gradually, a shot was heard, when the Prince of Wales called out sharply, “Who fired that shot?” (It was Arthur Prinsep of the 11th Lancers, but he was never given away, and the matter wasn’t pressed.) How, a few minutes later one of the tame tiger would not go away from in front of Sir Henry’s elephant, and he had to *pelt him with oranges* to get him to move on! How, big lunches in *hot cases* on the backs of elephants were taken into the jungle, and how delighted the Prince was with his first tiger, etc., etc., etc.

If I remember rightly, Sir Henry only took leave to England once during his sojourn of some fifty years in India. It was then only for three months, and made in order to procure agricultural implements and machinery for his district. In those days it only gave him about three weeks at home, and he had much to do. Directly he arrived a summons came from Marlborough House, and there the Prince of Wales told him he was to go to Balmoral to stay with the Queen. H.R.H. also added that on return to London he must make Marlborough House his head-quarters. These were sad encroachments on the scanty days of his short stay, but it couldn’t be helped. On leaving, the Prince and Princess of Wales (now Queen Alexandra) each presented him with a large signed photograph. These, in his haste, he left behind in his room. “What on earth did you do?” I gasped. “Oh,” said the old man, “I had a nephew, an equerry, and he had to go and retrieve them for me!”

He loved his unofficial title of “King of Kumaon.” Once a High Court judge, on leave from the plains, put up in the Government bungalow of Muktesar in the Kumaon Hills, and now a bacteriological college. Here was a large area Sir Henry had devoted to apples and potatoes. The judge liked the potatoes so much he took a sack away with him, sending the three rupees to the Commissioner, as told to do by the European caretaker. “I sent the money back,” said Sir Henry, “with the words ‘Kings don’t sell’!”

He reclaimed thousands of acres in the Kumaon *Bhābar*

(land below the foot-hills and dry, as opposed to the *Tarāi*, which is marshy and jungly land lying along the foot of the Himalayas north of the Ganges River), and persuaded the hill people to migrate there in the winter with their flocks and herds, thereby greatly adding to their wealth by giving them all seasons' crops. He also introduced the cultivation of potatoes, chestnuts, etc., all over Kumaon, another source of profit to his beloved people. These lived in what might well be called a model province, thanks to their king and father, Sir Henry Ramsay.

Some years after I joined at Almora, he was persuaded by his family to leave India and reside at home, where perhaps the cramped life speedily killed him, for he only survived about a couple of years, if so long. Like most strong men he had, of course, his enemies. I came across one who for years had been one of his subordinate officers and hated the sound of his name. Getting to know this man pretty well, I probed for the reason for this dislike. It turned out to be resentment at various official wiggings for slackness, which were well deserved, and also because he was "checked" for living with a native lady of Kumaon to whom he was not married. An amusing thing was that when this old bachelor moved anywhere, the good woman was always carried in a large packing case, the bearers of which were instructed, if questions were asked, to say it was the sahib's "bàja" (piano)!

There is no district in India, to my mind, so enchanting for a cold-weather tour as Kumaon, with its very comfortable rest-houses and good roads, thanks to Sir Henry Ramsay. Especially is this the case in the autumn, after the rains, with the air so crisp and the snows so glorious. Of many trips none brings back pleasanter recollections than one my wife and I took in the late eighties with the late Sir Auckland Colvin, the Lieutenant-Governor of the then called North-West Provinces of Agra and Oudh.

He had as his private secretary Captain Jack Strachey, than whom no greater master of detail, or better organiser, ever existed. This was later on evinced by the way all Governors fought for his services, and by his promotion, eventually, to be Controller of the Household to Lord Curzon. The arrangements for the camps on that tour were a perfect marvel, and it was through him that I was taken, with a party of signallers, to try and keep up com-



munication, by helio, or lamp, with Sir Auckland's summer capital, Naini Tal. Our destination was the charming tea estate of Kousanie, then under the management of Hugh Macmaster, one of the best of good fellows, who, with his daughter Bell—now Lady Ailsa—did all they could to make our visit a pleasant one.

The party, besides Sir Auckland and Jack Strachey, consisted of Mr. A. B. Patterson, the Commissioner of Inland Revenue (my wife's father); Colonel Erskine, the Commissioner of Kumaon in succession to Herky Ross; Jimmy Robertson, the senior member of the Board of Revenue; a Miss Ada Dyson, my wife, myself and, for a night or two, the Bishop of Lucknow. Nothing had been forgotten by Strachey and nothing was too difficult to procure. After a few days the ladies ran out of hairpins. They went straight to Jack, of course, as if he kept a haberdasher's shop, but, I think, with very little hope in their hearts. To their joy, however, they learnt the hairpins would be in camp the next evening. Miss Dyson was undoubtedly a most fascinating young woman. I firmly believe the whole camp fell in love with her, including the Bishop.

My signalling N.C.O.—a Gurkha—being a stickler for red tape, was very pressing regarding this State message, to know what kind of Government supply was a hairpin, which he noted was to be sent from Naini Tal by a special runner. On my explaining it was required for His Honour's hair in camp to keep it from getting caught up in official files, he appeared quite satisfied. Another heliogram sent by Sir Auckland also rather upset him. It was occasioned by the news that his brother Bassett's daughter, Amy, had got engaged to be married to Harry Somebody, and ran as follows:

“ One more lamb to be led to slaughter,
Auckland's niece and Bassett's daughter.
All delighted you're to marry,
Fondest love to you and 'arry.”

At the Naini end had been posted the battalion school-master, a good signaller and very proud of his knowledge of English. I sent this message myself, but it was nearly an hour before I could get him to take the word “ 'arry ” as sent. He would keep asking for a repetition, while enquiring whether it should not be “ Harry ”!

Sir Auckland was at his very best in camp. The scenery, the weather, the healthy marching, and the release from worry and official cares made him a boy again, and full of humour and chaff. Even loud shouting for my bearer one night, after he had gone to sleep, only caused the sarcastic remark at breakfast next morning that he hoped I had found him. One evening, after tea, he sat down and actually composed a very admirable poem on the members of the camp party.

Very few of that jolly party now survive, but for none do we mourn more than for the dear old "Shepherd," as Sir Auckland called Patterson, in joke, as if he was herding us two. His quick Irish temperament having been fired by reading of the wrongs of Italy, he left home at eighteen, joined Garibaldi, fought with him for two years, and besides being wounded and decorated on the field of battle, was promoted from cadet to captain within that period. Coming home afterwards, he passed brilliantly for the Indian Civil, was posted to the then North-West Provinces, and later became Commissioner of Inland Revenue with the Government of India. His ability much surpassed both his industry and his ambition, but with a memory so marvellous and a fund of knowledge so great, he was the most delightful companion imaginable, being, withal, the most lovable of men.

The battalion I was now with (the old 3rd Gurkhas) had just returned from the Burma campaign, and Lord Roberts (then Sir Frederick) had raised to it at Almora a new battalion of Garhwalis. These men, though excellent soldiers, were not looked upon, then, with the same esteem as Gurkhas, mainly because they were not so well known, enlisted sparingly and came from a province adjoining that of Kumaon and therefore in British territory. The selection of Garhwalis was somewhat resented by the officers of the old 3rd and especially so by Barry Bishop, our colonel. But the Chief was more far-seeing than most of us and, having appreciated the great value of the Garwali on his many campaigns, was bent on raising at least one complete unit of them, in spite of the depressing reports from civil sources regarding their disinclination to enlist. Here again he showed his acumen, for he did not agree with these reports or believe in them; time proved him to have judged correctly.

He once asked me, when up at Simla on leave from Almora, what I thought of the Garhwali. On my replying that I knew nothing of him, he said: "Well, I'll tell you something. There has always been a certain number of them, as well as Kumaonis, in every Gurkha battalion, and nearly every so-called Gurkha who has won the Indian Order of Merit for gallantry has been a Garhwali or Kumaoni!" Soon afterwards I had the curiosity to look this up, and found it was a matter of about ninety per cent.

However—as I have said—Barry Bishop was hipped, and for Barry Bishop to be hipped meant he would go on worry, worry, worry, until either he got his way or was outed. After three years' official, semi-official and private correspondence on this, to him, all-absorbing topic, we were given a new battalion of Gurkhas and the old 2/3rd was reconstructed the "39th Garhwalis," station Lansdowne. The number caused them much heart-burning, for it was that of the unit disbanded for the "shoe" episode at Delhi, to which I have already referred.

But the number was vacant and remonstrance proved futile. The adjutant, now Brigadier-General J. T. Evatt, D.S.O., their Colonel-in-Chief, devised, with prophetic foresight, a crest with the motto "Resurgam." I have often thought what a source of joy it would have been to Lord Roberts, and must have been to Evatt, to read the glorious record of the Garhwalis in the Great War, both in France and on other fronts, and to note the number of gallant soldiers this district provided.

Soon after joining the 1/3rd, we received a welcome addition to our strength in the person of Vincent Ormsby, whose maternal grandfather had been instrumental in raising the battalion in 1815. A deep friendship soon developed between "Vin" and myself, only ended, to my infinite sorrow, by his death in action in France in 1917, when Brigadier-General V. A. Ormsby, C.B., commanding the 127th Brigade, 42nd Division. No better fellow ever lived than this old Wykehamist, and it was a bright day for Almora when he and his charming bride arrived to make it their home for so many years. Not only was he a fine rider, first-class cricketer, and good sportsman, but he had an uncommonly pretty style with his pen, as evinced by his "Almoriana," and many other brochures, published in India.

About the time we heard of Government's sanction to the new 2nd battalion 3rd Gurkhas, I was going home on leave, after seven years in India. Having secured passages on a trooper, I was ready to start for Bombay, when Barry Bishop looked in on us at breakfast with something evidently on his mind. He soon brought it out by saying how extremely foolish it was of me to go home just then, when I was certain to get the adjutancy of the new battalion. I was of a different opinion and said so, but eventually he persuaded me to send a wire to Colonel (afterwards Lord) Nicholson, the Chief's military secretary, explaining the circumstances and enquiring what chance I had. It was a long and expensive urgent telegram, which I could ill afford, but I felt the outlay justified at 4 p.m. the same day on receiving the reply as follows :

"Chief selected you for adjutancy new Gurkha battalion Stop. You will probably have to take up your duties early next month." That settled it and England did not see me for six years more.

A good deal of football was played in Gurkha units even then ; but, so far as could be ascertained, it was a desultory kind of game with no definite rules. This was certainly the case at Almora, where sides consisted of any number, like Gilgit polo ; the ball was sometimes round and sometimes oval, and the by-laws varied at the fancy of the predominant Britisher playing. Rugby was suggested, but as this seemed impossible for Gurkhas, I started Soccer instead.

CHAPTER VIII

WINSTON THE OUTSPOKEN

THE first attempt to raise a second battalion to the 3rd Gurkhas at Almora having resulted in a wash-out, as I have explained, we eventually got one of pure Gurkhas, and I was the first officer to be appointed to it and as adjutant.

In those days it was the custom when raising a new battalion (and Lord Roberts raised a great many) to do so *ab initio*, with just a small nucleus from the sister battalion or one of a similar composition. Lord Kitchener, in his time, conceived the much better idea of dividing the old battalion into two halves and completing each to strength. The advantage of this was that the new unit was ready for the field much sooner, and although the old one was incapacitated for a time, yet both in a great emergency could be utilised, on account of the large number of old soldiers each contained.

I was most fortunate in having as my C.O., Major H. D. Hutchinson. He was commonly called "The Teacher" and known to the whole army, not only for his books, especially *Sketching Made Easy*, but also for his marvellous capacity for imparting knowledge to others. For years he had been a garrison instructor, and was the one selected to conduct the celebrated course held in Simla itself during Lord Lansdowne's viceroyalty. The reason for this was that, to qualify for promotion, Bill Beresford, the Governor-General's military secretary, had to pass the usual obligatory examination. But it was considered impossible for so important a person to be entirely absent from his official duties for three or four months! Hence the Simla class.

No one could wish for a better C.O. than I had in Major

H. D. Hutchinson, now Lieutenant-General and Companion of the Star of India. I shall always look upon it as a special dispensation of Providence to have had the enormous advantage of serving for four very interesting years under so brilliant a mentor. I notice the present Chief of the Imperial General Staff (Field-Marshal Sir H. Wilson) gave a touching tribute to General Hutchinson at the last prize-giving of the Bath School for Officers' daughters. After a feeling reference to his present affliction of semi-blindness, the field-marshal alluded to the immense amount he had himself learnt when serving under him at the War Office, just after the South African War.

This struck a very sympathetic chord in my heart, for the little knowledge I possess that I did not learn from him or from the late Major-General William Hill or my last divisional commander is not worth having. He was the first man to really make me work, and the first to encourage me to use my pen. I had never done either before. But with him I was always on my mettle, and I firmly believe that those four years were the turning point in my life, by changing me from a slackster into one possessed of some kind of high endeavour.

Lansdowne is not a bad little hill station, the highest part being just 6,000 feet above sea-level and the air very fine. The hills are too much on the big side for training, so it is most difficult to find ground to work over near cantonments. There is capital fishing within a day's march, good big-game shooting (tiger, etc.) close to, if you make proper arrangements, some pheasants and plenty of chakor (red-legged partridge) within twenty miles; also snipe and duck shooting in the plains below.

Here, in 1892, my wife and I had the novel experience of building a house, and very fascinating it was. Four good rooms with dressing and bath to each of the two bedrooms, wooden ceilings, papered walls, English doors and windows. This, with a cookhouse, servants' quarters and two stalls, cost us just Rs. 6,000, or say £450. It could not be done for three times that amount now.

At the end of my tenure as adjutant I was offered the post of inspector of musketry at Meerut. This was in February, but the telegram said the appointment would

not be vacant until May. Accepting this offer, I went off into the jungle to shoot.

Three days later a runner came into my camp at midnight with an "immediate" letter from the adjutant to say the battalion had been mobilised and was very shortly railing to Nowshera to join the Chitral Expedition. This was on a Sunday, and between Monday morning and Friday night I had cancelled my acceptance of the staff appointment, sold my house for seven thousand rupees, packed my things, started my wife and boy for England, and joined the battalion entraining for the front, at the nearest railway station. Quick and never-ceasing work, all day and most of the night, but so great was my joy at the chance of active service at last, after so many bitter disappointments during twelve long years, that no fatigue whatever was felt, and all the preparations for departure were a labour of love.

Imagine then my pain, grief and mortification when shortly after arrival at Hoti Mardan, near the frontier, a reply came to my letter about the staff appointment, addressed to the C.O. as follows :

"Chief sympathises with application, but cannot accept any resignation Stop Captain Woodyatt must join at Meerut immediately as appointment unexpectedly become vacant now."

It was well known that the Commander-in-Chief, Sir George White, held very strong views about staff officers relinquishing their appointments simply to rejoin their regiments ordered on active service. Undoubtedly this was a sound principle, but I held that mine was an entirely different case, for no advantage whatever had accrued to me from the appointment, which, moreover, I had declined three months before it was vacant. Colonel Hutchinson was kindness itself, sending many official and private telegrams, begging that I might be allowed to remain, even if only for two or three months. None, however, were of any avail, the last reply being :

"If Captain Woodyatt does not join his appointment at Meerut immediately he will incur the severe displeasure of the C.-in-C."

Just another case of slavish adoption of a rule combined with a large slice of injustice! Bringing me this wire himself the C.O. said : "I'm dreadfully sorry, but you'll

have to go, my boy. You can't fight the Chief!" The very next day, as the battalion marched on to Dargai and over the frontier, I was returning disconsolate in a tonga to Nowshera railway station and, as we sped along, I rather think it was a case of bitter tears.

Hoti Mardan is the head-quarters of the famous "Guides," the infantry portion of which corps I was to have the honour of including in my war brigade twenty years later. Our brigadier was the late General Channer, V.C., with Horace Smith-Dorrien as his staff officer. The general was most particular about being saluted at all times, and came to the C.O.'s tent very angry one day to say one of our stick sentries on the boundary of the camp had failed to do so. I was sent for, as it was my wing, and told to get hold of the man and bring him up at once. Turning to go I noticed the G.O.C. remained on, and was wearing a black mourning band on his left arm.

The sentry turned out to be a nice little Gurkha I knew well, a good football player, but very stolid and rather thick-headed. The colonel, being vexed, was somewhat rough with him. After some questions, without any intelligent answer, the general chipped in, saying, in the vernacular: "If you don't know your own general you ought to, and who indeed did you suppose I was?" Looking hard at his arm band the boy replied, "Bomb police!" That is to say, one of the military provost establishment called that by the men, and wearing a broad badge on the arm, though it is usually red.

Another curious episode at Mardan was the behaviour of a senior officer sent to us for Colonel Hutchinson to report on, after a fixed period, as his conduct had been very peculiar in his last unit. We had one tree in camp, on the southern edge, and, it being very hot, this officer, building an arbour in the branches, insisted on living, sleeping and feeding there. The colonel told the adjutant to warn this arboreous person that he must live like the other officers, but no notice whatever was taken.

On the evening of the third day, Colonel Hutchinson came and asked me to use my influence, pointing out that, although the major's action could hardly be called insubordinate or against rule, it was highly ridiculous, nor had he any business to be living out of the mess. I could see

the colonel was much averse to drastic action, but was very hipped at being made a fool of.

I explained to him that everything possible had already been done, but arguments were quite useless; that the tree was full of tinned tongues, *pâté de foie gras*, bottled beer and all sorts of luxuries, obtained by parcel post; and that the incumbent absolutely refused to come down, except to go to parades, etc.

Waxing wroth, the C.O. said, "Come along, we'll soon settle the matter," and off we went to the foot of the tree.

What followed was so funny that I was in real pain trying to suppress the laughter I couldn't very well indulge in. The colonel began in rather cajoling accents, looking up into the branches from the ground, and begging our friend to stop that kind of thing and come down. Then he tried to point out what a ridiculous ass the man was making of himself; next he talked about discipline, and finally, getting very angry, declared his report would be exceedingly bad, leading to a very serious situation.

Peering down from his leafy arbour, this funny old bird took it all with the greatest good-humour, saying his head would not stand the heat below, that he was paying for his messing as usual, and wouldn't the colonel and I come up and dine with him! As an inducement he told us he had just received, by post, fresh butter from Aligarh, potatoes from Kumaon, a ham from Green & Reade, Bombay, and pastry from Peliti at Simla—all of which was quite true. Absolutely defeated, the C.O. stumped off, white with rage, and a few hours later came the order for the battalion to cross the frontier in two days' time. A year or two later this poor tree-dwelling major had to be confined as a dangerous lunatic.

My new appointment brought me into close touch with Colonel W. Hill,¹ the A.A.G. musketry army headquarters. There are probably more anecdotes about "old Hill," as he was affectionately called, than any other soldier in India. Possessing great humour, much facility of expression, a somewhat pugnacious nature, and a nimble and virile pen, his noting on files at A.H.Q., and his quaint and humorous

¹ The late Major-General W. Hill, C.B., who died in 1903 while G.O.C. Mhow Division.

letters and sayings, were a perfect joy to the recipients. At the same time his sound judgment, irregular and rugged features, twinkling grey eyes and charming manner—when he liked—made him very popular and his company much sought after.

It was the custom for the Commander-in-Chief to fit the Meerut Rifle Meeting (the Bisley of India) into his cold-weather tour, and, after making an address, give away the prizes. I was present at the visits of Lord Roberts, Sir G. White, Sir W. Lockhart, Lord Kitchener, etc. When Lord Kitchener came he was most fussy about where he was to stand to speak, and made me pile huge palms round his lectern; so much so that he was almost hidden away. He also ordered me to produce a shorthand writer who was to be close to him, but quite invisible. I asked FitzGerald what his use was, as I knew there were lots of copies of the Chief's words. FitzGerald said heaven only knew what was often in Kitchener's mind, but it didn't do to argue about it! So I got one with much difficulty, an army schoolmaster, but the poor devil had to sit on a brick between two large palms, and sit there for the dickens of a long time.

Apropos Colonel Hill, when he was commanding the 1st brigade 2nd Gurkhas at Dehra Dun, many amusing anecdotes can be told. His divisional commander was Sir George Greaves and the two had many a tussle, for although they much respected each other at heart, their natures were rather antagonistic.

One year Sir George gave a big money prize for a collective musketry competition open to all units in the division, both British and Indian, and which the general was very anxious a certain British unit should win. Hill gave out openly that he intended to win it with his Gurkhas from Dehra Dun, and this much annoyed the divisional commander. The competition took place at Meerut and the Gurkhas won, to Sir George's intense disgust. To prevent the Gurkhas perpetuating their victory in the shape of a mess trophy, he personally directed that the money was to be given to the members of the team, and on no account expended on the purchase of a memento of the occasion.

At the next inspection dinner at Dehra Dun, Colonel Hill led in the general, and straight in front of the latter, on the

table, was a handsome silver cigarette box. Sir George could see there was some engraving on top, but all he could read without taking out his glasses was the title of the match, the date and his own name. Fidgeting a good deal all through dinner and drinking much more wine than he needed, the general waited impatiently for the cloth to be removed. Then turning to his left he said :

“ Look here, Hill, I told you distinctly that the prize for my musketry competition was a money one, to be given to the team, and now I see this box ? ”

“ Quite all right,” said Hill, “ the money was paid to the men in the acquittance roll for the month of March, and I got this box out of regimental funds as a memento of the occasion, for the men were very pleased at beating all the British teams. If you look at the inscription you will see it only says it is a regimental memento of a competition for a money prize given by you, and won by the men of the 2nd Gurkhas ! ” There was no more to be said.

On another occasion, trouble having occurred in a certain unit's canteen accounts, the Meerut staff, by the general's orders, issued some instructions for guidance, “ to be strictly adhered to and a report submitted before such and such a date.” Now certain Indian units, but very few, maintain a canteen, and [it was known the 2nd Gurkhas had one, in order to sell rum and beer to the men. The fund, however, was entirely a private one and in no way official. Failing to get any reply from Dehra Dun, a somewhat rude reminder was issued by the staff, in reply to which Colonel Hill wrote at the bottom in red ink :

“ The Divisional Commander has no more to do with my canteen than the Czar of Russia.”

For this he got a rap over the knuckles.

The Meerut Divisional headquarters always moved to Mussoorie for the summer, which is a hill station in the United Provinces, consisting of a main ridge—with various offshoots—some 6,500 feet above sea-level. It runs roughly east and west and overlooks Dehra Dun on its southern side. At the eastern end is the small military cantonment of Landour, some 7,200 feet high. In the centre, two miles lower down, is the main station, and at the western end, up to two miles or so from the centre, are hotels, residential

houses, etc., on wooded slopes and spurs. Dehra Dun by road is fourteen miles from Mussoorie, and about half-way is the hamlet of Rajpore, the changing station from motors, tongas, etc., to hill pony or dandy.

At the end of one season, Sir George Greaves decided to give everyone a treat by having a sham fight in which he would defend Mussoorie with the volunteers, cadets of three or four schools, and the few British details at Landour, against a force of mountain artillery and Gurkhas from Dehra Dun under the command of Colonel Hill. At the conclusion there would be a big luncheon given by Sir George.

As the approaches from the south were much the shortest and fairly easy, though wooded, and those towards Landour led up steep precipices, the general considered this flank secure and, practically ignoring it, disposed his forces on or about the centre of the main ridge. On the appointed day, Colonel Hill, moving to Rajpore the evening before, left again long before dawn, with half his strength, to tackle the eastern part of the Landour end. This had always been considered absolutely impracticable, but Hill had ascertained, by secret reconnaissance, that it was dangerously possible.

Meanwhile, at the decent hour of 8 a.m., the remainder of his force feinted in front and slowly pushed in Sir George's advanced posts. There was no real attempt, however, to force an attack on the main ridge, and as the luncheon hour drew nigh the general got more and more contemptuous of Hill's futile efforts and slow movements, whilst he drew in closer and closer his extended flanks. At last an adjournment was made for lunch, and in the middle of it a flag of truce was received from Hill with the message :

"Arrived Landour 1 p.m. with one section mountain artillery and 400 Gurkhas. Garrison overpowered and guns now in action entirely dominating your defensive position."

In a towering rage the general dictated the following reply :

"Have been strengthened by two battalions of British infantry from Chakrata [thirty miles off, and therefore quite impossible]. Shall attack you on a wide front. What do you intend to do ? "

To which the answer came in about an hour :

“Have been reinforced by the angel Gabriel and a company of cherubims and intend to remain where I am !”

And he was left alone, to rest there for the night after his arduous feat, which very few would have dared to attempt. None of the British officers, even the strongest and boldest, had been able to climb up without assistance from the men. As for the guns, it is a marvel how they were got there, even with the amount of rope provided.

As A.A.G. musketry, Colonel Hill had a considerable amount of touring. The regulations permitted him to take one horse always, or two, “if the second one was absolutely necessary.” Having continuous trouble over his travelling bills with pettifogging baboos of the Military Accounts department, he was much exasperated when his claim for two horses to Rawalpindi was cut down half. Asking for a refund as two horses had actually been taken there, he was told it was contrary to the regulations and could not be admitted. Pointing out, in a still further letter, the words in the book as put in inverted commas above, the pay people replied that it was essential for the adjutant-general to certify that two horses were *absolutely necessary*. This was too much for old Hill, and getting out his red ink he wrote across this :

“Am I really to understand that the officers of the Pay Department can possibly imagine I take these two horses about for the benefit of their health ? ” !

The money was refunded at once, but we all got a confidential circular shortly afterwards, saying it had come to the notice of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief that officers were in the habit of writing most improper remarks in military accounts departmental correspondence, which must cease immediately, etc., etc.

During one of his tours Colonel Hill attended a concentration held in my musketry circle, the occasion being an attack by an infantry brigade, with ball, on an enemy in position, represented by targets. In those days the order was that, at any pause in an attack, infantry would “kneel” ! The commander having omitted to make any personal reconnaissance, the attack failed, but the supports and reserves had been brought close up, and on a huge frontage was a long extended line, with other lines behind, but no strength

anywhere. Failing to see any objective the first line halted, and then the lines in rear did the same. Colonel Hill was standing near me with a very red face, on which was a most humorous look accentuated by the fact that, to ease his eyes, he had turned his old-fashioned helmet back to front. Then he spoke :

“Wherever I look I see lines upon lines of men in a devotional attitude. It seems to me about time to offer up prayers for those at sea!” The infantry colonel commanding the brigade for the day, certainly was very much at sea.

Like so many good soldiers, Colonel Hill had a horror of red tape and often told me how he found himself simply tied up in it at Simla. “I’m a pretty good fighter,” he would say, “but neither abuse, sarcasm, satire, sneers, nor even concrete facts have a dog’s chance when the methods of babooism rule the roost.” After fighting for a long period to get the Volunteers in India better armed and equipped and their Martini-Henry rifles exchanged for the ‘303, he was given to understand that the matter was settled. Then a sudden hitch called an indefinite postponement. Unable to restrain his indignation, he put up a long note to the Ordnance department, from which I quote the following amusing passages :

“ . . .—As regards the Volunteérs, the question of their being re-armed can be dropped for at least eight or nine years.

“I am very, very greatly relieved at this, for, having done a good deal of writing and talking on the subject, I have been much exercised in my mind about the Volunteer question, and it has been a terrible anxiety and responsibility to me.

“It was soon borne in upon me that I had made a huge blunder. I was interfering in a matter that in no way concerned the technicalities of musketry instruction. I felt as a man would feel who had picked up a bundle in the street and found it contained a ‘baby, and no one would believe that he was altogether innocent, and refused to relieve him of the responsibility.

“This infernal foundling has been as a millstone round my neck, and, as a lot of Volunteers have managed to persuade themselves that the responsibility for the maintenance and education of this cuckoo in my nest is

rightly placed on me, I have had frequently to deny my responsibility in unmeasured terms, when heckled on the subject.

“ My long-suffering patience and sincere penitence for my indiscretion in mixing myself up in matters that do not concern me, have at last been rewarded, and I go forth a free man, free of the shame, pain and humiliation (as Mr. Thorburn¹ would say) connected with the responsibility for this unclaimed and abandoned brat—the Indian Volunteer.

“ If I ever hear of the subject again, it will perhaps be when I am killing time, in the smoking-room of a Pall Mall club, by reading some weekly Indian newspaper, in which mention is made of the proposal to re-arm the Volunteers in India as being ‘ under consideration.’

“ I shall be able to look back on the time when I destroyed many quires of good foolscap on the subject and be able joyfully to exclaim, ‘ Vive la bagatelle ! ’ ”

When the late General Hill was inspector-general of Volunteers in India, he was suddenly taken extremely ill at Meerut in February, 1903. Partially recovering, he was promoted to the command of the Mhow Division, but in September went to England for medical advice. An operation revealed a malignant growth too far gone for the surgeon's knife. The verdict was six months in agony. Fortunately a clot of blood intervened, and he died the same evening. This was a truly cruel fate, for he had then gained the entire confidence of Lord Kitchener, who consulted him on the weightiest matters, and especially on the delicate question of the renumbering of the Indian Army. Had he lived and kept his health, there was nothing but age to stop him.

My first divisional commander at Meerut was General Sanford, referred to before as the young field engineer at the time of the 10th Hussar catastrophe crossing the Kabul River.

General Sanford was succeeded by that well-known soldier and great *shikāri*, Sir Bindon Blood, later to pass on to the command of the Northern Army at Rawalpindi. Handsome, debonair, imperturbable, always well mounted

¹ A Punjab civilian who publicly censured the Viceroy (Lord Elgin) in 1898 for his pusillanimous policy on the N.W. Frontier, and used the above words in his speech.

and ever the picture of health, Bindon was a popular commander, and Lady Bindon and he were a great social success.

It was at their house in Meerut I first met the Misses Lieter (now Mrs. Colin Campbell and Lady Suffolk), on a visit to India at the invitation of their sister, Lady Curzon. Their enjoyment of life, keenness to see and do everything, and their quaint American sayings, fairly astonished the place. Nothing was too trivial for their notice and nothing too small for their curiosity.

Daisy was very good-looking and very vivacious. One night at the Bloods the late Maharajah of Patiala was teaching her after dinner how to balance a rupee on her elbow, and catch it by a downward flick of the arm, at which she was shaping very badly. At last Patiala almost lost patience, for he had been doing a lot of groping about on the floor for her fallen rupees. Again placing the coin on his elbow, he said: "It's dreadfully easy; all you have to do is this (catching it deftly) and say 'Lawks a daisy'!" Which was rather smart.

Another visitor to the Bloods was Winston Churchill, then a subaltern in the 4th Hussars, and chiefly remarkable for his extreme precociousness and a never-ending tendency to make absurd assertions on purpose to create discussion. This didn't make him too popular, but at the same time everyone recognised his brain power and general ability. It was common knowledge that, although only a junior subaltern, he practically "ran" the 4th Hussars. He used to come out on field days with Sir Bindon, freely criticising all movements, and the fact that he was very often right, and that the general frequently followed his advice and suggestions, did not make his intrusion any more welcome!

During the polo week in Meerut, Sir Baker Russell, the general of the command, gave a large dinner party. One of Sir Baker's idiosyncrasies was to march straight into the dining-room with the senior lady, the moment the clock struck eight. He would wait for no one. If a man was late, Baker, who had an enormous voice, would shout at him from where he sat, and whatever his rank, somewhat as follows: "There you are, Jones, there you are, left hand of Lady Russell; if the ladies can be in time I don't know why you can't."

The poor devil would then slink to his seat. At Naini Tal one night, Lomax, commanding the Cameronians, was a bit late, and above is exactly what happened. But in his case it was much worse because, having ridden, he had tucked his coat-tails into his trousers' pockets, and in his haste to get into the dining-room had forgotten to take them out! So he walked round the long table looking rather ridiculous, though quite unaware of it.

On this particular evening Winston was late, and though Sir Baker, at eight o'clock, walked into the dining-room as usual, he went half round the table to greet young Churchill when he came in, a thing I had never seen him do before. When the ladies had gone I sat next to Baker, and "Boy" Maclaren of the 13th Hussars, his A.D.C., came and sat on the other side of me. Presently we heard a hubbub at the bottom of the table. It appears Reggie Hoare, of the 4th Hussars, had been out pigsticking for the first time that day and, having got into a pig, was describing his glorious sensation as the spear went home after so hard a gallop. "Yes," said Winston, in a loud voice, "that's a weak spot about fox hunting; I've always said the field should carry spears to jab into the fox at the finish." At this, of course, there were shouts of satirical laughter and, Baker asking the reason, Winston told him what he had said. "What about the hounds, my boy, what about the hounds?" remarked Sir Baker.

Shortly afterwards there was another uproar, with angry voices, and "Boy" Maclaren, nudging me, said: "That's young Churchill raising another discussion." Now all the men at the table except myself belonged to British cavalry, and Churchill had been getting their backs up by saying that no commander would think of taking British cavalry on service if he could get Indian instead! Appealing to Sir Baker, he asked what he'd prefer himself: "Oh well," said the general, rather flustered, "it all depends on the transport. If I had plenty I would always take British Cavalry, but otherwise Indian, because they require so little," which seemed a very good answer.

About this time Churchill gave out that he was leaving the service and going in for politics, but was very reserved as regards his views. Sir Bindon was reported to have begged him to make up his mind, and then stick to his

party through thick and thin, so as to gain and retain the confidence of the British public. This advice Winston received in stony silence. Sir Bindon, not to be beaten, went on to dilate on the respective careers of Gladstone and Beaconsfield and the esteem in which they were both held by the British public. He instanced the fact that the former, though sometimes lacking in judgment, was considered straight and trusted accordingly; whereas a feeling that Beaconsfield's policy was apt to be Machiavellian militated against this same feeling of confidence.

The following story gives a good insight into the impulsive character, pluck and good-nature of Mr. Churchill, as a boy. It was at the time when ragging was much in vogue, and subalterns' courts-martial of frequent occurrence. The 4th Hussars at Mhow had occasion to hold several, and unjustly put on the mat a young officer who had lately joined for the purpose of going to the Indian Army. Having been asked what his allowance was, and then how he expected to live on that sum in the 4th, he replied that he had no intention of doing so; but, having been offered cavalry by the War Office, he had taken it to gain his commission early, and as soon as possible was transferring to an Indian corps.

Being bullied by Churchill and told that the 4th were not accustomed to be turned into a *dâk bungalow*,¹ this officer waxed wrath, telling him that, as he seemed the most aggressive spirit present, perhaps he would like to come outside, and see which was the better man. Churchill consented at once and a scrap took place. Now the young prisoner under trial happened to have been the public schools middle-weight champion the year before, and he soon knocked spots out of his opponent. In spite of this, he maintains that Churchill bore him no ill-will whatever, but during the remainder of his time in the 4th was particularly nice to him.

The fact of having the lieutenant-general sitting on his head in Meerut, because he had no proper cold weather head-quarters, was extremely obnoxious to Sir Bindon Blood, and he took no trouble to hide it. I had much touring to do and, one day, while some distance away, I received an urgent wire from Sir Baker's chief staff officer, to return immediately. Wondering what it meant, I reported

¹ Staging house.

myself at once to Colonel Henry on arrival, who explained the situation as follows :

“ There’s to be a big divisional field firing to-morrow, which is, of course, directly under the divisional commander’s (Sir Bindon Blood) orders. Baker intends to be present, and as there is some friction between the two, it is quite likely Baker will interfere, and there will be a row. This would be a great pity, for, between ourselves, Bindon is as big a man as Baker. I’ve therefore sent for you to go with the latter and keep him quiet. Keep him amused and moving about and, whatever you do, keep him away from Bindon. I’m chief umpire, and I’ve got the rest of the staff disposed of on purpose, so you’ll be all alone.”

All went well at first and I got Baker ahead with the cavalry, but when the infantry came into action, he began looking round at them and got fidgety. I tried to persuade him to come over to the guns to see how they were supporting the infantry attack. We cantered that way, when some infantry volleys from an unexpected quarter attracted his attention and, turning off, he galloped in that direction.

Like the old war horse he was, the sound of heavy firing was too much for him, and, pushing his mount right into the firing line, he took charge of battalions, companies, and even sections ! I still hoped it might be all right, as there was no sign of Bindon, but when the situation became critical and the reserves were much too far behind, Baker, to my horror, bawled to his trumpeter to sound the “ Cease fire,” followed by the “ Officers’ call.”

This was, of course, a great breach of etiquette, and the fat was in the fire. Bindon came up with the rest, looking extremely annoyed, and a wordy war commenced by Baker asking who was the officer commanding the reserves.

“ I consider,” he said, “ that he entirely failed to grasp the situation and kept his troops much too far behind. For that reason I sounded the ‘ Cease fire.’ ”

Bindon told him he begged to differ ; that the officer had acted quite judiciously under his orders, and had the attack not been stopped prematurely it would have been quite all right.

So it went on, until Baker, leaning over his holsters, said, with a very red face : “ Well, well, Sir Bindon, all I

can say is that this, this, this field day would never have passed the Duke of Cambridge at Aldershot."

Bindon's only answer was a loud guffaw! I had a very poor ride of seven miles home with Sir Baker, my dejection enhanced by the thought that I had completely failed in my somewhat impossible task!

Sir Baker and Lady Russell, with their niece, Miss Long, dispensed lavish hospitality at Naini Tal, where they were greatly liked. At "Hawksdale" everyone was assured of a warm welcome, and each felt that the hosts were devoting themselves entirely to the care, comfort and amusement of their guests.

Dining one night in the R.A. mess at Meerut, I had pointed out to me two very handsome glass jugs used for champagne. They were wonderfully cut, with beautiful guns and gun carriages. They were the very last of the glass belonging to the old Bengal Artillery, priceless and irreplaceable. I duly admired the first one that appeared, and we then discussed duck shooting, the pace the birds went, etc.

By this time the wine had come round again. After moving on a heavy marsala decanter to my next-door neighbour, I passed one of the wonderful glass jugs after it. At the same time I was answering a query by suggesting that someone was omitting to *swing* sufficiently at the duck. This gave my hand an unconscious whirl, and bang went the jug into the marsala decanter and broke to bits. The man on my left had gone to sleep, and had failed to pass on the marsala! Never have I felt so miserable, and I spent the rest of the evening in gloomy silence.

A few weeks afterwards I was dining in the R.A. mess again. When the wine came round there was the one solitary jug, which I dare hardly look at. To my confusion, my host began expatiating on its beauty, adding: "We had two until quite lately, when some swine broke one." I then had to admit *I* was that swine!

Many years afterwards I dined in the same mess on a Sunday evening with L. A. Smith, a horse gunner, the only officer in Meerut who had been there in the old days. We dined at round tables, and after dinner Smith asked me if I remembered breaking the jug. Begging him not to talk about it as it was so painful, he told me, to my

joy, that it had been nicely mended, and sent for it. I took it in my hands with the utmost care, and noted how beautifully the work had been done. Then I handed it back to the mess sergeant; but a captain at the next table, wondering why the jug had been produced, called for it. He had not heard our conversation, but turning the jug over and over, and noting the tiny black marks, he looked towards Smith and said: "What swine broke it?" I thought Smith would never stop laughing, and I felt that penance for my untimely mishap was paid in full.

In the early part of the South African War, we were at Mussoorie. As news travelled slowly to outlying stations like Chakrata (thirty miles away by a hill road, and occupied by one British infantry battalion and British details), we used to send on daily, by helio, any interesting information received. The officer in charge of signals, named Mackenzie, was a lively young man with a marked predilection for practical joking. One day, having transmitted some perfectly authentic intelligence, he added on his own: "Sir George White and staff were captured by the Boers yesterday when engaged on reconnaissance duty, and having luncheon outside the defences of Ladysmith."

As it happened, Sir Bindon Blood was marching over to inspect Chakrata, and due there the following day. The O.C., on getting this important piece of news, immediately rode out ten miles to Sir Bindon's resting-place for that night to tell him about it. The General expressed no astonishment, saying it was just the sort of thing that might have happened. During his stay at Chakrata Sir Bindon could talk of little else, adding, that it also meant he was bound now to be sent out there himself. Cutting his tour down considerably, he hurriedly returned to Mussoorie, only to find the whole thing was a hoax! All the same, he *was* sent out to South Africa shortly afterwards.

One would have expected Mackenzie to get badly hotted, but all the general directed was that he must be had up and wiggged officially by his C.O., and that in future no messages whatever were to be sent by signal until signed by the O.C. Station personally.

Gallant Sir George White, what a brave heart he had. It was bad enough to be shut up in Ladysmith without suffering the indignity of being a prisoner in the hands of the Boers. All soldiers loved him for the prompt way in

which he made himself entirely responsible for Carleton's disaster in South Africa at Nicholson Nek in 1899, although he had nothing at all to do with it. So different from many more recent happenings, when the cry has too often been, "Where's the scapegoat?" One instinctively knows what would have been Sir George White's action in the Dyer Case.

CHAPTER IX

KITCHENER AND CURZON

WHEN I was at Peshawar in 1884, on first arrival in India, one of the Cheshires, at the club, pointed out to me a captain named Faithful, who had not been home for fifteen years. I remember still, my feeling of astonishment that anyone could possibly stay out so long, and walked round him to get a better view of so interesting a phenomenon. He looked very much the same as the others and extraordinarily fit, but to a new-comer, just out, it did appear weird that he could, in any circumstances, willingly consent to so long a separation from relations and friends in England. Yet, what with desirable appointments, and one thing and another, here I was in very much the same plight ; for it was nearly twelve and a half years before I put foot on English soil after my first departure in December, 1883.

Naturally I thought that everything would be very strange, that my friends would have all forgotten me, that my people would have acquired other and closer interests—in fact, that I was bound to feel completely out of it. Exactly the opposite was the case. After a few hours in England I felt as if I had never left it ; my people were delighted to welcome me, and old friendships seemed only strengthened by the long absence. My boy friends had come into their properties, or otherwise settled down. Many of them had married. The girl friends had mostly taken to themselves husbands, so that the circle of friendship was soon to be largely increased.

One of the first functions we attended was an " At Home," in London, given by my old friend, Mabel Cornwallis, whom I had known from her cradle. The occasion marked the presentation by her at Court of her sister, Isobel Wood-

house. It was a very warm, sultry afternoon in June, but a frock-coat was absolutely essential. Entering a crowded and very long drawing-room, I felt extremely hot in this kit. Much movement and a babel of voices prevented our names being heard, and blocked every avenue of approach to our hostess. Fortunately, being very tall herself, she spotted me, and calling out, "There's dear old Nigel, I always said I should kiss him," ran towards me and did so.

Now, being unexpectedly kissed by a tall and beautiful woman in a drawing-room filled with people, half of whom appeared strangers, was a novelty I had never experienced in India, and was too much for me. Losing my head, I felt so rattled that I immediately kissed her sister, and any other lady I was introduced to, if there seemed the slightest tendency on her part to treat me as an old friend. It was quite delightful, but very fatiguing; so much so that, at the first opportunity, I slipped away to try and get cool in the open air. I had an engagement with my tailor and, being in Knightsbridge, got on top of the first 'bus I saw, to take me to Piccadilly. My head was in such a whirl that I took no notice of the direction I was going, and was only brought down to earth when the red-faced old coachman, turning from his box-seat towards me, said: "We don't go no furdur." I was in Hammersmith and not Piccadilly!

Looking back on these delightful, careless days, as we lived and moved in our atmosphere of happiness, how little did we know what was to come. Small troubles and disappointments of course occurred, but catastrophes were rare and tragedies uncommon.

Take the chief actors in this little incident alone. Mrs. Cornwallis lost her eldest son in the 17th Lancers this summer. Ruthlessly murdered in Ireland after going through the whole war unscathed, and gaining the Military Cross and *Croix de Guerre* for continual gallantry with his machine guns.

Mrs. Woodhouse was visited with even greater affliction, losing first her second, and then her oldest son in aerial combat in France. An intrepid and accomplished airman, the last-named gained both the Distinguished Flying and Military Crosses for repeated acts of bravery and resource.

We ourselves mourn for our only boy, Nigel, killed whilst leading his men in the attack on Fort Dujela in Mesopotamia, 8th March, 1916. We like to think he died just ahead of his Gurkhas, as he would wish to die. He had "one crowded hour of glorious life," and who would deny him that? It is not those that go like this for whom we feel sorrow, but for those who are left behind. Truly "a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things."

In all such affliction we have the great solace of old friendship. It is well not to forget this. One of my oldest friends, who has had her deep sorrow too, in the loss of her only son in the war, gave me the following lines, *years ago*, and I have always treasured them :

"There are no friends like the old friends,
Live as long as you may ;
The new friends fail and change you,
But the old are the old alway ;
And oh ! when around life's pathway
The shades of the evening grow,
God spare me but one of the old friends
To grasp my hand as I go."

Shortly after return to India from my first leave home, I was promoted to the command head-quarters and stationed at Naini Tal, the summer capital of the United Provinces. When the Tirah force was mobilised in August, 1897, the first battalion of my regiment was ordered off at once. Sir Baker Russell, my general, and at my earnest request, put me into a vacancy which existed in the unit. Great was my joy and hasty my preparations to meet the battalion at railhead. Alas ! just as I was starting, a wire from Simla notified that, as I was a *seconded* officer, I could not go, and someone else must be sent in my place. Words fail me for any comment on this.

The Tirah campaign was badly handled. Sir William Lockhart, in chief command, was a very sick man, and General (afterwards Lord) Nicholson, his chief staff officer, was so incompetent for such a task, and had such an offensive manner with all the commanders, that everything was at sixes and sevens. He actually ran the whole show, which was remarkable for an entire absence of any kind of plan, even a bad one. With such an utter lack of imagination, and no endeavour whatever to forestall the

enemy on any occasion, the campaign could hardly end, except as it did, in a rather ignominious retreat down the Bara Valley. One might indeed say the best bit of work was that done by the improvised corps of hill scouts.

I heard of one amusing incident. A friend of mine was commanding a contingent of Imperial Service troops, i.e. detachment of troops maintained by native states and lent for the campaign. He got up a dinner for Christmas with the best means at his disposal. That is to say, the pudding was tinned, and port was drunk out of egg cups.

A Mohammedan chief, who had come up to see his troops, was invited. Paying a ceremonial visit to my friend on Christmas day, he was shown the arrangements for the dinner, and noticed there was no tablecloth. On enquiring why, he was told one could not be procured in the field, or brought on field service scale.

"But that will never do," said this gentleman, "it will not be like a real dinner without a white tablecloth. Now I am a guest, and it will be my privilege to provide one."

In the late afternoon a very nice, white cloth arrived. At dinner my friend said: "But how is it, Nawab Sahib, that on field service scale you have managed to bring such a beautiful white cloth?" "Well, major," said the Nawab, "to tell you the truth, I thought I might be killed in this war and so I brought my *shroud* with me, as my religion demands. As it now appears to me I am safe, I thought I might lend it you for to-night!"

Liver trouble in 1900 resulted in eight months' sick leave home, eventually extended by driblets to a total period of two years. As during that time I saw twenty-three doctors, it is somewhat surprising I am still alive! What exactly was wrong was never satisfactorily ascertained. It seemed to me, however, that the well-considered opinion, not of Harley Street, but of two local practitioners (one in Kent and one in Dundee), hit the nail on the head. They both diagnosed the case as an abscess that had dried up of itself. Sir Lauder Brunton sent me to Carlsbad, where I drank a great deal of water, and had many "mud baths," but felt little benefit. Anyhow, as soon as I got back to India, I entirely recovered at once.

The next event worthy of record is King Edward's Coronation Durbar of January, 1903. The majority of those then present will agree with me that nothing during the last many decades has equalled in magnificence of display, genius of construction, and masterly detail, this wonderful celebration, commonly called the "Curzon Durbar." Emanating, as all the detail did, from the imaginative brain of one man (Lord Curzon), and pushed on from beginning to end by his tireless energy, this durbar will always rank as perhaps the most remarkable series of wonderful pageants and ceremonies the world has ever seen.

In the elephant state entry Lord Kitchener was a very fine and conspicuous figure, mounted on his thoroughbred, "Democrat," a runner in the Derby of 1902. As the horse insisted on doing the whole processional route sideways, it must have been very uncomfortable for K. Nor can one blame the horse much, for Derby runners do not often see elephants.

This state procession of elephants, with Lord and Lady Curzon leading, followed by the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, was a splendid sight, with all the Princes and Ruling Chiefs behind them in due order on the most richly-caparisoned animals.

I think the next finest thing was the State ball held in the Dewan-i-Am (Hall of Public Audience of the Emperor Shah Jehan) at the Fort. The brilliant full-dress uniforms, wonderful robes and jewels of the Indian nobles, dresses and diamonds of the ladies, and the surroundings of the hall itself, combined to create a scene never to be forgotten.

I remember very well going to have a look at Mrs. Leiter, who had a string of diamonds round her neck worth a king's ransom. Each one was the size of a pea, and outshone even those of the ruling chiefs. Her daughter, Lady Curzon, in her peacock gown, looked very beautiful indeed, and moved about with the grace of a queen.

The supper, served in the Dewan-i-Khas (Hall of Private Audience), was excellently arranged and served. The white marble of the chamber, glittering table appointments, snowy damask, and dazzling electric light, combined to produce an effect such as I had never seen before. The number of guests being very large, it was a question of many



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LORD CURZON, WHEN VICEROY OF INDIA, ON HIS SHOOT IN THE
DISTRICT OF GARHWAL, SEPT. 1903.

relays, but no one of a fresh relay was allowed to enter until the whole of the tables had been completely re-arranged.

There was no such thing as going into a room with the remains of the last supper being hastily cleared away, or sitting down at a table with the cloth disfigured by spilt champagne. All the same, it took a party of British Dragoons, with lances, outside the doors to keep people away until everything was ready!

One of the most attractive displays was the review of native chiefs' retainers, held in the arena, as the huge covered-in amphitheatre built for the Durbar ceremony was called. Just a glorious circus, but what a circus! I'm glad I saw it, for it is never likely to be repeated on the same scale. Lord Curzon must regret extremely he was unable to attend. The review was a procession of these retainers along the horse-shoe of the arena. It seemed unending, and took one's breath away with its varied wonders, all so typical of India and the East.

Irregular horse in chain armour, the horses prancing and rearing straight up every other stride, as taught to do; troops of elephants in wonderful embroidered clothes, stopping every few yards to trumpet and salaam; the famous gold and silver guns from Baroda, drawn by richly-clad bullocks; the Maharajah of Alwar's golden three-tiered carriage, drawn by four elephants clothed *in armour*; a dancing elephant which performed all the way round; a Kashmir giant over eight feet high, and a Patiala dwarf of thirty inches, accompanied by men on stilts; horsemen and foot-soldiers of Kishengarh in the quaintest quilted uniform; a brilliantly-dressed contingent from Patiala escorting a gorgeous elephant carrying the *Grunth* (sacred Bible) of the Sikhs; the Kashmir horsemen from Gilgit and Yasin, preceded by dancing musicians in huge, fearsome masks; and, lastly, the Shans from the upper valleys of Burma, with their queer sunshades, fantastic hats and gaily-coloured dresses.

It made me feel rather proud to belong to a nation that could cause such wonders to be produced, and whose officers could stage-manage such a varied assortment of men and animals, and bring off so marvellous a spectacle without a single hitch.

The Durbar itself was chiefly remarkable for the cordial

reception given to the 9th Lancers, as they rode off after escorting the Duke of Connaught to his seat. There had been some trouble about them over a case of assault on an Indian. Rumour, wrong as usual, attributed the punishment meted out to the direct intervention of the Viceroy. This was entirely incorrect. The whole matter had been settled by the Chief in conjunction with Baring (the Viceroy's military secretary) without any action by Lord Curzon whatever.

Those who should have known better, and especially many who were actually the Viceroy's guests, took upon themselves to display their feelings on this question by most marked and uproarious applause whenever the 9th Lancers appeared. Done on purpose to annoy the very man who was not only their host, but whose genius was responsible for providing them with so much enjoyment.

It is said that the Committee which organised King George's Durbar in 1911 wished to be nothing if not original. They would have preferred an entirely new programme of ceremonies and functions, but force of circumstances compelled them to adhere to a great many of Lord Curzon's plans. Wherever they differed from them, such as the omission of the elephant state procession, review of retainers, state ball, etc., all who had attended both Durbars agreed that a grave error had been committed.

As guests in Lord Kitchener's camp, my wife and I were fortunate enough to see everything in great comfort. Wishing to obtain an unbiassed opinion on the Durbar as a whole, I carefully selected two intelligent acquaintances, who knew nothing of India, and asked their views. The answer in both cases was identical, that there was not one single ceremony, or pageant, which they would not give anything to see repeated.

After my poor friend General Hill's breakdown in 1903, I returned to regimental employ, and in the autumn was ordered to conduct signalling operations from Ranikhet to Lord Curzon's camps in the hills of Garhwal, where he was making a sporting tour. This he was induced to do at the instigation of a Balliol fellow graduate, Mr. J. S. C. Davis, Indian Civil Service, the Deputy-Commissioner of Garhwal.

There was some idea that it would be quite possible, with a base in the telegraph office at Ranikhet, to supply Reuter's

news to Lord Curzon, as well as keep up daily communication with him on matters of State. So it would have been, had it not happened to be the end of the rains, which were particularly late that year, and attended by constant heavy mists.

Selecting a central mountain about 12,000 feet high, I made that my head-quarters, locating some 120 selected signallers, both British and Indian, on various intermediate heights. But it rained and rained and rained, and when it wasn't raining there was a thick mist, so the duplicate messages sent by runners were of much more use to the Viceroy.

On going down some 3,500 feet to his camp, he repeatedly asked me what I was doing in that "impenetrable mist," and was very annoyed that I had not brought down my wife, as instructed. I explained that my reason for being there was to try and get his telegrams through to him, and that my wife couldn't come as I had descended by a goat track, so steep in parts as to require both hands for guidance.

He was most solicitous about doing something for her, and asking if he could send up anything, I mentioned books and a milch goat. He told me he had nothing in the reading line but official files, which he thought would not interest her. The goat turned up, with a case of champagne, which, although most kind of him to send, we found rather a white elephant in our onward marches, being deadly unpalatable at that altitude, especially out of tin mugs.

By a stroke of good luck, we had *one* fine morning, which followed the very evening on which the new Cabinet had been cabled out from home. This enabled Lord Curzon to receive in camp, within a few hours of despatch from England, the names of the new members, and to send congratulatory cables to Alfred Lyttleton, St. John Brodrick, etc.

It was while dining in one of his camps with the Viceroy that his unbending formality struck me; for, although I understood Davis was an old friend, and we were in camp miles away from anywhere, he was always "*Mr. Davis*," while most of his conversation emphasised the dignity and prestige which should attach to the person of the Viceroy of India.

Who doubts, however, that he is a great man? Will not history classify him as one of our most highly gifted and most distinguished Governors-General? If he had done nothing more than pass his Bill for the restoration and preservation of the glorious archæological monuments of India, he would have deserved well of the Empire, and his name would have lived for ever. But when you add to this the hundred and one projects, improvements and innovations that mark his regime, you are lost in admiration at his ability and industry, and marvel at the want of foresight in his predecessors.

While on the subject of Lord Curzon, mention may be made of the amazing misconception which exists regarding his resignation of the Viceroyalty in November, 1905.

Put bluntly, many seem to think that Lords Curzon and Kitchener had a row, that "K." won, and consequently Lord Curzon resigned in a huff.

That is not the case at all. There was of course a serious controversy between the two over Kitchener's official condemnation of the cumbrous working of, and undue influence exercised by, the old military department as regards military administration in India.

Speaking briefly, "K." strongly objected to the then existing system whereby the military member of council had direct access to the Viceroy behind the Chief's back. Moreover, the M.M. was in a position to criticise and even reject proposals made by the latter without putting them before the Viceroy at all.

Lord Curzon upheld the system, and advised the Secretary of State against acceptance of the Commander-in-Chief's proposals. He was overruled by Mr. Brodrick,¹ but he did not resign. He simply gave way.

A new department of military supply was formed to be represented in the government of India by a member of council who was to be a soldier. As the first supply member the Viceroy nominated Sir E. Barrow of the Indian Army, and much wished to have him. The Secretary of State insisted on appointing Major-General Sir C. Scott, late Royal Artillery.

Lord Curzon protested, without success, and resigned

¹ Now Lord Midleton, and then Secretary of State for India.

because he was refused the officer he had selected. Lord Kitchener took *no* part in this disagreement. He may, indeed, have been consulted, may even have been asked to note; but, if so, undoubtedly declined to do it, as being none of his business.¹

The incident naturally caused some excitement in India, but apparently, being an Indian question, roused little interest at home! Happening at that time to be writing to the late Newnham Davies (the "Dwarf of Blood" of *The Sporting Times*), I added a postscript asking what people were saying about it in London. His reply is typical: "Bar the fact that Curzon and Kitchener have had a row, and that Kitchener has come out top dog, the British public know nothing about the matter, and cares less."

One of the last functions I attended at Almora was a full-dress ceremonial parade, as strong as possible, in honour of the title of "Queen Alexandra's Own," conferred on the 3rd Gurkhas. The original title (1907) had been "The Queen's Own," but when the regimental deputation, consisting of General Hutchinson and the two battalion commanders, were received by Her Majesty, she said this title might mean *any* Queen, and she would like her own name inserted. King Edward consenting, the regiment received the present designation.

At this parade a large painting of Queen Alexandra was placed at the flagstaff, covered with flowers, and each company saluted it in the march past. On returning home my wife asked our phlegmatic Gurkha orderly if he knew what the parade had been for?

"Yes," he said, "it was because we have now become the regiment of the great Rani [King's consort] Aleck-jalander." He then continued: "But we all want to know, is she the number one wife?"

My wife tried to explain that Britishers only had *one* wife, adding that surely he understood that, because of the many sahibs he knew.

"Well, yes," said the orderly, "only I thought that was because officers were too poor to afford more. But with rich men it is different. For instance, our Badshah [King]

¹ The whole of this case is put with admirable clearness and in a most readable form by Sir George Arthur in his *Life of Lord Kitchener*, Vol. II, chapters lxxi. to lxxiv.

has *hundreds*, though the number one wife is the only one of any importance!"

The same year Kitchener selected me to raise the 2nd battalion 7th Gurkhas at Quetta, with promotion to lieutenant-colonel. The battalion was formed by splitting the 2/10th Gurkhas in two and completing each half to strength. A method of raising an extra unit quickly, which, as I've said before, would only have occurred to "K." The question was, which half was I to get? Thinking I was being "jockeyed," when the other O.C. suggested the left half to me, I insisted on tossing. I lost the toss, and had to take the left half, but they did me excellently well.

About a year later, the Chief came up to Quetta. I had an interview, when the following conversation took place:—

K. How is the battalion getting on?

Self. Very well indeed, and all ranks very keen.

K. How do the Gurkhas like Quetta?

Self. They don't like it at all.

K. But, Woodyatt, I hope you understand I want them to like Quetta.

Self. Well, sir, you can't make them like it to order.

K. Why don't they like it?

Self. It is a very long way from their homes: about 1,500 miles by rail, besides the road journeys onwards. Then the people of Baluchistan are all Mahomedans, and they can't even talk to them. There is no shooting or fishing, they hate the bad winds we get, and new barracks on a stony plain are devoid of all shade.

K. Why don't you plant trees?

Self. I have planted over three thousand.

K. Well, don't they give any shade?

Self. At present they are about as big as your walking-stick.

K. Well, Woodyatt, I think Quetta is a very good place for Gurkhas, and remember I want them to like it, and I'm sure they will in time.

He was quite right, as usual, and, strange to say, the men did get to like it very much, and it is now a popular station with them.

A little later I conceived the idea that it would be a

splendid thing to get Kitchener as Colonel-in-Chief of the 7th Gurkha regiment of two battalions ; but, on sounding " Birdie " (Sir Wm. Birdwood), he informed me that, much as the Chief was honoured by the request, and much as he would like it, unfortunately he was ineligible because of belonging to the British Service. A postscript said that Lord Kitchener begged him to add, should he ever become in any way eligible, nothing would give him greater pleasure.

At first it seemed a wash-out ; but, on reflection, I decided to write a special letter, officially, on the question, and took it to my old friend General Clements, commanding the Division, for recommendation and counter signature.

Clements, having read it, said : " Look here, Nigel, how the devil can I recommend 'K.' for a job ? " Explaining that it was a mere matter of form, and I must have his signature, he snatched up a pen and signed, when I posted it myself to " Birdie."

Eventually the appointment was gazetted, but how it was effected I did not learn until I got home in 1909, when, being at the India Office, I looked up an old friend there, who greeted me as follows : " Hullo, young man, you'd better not be seen in this old shop, for you are in bad odour here." Asking why, he told me that it was on account of Kitchener's appointment as colonel of the 7th Gurkhas. He gave me to understand that Mr. (now Lord) Morley, having received the application, put it in his pocket and, taking it himself to the King, next time he went to Buckingham Palace, got it passed. Returning to the India Office, he chucked it into his basket for necessary action.

Next morning, however, his secretary brought it back to him, in much perturbation, explaining that the appointment was entirely out of order and quite impossible, because Kitchener did not belong to the Indian Army.

" All right," said Morley, " *you* take it back to King Edward, for *I* won't " ; and through it went. " K.," of course, was delighted at being an unconscious associate in a cleavage of red tape, and I escaped myself from the India Office without being arrested.

We spent almost six years in Quetta, less two visits home, for eight months each time, in the summer and

autumn of 1909 and 1912. Taking into consideration, as well as its many other advantages, that of climate, we class Quetta as the best station in India. Though cold in winter, sometimes *very* cold, with the thermometer below zero, it is a jolly, healthy kind of cold, and we just loved it.

The spring is prolonged until May, or even later, and never during the summer do you really require a pun-kah, though used by some sybarites for meals. By the middle of August the weather had turned cold again at night, while September is the month usually devoted to brigade and divisional manoeuvres. Occasionally, in autumn and winter, you get a cyclone, with a biting wind which some people found teasing. Personally, I enjoyed these hurricanes, and, no parade being possible, wandered over the hills in the snow after chakor, the red-legged partridge.

The hunting in Quetta used to be very good. We had to meet in the afternoon, as frost made the ground like iron in the morning. As a constant follower of the Quetta hounds, I give the palm, as Master, during my six seasons, to J. C. R. Gannon, now on Lord Rawlinson's staff in India. It was customary to lay a drag for a few miles, and turn down a bagman at the finish. Sometimes he would go very straight and fast, but always in the direction of the hills which surround the Quetta plain on all sides.

One of the most formidable obstacles was the Samungli brook. Not so very broad, but with treacherous banks and black surging water that looked horrible. It always pounded a large portion of the field. One day we had already crossed it in the drag. Then the bagman, crossing it twice again, made for the hills over open country, which it had been hoped he would take when he was originally turned down. There was soon a tremendous tail and only five of us, besides the Master and first whip, were up at the finish. One horse was killed and another so badly lamed he had to be shot.

The other chief form of obstacle was a ragged ditch called a "karez,"¹ made by the villagers to bring water to their

¹ A succession of pits or wells sunk with great courage and labour by the villagers, often 20 feet to 60 feet deep and more. The bottoms are connected by a tunnel, to construct which men are

fields or villages. Of very varying width, horribly deep, and with rotten banks, it was not a pleasant jump at all, especially on a blown horse. People often went in, and it was a tremendous business digging the horse out. Sometimes, however, the chasm was so wide that you could lead your horse along the bottom until you got to a cart track where the banks had been cut. The Agent to the Governor-General (Sir H. McMahon) hunted regularly, and had just turned out in pink as Field Master, when he was transferred to Simla as Foreign Secretary.

A peculiar feature of Baluchistan is that the birds are European, the snakes (I seldom saw one) African, and the wild animals Persian. Chakor are to be found in abundance, but not very near cantonments after the season has opened for a month. The thing to do was to take the train for a journey of an hour or two; stay the night after shooting, or try to return the same evening. I could generally get ten to twenty brace. Really big bags were obtained by Mr. Beatty, the superintendent of police, and his parties. I had the pleasure of joining one, when, in two days, four guns got over one hundred and fifty brace.

These shoots were most enjoyable, except for the methods employed by Beatty, as well as the civil officials of this district, to obtain big bags. In Baluchistan water is very scarce, and chakor will not water at night. Some days before a shoot, all irrigation channels in the proposed area were stopped, and "watchers" posted by day at all the sources of water to prevent the birds drinking.

The result was that they remained in large numbers near their watering places, hoping for a drink when restrictions were removed. Coming to the first water-hole, you put up dozens of birds, and although when really alarmed they took to the higher slopes and precipices, giving you lots of climbing, a good many had been bagged by then. As soon as you shot elsewhere, they came back to their old haunts, thirstier than ever, poor beggars, and there you found them again later on. I tried hard to persuade the chief civil official to get this water stopping put an end to, but was unsuccessful.

let down in baskets by a hand windlass. Water is conveyed through the tunnel from a spring in the hills to the low lands. This tunnel becomes an open ditch as the water level approaches the ground surface level.

F. M. Beatty, the superintendent of police, was a great character, and quite the most interesting personality in the province. He had been there a great number of years, and wielded an influence amongst the wild tribesmen far exceeding that of any political. Born and bred in India, his had been a most varied career from early manhood, when he drifted into Baluchistan before even the railway through the Bolan pass was constructed.

Blessed with a magnificent physique, good eye and iron nerve, he was a great sportsman in his younger days, being a terror on the hillside, and a magnificent shot. Many are the tales of his prowess after trans-frontier criminals. Amongst them, credit is given him of having tracked, followed, run down, and actually *knifed* his man over the border, then, of having returned safely to Quetta, with or without the scalp.

The Indian Staff College was one of Lord Kitchener's pet schemes, and he was hugely delighted when it became an accomplished fact. Originally established at Deolali in 1905, it was transferred to Quetta about two years later, and when I arrived there it had only been opened a few months.

An enormous acquisition it was too, with its large staff of earnest, keen and most hospitable officers. Not only did it provide, as additional residents, a charming coterie of delightful people, but its professors set a most excellent tone which soon influenced, in every way, both the professional and social life of the community.

Living next door to the Staff College, as we did, was a great advantage to me, for, during the period the late General Capper¹ reigned there, I attended many lectures and numerous staff rides. It was, indeed, a pleasure to me to renew my acquaintance with Tommy Capper of the East Lincs, which soon blossomed into a friendship I valued very greatly, and which was maintained until he fell in action at the battle of Loos (September 26, 1915). I had the greatest admiration for his lofty ideals and strategic brain, looking upon him as the veritable "Foch" of the British Army. People will tell you he had his

¹ The late Major-General Sir Thompson Capper, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O., who commanded the 7th Division, British Army in Flanders and France.

limitations; so have we all; but, as a leader, he was matchless; as a strategist, incomparable; and, as an instructor, unique.

Having occasion to thank him for some very kind words he said, before he left Quetta, about my battalion and its officers, when lent to the Staff College for some night operations, I mentioned what an advantage I considered it had been to us in Quetta having a man like himself, with such high ideals, living beside us. His reply is so typical of the man, and exemplifies so clearly the high endeavour by which he was always actuated, that I reproduce it in full:

“ P. & O.S.N. Co.,

“ SS. *Caledonia*.

“ 31st January, 1911.

“ MY DEAR WOODYATT,—

“ Je suis bien touché a cause de votre lettre. I really don't think I deserve such eulogies. I have indeed a very high ideal of the military profession as an ethical calling affording us all the occasions we want, and more, for training a high character. But I feel too we don't all at all recognise this, and there is danger of our weakening on our own ideals through the feeling that high aims are really not expected of us.

“ It is therefore considerably strengthening to hear of earnest officers, as yourself, who pursue the same object. My argument is this—the military profession owes its dignity to the fact that, in its ultimate issue, it demands the highest self-sacrifice, i.e. the cheerful surrender of life itself. To be logical, then, we must work back from this, and regard all the minor forms of self-sacrifice, i.e. acceptance (instead of avoidance) of responsibility, performing unpleasant duties which we might avoid, and helping comrades to our own material disadvantage, etc., etc., as as much our duty as is the self-sacrifice of life, and all the more so, for these excite no remark and gain us no praise, indeed sometimes incur us in trouble which we might have otherwise escaped.

“ But it is true that the nation, and the army itself, have no very high standard in these respects, and there is danger, unless we do our best to counteract such lowering influences, to find our own ideals lowered, and a feeling

growing over us that so little is expected of us that we need give little.

“ It does great good if those of us who do strive for the dignity of the profession of arms support each other by encouraging one another in upholding the same view, and in living in hopes, not unmixed with fear of failure, that in the day of real trial, we may act up to our fixed ideals.

“ And I feel strongly, and try and impress on those at the Staff College, that the General Staff, if it is to aspire to lead the Army, must do so by the constant and habitual practice and expression of the highest type of self-devotion all day and every day.

“ *On no other terms can it, or will it*, secure the ungrudging confidence and esteem of the Army itself. Am I not right ?

“ I am afraid this reads like a sermon, but I am sure you understand me, so I can let myself go.

“ There is, however, one point in your letter which I must disagree with—in which you attribute any raising of the ethical level to me alone. You forget I have been helped by such people as Boileau, Shea, Waterfield, Franks, Bird, Drake, etc., etc., who have taken their full share in any success—and I am afraid it is small—which we may have attained.

“ Anyway in your gallant regiment we have always felt we had firm friends and comrades on whom we could rely for any amount of support.

“ Perhaps, who knows, we may some day find ourselves facing the foe together in earnest, and then we must think of our ideals, and not allow ourselves to be frightened out of them.

“ But how strengthening it would be if we knew the whole nation, not the Army alone, thought as we did.

“ Well—good-bye—my dear Woodyatt, and good fortune be with you, and all yours. I am sure you will bring up your son in your own footsteps, and then the traditions will be carried on.

“ I wonder what my brigade will think when I begin to speak of military ethics ? I will need to go gently at first.

“ I expect I will be home before you get this. I hope I

will soon hear you have a high and honourable appointment, and also will soon be back in England on leave.

“ Yours ever,
“ (*Sgd.*) T. CAPPER.”

Six months or so later I discussed with him, on paper, one or two questions, namely :

(a) The grant of commissions in our Indian Army to Indian gentlemen.

(b) Industrial unrest at home in 1911.

(c) The grave political crisis the same year between France and Germany over Morocco affairs.

One of his letters in reply is now most interesting in the face of what actually took place later.

“ CLONSKEAGH CASTLE,

“ CO. DUBLIN.

“ *3rd September, 1911.*

“ MY DEAR WOODYATT,—

“ Many thanks for your long letter.

* * * * *

“ I quite agree with you about the many difficulties of putting the native-born officer on a par with the British. But I think also with you that it has got to come. I wonder how it would work to have a one-year volunteer system for all natives of good family, who could join with sufficient education and general bearing and standard of conduct to make them potential officers. The one-year volunteers would be in the ranks, but would be allowed to live in separate and more comfortable quarters (at their own expense) when off parade. At manœuvres and training camps they would be with the squadron or company. From these, a certain number who appeared suitable could be selected for commissions. I would make them work their way up through the ranks of native officer, with, if necessary, accelerated promotion. Thus they could not reach British officer's rank until fairly well on and experienced. If this transitional measure succeeded, it could be extended so that British officer's rank was reached earlier. But I am really too ignorant of the subject to have an opinion worth hearing. As it stands I take it that—

“ (a) We have got to do something in the matter soon.

“(b) When we do something, we want to have guarantees that we make certain that the aspirant is what we want before admitting him to British officer’s rank.

* * * * *

“ We have had an exciting year, and I have had plenty to do. Besides the regular work, which, being new to me, gave me plenty to think about (especially as my Brigade Major and Chief Clerk were also new), there was the King’s visit, which entailed a lot of arrangement. Then came strikes and riots, and I had to live in my office for three days and nights. We had to send off two battalions to England in the middle of one night ; and I had to garrison three railway stations in Dublin. I thought on Saturday afternoon (19th August) that we were perilously close to a class war all over the Kingdom. Once the mob had felt real hunger, they would have broken out and looted all the property they could get at. Then the troops would have had to fire, and thus a class war would have begun.

“ Luckily the strike collapsed that night.

“ Now, of course, we are in a more or less standing-by condition in case Germany decides to go on bullying France, and so forces on a row. To-morrow’s (4th September) conference at Berlin should bring matters to a crisis.

“ I think Germany would be stupid to fight such a palpable war of aggression. She is too much in the wrong. But you never know what may happen, when a country suffers generally from such a severe attack of swollen head, as Germany is suffering from now. I hear that the Emperor by no means desires war, but that the upper and middle classes have a bad jingo fit on, and the politicians would proceed to almost desperate measures in order to quiet the Socialists who are getting a dangerous strength and threaten to swamp the Reichstag at the next elections.

“ If it is to be war, I don’t doubt that I shall be there or thereabouts pretty soon.

“ Altogether, things are fairly exciting, and I have had plenty to do and think about.

* * * * *

“ Kind remembrances to all your party from us both.

“ Yours ever,

“ (Sgd.) T. CAPPER.”

Finally, I reproduce the last letter I got from him as a brigade commander and before he took over the duties of inspector of infantry at the Horse Guards. The programme I gave him was much on the lines of the most practical inspection I had ever undergone myself. I refer to the "Kitchener Test," which is described later on, when writing of Lord Kitchener.

" 13TH BRIGADE,
" LOWER CASTLE YARD,
" DUBLIN.
" 18th January, 1912.

" MY DEAR WOODYATT,—

" I wanted your advice as to what you consider, from the point of view of the officer *being inspected*, is the best line for a battalion inspection, at the close of its battalion training, to take.

" We don't get very long for battalion training, and I don't think I could allot more than one full day to inspection.

" That being so, will you favour me by suggesting a programme ?

" The day could be made to run into night, but not *all* night.

" I know you think of these things and have sound ideas. I can't well ask my own people ! So I should like your own opinion on the matter.

" I only did a field exercise last year, which took the best part of a day, but seemed to me rather too superficial. I don't want anything to do with the *formal* inspection, which I arrange for separately. What I mean is a purely official business.

" I hope you are still alive after your hard work at Delhi.

" Yours ever,
" (Sgd.) T. CAPPER."

General Capper was a great admirer of General (now Marshal) Foch, and often talked to me about his sound views and extensive military knowledge. In Capper's death, England suffered a national loss. He was worth a million men. His death was emblematic of his life, in that he died to uphold a principle. That is, he held the moment had

come when it was essential even for a higher leader to set a personal example. What cared he if in doing so he must make the supreme sacrifice? He judged his duty and the occasion demanded (as he had written me over three years before) "the highest self-sacrifice, i.e. the cheerful surrender of life itself."

CHAPTER X

KITCHENER AS I KNEW HIM

MUCH has been written about the late Lord Kitchener as a soldier, as an administrator, as a machine, and even as an impostor. It shall be my aim to depict him as the *great man* he undoubtedly was.

Mr. Hugh Bennett, of Malvern, has been kind enough to give me some detail of Lord Kitchener's early life. From this it appears that after being at school at Geneva, where he was thoroughly grounded in the French language, he passed on, at the age of fifteen, to the care of Mr. Bennett's father (the Reverend John Bennett, chaplain of Montreux), who took in, as boarders, many English and American pupils.

Herbert, as he was called, was a lanky boy, shooting up so quickly that no tailor could keep pace with his rapid growth, and consequently so thin that he earned, and retained during his sojourn at this school, the sobriquet of "Skinny." He showed marked ability in mathematics and in conversational French, but in other respects did not give any particular promise. A characteristic feature was his extreme reliability, even at that early age. A marked peculiarity was that he did not make friends easily, and was addicted to long walks by himself, instead of joining his comrades' games. At the same time he was always cheerful enough, and quite willing to be sociable, while all who came in contact with him could not fail to be struck by his kindly, helpful nature.

My first personal meeting with Kitchener was at Delhi a day or two after he reached India in November, 1902, and while he was living in his railway saloon. Being with General Hill, who was commanding an improvised division

we saw a good deal of the Chief as he rode round the outposts of the Southern Army in the manœuvres. We thought he was very much a "live wire," and got early intimation of his very decided views on most questions.

General (now Sir James) Willcocks was one of the brigadiers and, in his zeal for active service conditions in every way, appeared at the flank of his command dressed as he would in the field; that is, a khaki muffler instead of a collar, thick shooting boots and no sword or belt. The next day we all got a reminder about the proper order of dress!

Lord Kitchener was very particular about his camp at the 1903 Durbar, and quite fussy over the review rehearsals, especially the quicker movement of the infantry at the first pivot on to the saluting base. There was so much galloping to be done for him in continual messages to go faster, that even the inspector-general of cavalry (General Locke-Elliott) was commandeered. Just in front of Kitchener was a ditch about two feet broad and the same depth. Locke-Elliott was riding a young remount which wouldn't face this. The message was very urgent; so, whipping out his sword, he gave the youngster such rib roasters with the flat of it, that he was soon the other side. Kitchener was intensely amused.

All the review orders were strictly scrutinised by Kitchener and many arrangements changed; for instance, he insisted on all major-generals not commanding troops riding on his staff and, when the directors-general of ordnance, military works, medical services, etc., had been roped in, there was a goodly array. The order, however, caused much trepidation, for many of them had failed to bring any mounted kit, and one or two had no horses!

At this camp we first realised Kitchener's intense dislike of publicity. Every order was headed: "Confidential, on no account to be communicated to the Press"—even one of two or three lines simply giving the hour the Chief would leave camp next morning for rehearsal parade. Many say he was hostile to the Press, but I doubt this, when they never ceased to belaud him. To the Press, too, he mainly owed the British public's wonderful trust and confidence in his sagacity and judgment.

Most people will remember the attack on Lord Kitchener

in the Press during the war. Being our colonel, my officers begged me to write and express their disgust. In reply FitzGerald told me it had not worried Kitchener at all or given him a single sleepless night. He added that the only result had been to get him his "Garter" rather sooner than would otherwise have been the case.

On arrival in India Lord Kitchener looked extremely fit. Indeed, during his seven years as Chief in India, he kept remarkably well, except for one or two attacks of fever. Having suffered a good deal from malaria in Egypt, he was extremely nervous about it: so much so that he went straight to bed at the very earliest indication; and, if report speaks truly, with all his clothes on!

Everyone was immensely interested in his appointment as Commander-in-Chief, and his arrival was looked upon as a red-letter day for the army in India. One of his first acts was to re-number the units of the Indian Army. This met with a good deal of opposition, but he carried it through. His methodical mind could not tolerate the confusion which appeared to him to result from having such an anomaly as the 3rd Gurkhas, the 3rd Brahmans, the 3rd Rajputs, the 3rd Sikhs, etc. He was rather indignant when twitted with being too fond of changes, remarking, in the famous memorandum on the Kitchener-Curzon controversy, that he hated changes for changes' sake, but that he did not shrink from them when really necessary.

Some extensive touring caused him to view with dissatisfaction the organisation and allotment of the army, and seeing no method whatever in the arrangements then existing, he evolved a new allotment of troops to areas, necessitating the abandonment of many stations and the formation of some new ones. In after years, that is during the War, his plans came in for some hostile criticism which was quite unmerited.

It is also interesting to note here that this new project received the unqualified approval of Lord Curzon, except that he expressed doubts as to the accuracy of the estimates submitted. Early in 1904 he even went so far as to say: "The present distribution and organisation of our military forces in India are both obsolete and faulty."

Kitchener's "scheme" aimed at providing India with a war army of nine divisions, after making proper provision for the military requirements of internal security. The components of these divisions were to be trained together in peace under the generals and staffs who would serve with them on active service.

As when K. arrived in India the potential enemy was Russia, these divisions were allotted to the two main lines of advance into Afghanistan: the northern, *via* the Khyber and Peiwar Kotal passes; the southern, *via* the Bolan and Khojak defiles.

Although an army commander was provided for each of these two armies, it was Lord Kitchener's wish that in peace time the duties of these two generals should be confined to "discipline" and "training," each separate division being self-contained in all respects, financial included, as were the old Presidency armies of Madras and Bombay.

Kitchener further desired to see India made capable of providing locally all the requirements of the army—rifles, field-guns, ammunition, clothing of all descriptions, medical stores and instruments, remounts, etc.

Before he relinquished his command, the Russian menace had to a very great extent disappeared, and Lord Morley decided to "go slow" with the completion of the programme. As a matter of fact everything was cut down to the bare bone. Such vital necessities as electric installations in British soldiers' gloomy hospitals and barracks, as well as numerous other projects, introduced by the Chief in the interests of military efficiency, or for the improved comfort of the soldier, were ruthlessly put aside. Many of them indeed had to be carried out later—such as acquisition of land—at a much enhanced cost, while the fulfilment of others, at the time, would have made all the difference as regards Mesopotamia in 1914.

On K.'s departure, he was replaced by General Sir O'M. Creagh, who had been given a mandate by Lord Morley to effect economies in the military charges. The latter indeed appeared to consider there should be no military progress in India at all on account of the understanding arrived at with Russia, followed by the appointment, as Viceroy, of Lord Hardinge, who as an ambassador had

been mainly responsible for the establishment of clearly defined and friendly relations with that country.

It was not fair to Kitchener to assert that his scheme failed when put to the test of a great war. It did not fully function, only because it had not been completed. Indeed the stress of war showed how right he was in his aims at making India self-supporting for military purposes; as well as, in his schemes, to make the Indian units, the Sillidar cavalry and the Indian infantry abandon the system by which commanding officers were made responsible for the provision of horses, and most of the requirements of their unit, other than arms and ammunition. In fact K. saw clearly that in a great war supplies of all natures—men, animals, ammunition, clothing, food, etc., etc.—must be the concern of the State.

India's shortcomings in 1914, and after, were due to Kitchener's successors, who failed either to complete his scheme or to substitute a fresh fully established one in lieu.

A new engine cannot be condemned as failing to work when the engineers who have taken over from the one who first undertook to fashion it, fail to complete its working parts.

As a matter of fact, when you look into all of Lord Kitchener's projects that were scrapped—and the number was large—you are astonished at his circumspection, prudence and prevision.

He was most anxious about the Loi-Shilman railway, which, branching off from the Jamrud line between that outpost and Peshawar, provided an extra line of communication with Landi Kotal at the head of the Khyber Pass. It would have been *invaluable* in the third Afghan War, in 1919, yet it was abandoned.

To speak of only a few other schemes. He alone was the originator of :

- (1) The cavalry school at Saugor,
- (2) Reorganisation of the Ordnance Department,
- (3) Senior Officers' classes,
- (4) Inventions Committee,

but he left India before they could be carried out, much to the detriment of the schemes.

The cavalry school was *not* to be a *Kindergarten* for

juniors, as is now the case, but a *college* where the seniors would learn and be kept in touch with all that was to be taught in regard to cavalry. A special class was to have been formed for adjutants.

The ordnance scheme broke up the department into three distinct branches—viz., manufacture, inspection, storage and issue (factories, inspectors, arsenals)—just as was done at Woolwich in the eighties, after the scandal of twisted bayonets, etc., in Egypt.

The senior officers' class had to be camouflaged as a musketry class at first, in order to get money for railway warrants, etc.!

The inventions committee was a standing board to test, at Roorkee, all inventions sent up by officers and others, and Lord K. obtained a special grant of money for this.

Lord Kitchener's successor did not carry on either the cavalry school or ordnance reorganisation on Lord K.'s lines, nor did he keep going the senior officers' class or inventions committee.

What is so marvellous, with all these progressive, and so necessary, changes introduced, is the fact that—putting aside the expense of great schemes such as re-armament of artillery—the normal cost of the army increased very little, owing to economies effected.

Kitchener was always anxious to save—was always finding out sources of expenditure which were justified in their day, but for which no necessity still existed. Many petty useless charges were done away with under his keen eye.

After his second cold weather tour, Lord Kitchener came to the conclusion that the standard of efficiency of infantry units was very uneven. Casting about for the reason—as was his wont—he rightly saw that the weak point was the instruction and supervision given by generals and their staffs to the training of their commands, and especially the want of soundness and uniformity in their annual inspections.

To come to a reasoned conclusion and to act, being one and the same thing to Lord Kitchener, we soon learnt that in the cold weather of 1904-5 we should be subjected to a very comprehensive test, or tests if we survived the first one. It was to be a matter of competition, Lord

Kitchener giving a trophy to the best British and Indian infantry unit. At the same time an Indian Army Order gave details, which are briefly as follows, and simply meant a sound and thorough inspection on uniform lines :

(a) All infantry units, except Pioneer battalions, would carry out the same test all over India.

(b) This would be conducted personally by the G.O.C. and his staff, who would mark for each event according to instructions detailed.

(c) The unit which obtained the highest marks in each brigade would be re-tested to ascertain the first in the division ; the first in the division would undergo a further test by the G.O.C. Command, and, finally, those placed at the top of each command would be tested by the Chief's own Board, consisting of Major-General Stratford Collins, I.G. Vols., as President, and Colonels Beauchamp Duff, Parks and William Capper, of Army Headquarters, as members.

(d) The curriculum consisted of—

- (1) A fifteen mile march in field service order, carrying a hundred rounds of ball ammunition.
- (2) To be followed immediately by an attack, with ball, on a position prepared by another unit, and to include reconnaissance, writing of orders, etc., etc.
- (3) A bivouac camp, with outposts, which would be attacked.
- (4) A night operation, probably opposed.
- (5) Preparation of a defensive position to be assailed by other troops.
- (6) A retirement of at least ten miles followed up by another unit.

Active service conditions to be maintained throughout in every way. In the final test each event followed immediately on completion of the last, the whole period lasting from fifty to fifty-five hours.

The 1st Battalion 3rd Gurkhas, to which I then belonged, got placed at the top of the brigade, division and command, and when Lord Kitchener came to stay with us at Almora, in circumstances related later on, Hubert Hamilton, his military secretary, gave him the telegram announcing the final result, Indian Army, as he got to the top of the steps

reaching my house. After reading it, Lord Kitchener handed it to me with his customary sweep of the arm, and I read :

“Result Chief’s Cup, Indian Army : first, 130th Baluchis ; second, 1/3rd Gurkhas, five marks behind ; third, 55th ‘Coke’s Rifles.’ ”

Seeing my face fall, Lord Kitchener said I ought to be very proud ; and walking into the house told my wife the news, adding that I didn’t seem to look very pleased.

“No wonder,” she said, “for it is a great blow to be so near and yet to miss your Cup ; and fancy being beaten by Baluchis ! I never even heard of them, what are they ? ”

Tucked away with a localised corps in a corner of the Himalayas, she had little knowledge of any class except Gurkhas, though she would have known what was meant by Punjabis, Sikhs, Dogras, or Garhwalis.

At tea Lord Kitchener tried to explain the composition of the 130th, but was not very illuminating. Finally he said he did not see her argument, as Coke’s Rifles would be equally justified in objecting to being beaten by Gurkhas. “Oh, no ! ” said my wife in her loyalty and ignorance, “they would know before they competed that Gurkhas would certainly beat them ! ” at which K. looked up with his cross eye, with a puzzled expression, as if being chaffed, and then laughed.

In a subsequent conversation, K. asked me if I had found the tests too strenuous and whether we were quite “fed up ” with them. When I answered that, on the contrary, we had never enjoyed anything more in our lives, especially the final one, he said it had been represented to him that some units had almost broken down under the strain and had found even *one* test, let alone *four*, too severe. Suggesting hesitatingly that perhaps some *generals* didn’t like them—

“Exactly, that’s it,” he said, looking up quickly, “but I shall keep them on the books all the same, though without any competition in the future. I’ll keep them on the books because they are very good for generals and their staffs ” (which he always pronounced as if the word rhymed with “gaff ”).

The next morning, early, he saw the battalion on parade,

when they were at the top of their form. At breakfast he told my wife that he had inspected the 130th, and now he had seen the 1/3rd, adding with a shake of his head: "And if I had been told to choose, I should have selected the 1/3rd."

"I'm awfully glad," said my wife, "then of course you will reverse the decision of your Board."

"Oh, no," answered the Chief, "I can't do that."

He told me he was very puzzled as to what kind of trophy to present, as he was so tired of cups and bowls and wanted something more uncommon. Mentioning that he was dining in mess that night, I suggested a scrutiny of "The Little Man," i.e. the 5th Gurkha Khud Race Challenge trophy, a silver model of a Gurkha in his national costume, which was then in our possession, and which he'd see in front of the Colonel. The result was the gift of a silver model of a R.W. Surrey soldier to the 2nd Queens, and of a Baluchi to the 130th.

Amongst a number of cantonments to be abandoned, under Kitchener's new scheme, was Almora, in Kumaon, for nearly a hundred years the station of the 3rd Gurkhas. Under a convention signed by Queen Victoria in the sixties, the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Gurkhas had been allotted to the cantons of Dharmsala, Dehra Dun, and Almora respectively: "in perpetuity" as the words ran, continuing somewhat as follows: "and although the regiment may be moved at any time, and for any period, according to the will and pleasure of Her Majesty's Government, it will always eventually return to Dharmsala, Dehra Dun, or Almora, as the case may be."

Lord Kitchener did not like conventions; he was also bent on moving Gurkha battalions to various stations in peace time. At first he was inclined to ride rough-shod over these documents, but, later on, apparently, thought better of it. Visiting Dehra Dun, the 2nd Gurkhas showed him their copy, which he is supposed to have thrown on the floor, saying it should never have been drafted!

Later he came, as I've said, to Almora, where we had been asked if we would agree to leave the place. The answer was "Yes," provided we were stationed with our 2nd battalion, then at Lansdowne.

The Chief rode over to Almora from Ranikhet, a matter

of twenty-four miles, and went straight to the barracks before coming on to my house. Getting off his hill pony, and glancing up at the fine double-storied buildings, he walked backwards and backwards and backwards until we thought he would certainly fall over the edge of the plateau.

At last he stopped and, still looking up, asked who on earth built them. The colonel told him the men had done so, with expert assistance and under the supervision of the resident sapper, at which Kitchener snapped out that it was inconceivable why they had ever been constructed at all in a place so remote from anywhere. Then, mellowing a little, he kept on repeating: "How can I take you away from this? How can I take you away from this? And yet I must." However, as things turned out, he never did!

After a very thorough inspection of the whole lines, Kitchener came on to our house, where an early tea awaited him, with my wife slightly perturbed because of his reputation of being somewhat brusque with ladies.

It is most strange how this rumour emanated, for we found him a very charming guest, and most easy to please. Still, there is no doubt it was currently believed to be true. Indeed, we are told it was even mentioned to Queen Victoria, who remarked: "He was always very nice to *me*!"

Kitchener was not in the least shy with ladies, nor did he dislike them. Some of them undoubtedly bored him, while others, overstepping all limits, were very promptly sat on. It was not at all an uncommon thing to see him in ladies' company enjoying himself immensely.

At the 1903 Durbar at Delhi, my wife and I were sitting close behind him at the investiture ceremony. During the long interval, while Lord Curzon changed his robes from one Order to another, K., talking to Lady Powis, told her a diamond ornament in her hair was coming out.

"Push it in for me, please," said Lady Powis.

K. was taken aback, but certainly didn't look shy. Now the thing wanted handling, but, after some hesitation, he simply made a sudden dart at it with his finger, and missed it altogether. Then they both roared with laughter, and K., refusing to have anything more to do with it, Lady Powis had to arrange it herself.

He looked magnificent that night, did K., in his full dress, with all his medals and Orders glittering in the electric light.

A well-known lady, who was a great friend of his, was twitting him one day with his dislike of the fair sex, when he interrupted her by saying he did not dislike them at all.

"Anyhow," said his friend, "you must confess you always keep them at a distance."

"Perhaps," answered K., "but you know the old proverb, 'Familiarity breeds contempt!'"

"Well, Lord Kitchener," remarked the lady, "it takes a certain amount of familiarity to breed anything!"

When paying an afternoon visit at Normanhurst in 1909, Lady Brassey, knowing I came from India, of course asked me if I knew Lord Kitchener.

"Dear me, yes," I replied, "why he is my colonel!"

After this there was a pause, for it was not understood how Lord Kitchener could be a colonel. Eventually, looking at me rather doubtfully, Lady Brassey remarked on the extraordinarily silly rumours which surrounded his personality. She told me she stayed a week-end in the same house-party with him in Ireland. That, although she never spoke a single word to him all the time, she found to her horror that they were leaving by the same train on departure, which meant a very early breakfast together before starting.

"You can imagine my feelings," said she, "for, knowing what most men are like at breakfast, I trembled at the thought of having that meal alone at 7.30 a.m. with the redoubtable K. of K. Not only that, but to accompany him afterwards in the same conveyance to the station." She added that he was just enchanting, looked after her most carefully all the journey, and she was never more delightfully surprised in her life.

So it was with us, and as for *talking*, he never stopped! He came three days after the severe earthquake of 5th April, 1905, which played such havoc with Dharmasala and damaged other hill stations as well. My own house had been mauled with a long zig-zag open crack from the roof downwards, which I pointed out to him as we approached, saying it had been "vetted" by an engineer, who gave his opinion that there was no danger.

"It will last a night or two, anyhow, I fancy," remarked K.

There were rumours of bad accidents at Simla and elsewhere, and a friend of the Chief's at the Grand Hotel, Simla (a very stout lady), was reported seriously injured. He told his staff the morning he set out for Almora to wire condolences and ask for details. The reply came at tea-time, saying the lady was quite uninjured, but the floor had given way and she and the bed had gone right through the ceiling into the room below. Handing it to his military secretary, the Chief said: "Send an answer simply saying, 'Poor bed.'"

After tea and a change, my wife escorted Hubert Hamilton and the A.D.C. to the club for tennis, etc. Taking K. into the verandah, where there was a lovely view of the snows, I put him on a comfortable couch where he could rest his leg, broken the year before, and about which his doctor said he was making a good deal of fuss. Getting a book, I sat near, prepared to read if he didn't want to talk. After a little humming of no particular tune, he began to talk, and went on for some hours with hardly any cessation. It was all so intensely interesting that I sat up very late that night, and the one after, recording all he had said, and now repeat it.

He was very down on *localised* units, and told me so, adding that he was astounded at the number of places he found in India where certain cavalry and infantry units had apparently taken root. In such places, he said, they were cut off from their brigadiers, were very difficult to move in cases of emergency, and were bound to suffer in efficiency from want of supervision and lack of rivalry and competition.

I ventured to suggest that some of these localised units, such as the Central India Horse, Deoli Irregular Force, Gurkha Regiments, etc., were pretty useful; that they gave a very good account of themselves when brigaded in the field with other troops; that their record in competitions, contests and games was no mean one, and that didn't he think there were many advantages that counterbalanced the disadvantages? Instancing as proof the fact that their splendid record made them jealous of their reputation, and anxious to keep up their good name, while isolation

helped the officers to concentrate more on their work, and give deeper study to their profession.

"Hum," said the Chief, "I'll admit I may have to modify my views, especially after what I've seen here!" A pause now occurring, as he appeared to be ruminating, I took up my book, when K. suddenly began again:

"I suppose you are one of those who believe in the Russian bogey?"

Though somewhat taken aback, I had to confess I understood all our training and military preparations were undertaken with the main view of preventing the Russians from entering India.

"That's all an exploded idea," said K. "We have nothing to fear from Russia, it is the German wolf and not the Russian bear we have to watch. I shall not be a bit surprised if some day you find yourself, with your Gurkhas, advancing in Persia alongside the Japanese."

This was in 1905 and was the first time the German menace had been brought home to me at all. But Kitchener was always looking ahead. A year afterwards, Sir Beauchamp Duff, then Chief of the Staff, told me how greatly impressed he had been with this characteristic of the Chief. How time after time he would take him up some case, with what he thought was a well-considered reasoning noted on it, and "K." after ejaculating his favourite, constant, and long-drawn-out "H-u-m," would say: "Yes, but have you thought how this will affect matters ten years hence?" Duff confessed he had not, and found much difficulty in always doing so.

The word "Chief" is mentioned several times, and it is worthy of note, as a rather curious fact, that Lord Kitchener was hardly ever referred to as "The Chief." He was always alluded to as "K.," or "K. of K." Of the eleven commanders-in-chief in India I have served under, all were invariably referred to as "The Chief," with the exception of Lord Roberts and Kitchener. The former, of course, was generally spoken of as "Bobs," or "Bobs Bahadur," a title of affectionate regard he much valued.

"What sort of a fellow is Brown?" asked Kitchener suddenly.

Now we had a Captain W. M. Brown, a county cricketer, and a fine athlete. Thinking he referred to him, I began

explaining what a marvellous eye he had for games, when I was sharply interrupted.

"I mean your brigadier Browne."

"Oh," I said, "I'm sorry; yes, of course, very nice fellow, knows his job, is an old 3rd Gurkha, pleasure to be inspected by him, etc."

"Well, I've never met him," said K., "but I like his confidential reports better than those of any general in India."

He was talking of Brigadier-General A. G. F. Browne, afterwards a Major-General, a K.C.B., and one of my predecessors in command of the Lahore Division. He certainly had that wonderful faculty of so writing confidential reports, as to put the officer straight in front of you, and that's just what K. wanted.

Kitchener then asked me if I didn't think an Indian career was simply a continuous camp life, for he had been out two and a half years and felt exactly as if he had been in camp the whole time. I told him it had never struck me.

"Oh, I forgot," he said, "I suppose it wouldn't, as you are in a *localised* corps." He was continually rubbing that in.

He then turned the conversation on to cholera. I had some experience of it, and he seemed interested. Then he told me that an epidemic of it occurred amongst his British troops, when concentrated for his advance against the Khalifa in 1898. The matter was very serious as the moment was most inopportune, for a postponement would have upset all his plans. On the second day, at dawn, he had all tents struck, turned inside out and spread on the ground, all clothing scattered over the camp, and every man *stripped naked*. Thus they remained in the sun all day long. There were some very sore skins, but it cured the cholera.

About this period one of those epidemics of unrest and dissatisfaction which roll up from time to time in all armies, attacked the British officers of the Indian army. Just before this time it had got to a pretty bad stage, and quite wrongly many officers, who should have known better, voiced their grievances in the public press. Under the Chief's instructions, Hubert Hamilton wrote semi-officially to every C.O., telling him to call his officers

together, find out exactly what was wrong, and then let him know.

The discontent was mainly confined to the slackers, who, realising they would have to work harder and really study their profession, caught fright, saw their promotion stopped, and were in a deadly funk of what the great K. of K., in his zeal for efficiency, might not do next. In addition, there was an undoubted feeling of uncertainty amongst all field officers regarding the time scale of promotion to lieutenant-colonel. This, it was reported, K. intended to ignore, if not satisfied with a man. Indeed, it had already happened in half a dozen cases of rotters, who had been plainly told they would not be promoted, and must go.

Kitchener got quite excited over this matter and, after asking me if I had seen the military secretary's letter, enquired whether I, too, had understood that, whether my work was good, bad, or indifferent, I should be promoted to major in eighteen years and lieutenant-colonel in twenty-six? In fact, that, when joining the Indian Army, I had made a contract with Government? There was nothing for it but to confess that such had been my impression.

"I call it monstrous," he said, "perfectly monstrous, that such a pandering to inefficiency could ever be conceived. Anyhow I've had the Royal Warrant amended by the Secretary of State and the words 'if well reported on' added. As regards Hamilton's letter, I have the answers from all C.O.s with me now, and, on the whole, I am very fairly satisfied with them. Still there is a very prevalent idea that officers *did* enter the Indian Army under a contract with Government, and that idea must be disabused."

He went on to say that he was disappointed with the officers of the Indian Army, and thought them very ungrateful. He mentioned the letters to the newspapers, saying they were disgraceful. He referred specially to one letter signed "Adjutant," adding that the man ought to be deprived of his appointment, as he did not know the regulations.

He talked about new leave rules granting combined leave for eight months to England, two months being on full pay and the remainder on furlough allowances. He had been told, he said, that officers required more than that period

when serving in India. He wondered why, as he had never taken more than six months himself. He mentioned one objection raised, that, the period being restricted to the months of March to November, no officer of the Indian Army would ever be able to hunt at home. He wondered how many officers of the Indian Army could afford to hunt at home; but anyhow the concessions regarding longer leave, under certain conditions, had been purposely ignored in these letters.

“What do you suppose I did about this leave question?” he asked. “Why it is actually stated that Government is trying to make money by it. What I did was to get hold of one of your own fellows, Birdwood, to thrash out the rules. My only instructions to him were to make them simple, and make them liberal, but to have them the same for all. A more hopelessly intricate and un-uniform set of rules than those existing could hardly be conceived, unless it’s the present Indian Army pay regulations.

“Yet for all this I get nothing but abuse, and that is why I say you are very ungrateful. Look at my Quetta Staff College. Could any other Commander-in-Chief have got that? Lord Roberts couldn’t. Its vast expenditure was only sanctioned because it was realised that coming out here, as I did, with an open mind, and no previous leaning towards India, I saw it was absolutely essential and said so. Look at my interchange of staff duties between staff officers at home and out here. No other Chief could have got *that*.”

Seeing me look up quickly, he asked if I did not agree, and I said, “No, because few of us could afford to hold a staff appointment at home, where we should be forced to go on to English rates of pay.”

Being really warmed up now, he said he was not referring to men of *localised* corps in a good climate, but had in mind, say, a lieutenant-colonel, on the staff in Madras, with a wife and two or three children at home who must be separated from him for years, for educational reasons. This man, whose health had suffered from the climate, could now exchange with a similar staff officer, say, at Aldershot who might like some Indian soldiering.

I suggested the pay question would come in here badly, but he wouldn’t listen and went on:

"Not only are you very ungrateful, but you have no *esprit de corps* whatever."

At this I demurred, giving instances of my own corps and others.

"You are referring to *regimental* esprit de corps. That is not enough. I am alluding to *esprit d'armée*. What have you in common with an officer, say, in Madras? Nothing."

Here I had to subside, for I felt he was quite right. It had not occurred to me before; possibly one of the disadvantages of being localised! He then lit a cigarette, looked for a while at the reflection of the sunset on the glorious eternal snows, and then continued on the question of the pay of officers of the Indian Army.

He told me he was changing our pay regulations, for he thought there was nothing so absurd as the way our present emoluments were made up of pay proper, staff pay, tentage, charger allowance, etc. He declared there would be no regimental staff-pay for anything except the appointments of C.O., adjutant and quarter-master, which would be *so much a day and drawn invariably by the man actually doing the work*. All other officers would draw uniform rates of pay $\frac{3}{4}$ of rank.

He said he had spent several nights after dinner working this all out on foolscap with a blue pencil. (Anyone who has had to deal with K.'s rough workings in coloured pencil will appreciate the task in front of the pay people to understand and decipher them!) He told me he sent for the officer at the head of the Pay Department, and asked what he thought of the scheme. This officer, after some hesitation, said he didn't think it would work. The Chief told him he had expected that reply, because it was much too simple and didn't give enough occupation for his baboos, with their everlasting objections. He added that finally he had got it through, and it would soon come out, the extra cost being small.

He then asked what I thought of it. This was rather a poser to answer straight off, and I said so, adding that it seemed all right, but I was uncertain regarding two points: (1) If a man lost all his staff pay when he went away, a great many C.O.s, for instance mine, would never take any leave at all! (2) I could not understand the cost being *small*, especially as affected by furlough pay.

"I'm not touching furlough pay," said K. "I purposely left it alone and it remains unaltered."

I explained that it *must* affect the question all the same, instancing the existing rule that if my C.O. went on furlough I drew half of his command allowance of six hundred rupees a month and half my own staff, while the other half of his command allowance was taken by Government towards the cost of his furlough pay. I enquired how this would now be met if the second-in-command was to get the whole of the C.O.'s allowance of, say twenty rupees a day in full? K. seemed a bit nonplussed and, after being silent a little while, said jerkily :

"Well, I don't care a damn. I've got it through, and they say it will only cost ten lacs. If they've made a mistake, that's their look out."

Apparently there *was* some big mistake, for although that evening the Chief gave me distinctly to understand the matter was settled, and that the new regulations would be promulgated shortly, nothing more was ever heard about them!

The next point K. referred to was his scheme for the special promotion of a certain number of selected officers of the Indian Army annually, which he had got sanctioned by the Secretary of State; asking me if I didn't think it very sound?

I told him frankly that I didn't like it at all, because it was bound to act unfairly in a huge country like India. Adding that all the promotions were bound to be given either to fellows at Simla, and immediately under the eye of the authorities, or, to possibly mediocre men pushed forward by interested generals. All to the detriment of just as able, if not better men, whose good fortune did not take them to Simla, or whose ill-luck had placed them under commanders disinclined to push them.

Saying this with a good deal of diffidence, K.'s reply pleased, though it rather astonished, me.

"You are quite right," he said. "It was entirely my own idea, based on my Egyptian experience, but even before I got it through I realised that India was too big a country, and it was therefore unsuitable. I then decided to make none at all, and informed my staff accordingly.

Victor Brooke

M.O.

Frankie Maxwell



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Hubert Hamilton

K. of K.

Birdie

LORD KITCHENER AND HIS PERSONAL STAFF, DELHI, 1903.

Next day, however, Elles¹ came to me and said I had already promised him one, and that on the strength of this he had actually told one of his officers—Moberley—that he was to get it.”

K. told him he was certainly not going to give one to his blessed department only, but if he had promised, then it must hold good. Eventually the Chief made them all for that first occasion. He told me he did not intend to make any more, but having got it sanctioned, he would leave it on the books as an incentive.

He added he was sorry, for the idea came to him mainly on account of his own case. That he was over ten years a subaltern, and had then realised how hopeless it all was trying to get on, when you were up against slow and stereotyped promotion. However well you did, and however hard you worked, you were forced to wait for the vacancy, or for the time laid down, just the same as the man who never did a stroke more than he was obliged to.

Next he mentioned the great difficulty he found in getting his orders understood. This is a trouble many of us have encountered, and would be emphasised in the case of Kitchener, because his big brain and clear-sighted vision were denied to lesser mortals.

He quoted a recent case where he had told his staff he wanted a manœuvre map made for the whole of India. It was to be completed by the staffs of brigades, divisions, etc., to ensure that they, and their generals, learnt a little more about the country within their areas. There was no particular urgency, but so great was everyone's awe of K., that the commands marked it *urgent*, divisions *very urgent*, and brigades *immediate* with a two months' time limit for completion. The order happening to reach brigades in the monsoon, a fact no one seemed to have anticipated, was of course an impossible one, for you cannot do outdoor sketching during the "rains." K., hearing about this accidentally at Simla, was furious, and the order was cancelled altogether.

Meanwhile my wife had returned, and seeing us in the verandah, went to K.'s room to inspect it. She found his servant squatting outside, but all doors and windows

¹ Sir Edmund R. Elles, the last military member of Council in India.

tightly closed. Opening the long French windows, she explained to his man the working of the "jinmills" or shutters. These, when closed at night, prevented the entry of stray dogs, etc., and yet gave plenty of air. The servant, however, told her that the "Lord Sahib" never had anything at all open at night! Truly he was a veritable salamander, for it was mighty warm weather.

CHAPTER XI

THE HUMAN SIDE OF K.

K WAS dining at our mess that night, and on entering the ante-room it looked very well, with red curtains, red shades to the lamps, red covered easy chairs and pots of red geraniums in the fireplaces. He was evidently rather impressed for, stopping short in the doorway, he looked round and said: "Hum! this is the result of being localised."

I think it is "The Gentleman with a Duster," in his *Mirrors of Downing Street*, who tells us that although Lord Kitchener had many admirers he was liked by few, and it is doubtful whether anyone loved him.

Shades of Hubert Hamilton, FitzGerald and Frankie Maxwell, do you hear this? Loyal and faithful "Birdie," do these words make you squirm with indignation? Reading them myself, my thoughts went back at once to that spring evening in 1905 when, taking Hubert Hamilton in to dinner in the 3rd Gurkha mess at Almora, our conversation turned on to the Chief sitting opposite us. Anything like the look on Hamilton's face, when his whispering became eloquent through emotion, I had never seen before.

Many things he told me of his hero, exemplifying his wonderful forethought, judgment and kindness. Of the South African campaign he said:

"Who do you suppose settled up the South African War? Do you think the Boers could have been induced to come to terms without K.? I am firmly convinced it was entirely due to his personality, prestige and firmness that we were enabled to arrange matters at all, and that no one else could possibly have done it. I have been on his staff in Egypt, South Africa and India, and simply love him."

An amusing incident, indicating his cross eye, occurred when he was saying good night. Two youngsters put their hands out together, each thinking he was being looked at! It was an awkward moment, but K. passed it off with a laugh.

When he left us it was to stay with the Gaselees¹ at Naini Tal. On departure he said: "I've enjoyed my visit very much," and turning to me added: "I must modify my opinion about localised units! The abandonment of Almora will remain in abeyance at present." Shortly afterwards we got an official notification to the same effect, and that is the last that has ever been said about it.

The first nineteen miles of the journey to Naini Tal was done on hired ponies along a narrow hill track, and I rode alone with K. We made a bad start, for the station staff officer had given him, for the first stage all down hill, a wretched little tat about 12½ hands high, with a goose rump, no shoulder, and cow hocks. I did not dare offer to change, as my own hill pony I was riding was a perfect fiend to shy.

K. looked very cross, especially as the pony stumbled occasionally. Trying a remark about the surrounding country being so excellent for training was not encouraging, for he only snapped out:

"Oh, I dare say, but it is all *far* too remote from the railway."

The thought came to me that I was in for a bad three hours' ride, but after four or five miles there was a change of ponies, and to my joy I noted the best hireling in the district was ready waiting. Lengthening the stirrups for him, to his injunction, "Make 'em as long as your arm," K. got up and started off at a canter.

As soon as he realised the splendid paces of the pony he was on, his ill-humour entirely vanished, and when I caught him up he was cantering along, flapping his disengaged arm and actually *singing*. Much more than a loud hum, something with words, though quite unintelligible. When we slowed down to a walk he asked me at what sort of pace we generally did such long rides, and laid down the dictum that the proper way was to trot or canter a mile or two, then walk the same distance, and so

¹The late General Sir Alfred Gaselee, then G.O.C. Eastern Command.

on. I didn't dare tell him that once, in a hurry, I had done those nineteen miles in an hour and twenty minutes!

During this ride another trait of Kitchener's came to light to confute those enemies of his who called him a butcher. Some of the hills on each side were very wild and precipitous, and at one place he pointed at a bluff saying it was like some ground near Simla where he had been taken out to shoot *ghoral* (wild goat).

"Poor little beggars," he said, "I sat on a rock with two rifles beside me, and dozens of them were driven towards me on the opposite side of the ravine by hundreds of coolies, quite unconscious of the fate awaiting them. I didn't like it a bit."

Lady Gaselee did not seem to find Kitchener such a delightful guest, during this three days' visit to Naini Tal, as we had done at Almora. She wrote to my wife asking what on earth we had done to K., as he arrived in such a bad temper! On arrival he had only grunted when she told him there was a big dinner in his honour that night, a garden party the next day and a picnic the day after. When she asked him if he would like to walk out and look at the lake, he told her he could see it from his bedroom window! Finally, at the dinner and garden party, he would not speak to a soul! The good lady had not employed her usual tact. K. hated entertainments, and she had given him a surfeit.

The next time I came across Kitchener was at the Indian Bisley rifle meetings at Meerut. I forget how many meetings, but during one of them I remember taking him to see the new "Rexer" quick-firing gun which some enthusiasts insisted on showing him. Riding home I tried to get his opinion on it, but only elicited a loud and long-drawn-out "H—u—m." Quite enough, however, to convey to me the fact that he was not enamoured of it.

He also made a long address on musketry before one presentation of prizes, afterwards helping Lady Gaselee to give them away. He was rather snappish with me when he saw what dozens there were to be presented, saying he should never catch his train. As it was then 4 p.m., his train went at 9.30 and the station was a fifteen-minute drive, I only laughed. But he was in an awful hurry all the time, and Lady Gaselee got quite rattled at the way he kept pushing the cups at her, saying, sotto voce :

“Go on, go on, give the man his prize, can't you? Don't haver over it.” She, poor lady, was trying to say a few nice words to each winner!

While in command of a battalion of the 7th Gurkhas (sometimes ironically called “Kitchener's Own”), and at home on leave, I was requested to address a large assembly of “might-be” Territorials, in the north-west of England, in the interests of recruitment. It was at this meeting I first realised the enormous hold K. had obtained over the British public. During my speech I referred to some remarks recently made by Lord Kitchener to the Calcutta Volunteers. No sooner had I mentioned the name than the whole hall burst out into applause. Remarking, on its subsidence, how delighted I was to note the approbation with which Lord Kitchener's— Here I had to stop again, for the cheering was deafening directly the name was out of my mouth.

Not daring to say “Kitchener” any more, I explained in a roundabout way that the reason I was so particularly gratified was because he happened to be my colonel. This remark was received in stony silence and with every mark of disapprobation. Such an audience could in no way understand how the Commander-in-Chief in India could possibly be a *colonel*! In fact my address was entirely spoilt by this unfortunate remark, the audience looking upon me as an infernal humbug. As this was the second time I had been let down by a reference to Kitchener's colonelcy of the 7th Gurkhas, I was careful never to mention it again.

Kitchener was a “big man” in every sense of the word. One cannot conceive him doing a contemptible action. An instance of his lack of all pettiness was told me by the Chief of the Staff, Sir Beauchamp Duff, personally.

Soon after Lord Curzon resigned, K. received some manuscript from a first-class English magazine containing a hand-written article dealing with the Kitchener-Curzon controversy. The publisher said they could not divulge the name of the writer, but he would like to know before issue whether Kitchener objected to its publication. Finding it was a violent attack upon himself, K. handed it over to Duff to read. The latter asking, after perusal, if he might make some enquiries about it—as he thought he knew the handwriting—was given permission to do so.

These enquiries proved the author to be a well-known colonel of the Indian Army, who was very clever with his pen. Duff, bringing this information to the Chief, asked what he would like done about it.

"Write and ask him whether he wrote it," said K., looking up from his table.

This was done, and the colonel replied that he couldn't remember! There the matter ended.

A few months later, a brigade becoming vacant, Duff took three or four names up to K. for appointment. The top name was that of this very colonel. Duff told me he expected it to be scratched out at once. On the contrary, after careful scrutiny of this officer's confidential reports, K. put him in without a word.

The relations between Kitchener and his personal staff were most devoted; indeed might be called affectionate. They all appeared just as strongly attached to him, as he was to them. Of all, perhaps "Birdie" did him the most wonderfully faithful service, and undoubtedly FitzGerald was the best beloved. The connection between the two was extraordinary, for while FitzGerald worshipped the ground K. trod on, K., in his turn, treated him as a dearly loved son.

FitzGerald's influence with Kitchener was enormous, but one never heard even a hint of it being misused. During the period K. was unemployed after leaving India, FitzGerald was beside me at the Quetta Staff College. There had just been a regular press campaign at home regarding K.'s unemployment. Sarcastic comments were made about the debasement of our greatest soldier by his acceptance of the chairmanship of the London, Chatham and Dover Railway. During a long walk together, FitzGerald and I discussed this, as well as the question of K.'s succession to Lord Minto as Viceroy, which it was known he so greatly desired. FitzGerald did not tell me all he knew, but one remark of his amused me immensely: "I keep writing to him begging him whatever is said to keep his mouth shut, telling him that if he does this he is bound to come out top dog!"

Regarding the succession to Lord Minto it is interesting to record that at a very big dinner given to some notable or other at the Bengal Club in Calcutta in 1910, the appointment of K. as Viceroy was freely discussed after dinner. The

commercial magnates in Calcutta are shrewd and knowledgeable men, yet there was not one single dissentient voice on this question.

Talking of Calcutta reminds me of an anecdote about a dinner Kitchener gave to the Japanese military attaché there, Colonel ——. The latter's English was not his strong point. During conversation K. asked him what would be the principal sights should he visit Japan. The little colonel gave a list of local wonders, some of which caused K. to remark that they did not appear quite "proper." The attaché, not at all understanding what his host said, simply answered, smiling: "Yes, yes, verree nice, verree nice"!

Kitchener always wanted the *best*. Nothing short of this satisfied him. It fretted him to live in an atmosphere where things were standing still, when they could so easily be bettered. When improvement was within his grasp he made it. This of course led to changes and alterations. People affected, sometimes found these unpalatable, and abused K. as a man who was never content to leave things as they were. True for them, he was not, if his great mind saw advancement was called for. It must have been somewhat discomfoting to them, however, to find he was nearly always right.

Many stories exist of his kindly, helpful nature. Lady Flora Poore allows me to quote one. She must know several, for in 1901-2 Lady Flora and Lady Maxwell, being the only two English ladies in Pretoria, always sat on Lord Kitchener's right and left.

In 1901 Lady Flora, whose husband (Major R. M. Poore, 7th Hussars) was on the head-quarters staff at Pretoria, went out to South Africa for the second time, expecting to remain with the other married ladies down at Newcastle, with an odd chance of seeing her husband now and then.

On reaching Cape Town she heard the joyful news that Lord Kitchener had given her leave to go up to Pretoria, which was a great surprise. Lodging at the Grand Hotel she wondered if she could possibly stay as long as a week. When that was about to expire she expected orders daily to return to Natal.

Getting an invitation to dine with the Commander-in-Chief at the end of the week, Lady Flora felt sure she would get her *congé* at the dinner, and was very despondent accord-

ingly. When, however, the Chief came into the room the first thing he said was: "How do you like Pretoria?" and the second: "Have you got a house yet?"! What with delight and astonishment Lady Flora was barely able to gasp out "Not yet," but quickly recovering, added, "Though I shan't be long about it now I have your tacit permission." K. seemed very much amused, and the Poores were established in a house next morning!

As regards his numerous residences, his desire to make things better became a hobby. Houses, grounds and gardens had to be improved. Snowdon in Simla; Wildflower Hall in Mashobra, beyond Simla; Treasury Gate in Fort William, Calcutta; and Broom Hall, Kent. He had even sketched out in his mind, and talked over with the Mintos, what he would do at Viceregal Lodge were he to be made Viceroy. He often used to say that he ought to have been a house designer and architect instead of a soldier.

It has been said that K. had no sense of humour and could not make a joke if he tried. Never was there a greater misconception. The stout lady and the bed incident in the Simla earthquake has been mentioned. That is perhaps rather clumsy, but here are two more.

When Sir William Meyer, the present High Commissioner for India, became financial adviser to K., he is said to have suggested he should receive some military rank. Kitchener replied he could not see his way to recommending him for a commission, but would gladly promise that Meyer should be given a military funeral, if he died while employed in the Army Department!

An officer of the head-quarters staff in India of very uncouth appearance went by the name of "The Walrus." One cold day he turned up to take papers to the Chief in a new suit of Irish frieze, as stiff as a board. Going into K.'s study, the Chief, after looking hard at him, said: "The Walrus has evidently had a suit made by the carpenter."

Some peculiarities of Lord Kitchener's were:

- (1) He had very small hands for a man, but extraordinarily well formed.
- (2) His hair was much thicker than most people's, and in India he had not a single grey one.
- (3) He carried a well-known danger signal, on seeing

which it was advisable to change the subject or quietly disappear. This took the form of veins swelling on the cheek bones, and caught the eye at once.

(4) His spectacles were rather unusual. The shanks instead of being prolonged behind the ears were so constructed that they maintained the glasses in position by pressure against the temples.

(5) Mention has been made of his constant interjection "Hum" when conversing. It was his favourite method of implying doubt, and the greater the doubt the longer drawn out was the interjection.

Many instances could be quoted of his chivalry. Perhaps the finest was the way in which he always gave to Lord Roberts the entire credit for every advantage we gained in South Africa, including the successful termination of the war itself.

Kitchener did a great deal to promote temperance and reduce venereal disease in the army. He was all for clean living, and I am sure did more to influence the soldier in this matter than any of his predecessors. Not even excepting Lord Roberts, who certainly made great efforts, but finally funked "grasping the nettle."

Many will remember that excellent little paper every British soldier received on the way to India, and a somewhat similar note entered in the service book of every man of our expeditionary force in 1914. These were written by K. himself, and he approached the subject in quite a new way.

Although he did not show up as a churchman in India, he was always on the side of religion and clean living, backing up very strongly all efforts to this end, such as the Rev. G. D. Barnes' *League of Honour*, etc.

The influence Kitchener exercised over some people was very great, and his power of persuasion quite uncommon. Here is an instance: When the late Amir of Afghanistan (Habibullah, who remained so staunch to us throughout the war) visited India in 1907, the whole programme of functions and ceremonies was arranged with motor-cars as the means of conveyance. Shortly before his arrival it was ascertained that nothing would induce the Amir to enter a motor. All the timings, therefore, had to be rearranged, and state carriages collected from here, there and everywhere. He was duly met by a state landau, and

the next day lunched with the Commander-in-Chief in his camp.

During the meal Kitchener said he was taking him for a motor drive after luncheon. The Amir was horror-stricken, and said he couldn't think of it. K. insisted, and telling him they would go very slow and he had a special expert, in the shape of a Royal Artillery officer to drive, the Amir eventually gave way. The result was, that afterwards the Amir would not get into a carriage, and all the timings, etc., had to be again altered! A further sequel was that Habibullah bought several cars, and insisted on taking the gunner officer back to Kabul with him!

Time after time have I referred to Kitchener's prevision. It was only miraculous because it was a doctrine he had taken unto himself. Something akin to the "Scouts" motto, "Be Prepared."

Once when talking to Lady Flora Poore of "careers" and about men getting on in the world, he explained how he had always looked on life rather with the eyes of a naturalist, who watches an ant hurrying in some direction, or peers into an ants' nest.

He expounded how this student of nature looked with attention at their comings and goings, and their circumambulations, so as to note carefully what was the actual drift of their activities.

So, said K., has it been with me through life. I would hear of disturbances in Peking. I at once set myself to learn Chinese. Again there would be a rumour of trouble in some other part of the world. Getting books and maps, I would study the past and present history of that country. And so on, always endeavouring to be beforehand with any knowledge that might be of value when the time came.

In his farewell speech at the Simla United Service Club on the 21st August, 1909, he pointed out that *two* main principles underlay all he had tried to do in India: "Firstly, that each step in army reform must be founded on an accepted policy, based upon admitted premises, arrived at either by experience or by reasoning, and laid down in clear language understood by those who have to apply it, and intelligible to those to whom it is to be applied.

"The second principle has been, in all things to look

ahead. To consider not merely for the present, but to lay the foundation for the needs of the future."

Kitchener was simplicity itself. When given any one of his numerous decorations, no one was more childishly pleased; but he was the last man to do the least thing special in order to gain it. Talking of decorations reminds me of an incident that occurred when he was in command of the troops in London at the 1911 coronation, by King George's special desire. In one of the coronation processions Kitchener's G.C.S.I. star came off his tunic, and could not be found anywhere. The police and everyone were informed, and asked to look for it. When K. came to have his field-marshal's boots pulled off he gave a yell of pain. The star had to be cut out of the boot with the aid of a razor!

Although by no means devoid of sympathy this attribute, by the very nature of the man, was seldom openly displayed. Being a real worker, with the highest ideals, he judged everyone from the standard he had set himself. If a man did good work it was not K.'s custom to praise him, because in his opinion he had only done his duty. At the same time censure was very rare.

When he caught a snag he got rid of him. Swept him away. Sometimes this was impossible. It may have been a highly paid appointment, perhaps not directly under K., or there was no one available to succeed. In this case he simply ignored the man and did the work himself.

What was the case when Kitchener went to the War Office in 1914? He found the majority of the best officers, who really knew the up-to-date and highly organised War Office, bound for overseas. To help him he had mainly weak, mediocre men, or men brought back who only knew the institution as it was ten years before. What was the consequence? He did all the work himself.

Even the "Gentleman with a Duster" gives K. credit for high and honest endeavour, yet he describes him as weak and petulant with his colleagues in the Cabinet. This seems highly improbable, for it was not K.'s way. If he could not get what he wanted, especially in a time of stress, his nature was to say: "Very well, you are running the show. I've said what I want. If you won't agree, that's your look out. I can do no more."

As indicated at the commencement of this chapter my endeavour has been to show that Kitchener was a man and not an official machine. If such a man possesses the confidence of a nation to so large an extent that he has only to say a thing is necessary to gain unquestioning response. If, in addition, he possesses character, industry and persistence. If he is also a deep thinker with unique talent for organisation, immense driving power, supernatural foresight, high ideals, reasonableness when convinced, and a desire for efficiency that is absolutely contagious—can he ever be classified as anything but one of the GREATEST OF MEN ?

CHAPTER XII

THE KINGDOM OF NEPAL¹

IN the southern ranges of the Himalayas and north of two Indian provinces, called respectively "Bengal" and "United Provinces of Agra and Oudh," lies the little independent kingdom of Nepal. It is a narrow tract of country extending for about 520 miles along the southern slope of the central axis of the Himalayas. It has an area of 54,000 square miles with a population of about six millions, chiefly Hindus. The average annual revenue is now estimated at about £1,100,000, but it is probably a good deal more.

This state enjoys complete independence, and has at its capital (Katmandu) a British envoy, whose chief duties are connected with correspondence relating to the Gurkhas who enlist in the Indian Army, and serve as mercenaries under an oath of allegiance to our King-Emperor. The term "Gurkha" is now the national designation of the inhabitants of this country, but it was originally limited to a people occupying a district of the same name, and situated in the centre of the present kingdom. That is to say, *the term does not denote a race*, but simply a follower of the King of Gurkha in the old days.

About 1765, the King of "Gurkha"—one Prithwi Narain—made his second invasion of Nepal proper, and after some four years' hostilities, conquered the whole valley and established his capital at Katmandu. For the next thirty years the Gurkha was engaged in almost

¹ As regards this and the following chapter, I have to acknowledge the kindness of the Committee of the Royal United Service Institution in allowing me to include in them some portions of an article I wrote for their journal in December, 1906.

continual fighting for conquest. Sikkim was overrun and a large portion annexed. Thibet was invaded, and much loot and plunder were acquired.

In 1792 a Chinese army managed, with great difficulty, to penetrate into Nepal, and actually dictated terms near the capital. But the damage inflicted by the invaders must have been small, for in the next two years the Gurkhas, striking westward, subdued and annexed the petty States of Kumaon and Garhwal. Indeed, so great was their prowess, and so many and so vast were their conquests, that in 1795 they were masters of all the hills and valleys from Bhutan to Kashmir, and from British India to Thibet.

At this time they showed little or no consideration for boundaries; nor would they listen to any friendly remonstrances from their neighbours. So intolerable did the incessant pillaging in our territory, and encroachments on our frontier become that, in 1814, Lord Hastings, unable to endure it any longer, declared war against Nepal. After a six months' campaign, during which the Gurkhas behaved with the greatest gallantry and determination, the war came to an end owing to the skilful operations of General Ochterlony.

Peace, however, was not yet assured. The Nepal Government would not accede to our demands, and it took a second campaign, under the same capable leader, to bring about the Treaty of Segowli, which was signed in 1814 and ratified the following year. This treaty defines British relations with Nepal at the present day, except that a legation has now been established at the capital of our allies, instead of the old-time Resident.

But before this treaty was ratified at all, Gurkha soldiers began to troop to our colours, as military service is what they adore. In 1815 the first, second and third Gurkhas were raised at Subathu (Simla hills), Sirmoor (near Dehra Dun) and Almora (Kumaon) respectively. In 1857 the 4th Gurkhas were raised at Pithoragarh (beyond Almora on the western border of Nepal), and a year later the 5th, at Abbottabad. The other regiments were some of them formed in the early part of the last century, but were not designated "Gurkhas" until 1886 or later.

Many accounts are given in the official handbook on Gurkhas—originally compiled by Colonel Eden Vansittart

of the 5th and then 10th—about the extraordinary valour repeatedly shown by them in the Nepal wars. Tales which show that not only were they the bravest and cleanest fighters, but had a wonderful confidence in the good feeling and rectitude of the British.

Quite close to Dehra Dun, the permanent home of the 2nd and 9th Gurkha regiments, is a ruined fort, very strongly posted, called Kalinga. It was held in the first war by a Nepalese warrior named Balbhadar and 600 Gurkhas. General Gillespie with exceeding rashness—as he had no heavy guns—unsuccessfully attacked this fort, and was himself killed leading the first assault. The second assault was also repulsed, and altogether Balbhadar caused us a loss of thirty-one officers and 750 men killed and wounded. When ultimately three days' incessant shelling compelled the Gurkhas to leave, Balbhadar and the survivors, reduced to ninety, cut their way through our posts and escaped. The defence of this fort retarded a whole division for over a month.

One day, while shelling was in progress, a Gurkha was seen in the breach advancing towards the British, and waving his hand. The guns ceasing fire, the man came calmly into our lines to ask for medical assistance as his jaw had been shattered by a round shot. When he left hospital he openly declared that he was going back to fight against us once more, and did so!

With reference to these campaigns, it is extremely interesting to note that General Bruce—whom I refer to later on—got hold of a diary written by an officer who took part in them, and found that “Gurkha *snipers*” were continually referred to. Perhaps the first use of that particular term.

Writing of General Bruce reminds me that *he*, with his extraordinary knowledge of Gurkhas, should really be writing these two chapters and not *I*. However, I have done the next best thing, viz., freely consulted him, and I am greatly indebted for much information and many stories from his pen, or told me personally, which appear in these pages.

His Majesty the King of Nepal is called the “Maharaj Adhiraj” and, being too sacred a personality to be troubled with mundane affairs, he takes no share in the administration of the State, which is ruled by the Prime Minister



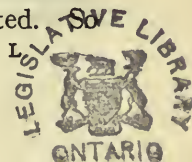
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BRIGADIER-GENERAL THE HONBLE. C. G. BRUCE, C.B., M.V.O.,
LATE 5TH ROYAL AND 6TH GURKHAS AND OF MOUNT EVEREST FAME.

The King is nominally the head, but since the appointment, over a hundred years ago, of Bhim Sen Thapa as Prime Minister, all the power has been wielded by the holder of that office. This Bhim Sen ruled the Gurkha dynasty with great ability for more than twenty-five years. Many attempts were made by the reigning monarch to secure absolute power, with a final result that, about 1840, Bhim Sen either committed suicide, or was murdered in prison. Some six years later a general massacre of the most powerful nobles brought the famous Chieftain Sir Jung Bahadur to the front, and he obtained from the sovereign the perpetual right to the office of Prime Minister of Nepal. This right is still enjoyed by his descendant. Under Bhim Sen's rule an offer was made (1848) to assist us in the second Sikh War, but declined. Later (1857), during the troublous times of the Mutiny, a similar offer was accepted, and over 10,000 troops, with the Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief at their head, fought for us against the rebels.

The Nepal Army is roughly estimated at 50,000 men, of which a total of about 2,500 is artillery. Service is compulsory for at least three years, after which it is optional to remain on. The Nepal Government have given every facility during the last thirty years or so for the enlistment of Gurkhas in the Indian Army. This recruitment does not affect the supply for the Nepalese units. Formerly many impediments were placed in the path of our recruiters by the Nepal Durbar. Our men had first of all to make a long stay on the Indian border to enable them to grow their hair, and thus pass as ordinary villagers. Whispered enticements in the ear of a likely looking boy at some local fair led to midnight trysts in a lonely jungle. Here the keen recruiter, mustering his batch for the onward journey, travelled only by night, until the British frontier was reached.

After the successor to the great Jung Bahadur had been duly assassinated, came an enlightened Prime Minister in the person of Sir Bir Shum Shere Rana, and he eventually removed every restriction. For years our men have gone in freely, and provided, annually, from 1,500 to 2,000 men to meet all requirements. For this we also have to thank Lord Roberts, as it was mainly due to his influence and energy that this free enlistment was permitted.



great was the Field-Marshal's admiration for Gurkhas that he chose one as a "supporter" on the left of his coat-of-arms.

The origin of the Gurkha is undoubtedly Mongolian. His appearance shows it pretty clearly. The nation consists of many tribes and clans, but the classes enlisted in our Army before the war were almost entirely *Gurungs*, *Magars*, *Thakurs*, and *Khas*, with *Eastern Nepal* men (i.e. *Rais*, *Limbus*, *Sunwars*, and *Lamas*) for the 7th and 10th Gurkhas.

My first experience of *Eastern Nepal* men was when Lord Kitchener selected me to raise the 2/7th at Quetta in 1907. *Limbus* and *Rais* were supposed to be bad tempered and difficult to manage. This idea got about because no battalion had, formerly, more than a very small percentage of them. Having been the latest converts to strict Hinduism, it is possible that in moments of excitement and passion, the other classes reviled them regarding their former indiscretions. This would raise any Gurkha's ire, and the *Limbu* or *Rai*, seeing red, probably whipped out his kukrie (long, broad-bladed, curved knife) or bayonet, and went for his calumniator. Hence his reputation.

I found them exceedingly good-tempered, and particularly intelligent. Much more so than any other class. I must mention, however, that at first I found such difficulty in getting my orders obeyed, especially as regards gambling and the illicit brewing of alcohol, that I had to punish very heavily, and convene a large number of courts-martial. So much so that, first of all, my brigadier (now General Sir F. J. Aylmer, V.C.) talked to me about it, but was quite satisfied with my explanation.

Then my second-in-command, who had served with *Eastern Nepal* men in Burma, warned me, with much solemnity, that I was riding for a fall. Asking why, he explained that I could not discipline the *Limbu* and *Rai*, and that if these heavy punishments for disobedience of orders were persisted in, I should have a sort of mutiny. I gave him clearly to understand that it was my intention to continue as I had begun, that ill-discipline in the battalion could not be tolerated for a moment, and that if I failed I was prepared to face the consequences.

Like the good fellow he was, he gave me his whole-

hearted support, and after another three months we had no more trouble at all. Six years later, when this officer took over the command, the letter he wrote regarding the condition of the unit, and its discipline, is one I often re-read with pride.

The *Magars* and *Gurungs* are to be found chiefly in Central Nepal, and are aborigines of the country and of the old district of "Gurkha." They have been warriors, pure and simple, from the very earliest times. When not employed fighting, the energy of the Magar tribe has been mainly devoted to agricultural pursuits, and that of the Gurungs to pastoral work.

The *Thakur* and *Khas* (or Chettris, as they prefer to be called) tribes are of the highest social standing in Nepal. The *Thakurs* indeed reigned in the old kingdom of *Gurkha*, and were descended from the *Rajputs*, who took refuge in Nepal after the first siege of Chitor.¹ The Nepalese Royal family is in a straight line from the old *Gurkha* Kings. In fact the present "Maharaj Adhiraj" is the *Gurkha* King himself direct.

The Gurkhas have a very strong sense of their obligations when on duty. More zealous sentries it would be difficult to find. Sometimes this creates an awkward situation. At Dacca, on one occasion, a Gurkha sentry shot at and wounded a perfectly innocent member of the municipal committee. This man had every right to be where he was, and had answered the challenge by shouting out "Friend." Still the Gurkha fired at the city father. At the enquiry his defence was that the man, not being a *soldier*, could not possibly be a *friend*!

One ancient custom I must briefly refer to as regards violation of the laws of marriage by a man with another man's wife, to whom the latter had been properly married, i.e. by what is called the "Biaiti"² ceremony. (Many, if they can afford it, have other wives, who do not count in the same way.)

By the law of the land the husband of this wife was permitted to have one cut with his kukrie at the accused, if convicted by the court. This "cutting" took place in full ceremonial, and if the man tried to bolt, he would

¹ *Chitor* in Rajputana : four times taken and sacked by Mohammedan kings and emperors between 1303 and 1567 (Akbar).

² Properly *byāh*.

be tripped-up by the spectators. There was only one way he could get off, and that was to so humiliate himself as to crawl between the straddled legs of the injured husband.

In recent years this law has been abolished, and a system of fines substituted, varying from 120 to 5 rupees. In addition, all property, ornaments, dowry, etc., have to be returned to the husband.

When the present reductions in the Indian infantry are completed, we shall have ten Gurkha regiments of two battalions each, or a force of about 18,000 men. Of these, the 9th Regiment enlists Khas, the 7th and 10th Limbus and Rais, and the remainder almost entirely Magars and Gurungs. Of course during the war units had to take what they could get, and many rather undesirable classes were enlisted, but most of these have by now been eliminated.

Allured by every prospect of employment in the field, our service is extremely popular. Doubtless the men are not blind to the advantages of good and regular pay, and the fairly liberal pension establishment. But the boy-villagers noting, with envy and admiration, the bemedalled veterans settling in their midst, are mainly attracted by the hope of fighting for the "Sarkar"—the name they give to the British Government.

After joining Head-quarters it is astonishing to note how quickly they learn to reverence the King-Emperor, whom they look upon with much veneration. Our barrack-rooms are full of coloured prints of the Royal family, and the most acceptable gift you can make to a non-commissioned officer's room are pictures of our reigning monarch and his consort.

On the outbreak of the Great War, the present ruler of Nepal¹ threw in his lot with the British at once, and immediately placed all the military resources of his State at the disposal of the British Government, for the defence of India and India's frontiers.

Here it is necessary to explain that according to the religious usage of Nepal it is obligatory for any soldier crossing the *Kalapani* (black waters of the sea) to obtain

¹ General His Highness Maharajah Sir Chandra Shum Shere Jung, Bahadur Rana, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., D.C.L. (Oxon), Prime Minister and Marshal of Nepal.

a special dispensation on return, before he can enter Nepal or have any intercourse with Nepalese, even with the members of his own family. This dispensation is called *pani pathya* (purification ceremony), and is looked on as being of extreme importance. The penalty for evading it is excommunication of the severest type, for the man becomes an absolute pariah, his own relations refusing to eat, drink, or smoke with him. This is described by our men as *huqqa pani band* (lit. smoking and water stopped).

The supreme religious authority in Nepal has to be consulted in such matters, and, as regards the Great War, the question was a very big one on account of the enormous number of Gurkha soldiers in our army proceeding overseas to France, Gallipoli, Egypt, Mesopotamia, East Africa, Palestine, etc. Fortunately for us the influence of the present Prime Minister is so great that the priesthood consented to grant this dispensation to all—except pure Brahmans—under certain conditions. Firstly, it had to be active service under the orders, or with the consent of the Nepal Government. Secondly, there was to be no tarrying abroad longer than was necessary. Thirdly, each man was to bring back convincing proofs, signed by a competent British officer, of having upheld the prescribed caste observances throughout.

Sir Chandra showed great forethought over this, and also his usual solicitude for his people who would otherwise have been put to much trouble, expense and humiliation. But this was not all, for he persuaded the spiritual head in Nepal to depute a representative to Dehra Dun and other places used as centres for this grant of *patia*. Moreover, representatives were despatched to Gurkha stations on behalf of the families of soldiers who had died overseas, and for whom this dispensation was also necessary in connection with after-death ceremonies.

It was on account of the difficulties regarding this purification ceremony that the contingent of the Nepal army was proposed for the defence of India and India's frontiers only. This did not involve any crossing of the sea.

At first the offer was not accepted, because of the many difficulties regarding command, employment, training, etc. Early in 1915, however, the Government of India, finding itself in great straits for reliable troops, welcomed the

suggestion with open arms, asking for contingents of six thousand men as early as possible. For these camp accommodation was provided at Dehra Dun (2,000) and near Abbottabad (4,000). This strength was increased a year later by two more battalions to each station, making a total of over ten thousand.

I happened to arrive at Dehra Dun as brigade commander, in April, 1915, about the same time as the first two battalions, 1,060 strong each, and at once took their training in hand. As the men, though of good physique and possessing a knowledge of ceremonial combined with a fine soldierly spirit, had never lived together in camp or barracks before, nor done any field training; and moreover the officers and N.C.O.s, though keen and zealous, had received little professional instruction or schooling, it was rather a puzzle how to ensure a good start and make rapid progress.

A brain wave gave me the inspiration of "practical demonstrations." Taking up the idea at once, my excellent Territorial battalions and the good old 2nd Gurkhas were daily utilised to give exhibitions to the Nepalese officers and N.C.O.s. Every description of military training from physical exercises to night operations and, later on, attack and defence with ball, was demonstrated, and all with the most gratifying and surprising results.

I found General Tej Shum Shere¹ in command of the two very strong battalions at Dehra Dun. He was an earnest soldier, who backed me up in all my endeavours, being as anxious to advance his own professional knowledge as he was to absorb all we could teach regarding sanitation and hygiene. This up to date had been to him a closed book.

When transferred later to Abbottabad, I found there four equally strong units under General Padma Shum Shere² who proved himself always a shrewd and zealous helpmate, ready in every way to take infinite trouble to further the fitness and proficiency of his officers and men. The Inspector-Generalship of the Nepalese forces in India was in the capable hands of the second son³ of the Prime

¹ Now General Sir Tej Shum Shere, Jung, Bahadur Rana, K.C.I.E.

² Now Commanding-General Sir Padma Shum Shere, Jung, Bahadur Rana, G.B.E., K.C.I.E.

³ Now General Sir Baber Shum Shere, Jung, Bahadur Rana, G.B.E., K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E.



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GENERAL SIR BABER SHUM SHERE, JUNG, BAHADOOR RANA, G.B.E.,
K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., NEPALESE ARMY.

Minister. This officer remained with army head-quarters, making periodical visits to Dehra Dun and Abbottabad for purposes of inspection. At Simla and Delhi he was most useful, and was freely consulted in all questions concerning the contingents. With him I formed a close, and I hope a lasting, friendship, and I am full of admiration for his soldierly qualities and brave spirit.

Attached to each contingent were supervising British officers with four or five British sergeants per battalion. On these devolved tasks requiring a considerable amount of hard work, combined with a good professional knowledge, and more than a little tact. I shall always feel I owe them a deep debt of gratitude. I am certain also that the enormous strides made, in so short a time, by the Nepalese, were due as much to their fostering care, as to the zeal and keenness of the troops themselves. An opinion shared, I feel sure, by His Highness the Maharajah.

In January, 1920, the Government of India offered to the Nepal Government an annual present of ten lacs¹ of rupees as a "mark of appreciation of the attitude adopted by Nepal during the war, as a recognition of the sacrifices which have been made, and in the hope that the gift will not only further strengthen the ties of friendship which have existed for so long, but will add to the power and prosperity of Nepal."

According to Nepalese official returns the total male adult population is just under one million, and the number of men taken out of the country for all purposes connected with the war from 1914 to 1920 reached the enormous figure of over two hundred thousand.

Money contributions reached the large amount of over a million and a quarter rupees, of which over a fifth were from Sir Chandra's private purse. Again, in 1915, on the King's birthday Nepal presented to His Majesty thirty-one Vickers-Maxim machine guns.

The Prime Minister looked on the war as if it was his own, and his efforts to provide more and more man-power were prodigious. But nothing less could be expected from one who has proved himself for many years such a successful ruler, and so staunch an ally to the British Empire. His influence has never waned, indeed his authority has increased

¹ At 1s. 8d. exchange = £83,333.

with time, and the present prosperity of the country is due to his sagacity, energy and foresight.

The host of our King-Emperor in 1911 in the famous jungles of Nepal, he has been much looking forward to the present month when he acts in a similar capacity to the Prince of Wales.¹

I have already mentioned my friendship with his second son, and would like to relate a personal incident connected with the innate good feeling of this gallant officer. Our dear son, having been one of the British officers attached to the Nepal contingent at Dehra Dun, had been photographed in a group of Nepalese and British officers. Some months after our boy was killed, General Baber, calling on me at Abbottabad, said, at the end of the interview, that he had a group photograph for my wife, mentioning what it was. Thanking him, I rather expected him to bring it out of his pocket. Nothing appeared, however, until evening when a coolie arrived with a large case containing an immense framed and glazed enlargement of the group. We were extremely touched at the kind thought which prompted our friend to make this gift, and at his consideration in bringing it himself all the way from Simla. When three years later he suffered the loss of his own eldest son, Bala Shum Shere, aged thirteen, we felt, in our deep sympathy, that this sad loss was another bond between us.

To set in motion the training of the Dehra Dun contingent, before I left it in the capable hands of Colonel Lord Radnor, and to perfect the military education of the remainder of the 10,000 at Abbottabad, was work entirely after my own heart. With any troops it would have been congenial, but connected, as it was, with a nation which had always so much attracted me, and in intimate relations with an inspector-general and commanders who were so responsive to every hint, or demand, made it a real pleasure.

The Prime Minister took an enormous interest in the progress and welfare of his men, which gave me the opportunity for some correspondence with him. In my zeal I suggested certain innovations regarding promotions, etc., some of which were agreed to, and others unacceptable. To give effect to the former meant increased expenditure,

¹ Written December, 1921.



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NEPALESE EFFIGY, MADE OF WOOD AND CLAY, IN FRONT OF QUARTER-GUARD OF PASU PATTI PRASAD BATTALION OF NEPAL CONTINGENT AT ABBOTTABAD, 1915-1919.

necessitating a reference by me to army headquarters. The result was a letter from the Chief of the General Staff asking for an explanation as to how this matter had originated. On getting my reply that it was my own brain wave transferred to His Highness by letter post, I received a mild wiggling, and a reminder that all communications with Nepal must be made through the Foreign and Political Department of the Government of India. The letter added that I had usurped functions far beyond my province, and, indeed, functions which even His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief could not exercise! The main point, however, to me was, that all my proposals were sanctioned.

The contingents remained under canvas for over four years, and it speaks much for the attachment and fortitude of our Nepalese Allies that, during all that long period, they never faltered, simply concentrating their attention on their own efficiency, and delighted with the opportunity given some of the battalions of seeing service on the North-West Frontier. One must remember too that it was only possible to house the officers very poorly, just as our own had to fare during the exigencies and overcrowding of the war. Even General Padma, accustomed in his home to a marble palace, electric light and every convenience, had a small subaltern's tin-roofed quarter; yet I never heard one word of complaint.

Much interest was taken in the sanitation and cleanliness of the camps, and units vied with one another in ornamentation and the like. Weird and grotesque figures were constructed of clay and wood near all quarter guards, symbolic of the name of the battalion, Hindu divinities, etc. Ornate creations apparently peculiar to Nepal, for I have never seen them anywhere else. I reproduce one of these.

In 1917 the Government of Nepal instituted two Orders for the first time in Nepalese history. One was for the rank and file, and the other a higher order styled "The Star of Nepal," and divided into four classes, with the highest carrying the title of "Supradipta Manyabār" (The Most Honourable Honourable). It was with extreme gratification that I heard in 1920 that the Nepal Government had conferred on me the honour of this "Star of Nepal" (Second Class), with the title of "Pradipta

Manyabār " (The Right Honourable Honourable) in recognition of the supervision I had given to the welfare and training of the contingents. The King's authority having appeared in the *London Gazette* for the unrestricted use of the insignia at all times when medals and decorations are worn, enables me to show, with pride, this mark of esteem from the gallant little nation I so much admire.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LITTLE MAN

NEARLY thirty years ago the 5th Gurkhas presented a silver model of a Gurkha in his national costume, commonly known as "The Little Man," as a challenge trophy for an individual competition by Gurkha units in a "Khud" race, i.e. an up-and-down-hill cross country run. For some time, probably owing to better ground at their stations, the competitors mainly came from the 3rd and 5th, until the 6th took up the matter so seriously, that it appears possible the trophy may remain in their mess for ever. The 3rd had a wonderful performer called Budhipersad, who won it quite six years running, partly, in the end, by brow-beating!

One year General Sir Alfred Martin, an old 5th Gurkha, and then commanding the Rohilcund Brigade, was instrumental in having the competition held at Ranikhet, only twenty-four miles from Almora. A battalion of the Rifle Brigade and one of the 60th Rifles, at Ranikhet and Chanutia respectively, became so bitten with khud racing that they did little else than run round and round and round the selected course.

When the actual race was over, owing to a mistake they made in the timing, it seemed to the 60th that certain of their men could easily do better time than the winner. An invitation and challenge were therefore sent to the 3rd Gurkhas, inviting a hundred men to come over, as guests, in a month's time and compete against a hundred of the 60th over the original khud racecourse. The challenge was accepted, and a time test being decided on, resulted in the Gurkhas taking the first 99 places!

It is the coming *down* hill where the Gurkha scores, and

the more precipitous the going, the more he scores. It is unnatural to him to run *up* hill, and he only does it, in a race, under protest, as it were, and of dire necessity. The Britisher can go up better, but when it comes to the descent he is left standing still. To see, from a distance, a batch of trained Gurkhas, in a khud race, coming down a really difficult bit, can best be described as reminding one exactly of raindrops falling down a window-pane.

One cannot possibly mention the "Gurkha Khud Race" without a reference to its founder, Charlie Bruce,¹ late of the 5th Royal Gurkhas, who may be fitly termed "the spirit of the race." Not that there is anything spirit-like or ethereal about his appearance, for he has always been "a fine figure of a man." But simply because it was owing to his impulse and efforts that the competition came into being. A member of the Alpine Club, mountaineering has been his hobby for years, while his enthusiasm over this particular form of sport is very great.

Of extraordinary physique and colossal strength, Charlie Bruce has always been famous in the brigade for his muscular vigour. One of his feats on a "big night" was to lie on the floor, and get the heaviest man in the room to *jump* up and down on his stomach! This was usually referred to by the heavy one as something similar to prancing on the deck of a ship. Being unavoidably absent at his farewell dinner, I enquired of a staff officer of mine—of great weight—next day if he had been asked to carry out this performance. "Yes, indeed, sir," he said, "and I was greatly afraid I should hurt him with my sixteen stone, but he only told me to jump higher."

I remember at Almora he was the only man who could lift up our celebrated brass image of "Buddha" weighing about two hundredweight. He could lift this right up, and one night another man talking a great deal of his strength, Bruce passed it to him. Being much too heavy, however, the boaster dropped it, and smashed his own toe. After that we kept it screwed down. General Bruce was always looked upon by his Gurkhas as a paragon, while his intimate knowledge of their classes, languages and customs made him the intimate friend of many hundreds.

He was always in the highest spirits and always ready to fight, laugh, balance a full tumbler on his chin, or race

¹ Brigadier-General the Honourable C. G. Bruce, C.B., M.V.O.

somebody down the khud. His everlasting juvenility and his love of a joke were contagious, and made all his associates young again. I reproduce a picture of him posing, in his pyjamas (with a big cushion to give him the requisite figure!) as "Lallā Brucirām Daftari."¹

He has added much to my knowledge of khud racing, has given me many notes, and we have discussed the vexed question of it being harmful to the men. Budhipersād ran in eleven competitions, beginning when he was seventeen and finishing when he was thirty-five. Harkia Thapa, of the 5th, and later subadar-major of the 6th, ran his first race in 1890, the first year the competition for the trophy was held, which four years later was opened to the whole brigade. In 1913 he was fourth, as subadar-major, in a double-company competition. This particular athlete never actually won the trophy, but he was in the first four no less than eight times. There are many instances of men having run in this competition for ten years on end, without the least harm being done. It is simply a matter of training them on the right lines.

Look at General Bruce himself. He has climbed mountains and run up and down hills all his service, yet this summer, when over fifty-five, he tells me he went better in Switzerland than he has gone for the last ten years. As he has just been selected by the Royal Geographical Society (Nov., 1921) to lead the Mount Everest expedition in the spring, I hope to hear of him, next summer, as being on top of the highest mountain in the world.

Khud racing was first introduced by him partly because years ago Gurkhas were supposed to be inferior in physique and stamina; and partly to create a higher standard of manœuvre. Pace in hill fighting is everything. That is to say, there are often occasions when, if you can go *fast*, you have the finest weapon possible at your hand. The Gurkha scouts in the Tirah Campaign under Lucas, Bruce, Tillard, Nightingale, etc., proved this. They had to carry out almost daily the most difficult of all hill manœuvres, viz. retirement under fire; yet they never failed, and introduced a new standard of pace of manœuvre.

Every young officer joining a hill regiment should be taken into mountainous country to learn the meaning of *pace*, and the ordinary rules of scouting. Moreover occa-

¹ A man who looks after any clerical office.

sionally, he should carry a rifle and full weight of accoutrements so as to judge for himself the tasks he sets his men.

It is not only as a climber that General Bruce deserves a niche in the temple of fame. He is the inventor of "shorts"! I can find no earlier record of them than 1897 with the Gurkha scouts in the Tirah Campaign. For a long time many of us thought that Hugh Rose, of the 3rd Gurkhas, was the first to introduce them, about 1900, as a service dress for a battalion. But as Bruce assures me the 5th Gurkhas adopted them in 1898, Rose must give way.

The dress was speedily adopted in India for work in the hills by British infantry and mountain gunners, and soon, although for years unrecognised officially, became universal for dismounted soldiers. Finally they obtained a grudging admission into the list of items of military supply, as "shorts, khaki, pairs."

Even now, although the war was won in "shorts," their position is still far from secure. The late Commander-in-Chief in India would have abolished them, had he dared; but on his Q.M.G. telling him he had the whole army against him, he refrained.

Those who rail against "shorts," khaki stockings and brown shoes as "uniform" in the tropics, should be made to take long dusty motor journeys, and work in a mud-hut office, say, Tank, on the North-West Frontier, for a whole summer, while forced to wear Bedford cord breeches and leather gaiters. As one somewhat notorious for his strict views on dress, I submit that, with a well-cut khaki frock and a Sam Browne belt, the turn-out is particularly smart.

Each of the five old regiments, raised in India, had its characteristic, for which it was famed in the brigade. The 1st at Dharmasala was renowned for its shooting, marching and band. The 2nd for polo and a wonderful esprit de corps. This, though by no means wanting in the others, was so particularly marked at Dehra Dun, that if the men were all dying of scurvy, they would still perform prodigies for the good name of the "siccon," as the Gurkhas call the regiment. The 3rd was remarkable for its football and, later, its excellent training; the 4th, at Bakloh, for its dress; and the 5th at Abbottabad, for the good pro-

fessional knowledge of the officers, their mountaineering prowess and greater experience in hill warfare.

An outsider, talking to an officer of Gurkhas, was always immensely struck by two things: firstly, by the affection he displayed for his men, and, secondly, at the assured manner in which he let it be known that his own battalion was by far the best of the bunch. At only one period during my long service with Gurkhas did I know of any exception to the latter idiosyncrasy. This was during the tenure of command of the 1/3rd Gurkhas by Hugh Rose, when it was quite common, in any discussion of proficiency in some matter of training, to hear the remark: "Splendid at hill work (or whatever it was), couldn't be beaten, except of course by the 1/3rd."

For many years it was a sort of unwritten law, not to be found in regulations, that a very tall officer should never be appointed to Gurkhas. It is supposed to have originated in the Bombay command at the time when the Commanders-in-Chief of Bombay and Madras had a few nominations. It was not, however, really very strictly enforced until the great height of Ivor Philipps, of the 5th, called particular attention to the anomaly of a man of, say, six feet four inches, working on the hill-side with Gurkhas of five feet. Lord Kitchener took up the matter keenly and laid down a maximum of five feet nine inches, though that, too, I have known evaded. His successor (O'Moore Creagh) annulled the order altogether.

"K." was very jealous of his patronage regarding first appointments to Gurkhas, and like Lord Roberts always made them himself. He told me, personally, that the "Commands" had put up a suggestion that they ought to be allowed to make those appertaining to their own areas.

"I told them," said K., "that I quite agreed, but wasn't going to let them!"

The first time K. saw Gurkhas was at the Delhi manoeuvres, shortly after landing in India, and I happened to be present. We were going round the outpost line of the army defending Delhi. While watering horses and eating sandwiches at midday in a "bagh" (grove of trees), Smith-Dorrien, the adjutant-general, told him there were a lot of Gurkha mounted infantry close by, and would he like to see them.

"Yes," said K., "send for the O.C."

Now Gurkhas are not, and never will be, horsemen. Their thick legs and rounded thighs were not meant for gripping the sides of a horse. This does not mean they are not good horse *masters*, for they are, when properly instructed (as evidenced by the reports from the M.I. schools), but proficient, graceful and pleasing mounted soldiers they are *not*.

However, this was just after the South African War. The decree had gone forth that every infantry unit was to have a proportion of trained mounted infantrymen, and no exception was made for the poor little Gurkha! He was therefore issued with drawers, riding breeches and spurs, and sent off in batches to the M.I. school. Just one of those stupid, undigested orders so apt to be issued, where the good old motto "*In medio tutissimus ibo*" is entirely ignored, and slavish *adoption* of a rule held in much higher estimation than skilful *adaptation*.

It was a little hard on the Gurkha that his first introduction to the great K. of K. should be on the back of a pony! Presently the O.C. (Porteous, of the 9th) arrived and walking outside the copse with him, K. said:

"Take your men a good half-mile over there, gallop up to about here, and come into dismounted action against that mound, some eight hundred yards away."

Now K. liked everything done rapidly. If you covered the ground *quickly*, every fault was forgiven. The first time he saw my battalion in the field at Quetta, it was executing a flank attack on an enemy in position. We went much too fast, quite unrealistically so, and I expected to hear about it. However, when the "Stand fast" sounded he sent for me and said: "Your men move very well, Woodyatt. They went fast, I like a good pace."

Porteous could hardly have known this, but he hadn't many flies on him, and they galloped up like the devil. A bit ragged, but the men were soon out of the saddle, the led horses nicely handled, and the attack on foot very well carried out, though absurdly fast. K. was delighted and began to ask Smith-Dorrien about Gurkhas. Spotting General Hill, the Divisional Commander (a great personality and one of the best known and most brilliant of all Gurkhas), the A.G. called him up and I heard the following conversation:



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MAJOR-GENERAL WILLIAM HILL, C.B.

K. "What sort of shots are these men?"

Hill. "None better."

K. "Have they good eyesight?"

Hill. "Can see through a brick wall."

K. "How do they stand hardship?"

Hill. "They'll stand anything, except abuse."

K. "Humph! A pretty useful sort of soldier, apparently."

General Hill then saluted and walked off. That was absolutely all that occurred. It is typical of K., who seldom wasted words, and also very typical of Hill.

The temperament of the Gurkha soldier reminds one of our public schoolboy. The same light-hearted cheerfulness, hatred of injustice, love of games and veneration for superior ability or skill. There is the same tractability, with dogged affection (if well treated), and also, like the schoolboy, he works best and hardest with a firm controlling hand. No punishment, however severe, is ever resented if thoroughly deserved; but with us, punishments, I am glad to say, are usually few and far between.

The Gurkha cannot stand "nagging." Once get the men sulky owing to continual "nagging," and it is well-nigh impossible for the aggressor himself to put matters right again. Many years ago it was the fashion to assert that the Gurkha should not be made smart; his worth was so well known that he might slouch about with impunity, and look generally untidy. A great mistake, I am sure, for now no battalion permits this, and the result is most satisfactory in drill, discipline, field work, and appearance.

Unlike most soldiers, Gurkhas seem to rather enjoy the many changes that have taken place in late years in drill, manœuvre, etc. It is something new! In the early nineties free gymnastics were a great joke, and they were immensely amused at "knees up." One often noticed at these exercises small batches of their women-folk perched on surrounding eminencies, evidently much entertained at the antics of their lords, as, stripped to the waist, they developed the muscles of their legs and arms.

On manœuvres they show themselves born scouts, with a wonderful eye for country, especially in the hills. The art of skirmishing is to them second nature, and beyond the broadest principles, any attempt to teach from the drill

book is unwise. On the range they are good shots—some of them particularly good.

When sick, the Gurkha is *very* sick, and in hospital he looks the picture of woe ; but about going there, or reporting himself ill, he is very whimsical. Be the medical officer, or his native assistant, not to his taste, he will probably do his own doctoring, in spite of exhortation to the contrary. On the other hand, should either, or both, have gained his confidence, then he puts himself readily under their care ; nor does it matter a bit to what faith the native doctor, or " doctor Baboo," as he calls him, belongs. I knew one fine specimen of the subordinate medical establishment, a Mahomedan, who was immensely liked and looked up to by the men.

It is extraordinary how easily Gurkhas, of whatever class, adapt themselves to European companionship. One can go further and say they possess a marked faculty for hitting it off with people of all nationalities. I mention elsewhere how a Gurkha detachment at Amritsar, in 1920, were received at first with black looks and offensive remarks, when shopping in that city ; how they smiled it all down until, after a month or two, relations between them and the Sikhs of the city were quite amicable. Here is another instance :

At Quetta, about 1910, half my battalion was told off to garrison for six months the outposts of Robat on the Eastern Persian frontier. This meant a short rail journey to Nushki, followed by a desert march of some three hundred miles across the Baluchistan district of Chargai, then administered by a Lieut.-Colonel Webb-Ware, a distinguished frontier officer of the Political Department. He also controlled numerous bodies of tribal levies garrisoning Nushki and each post beyond.

On arrival of the detachment at Robat, Webb-Ware wrote to tell me how well the men had behaved and what a good impression they had made by their genial manners and prompt payments. Also how much the inhabitants had taken to them, although of an entirely different sect to themselves. At the end of their stay I received further eulogia, but my gratification was still greater when he wrote me, after their return journey, saying, so much were they liked that the levies had sent in to ask permission to turn out guards of honour for them, a thing he had never

known them even hint at before. He added: "In their petition they also begged me to inform the writers what kind of people are Gurkhas? That they were said to be Hindus, but the levies declared that they had never seen any Hindus at all like them before, and were sure they were some 'Naya kism Mussulman' (new kind of Mahomedan!)"

The sequel to this is also amusing.

The last portion of Webb-Ware's letter was reproduced in a battalion complimentary order. The result was that a few days later my Gurkha officers, headed by the Subadar Major, came to see me. Looking very solemn, they informed me that the Gurkha officers of our sister battalion were much upset about this order, as it would get about in Nepal that some of the 7th Gurkhas had turned Mahomedan, and there would be dreadful complications. My brother commandant and myself had a good deal of trouble getting into their heads the meaning of *façon de parler*.

On two or three occasions General Bruce has brought Gurkhas home with him, and also taken them to Switzerland, etc. He tells me he was astounded how easily they got on with all the races met with. It did not matter whether it was a case of French *poilu*, Swiss guides, British gamekeepers or English maidservants, the Gurkha smiled at them all, and made friends. But in England he much preferred the gamekeeper's cottage to the servants' hall.

Even the millions at home, who hardly know the position of India, have some vague feeling that Mr. Thomas Atkins—especially the Highland Atkins—and the Gurkha are great friends. They fight together, take walks together, smoke together and drink together, the while the Gurkha copies his paragon in all he does, even to learning his bagpipes. That they are quite unable to converse does not seem to matter in the least. Their tastes are similar, and they are just attracted to one another and become pals.

In the second Afghan War (1878-80) Colonel Jack Strachey was riding one afternoon through the streets of Kabul, when he came upon an excited crowd gathered round a gigantic Highlander of the Black Watch, just in front of a shop. On pushing up to see what was the matter, Strachey observed that the Highlander was quietly puffing at his pipe and looking on, while a Gurkha, who reached up

to about his waist, was holding forth in his own lingo, which was as intelligible as Gaelic to the Afghans. Enquiring what was the matter, the Highlander replied: "Well, sir, I don't rightly ken. There's a deal of trouble about some money I paid, but my little friend here is seeing to it, and it's bound to be all right, sir."

The Gurkhas and the 42nd (Black Watch), in Kabul, used to go about in pairs, sometimes jabbering fluently in their respective tongues, although well aware the other did not understand a single word. More often, though, they sat together in silence, smoking. The fact that both smoked pipes may have brought them into companionship. I wonder if it was the sight of these pairs, in his daily rides through Kabul, which gave Lord Roberts the inspiration of a Highlander and a Gurkha as "supporters" in his coat-of-arms.

This trait of attractiveness served Gurkha prisoners well in the war. I had long talks in 1920 with an old batman of mine in the 7th, who was three years with Germans and Turks. He said all Gurkhas were well treated, except during the march from Kut. Another, Kulbahadur Gurung, had an account of his wanderings written. He was taken prisoner in Gallipoli on 4th June, 1915, and spent three and a half years, as a prisoner of war, in different parts of Turkey. There he lived and worked with Australians, Italians, French, etc., and sailors as well as soldiers. His story shows that he was received with extraordinary sympathy everywhere, and entirely as one of themselves.

The Gurkha is a very cheery little fellow, and many think he is full of wit and humour. I agree with General Bruce that this is not exactly the way to put it. What he has really is an enormous sense of the ludicrous, and anything ridiculous or comic excites laughter from him at once. General Bruce gives me two instances:

The first Gurkha he took home sat with him to Vereker Hamilton for the Kandahar picture. One afternoon Hamilton took him to the Zoo, and suddenly introduced him to the giraffe. It was such a surprise that, although in uniform, he fell into so immoderate a fit of laughter as to finally collapse on the ground! The same man on a difficult climb on the Baltoro Glacier, at a particularly dangerous place, roped another Gurkha round the neck with a slip-knot. Then, what with laughing himself, and the tightness

of the slip-knot, they were eventually extricated with extreme difficulty.

In Gallipoli two Gurkhas, having captured a Turk, put him up in the corner of a trench and took alternate charges at him with a fixed bayonet, missing him by an inch or two each time. After having satisfied their bent for something ludicrous by reducing the Turk to chewed string, they took him away and fed him.

At Almora once, on the occasion of our annual inspection dinner, a new orderly had been put into the mess, whose duty it was to dust officers' Wellingtons, in the porch, with a long feather brush. When the general arrived the little Gurkha, getting somewhat excited at his exalted rank, rather rushed at him. The brigadier being much surprised by a man running at him with a stick, involuntarily stepped away, when the long brush got between his legs, and, tripping him up, he fell over backwards. The boy being intensely amused burst into laughter! The moment was a most awkward one, and it took all the colonel's tact, and much champagne, to prevent the battalion getting a bad report!

The Gurkha is very fond of a looking-glass. He always has one handy. Knowing this weakness, one of our officers tried the effect of his much magnified shaving-glass on his batman. Struck dumb at the sight of his own familiar features so grotesquely enlarged as almost to be unrecognisable, the little man turned it first this way and then that in dead silence, and then promptly sat down convulsed with mirth.

Every Gurkha wants to go to England, and to *London*. They think the world of London, and "the bridge that breaks in half" as they call the Tower Bridge. Every wounded man in France when told he was being evacuated to England immediately asked if he would see London. To keep him happy and contented he was always told he would. One of our ladies was visiting the wounded Gurkhas at Brockenhurst. She found those of the 3rd very querulous. They said: "We are now convalescent and were promised we should see London, what then are we doing in this jungle?" I am not sure she did not take up the whole lot at her own expense, for she has a very large heart, and is most devoted to Gurkhas.

The same lady went to see other wounded Gurkhas at

Brighton, where she found one man, with his jaw badly shattered who appeared to be very friendly with his British hospital orderly. Talking to the latter, he told her he had been looking after this Gurkha for six weeks, and since the start had done all he could to buy his kukrie. Beginning with five shillings he had gradually gone up to twenty, but the patient only shook his head. The lady condoling with him, he added, "But I 'ave a 'soovneer' after all. I've got one of his teeth!"

Talking of souvenirs I happened to meet six hundred Gurkhas entering Abbottabad on a few weeks' leave, to see their families, after a long absence in Gallipoli, etc. They were halting just outside the cantonment, and on falling in I walked down the ranks. There wasn't a uniform button amongst them. Asking a man the reason he talked about "Asstrelly" and "sufner" which I could not understand, until a very intelligent N.C.O. told me that the Australians had taken them all as *souvenirs*!

The Gurkhas admired the Australians immensely. Thought them splendid fellows. And the feeling was reciprocated. A soldier from the Australian hills was seen tapping a Gurkha on the chest, and shouting at him hard: "I'm an Australian Gurkha, come from mountains in Australia, see?"

It should be understood that our Gurkha soldiers hail from every kind of climate in Nepal. That is to say, from districts a few hundred feet above sea-level, as well as from mountainous areas over ten thousand feet high. Also, that large numbers live in regions which, for many months in the year, are extremely malarious. It is this great mixture of men, naturally affected by the conditions of temperature, moisture, etc., in which they have been brought up, that has given to the Gurkhas the reputation, largely deserved, of being a somewhat delicate race.

It is as well this should be known. As it is hardly recognised in India, it is not likely to be understood at home. Gurkhas at the present time have taken on the rôle of "additional British troops" in India. In troublous times they have exactly the same duties allotted to them. I note they have now been sent to the Moplah country to assist in quelling the rebellion there. As it contains highly malarious tracts we must expect a biggish sick-roll.

Every Gurkha is *supposed* to be a shikari. It would be

much more correct to say ALL are shikar lovers, but only a very small minority has any real knowledge of game. When you do get a shikari he is good, as good as they make them, and quite fearless. I cannot illustrate the reliability and trustworthiness of a Gurkha-soldier-shikari better than by repeating a story told, I rather think, in the official handbook on Gurkhas.

It happened a very long time ago, before the Mutiny, and was told by Sir C. Reid, once of the 2nd Gurkhas and known in London as "Gurkhy Reid." After relating how a man he lost at Delhi had shot twenty-two tigers with his old smooth-bore; how Gurkhas never wasted a shot and called their ammunition "kazàna" (treasure); how eminently they possessed that grand fighting quality, "courage," he quotes an old Gurkha saying: "It is better to die than to be a coward." Then he tells his tale regarding coolness, bravery and amenity to discipline.

Two officers at Dehra Dun hearing of a tiger "kill" close to the cantonment, went after it at once. Having no success they started home on the elephant with a Gurkha orderly just in front, on foot, to show the way, and carrying his old smooth-bore. Suddenly, as they were leaving the jungle this man dropped on his knee and "presented," as if to fire.

The officers got their rifles ready and pushed up the elephant, but could see *nothing*. To get direction better one called out "As you were," and the Gurkha brought his rifle down as if on parade. Then "Present," and up it went again, but no pull on the trigger, although the tiger was only three paces away.

The younger officer shouting out that he could not leave the gallant fellow alone like that jumped off the elephant, but although he looked along the levelled barrel of the orderly he could still see nothing. Putting up his own rifle he told the Gurkha to fire. A terrific roar, a bit of a rush and all was still. When the smoke cleared there was the dead tiger with a ball in his brain which had entered through the centre of the forehead.

The Gurkha takes readily to games. Football, undoubtedly, appeals to him most. When starting the "soccer" game at Almora, in 1888, I had occasion to write to the late Sir E. Marindin (then a major) on a nicety concerning the "off-side" rule. In his reply he added a postscript: "I

am glad the Gurkhas are taking to football; I hope they don't draw their kukries when playing!" He evidently thought they would be hot-tempered over it! But not at all, they are very good-humoured, though a foul charge *does* put their backs up. After football, quoits, putting the shot, tug-of-war, and then hockey come next in their estimation.

It is rather a curious fact that with such an active-minded people the ruling clans have so little care for field sports, or athletic games. Very different from Indians of the same class. Beyond the great official tiger hunts, riding and drill and manœuvre, the ruling classes do not take a great deal of outdoor exercise. The real keenness, for both sport and games, seems to be characteristic of the peasant.

Gurkhas get much attached to their British officers, and feel their retirement or transfer very keenly. They will do wonders for officers they admire, and the amount of work they can get through, when properly managed, is truly marvellous. My old colonel (now General H. D. Hutchinson, C.S.I.), than whom there is no better judge, always used to say that provided you gave the Gurkha plenty of time for his two meals, and provided he saw some definite end in view for his labours, you could work him or parade him, with advantage, all day and every day.

The Gurkha has an excellent opinion of himself, is most patriotic, and very fond of his country. Indeed, his devotion to the latter is most touching, and his contempt for some of the "plainsmen" of India is somewhat amusing. A favourite orderly of mine once asked me during a halt in the jungle if my father had served in the Indian Army. On my telling him I had never had a relation out there, he remarked quite solemnly: "That's like me; I never had a relative in this country either!"

When there is no fighting to be done, the Gurkha is decidedly domestic. He makes a capital husband and a kind father. He frequently brings his wife with him from Nepal, and in every battalion a married establishment of from 200 to 250 is provided for. The youngsters born in barracks are called "line-boys," and many of them make good soldiers, signallers, bandsmen, etc., if well looked after when young. In the field, too, these line-boys are most conspicuous for their daring and courage, being frequent leaders in an attack or assault.

I was staying in the same house with Lord Kitchener on his return from a visit to Nepal about 1906. Asking him how he liked it and what he thought of Nepal, he said he had enjoyed every minute of it and was never so surprised in his life. He described how he was carried the last stage in a dhoolie,¹ while "Birdie" (Sir William Birdwood) and his adjutant-general (Sir A. Martin) walked, but couldn't raise their legs without pain for three days, as it was mainly steps.

Describing his visit, Lord Kitchener said he was intensely surprised at the look of the country on getting out of the dhoolie, for he had expected to see something like the hills round Simla. Instead, what he saw was a beautiful valley in front of him dotted with little houses painted green. Country, he said, exactly like Switzerland and the resemblance intensified by these houses, which looked so thoroughly Swiss in shape and design.

"Then I was put into a roomy landau, horsed by very fine walers, and driven along a splendid road to the capital (Katmandu). There I found marble palaces, lighted by electricity and full of Nepalese officers who were all generals and always in uniform, like a continental nation. The Maharajah was kindness itself, and meted out to us the most splendid hospitality, while the big review was excellently carried out by very soldierly looking troops."

Lord Kitchener took advantage of his visit to press for permission to raise two more battalions of Gurkhas to the then existing eighteen; a question which had been hanging fire for some time. The Maharajah wasn't very keen, and the Chief did not advance matters much just then. A friend of mine was in the carriage when Lord Kitchener made his request, pointing out that it was Eastern Nepal men he wanted, which would not be so great a drain. Adding also that he was anxious to have a round number of twenty battalions. In 1907, one more was agreed to (my battalion, the 2/7th), and in 1908, another, the new 2/10th.

Gurkhas are very fond of the Scotch bagpipes. In their own country they have something similar. I don't quite know when they were started, but I believe the old 4th, in 1884, was the first unit to have a regular set. Almost

¹ Species of covered roomy "stretcher" carried on the shoulders of coolies.

every battalion has a complement of pipers now. It is usual to send selected men to a Highland regiment for a proper course of six months or more, with refresher classes every two or three years afterwards.

There was much opposition at first by the regimental bandmasters. When started in the 3rd Gurkhas, our bandmaster was an Italian, a Signor Rossetti. He *hated* them. When playing out at the club, etc., the pipers marched up and down, playing, after each piece by the band. One evening, to pull his leg, I went up to Rossetti and said :

“ Well, Signor, how do you think the pipers are getting on ? ” Up went both hands and, pulling a dreadful grimace, he said, with much gesture :

“ Don’t mention them, I have played one wonderful piece of music, and the beautiful melody is running in my head, when [squeezing, in jerks, an imaginary bag under his arm] whare, whare, whare, those blasted pipes begin ! ”

The great annual festival of the Gurkhas is called the “ Dasehra ”¹ in honour of the goddess Kali² (the destroyer). It takes place in September or October, lasts a week and is much thought of by the men. Ten days holiday with us is usually given to allow for the preliminaries, and also for recovery afterwards from the orgies of food, drink and revelry, which are a natural corollary to the celebrations.

On the big day the arms of the unit are “ piled,” with bayonets fixed, in an improvised tabernacle, the floor of which is carefully levelled and then “ leeped,”³ while the ground all round is lavered with water. The rifles are adorned with flowers and blessed by a Brahman, for Gurkhas worship the implements of war believing that it is to the favour of the sword they owe their prosperity. Just northward of this tabernacle is a stout post 4 to 5 ft. high, with 2 or 3 ft. of it firmly embedded in the ground.

¹ From earliest days a great Hindu military festival at the close of the wet season, which was the period when military expeditions were usually undertaken. The Mahrattas used to celebrate the occasion in a way characteristic of them by destroying a village !

² Wife of Shiva, one of the Hindu Trinity, i.e. (1) Brama, the creator ; (2) Vishnu, the preserver ; (3) Shiva, the destroyer.

³ I.e. plastered carefully with a mixture of cow-dung and wet clay.



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PIPERS OF 2/3RD, QUEEN ALEXANDRA'S OWN, GURKHAS PLAYING IN A VILLAGE IN FRANCE, WINTER OF 1914-1915.

Round holes, capable of taking a stout rope, are bored in the post at convenient heights from the ground.

When all is ready, the sacrifices commence by one goat after another being anointed, brought up to the post, his head secured against it, and then struck off by a stroke of the kukrie. No bungling ever takes place. All sacrificial animals are males, and death is absolutely instantaneous. Some blood of each victim is sprinkled on the floor of the tabernacle.

Last of all comes the *pièce de résistance*, or the decapitation of a young male buffalo with one stroke of the kukrie. This is a most difficult feat and the executioner is specially selected for his strength, activity, quickness of eye and nerve. The buffalo, duly anointed, is led to the post with much ceremony, and his head firmly secured to it. The selected man, clad in new linen "shorts" and vest, approaches the beast, carrying a very large kukrie. Using both hands, he carefully measures distance, straddles his legs, raises his arms very high and, with incredible swiftness, brings down his weapon, with a cut and a draw, right through the nape of the neck to the dewlap.

I have seldom seen this bungled and it is a remarkable feat. To be absolutely propitious, the buffalo should sink on his knees and belly and not fall to one side.

With reference to these sacrifices it is most interesting to read about peace, sin and trespass offerings in the third book of Moses (Leviticus). Here we have a direct analogy. Note the tabernacle, the priest, the sprinkling of blood, the laving of the ground, the clean linen breeches, the anointment of the victim, his position and his male sex.

In conclusion, what more can I say about these splendid little fellows who are such fighters, and yet so jolly with it all? *Before* the Great War, *during* the Great War, and *since* the Great War they have indeed given of their best for England. At their recruiting depot at Gorakhpur we hope soon to see rest-houses erected surrounding a replica of the Whitehall cenotaph. On this will be recorded the heavy losses the men of Nepal sustained during the Great War in our service; while in a niche will be a semi-sacred book containing the names and units of the glorious dead.

I write on Gurkhas. My enthusiasm is but natural when I served with them for over a quarter of a century, and my only son was killed fighting with them. But let it

not be thought there are no other races in our Indian Army who have an equally good fighting spirit, and can show a grand and honourable record. There are many, and, as I learnt after completing my regimental service, the number of brave and gallant soldiers of all classes and creeds included in that wonderful force passes comprehension. He should be a proud man who has the good fortune to be associated with them.

CHAPTER XIV

RUNNING A DURBAR CAMP

WHEN preparations were being started in the early part of 1911 for the King George V. Coronation Durbar to be held in December of that year, I was astonished one day to get a wire from my old friend Jack Strachey, then manager of the Army and Navy Stores at home, asking if I would look after *one* of the camps, provided he was given the task of arranging all visitors' accommodation. Understanding that no troops would go from Quetta, the idea had some attraction; so, replying in the affirmative, I received orders a couple of months later to report myself at Delhi to Sir John Hewett, president of the Durbar Committee.

There I found old Jack (who was on a tour of inspection of his branches in India) wallowing in detail regarding the question of the visitors' accommodation. My first job was to survey and map out a large camp near the King's site to accommodate Members of both Houses of Parliament. Borrowing a plane-table, work was started, only to result, after completion, in a wash-out, because it was ascertained an autumn session and other reasons would prevent any Members coming.

Hoping then to return to Quetta, where the command of my battalion gave me quite enough to do, it was with much disgust that I received instructions to take over *all* the visitors' camps *at Delhi*, and command my battalion *at Quetta*, at one and the same time!

Strongly objecting, the president was bearded, and he told me Strachey could not be spared by his board of directors, and he wished me to take his place. He reminded me also that my services had already been placed officially

at his disposal. Giving me twenty-four hours to think it over, I made certain conditions, including the appointment of a locum tenens in Delhi itself, while I returned to Quetta with a small establishment. All being agreed to at once, there was nothing for it but to submit, with the best grace possible.

Then followed the most strenuous six months' work that ever fell to my lot. The only staff obtainable was a lance-corporal of the Essex as clerk and superintendent, and a post office baboo filched, with some difficulty, from the superintendent of Postal Records in the Punjab. The latter did all the accounts and was an excellent fellow; but, not being a trained accountant, had everything to learn.

To facilitate concurrent battalion work, the Gurkha Officers' Club, opposite my own orderly room, was commandeered. There I was to be found daily from early morn until 8 or 9 p.m., sending orders for camp equipment, furniture, crockery and all the odds and ends required for various camps to accommodate about a thousand visitors. Or else framing budgets, revised one after the other, checking accounts and trying generally to keep within the estimates.

The camps and fees *per diem*, per head, for a minimum of twenty days, were :

Ten guineas for double suites in *Curzon House*.

Six guineas for quarters in the *Cecil Hotel* (this Strachey had most astutely hired for a month, as it stood, for Rs. 95,000, which an ungrateful Government cursed him for doing, although eventually it was the only camp that paid its way).

Five guineas for tents in *Kudsia Bagh*.

Two guineas for accommodation in the "Nicholson" Camp.

I entirely disagreed with the committee over these fees, holding that the variation was too great. Ten guineas seemed to me too much, while two guineas was too little. Intending visitors would shy at the former and think the latter was a camp intended for European servants. Although I was told to mind my own business, the result justified my contention, for only nineteen suites were taken out of twenty-seven in Curzon House, and Nicholson Camp was not nearly filled. The Cecil Hotel and Kudsia

Garden accommodation was snapped up at once, the former making a good profit and the latter paying its way.

Looking back on those days it comes home to me now that there was really a great fund of amusement to be got out of it all. At the time, however, to have your office hourly besieged by one or other of my twenty-three worried camp officers requiring instant decisions; to be pestered day and night by Britishers, Canadians and Americans about non-receipt of invitations to the various functions; to have visitors eluding their camp officers to make complaints personally to me—none of this seemed to me joy then, and probably made me very snappish and irritable.

One morning I heard a rustle and, looking up, found a well-known and extremely good-looking Austrian countess at my side, who, plumping herself down on the edge of my *office table*, motioned her companion to the only vacant chair.

Asking what I could do for her she said, with a most attractive foreign accent, that the Countess — (pointing to the lady in the chair, who was quartered next her in the Cecil) wanted to change her room, as she could not sleep because Sir *Surname* on the other side *snoored* so badly. Explaining that there were no vacant rooms, she then proposed Sir *Surname* should be moved elsewhere, and next to some people she had spoken to and squared. I told her that Sir William (a well-known English baronet) had taken his rooms through our London agent, and would strongly object, because he had purposely got his two sons (aged eighteen and nineteen respectively) placed next to him in the hotel.

“But why,” said this beautiful creature with a charming smile, “they are not *bab-bies*, it is not as if they wanted their mother!” Seeing it was no use arguing, I told her I could not interfere, adding that I had a camp officer there on purpose to arrange these sort of things, and why therefore did she come to me?

“Oh,” she smiled, “because they all say you are so nice!”

On the whole I think visitors were fairly satisfied, with the exception of an irate general who abused me because he had not got some particular invitation for a lady he was interested in. Telling him I had nothing to do with the *selection* for the invitations, I advised him to go and see

Sir John Hewett. I believe he did, and got no change, for the lady was a divorcée.

A high Canadian official at Curzon House was most indignant because he had received no card for the "Investiture ceremony." He told me in a remarkably nasal twang how he had been assured in London he would get invitations to all functions, free; that, on the strength of this, he had bought a court suit, with sword, and that he didn't consider Canada was receiving the attention due to her.

I expounded the fact that the Investiture was a *Command*, not an ordinary invitation. At the same time I gave him a letter for Sir John Hewett, and eventually getting his card, he was able to utilise the court suit, though it was not in the least necessary.

The Durbar ceremony itself (i.e. the Royal proclamation announcing the solemnity of His Imperial Majesty's Coronation in London on 22nd June, 1911) took place on the same site as in January, 1903, and comprised a large roofed-in amphitheatre with tiers of seats and radiating gangways. Below the bottom row and along the ellipse ran a broad red road. Facing the centre, on the opposite side of the road, was a raised dais and canopy with two thrones. Behind these, running out into the arena, was a broad raised gangway of a couple of hundred yards or so, leading to a beautifully constructed pavilion, in which was another pair of thrones facing the paraded troops. Behind the troops again was a second huge roofless amphitheatre in which was accommodation for the assembled multitude in holiday attire.

A most impressive spectacle was the solemn procession of the King-Emperor and Queen-Empress, crowned and in state robes, from their thrones on the dais to the royal pavilion. This took place directly the Governor-General, the high officials and the ruling chiefs had individually done homage. The dead silence, the stately march, with equerries backing in front of Their Majesties all the way, the royal robes with the long trains held by pages, the scarlet-clad troops, and the gaily-dressed crowd beyond, all helped to make as gloriously an impressive scene as is possible to imagine. Not the least of the wonders of that day was a Grenadier from London, in full dress, posted in front of the royal pavilion, who stood at strict attention

with his cane under his arm, without the slightest movement, for about two hours.

When the Durbar was over, and as the troops were moving away, hundreds of natives pressed forward towards the thrones in the royal pavilion and did puja (worshipped) to them.

Even greater loyal emotion was shown at Calcutta a few days after the Delhi Durbar. The King, noticing the huge crowds at the principal ceremony and the great distance they were being kept away, had heavy ropes brought and an inner cordon formed much closer, with the aid of these ropes held by police.

Intimation being given the crowd that they could come up to the ropes, such a rush took place that the ropes and police were swept away, and for some considerable time the King was actually lost in the middle of an excited mob; but as safe as in the drawing-room of Buckingham Palace. All they did was to touch the "hem of his garments."

When he had gone away thousands worshipped the gold chair he had sat in, and every particle of dust and sand below the chair was gathered by nimble fingers to be treasured till doomsday.

One incident in the Durbar proves how short a step it is from the sublime to the ridiculous. In India there is a saying that it is impossible to eliminate the sweeper¹ and his broom from any function or gathering. Still, one would think it impossible for him to figure in a royal durbar. Nevertheless, he did in 1911, and photos snapped of the amphitheatre when all had taken their seats, and we were awaiting the arrival of Their Majesties, depict this menial with his attendant broom emerging round a corner of the dais! He was soon hunted off by a terribly shocked political.

Two other never-to-be-forgotten functions are stamped on my brain, the homage ceremony at a bastion of the Delhi Fort, and the fire at the Investiture.

As regards the homage ceremony it must be stated that over a million inhabitants of the surrounding district had been collected and assembled by the civil authorities in the *bela*² of the River Jumna, close under the walls of

¹ Very low-caste menial of the Conservancy Department.

² A sandy waste on the banks of a river.

the fort. This multitude was to march by and do homage to the King and Queen seated, fully robed, in a bastion jutting out from the fort wall.

My wife and I had got seats in an enclosure a few feet to the right of Their Majesties. In common with the majority, we had looked upon this particular performance as a vast piece of humbug—a sort of “by order” function got up to please the King and Queen. But Lord Hardinge and Sir John Hewett had known better, and this we realised when we saw this huge mass of people of all ages surging forward in excited batches, through the well-arranged barriers, to do homage to their King-Emperor.

It amazed us to behold with our astonished eyes the spontaneous, genuine and impulsive feelings by which they were undoubtedly actuated. To hear their cheers, shouts and excited cries of “Badshah! Badshah!” (Emperor! Emperor!) as they passed the Presence. Finally to note, with big lumps in our own throats, that below the eyes which blazed with so much enthusiasm, tears were running down the cheeks.

If any corroboration were necessary it was given me on my way home by a major of Indian infantry on duty in the *bela* who told me he had been as sceptical as I was before the event, and felt as small as I did at our defective forethought. We could see that the King and Queen were deeply affected. In fact no one had expected so emotional a scene.

The fire at the Investiture was a very near thing. The function was held in a huge canvas hall draped in light blue muslin, the colour of the “Star of India” order. This was festooned in wave after wave along the ceiling, and right down to the floor all round. It can easily be imagined how this would have blazed to nothingness in a few seconds had flames once touched it.

What happened was, a telegraph messenger, bringing a wire to the tent next but one to this hall, and windward of it, leant his bicycle with its lighted lamp against the ropes of the tent while he tried to find someone to whom to deliver his message. The breeze blowing over the bicycle, the lamp set fire to the tent, and in less than two minutes there was nothing left but charred canvas and bits of burnt furniture. Fortunately the tent in between, belonging

to Lord Crewe, was cut down immediately, and that really saved the situation.

Inside the hall we could plainly hear the roar of the flames, which sounded only a few feet away, and every second we expected to see them. There was a sudden movement amongst the large audience of ladies, British officials, non-officials, Indian nobles and native gentlemen. Many rose up, turning towards the one entrance, but all with their eyes on the royal dais.

Seated in the third row and actuated by a sudden impulse, I remember standing on my chair, and shouting in a loud voice, which sounded quite strange to me : " Sit down, oh ! do sit down."

Near by this had a good effect, but it appeared to me that the spectacle of the King calmly persevering with the investments, as if nothing had happened, did more than anything else to stay the excitement.

It was not as if he did not know. For one thing, he could not fail to hear the roar of the flames, and besides this the Duke of Teck had slipped out at the back at once, and returning had whispered the news to His Majesty. Adding, I fancy, that Crewe's tent had been cut down, because King George appeared much amused.

Early in the evening an entertaining thing happened. The heralds having proclaimed by fanfarè the arrival of the King and Queen, and Their Majesties, after the processional entry, having taken their seats on the dais, the Queen suddenly got up and, with a small escort, walked out again.

An excited Rajah, exactly in front, turned round to me to say she must be ill. Shaking my head, he insisted on repeating his remark, enquiring what else could it be ? Not satisfied with my further negative motion, he jumped about on his seat, and informed his right- and left-hand neighbours that the Queen must be sick, very sick. Being just as ignorant as he was of the cause, we felt puzzled, but it seemed extremely unlikely to be sickness with a private way out behind the dais, if required. When just about to ask the Rajah if he was *obliged* to be so fidgety, a flourish of trumpets was again heard, and in marched the Queen, through the audience, in the sky-blue robes of the Star of India. Making an obeisance to the King, she was invested with the order of Grand Commander,

after which His Majesty, assisting her to rise, kissed her full on the lips in front of us all. I very nearly cheered !

One sad event, indeed a tragedy, in Kudsia Garden Camp, really marred the pleasures of the Durbar. About midnight towards the end of the King's visit, my medical officer came to tell me that an American visitor named Harris (Harris' agricultural machinery) had got confluent small-pox. Asking why I had not been told before, he said he was not certain until that night, and did not wish to raise an alarm in such a large camp with the occupants of this tent, in the middle of a line of several others. This seemed a bit lame, but the only thing to do was to get the case away somewhere.

Mr. Harris was on his honeymoon with a young and extremely pretty bride, and a boy of fourteen, the issue of a former marriage. He was a religious enthusiast, and had been attending missionary meetings in the Delhi City, where it was supposed he had contracted the disease.

The doctor was sent off immediately in a car to see the Durbar health officer, a stoutish colonel, who, waked out of his beauty sleep, was not very helpful. He absolutely refused to take the patient into his segregation camp, nor did he give any feasible alternative. It was now 2 a.m. and there was nothing more to be done that night.

Having heard, as a dead secret, that Leslie Cheape, of the Inniskillings, was a smallpox patient in the Hindu Rao hospital on the Ridge, but that the fact was being kept very dark to prevent alarm, there seemed to be in this a possible solution of our difficulty.

Calling up the medical officer in charge of his hospital at 6 a.m., I told him of our case and asked him to take it in. Very indignant he was ; couldn't dream of such a thing ; his hospital was not for contagious diseases, etc., etc. Mentioning that I happened to know what Leslie Cheape was suffering from, there was a brief silence, and then a voice came through : " I'll send an ambulance over at 3 p.m. ; please have patient ready then ! "

The camp officer, two orderlies and myself, carrying poor Harris to the bullock ambulance, accompanied it to the outlet gate on to the main road. There we found the men of a British infantry unit lining the street on both sides.

It was for the King's passage to some function, and this road we had to cross. Causing a slight commotion by getting the men to make way, their colonel galloped up, extremely angry, to ask why the devil we were upsetting his dressing, and ordered the men back immediately.

Saying how anxious we were to get the ambulance through, he answered me that it was quite impossible, as the King was almost due. "Very well," I said. "Just as you like, then, we stay here, but this is a case of confluent smallpox." The ranks were opened at once, and we got through.

Next morning Mr. Harris died at 4 a.m., and in the evening we buried him in the little cemetery just behind the statue of John Nicholson. It was a cruel beginning of married life for his poor wife, who bore her loss with true fortitude, supported as she was by her deep religious convictions. We visited her frequently, and took her books, at the Hindu Rao hospital, where she and her young stepson had to wait over ten days in segregation before returning to America.

It was most fortunate that we had no other cases, and due, I consider, to the precautions at once taken. Having pulled down the batch of Harris tents, I had them dragged, together with the matting, furniture, carpets, all his clothes, bedding, etc., to a space behind, where they were instantly burnt; while everything belonging to Mrs. Harris and the boy, together with a few sentimental relics of her husband, were thoroughly fumigated and disinfected. All the remaining visitors were informed of what had taken place in order that, if they so wished, they could go elsewhere, but no one left.

Shortly after the Durbar, Field-Marshal Sir William Nicholson, having completed his tenure as Chief of the Imperial General Staff at the War Office, was raised to the peerage as Lord Nicholson. He was then deputed to India as president of a commission to advise regarding reductions in Indian military expenditure.

The findings of the commission were not unanimous. That is, there was a strong minority report which disfavoured the recommendation that India should not be required to supply, even herself, from her own munition factories. The feelings of all thinking soldiers were with the minority, and that's about all there is to say.

There are a good many stories about Lord Nicholson as C.I.G.S.,¹ two of which are quite worth repeating :

One morning he suddenly decided he would go and inspect the cavalry depot at Canterbury. The staff were informed, the depot warned by telephone, and off he went, by motor, accompanied by one staff officer. On arrival it was found the O.C. had gone off to a wedding, but Sir William was met by a young officer with an eyeglass who addressed him in French! Assuring the boy he knew English quite well, the usual round was made, both the C.I.G.S. and his staff officer being much puzzled by this young officer's manner and his treatment of them.

During luncheon with the officers the O.C., having been urgently sent for, returned. When asked whether the War Office telephone message had been duly received, he said "Yes," but they had also been warned to expect a visit from a Russian general. The boy had jumped to the conclusion that Sir William was the foreigner.

On saying "Good-bye," Nicholson when stepping into his car, turned to this youth and said: "Even now I don't believe you know who I am." A fatuous smile being the only response, Sir William added: "Well, I'm commonly called the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and First Military Member of the Army Council."

"Good God!" gasped the lad, "what's that?"

Lord Nicholson was extremely fond of quoting Horace and the Bible, being a master of both. These quotations served him well on many occasions. Here is an example :

In 1909, when C.I.G.S., he had to preside at a banquet of officials and others in connection with the scheme for the new Territorial force. Amongst the after-dinner speeches, one was delivered by a very irate and injured Volunteer colonel, who told the Army Council in unmeasured terms what he thought of them and their treatment of the Volunteers. The whole table was quite uncomfortable. Many wondered how the chairman would be able to refute the speaker's charges and arguments, which had been ably put.

Rising to reply, the C.I.G.S. touched on other points brought up, and coming to the speech of this indignant warrior, said: "As for Colonel ——'s charges, I am indeed sorry he should think he has been so badly treated by the

¹ Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

Army Council. I can only ask him to take comfort in the words of the scripture, that 'He whom the Lord loveth, He chastiseth.' "

The roar of laughter which followed, in which the aggrieved one himself had to join, entirely eased the situation. There was nothing more to be said.

"Old Nick," as he was often called, had held many appointments at Simla, including those of military secretary to Lord Roberts and adjutant-general to the Army. He was therefore well known in India when he took his seat as president of this Army Commission. One of the members was Sir W. Meyer, now "High Commissioner for India," in London, and to him is given credit for the most appropriate allusion to Lord Nicholson's sobriquet of "Old Nick."

At the first meeting of the commission Meyer was late. Coming into the room with his little mincing steps, and seeing so many military members seated at the table, he stopped short, exclaiming: "I feel like Daniel in the lions' den!" Then, after a pause, "But I am much worse off than Daniel. *He* put his trust in the Lord, while *I* can only hope for support from Old Nick!"

A year or two later the very interesting officiating command of the 1st Quetta Infantry Brigade fell to my lot. After holding it nearly six months orders came appointing me to the general staff as G.S.O.I., 8th (Lucknow) Division, with summer head-quarters at Darjeeling. It was a matter of great regret to both of us to leave Quetta, but it couldn't be helped, and we felt that we had been extremely lucky to remain there undisturbed for nearly six years.

When you *are* moved there is nothing like a real good move, which is certainly the case when it is a matter of going from Quetta to Darjeeling, a distance of over two thousand miles by rail. In the month of July, too, across the Sirhind Desert with a wife, two Gordon setters, two horses, two orderlies and six servants, to say nothing of mountains of luggage. Great were the preparations, for the dogs had to be shaved, household effects packed, and arrangements made for a halt in Calcutta after four nights running in the train.

But what did it matter? Wasn't it a matter of congratulation to be appointed a first-grade general staff officer before you have finished your regimental command,

and didn't we long to see Calcutta, which neither of us had ever visited? Nor was the journey half so bad as we expected. What with reserving a whole compartment, keeping it tightly closed by day, and filling a large tin tub with a block of ice, the carriage was comparatively (!) cool. The dogs were in clover near the ice, and the horses were kept comfortable with ice-caps on their heads.

Darjeeling was mostly enveloped in mist, and it never ceased raining. Even in the early autumn it was only occasionally one got a glimpse of the glorious snows with Kinchinjunga (28,100 feet) overtopping everything else. By going five miles to a small rest-house, and getting up before dawn, we saw the highest peak of Mount Everest (29,002 feet) tipped by the rising sun. We missed the American invasion, which came annually a little later in the year. Sallying forth from their hotels at 3 a.m., these indefatigable sightseers would rush up to this bungalow to add to their bag a glimpse of the highest mountain in the world.

At the beginning of the following year came my first introduction to the Y.M.C.A., at a concentration (which included a large number of British units) held at Dacca, in Bengal.

The Y.M.C.A. was a movement in which my divisional commander took much interest, and which, with his usual foresight, he felt would eventually become of inestimable benefit to our men. He made rather an amusing slip in an official letter about getting a branch to Dacca, when he ended up: "In fact, I feel certain the British soldier will much appreciate the presence of the Y.W.C.A."!

The response by the Y.M.C.A. to his request far exceeded our most sanguine expectations. We found on arrival a large staff assembled under the direction of Mr. Callan, who made such a name for himself later in France. There was a huge shed for addresses and lectures, with roof and walls of matting. Its capacity was a thousand soldiers. There were writing and other rooms attached, where letters could be written, and various indoor games played. In addition, preparations had been made for all sorts of outdoor tournaments, from football, hockey and swimming to badminton and tennis. Lectures and addresses took place at 7.30 p.m. and the general and I went frequently, and sang lustily the opening chorus of "Oh! my darling,

oh ! my darling, oh ! my darling Clementine," much to the delight of the soldiers !

On the first night Mr. Callan told the audience the aims, objects and achievements of the Y.M.C.A. He was a born orator with a telling voice, lucidity of expression, and fluent delivery. He explained that there was much misapprehension regarding their object and aims. That many thought they were intent on ramming religion down the soldier's throat, whereas their main desire was to provide him with healthy recreation for mind and body, so as to maintain both in a clean and fit state. He instanced this misunderstanding about religious pressure with the following tale :

" Why, coming here to-night I met Private O'Brien of the —— whom I had known in Calcutta as being a good deal addicted to the wet canteen, but not a bad fellow. ' O'Brien,' says I, ' I trust we shall see you at our shows here.' ' Well, no, Mr. Callan,' said he, ' I can't very well come to your shows, as I *don't carry the brick.*' "

I sat between the colonels of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and the " King's Own." When " carrying the brick " was mentioned there were roars of laughter from the men. I whispered in turn, to each, asking the meaning of the phrase. Neither knew, nor had I heard it before myself. Afterwards I had to tackle Mr. Callan, who told me it was a soldier's expression for carrying the Bible, and meant that a man had found or " got," as he expressed it, religion.

We were all much impressed with the great work done by the Y.M.C.A. at Dacca. Since then the world has seen what an immense boon the Association has proved itself to our soldiers in the field.

Among other military diversions at Dacca, many experiments were made in crossing a river by cavalry and artillery—with their horses, arms, saddlery and guns—as quickly as possible. Rough rafts were easily constructed, as well as inflated bags (one called the " Wheatley," invented by an officer of Indian cavalry), bales of compressed hay, balloon-like tarpaulins filled with dry grass, etc. The last gave the greatest buoyancy. I reproduce a photograph of the crossing of a fifteen-pounder gun, the motive power being a horse swimming on each side of the raft with his head held by a gunner.

We had a competition between a squadron of the 12th

and one of the 17th Cavalry. The men and horses, fully armed and accoutred, were drawn up on one bank. At a given signal all had to get to the other side as quickly as possible without wetting their clothes, rifles or ammunition. Then dress, saddle up, mount and gallop away in line from the further bank. The bags, bales, tarpaulins, etc. (filled), were ready at the water's edge, and they could take their choice.

Lord Carmichael, the Governor of Bengal, came down to see the show, and at the signal "Go!" it was very interesting indeed to see three or four of the best swimmers throw off their uniforms and dive in, carrying across rope ends as guides for the means of transport selected. Then all got stark naked (British officers included), stacked rifles, ammunition, uniform, saddlery, etc., on the conveyance chosen, while one half of the men swam over to receive the horses and the remainder drove them all in, crossing with or after them. The 12th won by a small margin, and the time from the start until the order was given to gallop off in line, fully dressed, was under half-an-hour. A very fine performance!

CHAPTER XV

SEDITION IN INDIA

BEING at home in 1914 on eight months' leave from my Lucknow appointment, the ominous portents which heralded the advent of the Great War found me in London offering my services to the War Office.

Early in the morning of Saturday, the 1st August, I met a friend, Buckle of the West Kents, with a beaming face, who told me he had just received his orders, and was off to take up some appointment that evening. Agreeing to lunch with me at the "Senior," it was a matter of great surprise when he came to my room soon after noon with a most dejected air, saying his orders had been cancelled, and asking if I had not heard the news.

On saying, "What news?" he told me that a Cabinet Meeting that morning had decided that (even with Belgian neutrality violated) under no circumstances would England enter the war. Hardly believing my ears, I told him such action was impossible, but he replied that there was no doubt about it, and that he was off at once to his home in Surrey. That was the last I ever saw of Buckle, who was killed in action very early in the war.

Returning to the club for lunch, I found Lord Morley at the next table, and evidently in very good-humour with himself, which seemed somewhat to confirm Buckle's report. His presence, after being a party to such an inconceivable decision, quite put me off my own lunch, and it was with a kind of fascination that I watched him put away a large brandy and soda, and a glass of port, with an old brandy in the smoking-room afterwards. Then, to my

relief, he disappeared, when I pondered over the wisdom of the club's rule which makes Cabinet Ministers honorary members, and thought what an advantage the concession must be when they wish to get away from political dissentients.

The next thing to do was to get back to the War Office. Groups of officers were walking about, instead of working, in a very excited manner, and you heard such remarks as: "Good God! how can one ever visit France again or even go overland to Marseilles en route to India," etc., etc.

Wishing to get some confirmation of this Cabinet Meeting decision, I looked up an old pal of mine, who was always full of information. Not finding him in his office, I rang the bell and asked the messenger what Colonel B. was doing, and when he was likely to be in again. From his replies I gathered that B. had gone off indefinitely, with no apparent intention of returning; that he was in a very bad temper, and had used the most appalling language!

The War Office appearing to be a most gloomy and undesirable spot, with no one doing any work, and my wife and belongings being at Westward Ho! the notion took me to go down there. Rushing back to the club, I found I could get a train at 4 p.m. from Paddington to take me as far as Exeter. In the hall I met Sir Henry McMahon, soon to be High Commissioner in Egypt, to whom I imparted the news about the Cabinet Meeting, which, to my great relief, he scoffed at. Still, there was a lot of evidence on the other side, so I decided to carry out my plan of desertion, wired for my car to meet me at Exeter early Sunday, and duly caught the four o'clock train.

On Monday, the 3rd, Sir Edward Grey made his famous speech, and about 3 a.m. the next morning a man shouting outside awoke me with a telegram reading: "Return at once. War Office." The same evening saw me again in London, hearing the glad tidings that the Cabinet had decided to declare war on Germany on account of their invasion of Belgian territory, and that Morley, Haldane and John Burns had accordingly resigned. At the same time a communication was received from the India Office telling me to hold myself in readiness to return at once to

India, which was rather a cold douche after my castles in the air, on the upward journey, of an early crossing to France.

Retiring to bed at my club shortly after midnight, I found the tape recording the fact that we had actually declared war. This momentous news, coupled with grave misgivings as to my success in evading the India Office order, so preyed on my mind, that, sleep being impossible, I changed into flannels and walked the London streets until daybreak.

In Trafalgar Square, about 5 a.m., while drinking a cup of coffee at a stall, one of the London waifs and strays in tattered clothing accosted me, to say he was very hungry and thirsty, had slept on a bench all night, and it was a lovely morning. Inviting him to coffee and buns, he told me, while he drank, what he would do as regards the war, if he were Prime Minister. How he had held responsible positions abroad, but been unfortunate enough to lose them. How he had visited India and the Cape, and still hoped for another appointment somewhere!

He ended up with the coming war again, and the assertion, which astonished me and I pooh-poohed, that it would last for *years*, thus being even before Lord Kitchener in a correct prediction. He talked extremely well, with quite an educated voice, and had evidently seen better days, but I did not press for details of his history. He was a deplorable-looking object, and the three cups of coffee and three buns I stood him must have been very acceptable. Rather to my disgust he insisted on accompanying me back to the club, where the page boy at the entrance to the residential quarters appeared very shocked at my choice of a companion!

Deciding to lay my case—with its extraordinary record of ill-luck about ever getting on service, anywhere—before Sir Edmund Barrow, the military secretary at the India Office, I got close to his door on the 5th August about ten o'clock. Just then he appeared in the passage, looking very worried, with a closely-written sheet of foolscap in his hand. After greeting me he asked if I were very busy, but without waiting for any answer, handed over the paper, with a bunch of keys. He told me he must go at once to the Secretary of State, and would I please

encipher the message I held, saying the cipher was in the right-hand drawer of his table.

Looking over the document I found it was from the Secretary of State to the Viceroy, making suggestions about the two divisions for France, and making proposals regarding what officers from India, on leave in England, should be allowed to remain, and who must return immediately. Scanning this part with feverish haste, I read the following words, which are for ever burned into my brain: ". . . I am sure your Lordship will agree with me that all officers holding staff appointments in India must return at once." That seemed to cook my goose, but I had no time to think, for there was the telegram to be enciphered.

Now, while coming up the India Office stairs, I thought I saw near the top a man called Torrie,¹ brigade-major to the cavalry brigade at Lucknow, and that he appeared to be hastening to avoid me. Looking round, the way he had gone, his nose—which was abnormally large—was distinctly visible round a pillar. Approaching it, I found no one there, but the nose again appeared behind a further pillar. Feinting on one side while quickly moving to the other, I bumped into Torrie, and asked him what on earth he was playing at.

He explained that he was temporarily employed at the War Office, and expected to be sent over to Belgium immediately. That he had come to draw some money, but was in mortal dread of meeting his brigadier, General Cookson, who had been wiring everywhere to find him. That, if successful, the general would certainly put a stop to his War Office work and drag him out to India, whence we had all been warned to be ready to start. This, then, was the reason for the game of hide-and-seek, and, imploring me to tell no one, Torrie disappeared down a corridor leading Heaven knows where.

While enciphering the wire, the door opened and Cookson's head appeared. Seeing me instead of Sir Edmund he asked what I was doing there, and being told, began about Torrie, saying he could get no news of him at all. That he wanted to get out to India at once, as he was sure his brigade of cavalry would go to France, but he must

¹ A major in the 26th Light Cavalry, later temporary O.C. 1st Life Guards—killed in the war.

have his brigade-major. Muttering something, I went on with my work and Cookson disappeared. To the best of my knowledge, neither of us ever set eyes on poor Torrie again. He was, I believe, in Belgium very shortly afterwards.

It is interesting to add that the two divisions detailed for the Indian Corps were not the 3rd (Lahore) and 7th (Meerut) which eventually went to France, but the 3rd and 6th (Poona). The change was made at the instance of Lord Kitchener, who, not knowing them, did not believe in Mahrattas, whereby he did them a great injustice, for their record in Mesopotamia and elsewhere surprised many, and was second to none.

I had just finished the enciphering when Sir Edmund returned. Opening my own case, as soon as I could, I got no change whatever! Indeed, when persisting, I was met with the curt remark that it would be very inadvisable, in my own interest, to press the matter any further, and that I would sail in the *Dongola* on the 11th August. This I was determined I would *not* do, for my divisional commander being also at home on leave, I had made up my mind before that, if I really had to go, I would sail with him in the P. & O. ship *Multan*, in which he was to embark on the 7th August.

But I was to make one more futile effort. Lord Kitchener was the Colonel-in-Chief of my old regiment, the 7th Gurkhas, and had selected me, as C.O., to raise the 2nd battalion. Going to see FitzGerald next day, I asked him to get me an interview. Here again I had no luck, for although "K." received me quite nicely, I no sooner mentioned my wish and begged for his help with the India Office than he got quite cross, and told me he had received so much obstruction from the hands of the officials there that he would ask nothing more.

So the *Multan* it was, and a regular nightmare of a voyage, for everyone felt he was going the wrong way. When starting off to confirm our passages, I met my divisional commander, who upset our calculations a good deal by saying: "You can't take your wife. I've been told I can't take mine." This was most awkward, and all the way to the P. & O. steamship office I pondered over what I could do. By the time I got there the best plan seemed to be to take the booking official into my confidence,

after judiciously sounding him about ladies' passages to India.

He had not heard of any restrictions, but said of course they might come later. To avoid trouble, I persuaded him to put my wife down on the list as "Mrs. Wood-Smith," of Australia, while allowing our cabin tickets to remain unaltered. This was all right at first, and during the voyage I forgot all about it. An unfortunate lapse, for at Aden we transhipped into the S.S. *Salsette*. Finding the new steward removing my baggage out of our cabin, I stopped him doing so at once, and he walked off. Returning shortly, he asked me to speak to the purser, and going to his office, I was confronted with the charge of forcing myself into Mrs. Wood-Smith's cabin! The matter took quite a lot of clearing up, for there were no passports in those days, and finally I had to call in my divisional commander to identify us!

Going up the gangway of the *Multan*, I was deprived of the gun-case in my hand, on the grounds that immediate sinking would follow capture, if any arms were found on board. Being an expensive gun, its loss was a consideration, so, going to the captain, I asked for an assurance that he would not sail without me, while I went back to find someone to take it to London. The result was permission to put it on board, which it only took me a few minutes to promulgate to everyone, for the quay was full of officers, gun-cases in hand, running about to find an agent to take them over.

The India Office had given me a mass of secret documents for Aden and India, with strict orders to sink them in the sea if we were captured. I handed some over to the captain, but the most important he absolutely refused to take. Lashing them to a small crowbar, for speedy submersion, the purser was persuaded to put them into his safe. He promised in an emergency and in case of my own demise to sink them himself.

We had over seventy officers of the Egyptian Service on board, many without berths. Also returning to his country *incognito*, Prince George of Greece, whom it took those interested many days to identify. We were daily assured by some inquisitive lady or other that So-and-so "was *really* the Prince." He would not have been flattered at some of the representations.

At Port Said we saw Major (now Brigadier-General) Crauford, Gordon Highlanders, who had laid his hands on eight German Hausa Line steamers. His official appointment was, I believe, that of censor!

Amongst the Egyptian officials was the Sirdar, Sir Reginald Wingate, and the late Lord Edward Cecil, the Financial Adviser. From them we gathered the following illuminating account of Kitchener's visit to Dover, a few days before, when about to return to Egypt, with his staff, on board a destroyer.

What I gathered was that when the train reached Dover, K. received a message on the platform to say he was wanted on the telephone by Mr. Asquith. "Damn Mr. Asquith," said K. "I'll have nothing more to do with that Government. They are a lot of haverers, and I hate haverers."

It was only after much persuasion that he eventually consented to enter the telephone box, and then his remarks, bawled out in a loud voice, could be heard all over the station.

This is possibly the origin of the report, so commonly believed, that Mr. Asquith was very adverse to the appointment of Lord Kitchener as Secretary of State for War. That indeed he actually pressed him to take a joint Under-Secretaryship with Lord Haldane, while he himself retained the War Office portfolio. K., however, would accept nothing but the post of unrestricted War Secretary, with a seat in the Cabinet, and eventually he got his way. Coming out of the box, somewhat ruffled and red in the face, he snapped out an order for a "special" back to London.

Late at night on the 5th August, having a look at the tape in the club hall, on the way to bed, I had seen it tapping out: "Lord Kitchener has been appointed Secretary of State for War." So great was my delight that, inadvertently, I went upstairs humming loudly, and continued to do so as I began to undress. The door opening, a figure, in pyjamas, appeared and, with hand on hip:

"Are you *obliged* to make that noise?" it asked.

A burst of laughter, I was so tickled, was my first rejoinder, hastening to add, as wrath was gathering:

"Indeed I am. It is very inconsiderate of me, I allow, and I apologise, but I've just seen the tape record that Kitchener has been made Secretary of State for War."

To my astonishment the figure drew itself up to "Attention," saluted and, saying, "Hurrah! I entirely forgive you," disappeared.

As it was the next room door that closed, I looked him up, and found he was a naval commander; but I forget the name.

On the *Multan* we were not in as bad straits as on the *Dongola*, which sailed for India on the 11th August with about one thousand three hundred officers, who had great difficulty in getting meals, and were so inextricably mixed up that it took ten days to get a list of them made out. Arriving at Southampton, the officers saw about half a mile of their luggage stacked on the quay with no porters to handle it.

My friend, Major-General Sir Godfrey Williams, the Director-General of Military Works, told me that they had to put it on board themselves. That, while staggering up the gangway amongst a crowd of officers carrying their own baggage, with a suit-case in one hand and a heavy kit-bag held on the other shoulder, he was forced into the man in front of him by the crush behind. This man, turning his head as much as he was able, called out angrily:

"To hell with your pushing, sir, do you know I'm a major-general?"

To which Godfrey replied in great wrath: "To hell yourself, for I happen to be a major-general too!"

Evidently these officers also felt they were going the wrong way!

The S.S. *Multan* reached Bombay on 29th August, 1914, and my divisional commander, the A.D.C., and myself proceeded at once to our destination, Lucknow. My general, however, only stayed there a few days, being moved up to command the northern army vice General Sir James Willcocks, given the Indian Army Corps on the Western Front. Entirely lost as I felt without him, and impossible as it was to get overseas, my promotion very shortly afterwards, as deputy adjutant-general (additional) army head-quarters, with the rank of brigadier-general, was very welcome.

Joining immediately, it appeared my appointment would keep me in Simla during the winter, as head of the adjutant-general's branch there, while army head-quarters took up its cold weather residence in Delhi. In addition to

being director of personal services, with much other detail of discipline and administration to attend to, my most important task was the organisation, and future conduct, of all arrangements for "enemy subjects" in India of *military* age. This included those who were residential and those, many being combatants, captured on the sea and in East Africa, Mesopotamia, Persia, etc.

The undertaking seemed a truly formidable one, not only because it comprised the framing of rules and regulations as regards their apprehension, internment, location and treatment; but also because none of us had the very vaguest notion of the correct procedure, nor had we any former experience to guide us. The "military age" varied according to nationality, and in some countries priests and medicals were deemed to be exempt, while in others they were not, e.g. Germans and Austrians. All "enemy subjects" who were above or below military age—including all women and children—were dealt with by the civil authorities.

After a short time, with work at a very high pressure, chaos was relieved, but we were always having to increase our accommodation. At first Ahmednagar, near Poona, in the Bombay Presidency, was the selected spot, for those of military age as well as others, but as this place got filled up, those under the civil authorities were moved to the Fort at Belgaum, where there were many houses and very good quarters.

As Turkish prisoners arrived, I had to think of some other locality, as it would have been inadvisable to incarcerate them near a Mahomedan population. Burma was selected, and at Thayetmyo, Meiktela, etc., we had eventually over ten thousand.

It was surprising the amount of money the Germans had. Many of course were business men in the large cities. The commandant at Ahmednagar wrote to me early in the war to say that the large sums in their possession, and the heavy remittances coming to them, were a source of danger. By permission of the Postmaster-General I got any limit for deposits in the local post office withdrawn entirely, and the money put in there, no prisoner being allowed more than fifty rupees in his possession at one time. Eventually the assets of all "enemy subjects" were taken over and disposed of by Government.

Getting authentic information from the South of India that members of the Basil Mission were communicating with the S.S. *Emden*, and were also reviling the Government habitually to the natives, I ordered the internment of fifty-two at Ahmednagar. Amongst these were German Jesuit priests and doctors who, being of military age, came under my jurisdiction as liable for enemy service.

The Home Member however thought otherwise and, being impeached by him, I had the honour of a special citation on paper before the Members of Council up to the Viceroy, but was saved by Sir Beauchamp Duff's note, running: "I only wish he had interned the whole lot. B. D." When the case came down again, through the Council, as is the rule in the case of contradictory noting, the Home Member wrote: "After the remarks of His Excellency the Army Member, I do not wish to press the case any further"!

More than four long years afterwards, when inspecting the Ahmednagar internment camps as G.O.C. Poona Division, I came across these men standing by their cots at "Attention," the priests in beautiful white garments, well got up and splendidly starched. I must confess I felt sorry for them living all those years behind barbed wire, and wondered whether they had any idea that the general going round was the very one responsible for their incarceration!

Under our care, however, the prisoners in India were exceedingly well treated, and, reading the account of the recent Leipzig Tribunal, one marvels at the psychology of a nation that could not only countenance, and practise, every form of brutality towards helpless fellow-creatures, but even maintain later that there was every justification for doing so. These people even got the daily newspaper. This I had tabooed, but was overruled. All those who would give parole were allowed to go anywhere within a ten-mile limit, while married ones, on parole, or not judged dangerous, lived with their wives in special barracks.

When visiting Burma I was much struck with over ten thousand Turkish prisoners of war from Mesopotamia, etc. Most of the men were exceedingly fine fellows, vigorous, lusty and well set up, while many of the officers impressed me most favourably. An army comprised of such material, *and well led*, should be invincible.

In the early part of 1915 the attempts of seditionists to

tamper with the allegiance of the Indian Army, following the return of the Sikh immigrants refused admission into Canada, caused some serious rioting at Budge Budge, near Calcutta. The trouble was undoubtedly instigated by the Ghadr¹ party, and achieving some success in certain quarters ultimately resulted in a number of executions.

A new brigade recently formed at Delhi becoming vacant about this time, I was ordered from Simla, with less than twelve hours' notice, to take command, as the central investigation department had information of increased activity amongst this Ghadr party, with, possibly, further attempts on the person of the Viceroy.

Arriving at 6 a.m. it seemed the first thing to do was to find out the arrangements for internal security. To my amazement practically none existed, in spite of the most gloomy reports given me by officials of the above-mentioned department, whom I visited at once. Incredible as it may seem, it is a fact that although there were nearly four hundred able-bodied Britishers employed as clerks, etc., in the Secretariat situated in the civil lines, Britishers who were all trained volunteers and many of them old soldiers—yet their rifles, and the ammunition, were kept two miles off in the Fort, to get to which you had to cross the railway, and skirt the confines of the city itself!

It did not take many hours to put this right and, besides evolving a practical scheme, to place four hundred rifles and a supply of ammunition under a guard in the Secretariat buildings. Then came the security and employment, in case of emergency, of the troops cantoned and camped beyond the Ridge close to Viceregal Lodge.

Riding round the various barracks and encampments it was evident that in some cases there was an entire lack of adequate protection. The latest reports pointing to sudden attacks by bombs on quarter guards from concealed vantage spots made me anxious to provide a good system of observation, without, if possible, increasing the number of armed sentries. Orders were therefore given for "flying sentries" (observation men with a definite area, carrying sticks only) to be posted where necessary. Hereby hangs a tale denoting the extraordinary way false rumours can gain credence, and how impossible it is to anticipate them.

¹ See Chapter xxi., page 283. N.B.—The root meaning of Ghadr is "treachery."

The back of the gunners' camp on the edge of a deep ravine, separating them from the lines of the Indian cavalry regiment, being one of the weak spots, I sent for my C.R.A. (Colonel L. A. Smith) to tell him to order the battery commander concerned to put a flying sentry there. I repeated to him, in confidence, what I had just learnt about the probable action of the malcontents, which made the nullah a likely hiding place.

Next day I was called up by Lord Hardinge's military secretary (Frankie Maxwell) on our private connection, saying the Viceroy wanted to know whether I had given any orders lately about protection in the artillery lines. Explaining that I had, he asked if I could remember exactly what was said, and I gave him an account, as above. Telling me he would call up later, he rang off.

Sending for Smith again, he repeated to me his words to the battery commander, which were just what I had told him, including a remark that the nullah which ran between the artillery and Indian cavalry lines must be continually watched. Towards evening Maxwell called me up once more to say the Viceroy was perfectly satisfied. "Satisfied about what?" I asked, when he explained as follows:

The battery commander (the late Lord Suffolk), when returning to quarters, hinted to his wife that there was pending trouble with the Indian cavalry regiment, which might mutiny at any moment, and he had been ordered to put extra sentries in that direction. The lady, being a friend of the Viceroy, went to him to ask if she ought to send her children home, telling him what she had just heard. Hence the telephonic enquiry!

"His Excellency added," said Maxwell, "that he wished to God husbands would not babble to their wives!"

The Delhi Brigade had evidently been hastily formed, for a more peculiar composition could hardly be imagined. Besides Delhi itself, I was charged with the administration and training of all troops in Dehra Dun, Agra, Bareilly, Chakrata, Landour, etc., but not Ranikhet and Chauthattia; and this with only one brigade major to assist me! There was a Territorial battalion in Delhi, Agra and Bareilly respectively, and although it was well on in March before I could get away to the last two, it was insisted on that all should be subjected to a "Kitchener test," in a somewhat modified form.

No orders could be obtained regarding my summer headquarters, so when the Viceroy left Delhi I packed up and transferred the office to Dehra Dun which was much cooler. There the ever vexed question of house accommodation came up and not a bungalow fit to live in could be found. Eventually I came across a delightful house designed by Lord Curzon for the commandant of the Imperial Cadet Corps. A diplomatic letter to the Foreign Department pointing out that, as the cadet corps had been dispersed, I should much like to live in it, resulted in the necessary permission, at a very moderate rental.

For the benefit of those who do not know Dehra Dun in the United Provinces, the permanent home of the 2nd and 9th Gurkhas, and situated on the south side of the large hill station of Mussoorie (6,500 feet above sea-level), it may be stated that it is perhaps one of the most beautiful and delightful places in India, outside Kashmir. Rather hot, of course, from the end of May to September, and somewhat unhealthy in the latter month, still, being only fourteen miles from Mussoorie, a pleasant change can be easily obtained. With unrivalled advantages for polo, shooting and fishing, and with a bracing cold weather climate, is it any wonder it is such a favourite spot?

It was during my tenure of this command that I got to know Lord Hardinge, my eighth Viceroy. Both at Delhi and at Dehra Dun he was kindness itself to both of us. The recollection of his handsome presence, courteous manners and dauntless courage in carrying on in most difficult times, and after a dastardly attempt on his life, which nearly proved fatal, can never be effaced.

I was dining with him at Dehra Dun when he received the news by cable of the naval attempt to force the Dardanelles. He was extremely angry at the futile effort. The blue veins swelled in his forehead, and he appealed to me to back him up in his assertion that it was pure madness. I replied that we soldiers had always been taught the principle that naval action must be fruitless unless adequately supported by land forces, which pleased him immensely.

Those were happy days in the beautiful Doon with our beloved son beside us in the 2nd Gurkhas. Days, however, which were destined to be all too short. Since my return to India I had been worrying the military secretary on every opportunity to get me overseas. I now made another

attempt, pleading, for the hundredth time, my extraordinary ill-luck about ever getting on service.

The reply I got was that—as far as could be seen—I was likely to remain at Dehra Dun for the duration of the war ! This being so, and the house being an excellent one, we collected all our belongings from Quetta, Lucknow, Calcutta, etc., unpacked everything, put up heads and skins in the hall, got a big flagstaff erected on the lawn, and issued invitations for our first Dehra dinner party. Hardly had these been posted, however, when a wire came saying I was transferred to command the Abbottabad Brigade, and should join as soon as possible !

At first, this was rather a shock, until the thought came that in reality Sir Beauchamp Duff was doing me a good turn by this transfer to the North-West Frontier. The Abbottabad brigade synchronised with the 3rd war brigade, so if there was any trouble on the frontier I should take the field under my old friend Sir Frederick Campbell commanding the 1st (Peshawar) Division. The trouble was not long in coming.

As we were preparing to move I was called up on the telephone by the acting divisional commander to ask who I suggested should succeed me at Dehra. My senior colonel was a Territorial officer, the Earl of Radnor, commanding the 1/4th Wiltshire Regiment, and of whose military capabilities I had a high opinion. Naming him at once the query came through asking if I realised that he was a Territorial? My reply was: "Yes, but what's that got to do with it? He is a good soldier, has knowledge of men, much sympathy and great common sense; therefore, in my opinion, eminently qualified." I'm glad to say he was appointed, and I handed over to him a few days later.

CHAPTER XVI

PUNISHING THE BUNERWALS

ABOUT three months after joining at Abbottabad the 3rd war brigade was mobilised, and later on entrained to Hoti Mardan, about fifty miles north-east of Peshawar, and the head-quarters of the famous corps of Guides. Not being at all certain of the situation, I posted off by car at once with my brigade major to Mardan, and found orders awaiting me to take over command of all troops in the Yuzufzai ¹ country.

A good deal of chaos prevailed at Mardan, and reaching there in the early morning some difficulty was experienced in ascertaining exactly what troops I had, and where they all were. One fact was quite clear, however, namely that a detachment consisting of the Guides infantry with some squadrons of cavalry and a field battery had been heavily engaged with a large number of Bunerwals ² the day before at a place called Rustam.

¹ A division of the Peshawar district containing Mardan and outposts beyond.

² A tribe of Pathans occupying Buner, a tract of independent territory N.E. of Yusufzai. Can probably put about ten thousand fighting men in the field when well united and acting in a common cause. Looked upon as one of the finest races on the N.W. frontier of India, and being simple, austere, truthful, religious and hospitable, they are bright examples of Pathans. With the assistance of other tribes, the Bunerwals proved most formidable opponents against us in the Ambela expedition in 1863. They were predominant in the attacks on the famous Crag piquet which was lost and won no less than three times (with heavy casualties on both sides), eventually remaining in our possession. I am told on good authority, but cannot find the official reference, that it was the custom amongst the Bunerwals to tie a piece of red string round the right wrist of each of their dead warriors who had specially distinguished himself. On our retaking this Crag piquet for the third time our dead there (mainly Highlanders) were found with a red string round *each* wrist.

This hamlet was close to the Buner border, and some twenty miles from Mardan, along a road the last eight miles of which went through heavy sand. The enemy had been dispersed, but was hanging about close by, with the evident intention of attacking the camp again that night. Reinforcements were urgently required at once, but only half of my British battalion (1st battalion Royal Sussex) had arrived, the other half might come in shortly, the 6th Gurkhas ought to arrive that evening, while the 84th Pioneers was the only unit ready in Mardan.

Evidently my mission was to get to Rustam immediately, and see the situation with my own eyes, but it was stated my own car (a Rover) could not get through the deep sand. Luckily it was possible to purloin a Ford, so pushing off, after giving orders to impress all country carts possible, we reached Rustam by nine o'clock to find the garrison anxiously expecting assistance.

The camp was cram-full of horses belonging to the four or five squadrons and the field battery, and although everyone was digging hard, the perimeter was none too secure, and much too large for the number of men available for its defence. It was August of a rainless year, and the heat was intense, yet there was nothing for it but to go back as quickly as possible to try and get the remainder of the force to Rustam immediately. Anyhow before dawn next day, when the Bunerwals might be expected to be withdrawing from, what we hoped would be, a futile attack.

On reaching Mardan again we found the other half of the Sussex had turned up, the 6th Gurkha trains, with a lot of transport, were to arrive at 4 p.m., and a mountain battery with a company of sappers and miners next day. It was obviously impossible to start before night, so orders were issued to march off in one column at 8 p.m.

The question then arose where to assemble the troops so as to ensure a satisfactory start. There was an unbridged river to cross at Mardan itself, which the local commander told me was then easily fordable, but which a little rain rendered impassable for many hours. The sky was very clouded, rain was long overdue.

On both banks of the river were excellent positions of assembly alongside the road. If I concentrated on the Mardan side, and it rained, I couldn't cross. If on the

other, I ran the risk of all my supplies, which were only just being loaded and couldn't be ready till late, being cut off by an unfordable river, while the troops were marching away from the farther bank!

This was somewhat of a dilemma, but undoubtedly my endeavour must be to relieve Rustam, and for this purpose to get all the troops, all the transport, all the carts, across the river at once, man-handling the remainder of the supplies over as they arrived. One had to take risks; fortunately it did not rain, but the large fatigue parties necessitated a postponement of the march until 10 p.m.

It was a horribly sultry night, the men were dog-tired. At every halt they just threw themselves on the ground and were asleep in a few seconds, Lewis gunners twisting the mules' reins round their wrists. At 2 a.m. we could hear the furious cannonade of a camp heavily attacked, but were helpless to assist. It held out, however, and, very bedraggled, we crawled inside their piquets about 7.30 a.m., and after a rest set about the construction of a new and enlarged perimeter.

By next evening the force was complete with:

Six squadrons cavalry (two being on detachment).

One field battery.

One pack battery (mules).

One company sappers and miners.

Four battalions infantry with Lewis guns.

Usual field ambulances, supply sections and transport.

There was a political officer in camp who informed me that there were about eight thousand Bunerwals, some three thousand other tribes, and a lot of Hindustani fanatics¹ opposed to us. These latter people are always bent on creating disloyalty and unrest amongst the frontier tribes. They join many of the periodical risings and are noted for their disregard of death. Their chief desire is to kill as many British infidels as possible. If one of their number succeeds in killing a British officer he is perfectly happy,

¹ Also called Muhajirin, plural of Muhajir = one who abandons his country. A colony of fanatical Mahomedans who migrated from India about 1823 to the Buner country from Patna in Bengal. Their doctrines are those of the Wahabi sect, i.e. expounding the original tenets of Islam. The colony consists of about 1,000 fighting men and 1,500 women and children. They are a species of reformer, rather like our reformers of Cromwell's day.

and it does not in the least matter if he loses his own life in the attempt. Braver and more dare-devil fellows I never met.

Only the day before our arrival one had concealed himself like a hare in some scrub jungle where line upon line of Guides passed over him. Waiting his opportunity, he rushed out at a British officer, advancing a little apart from his men, killed him from behind with his sword, and sank with a smile when riddled with bullets a few minutes later.

Some days afterwards seven more, trying the same game on a flank, close to me, were caught between a party of the Sussex hunting them, and some flankers of the Guides coming down from higher ground. Seeing the game was up they rushed out like tigers towards the Guides, missing the officer, but badly wounding one Guide before being all disposed of themselves. The most unpleasant part of this encounter was the vast danger of Guides shooting Sussex, or Sussex shooting Guides; or both, or either, shooting me!

The courage and ferocity of the Bunerwals combined with great speed and stamina on the hillside had for years stamped them as very formidable opponents, whom the Government were always most anxious to placate, and dissuade from joining any frontier disturbance. They were not particularly well armed as a tribe, though—like the Hindustani fanatics—possessed, individually, of a good number of modern rifles. Openly expressed pride at the efficiency of my little force probably led Sir G. Roos-Keppel, the Chief Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province, to motor over from Peshawar, for an hour, to implore me not to despise my opponents, to remember they were men of extraordinary activity and spirit, and to read and re-read the accounts of the fighting in 1863¹ when we had come off so badly against them.

And this was the only visit I had, and as for instructions, I received none. My divisional commander away back at Peshawar was more than busy with the situation on his other flank, where the Mohmands were expected to break out any minute. Writing to him for a hint, I said, that except feeling certain I was not to allow the enemy an

¹ Ambela Campaign. British force, 9,000. Killed and wounded, 909.



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GENERAL HIS HIGHNESS MAHARAJAH SIR CHANDRA SHUM SHERE JUNG, PRIME MINISTER AND
MARSHAL OF NEPAL, XMAS, 1920.

initial success, I was very hazy regarding my limitations, but did not propose to let him knock me about without retaliation. His reply was that it was difficult to say much, and the only thing he could think of was Lumsden's¹ invariable instruction to his Guides :

“ I want Heads.”

That was just like Fred Campbell² ; so typical of this fine frontier soldier—the best we now have alive—who trusted his subordinates, and left them alone to carry out their tasks, probably the reason for his unfailing success, and the cause of his wide popularity.

It took a few days to settle down at Rustam, and make our camp impregnable. For five nights running we were attacked by hordes of wild tribesmen, evidently well supplied with ammunition, for they fired thousands of rounds from all sorts of rifles. It was very interesting to note the difference between the “ swish ” of the larger bore like the Snider or Martini-Henry, and the “ ping ” of the ‘303 or ‘256.

Our casualties were surprisingly small, due partly to the fact that the cavalry had been reduced by sending two squadrons to distant outposts, and partly to dug-outs, traverses and other precautions. An enormous number of bullets went high. As the tribesmen often attacked from two opposite sides, it is a matter of wonder whether they made many casualties amongst themselves. I don't think we made many at night ourselves. My standing orders were that the fire was on no account to be returned, unless there was a distinct target visible by flares, searchlight, or moon, and then only by order of a British officer.

Fire discipline was excellent. The hour of attack varied, being sometimes 9 p.m., but oftener 1 or 2 a.m. At the first shot every tent was downed immediately. On no occasion did the enemy actually close, due undoubtedly, after the first night, to trip wires, booby traps and elephant pits. At first I scorned a dug-out, but later, as the area of my bivouac seemed to attract an enormous quantity of bullets, I had to submit to the hot, stuffy abomination.

¹ Raised the Guides, as a subaltern, in 1846-47 at Peshawar. Corps is now called “ Queen Victoria's Own Corps of Guides (Frontier Force) (Lumsden's).”

² Now General Sir Frederick Campbell, K.C.B., D.S.O.

On the second night—and before I had succumbed to a dug-out—I woke just before the firing began in a muck sweat, as the slight breeze we got had suddenly dropped, and called to my servant to get me a change. He was in a dug-out twenty yards away, and as he came the bullets started. Down he dropped, and I thought he was shot. It was only a precautionary measure, however, for I soon saw him wriggling to me on his stomach, from which posture he handed me a clean shirt, and then retired in the same way. He was a fat cantonment Pathan from Abbottabad, and I laughed so much I got hotter than ever.

After the third night the “sniping” in force was no longer to be calmly endured; besides I was then ready to move out. There were three main valleys leading to the Buner country, named Ambela, Malandri and Pirsai, and I felt sure that one, or all, must be the temporary resting place of the enemy. Taking each in turn, we drove out the tribesmen, inflicting such casualties on them that their night operations became less and less formidable, until when the third valley was cleared, and its villages burnt, they ceased altogether.

The most serious impediment to successful work in the field was the intense heat, and the sandy nature of all roads and tracks, making them extraordinarily trying to the infantry and mountain artillery. Already several cases of heat stroke had occurred in camp, and my cavalry brigadier had returned with two dead sowars¹ tied on their horses (and several more unconscious ones supported by comrades), after an all-day reconnaissance to report on an adjacent tribe. Meeting them at the entrance to camp, it was a sorrowful sight to see a nice-looking horse stepping out freely, while on his back lay the dead rider with head touching the mane, hands tied together below the neck, and feet lashed under the horse's belly.

The temperature of one British soldier down with heat stroke rose to 110° Fahrenheit, which I had always thought impossible. Such however was the fact reported by my principal medical officer, and moreover the man recovered after treatment in ice baths.

Visiting one of our distant outposts with my invaluable brigade major, we had some eighteen miles to ride, mainly across country. On arrival he looked rather cheap, but

¹ Trooper of Indian cavalry.

swore he was all right. After going a few miles on the return journey he appeared really bad, and shortly afterwards collapsed, though I was fortunately able to catch him before he fell to the ground. The combined water bottles of the escort revived him, but we still had twelve miles to go before we reached any track fit for an ambulance.

There was a well of coldish water six miles ahead. Getting Loveday on to his horse, we galloped the whole distance, supporting his swaying body, myself on one side and a duffedar¹ on the other. Then came the last six miles covered in the same way. He was 106° on arrival at the hospital tent, where he had to remain over a week, much to his chagrin, for although not over strong, his lithe wiry body contained the heart of a lion.

I was to lose him soon afterwards to command his battery, and then a group of artillery in France, where he covered himself with glory.

My worst experience of heat-stroke was during the return from our advance up the Malandri Valley. Although we started at 3 a.m., and had less than eight miles to cover, there was opposition to contend with, villages to burn and much scrub jungle full of rocks and boulders to be searched. All this took time, so that it was after midday when we began to withdraw to camp.

So many British soldiers fell down with heat-stroke that the rear-guard could hardly move. The stretcher bearers were so overcome themselves that they were useless. It was then that the splendid Guides, and later the 84th Pioneers, came forward and volunteered to carry the sick, while officers, mounted and dismounted, as well as men in the ranks, took over the rifles and accoutrements of those *hors de combat*. Fortunately I had reduced the scale of ammunition that day to fifty rounds per man on account of the heat, but even then found the six sets of accoutrements picked up, and hung on to myself and my horse, a most uncomfortable burden.

Strict orders existed that no Britishers were to be buried near Rustam, because their graves would be desecrated by the enemy. Progressing at a funereal rate at the tail of the rear-guard, with an occasional bullet to keep one awake, the thought came to me of how on earth we could get the corpses of so many soldiers into Mardan. With little experience

¹ An N.C.O. of Indian cavalry.

of heat-stroke, I felt that many of the muttering, unconscious men, with blue lips and swollen faces, must surely succumb.

Some way on we came to a large tank about two and a half feet deep. Seated in it I found most of the casualties, presenting a very comical spectacle with their large sun hats, surrounded by huge neck covers, appearing just above the level of the water, making the whole crowd look exactly like a lot of floating mushrooms. And close to the tank, to my relief, was an army of transport carts, ordered out in case of emergency, and which conveyed all the sick back to camp, every one of whom eventually recovered.

It is difficult to describe in words the extraordinary interest of an independent command like this. An efficient and companionable staff, capable and contented troops, successful though arduous operations, isolated and detached situation, all tended to make the few weeks spent at Rustam—in spite of the heat—the happiest of my life. About a fortnight sufficed to drive the enemy entirely away with considerable casualties, and it is a significant fact that the much dreaded and powerful Bunerwal tribe have never lifted a finger since. Not even in our darkest days, when every inducement to rise was given by seditious emissaries, to each trans-frontier clan.

It does not appear to me certain that this has been fully recognised. I do not allude to personal recognition. The ultimate rewards of a Companionship of the Bath and promotion to Major-General "for distinguished service in the field" were more than sufficient. Nor to the avowal of the Brigade's activity in Sir Beauchamp Duff's despatches. But, to the *reality*, that the operations of the force relieved the Government of India of much anxiety in this particular quarter for a very long period, i.e. from September, 1915, up to the present date.

In September, 1915, orders reached me in Rustam, by cipher wire in the middle of the night, to move my force as quickly as possible to Peshawar. Thence it was to go on towards Shabkadr—eighteen miles north of Peshawar—to take part as the 3rd brigade, with the 1st Division under Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick Campbell, in possible action against the Mohmands, a powerful and well-armed tribe of some twenty-two thousand fighting men.

Their country lies north of the Kabul river, the south-eastern boundary running close to our outlying forts of Michni, Shabkadr, Matta and Abazai, usually held by the frontier constabulary. In early October the enemy crossed our border in considerable force, and on the 5th a regular battle took place near Shabkadr in which the 3rd brigade occupied the left flank of the division. The Mohmands were entirely defeated, and very shortly made submission.

The country was interesting on account of its broken nature and its numerous ravines, in which the tribesmen operated with a most extraordinary skill for concealment, and from which it was very difficult indeed to dislodge them. It was also of particular advantage to me to get to know this terrain, for some fifteen months later my head-quarters were in Shabkadr Fort while commanding the blockade line running from Abazai on the Swat river to Michni on the Kabul, a distance of sixteen miles.

Before describing the Mohmand blockade line, it is necessary to say a few words about the condition of India in the early months of 1916. That is, before the desperate situation on the Western Front was fully realised in India, or the ever-increasing necessity of *well-trained* officers and men, for our numerous other fronts, was thoroughly understood.

The internal situation was better than it had been for a long time. Indian Princes and others had come forward nobly in the matter of men, horses and money, and there was a general feeling amongst Indians that all political and private controversies should be put on one side, and a combined effort directed towards winning the war. But strange to relate, at this very period, an extraordinary apathy seemed suddenly to seize the authorities and the European population, which, though only transitory, was alarming enough at the time, especially from a military point of view. It was just as if someone had voiced the general feeling by saying :

“What more can we do? We have denuded India of troops, munitions and equipment, to an almost dangerous extent. We have successfully repelled trouble on the North-West Frontier in several quarters. We have the internal situation quiet and in hand. We have raised and are raising more regiments. Heaps of officers have

entered the Indian Army Reserve. Drafts are preparing for overseas, and the country is full of Territorials from home. True, a division is invested in Kut, but we can send nothing more there. The future is in the lap of the gods, and in the hands of the War Office in London."

With that feeling existing, life seemed to settle down in large cantonments as if there was no war on at all. People seemed satisfied to do their daily task and live just as they had lived before, simply hoping for the best. There was no real effort to strain every nerve in preparation for a long titanic struggle. In short, apathy was abroad.

These are only personal reminiscences, and of course I may be quite wrong, but that is how things struck me at the time. So much so, that I committed a daring act, by writing a highly confidential letter to the Chief of the General Staff pointing out what I have just said and begging for a lead from above. Instancing too the fact that hundreds of new officers of the Indian Army Reserve were getting no adequate instruction; that frontier warfare was a forgotten art; that the Territorials had never heard of it; that too much listlessness existed, and that above all we needed schools of every description to teach the would-be teachers.

The letter was very well received. Probably steps were being taken at Simla. Anyhow, a fillip was very shortly given to training, and by the late summer numerous schools of instruction of every kind were initiated, from the mountain warfare school at Abbottabad for Territorials—later extended to embrace officers of all services—down to large schools at Sabathu, Bangalore, etc., for cadets from the ranks who were about to receive commissions.

This was the only lapse, as far as India was concerned, and it was not of long duration. Just as before she had given of her best and tried her hardest to answer every call; so later on, and up to the Armistice, did she put forth her full strength. As regards the military this meant the most intensive training, and every other kind of preparation. As regards others, a memorandum has been issued giving full detail of India's efforts. In addition there was the mighty recruiting campaign in the Punjab of that grand patriot Sir Michael O'Dwyer, and the vigorous war work of nearly every other soul, the most energetic amongst them being Lady O'Dwyer herself.

Towards the end of 1916 it became evident that the Mohmands had failed to fulfil their pledges. They were restless again and guilty of frequent raids into British territory; so much so that the Indian Government decided to establish a blockade line along their border in order to prevent entirely all egress and ingress, until the tribe effectively carried out the demands of the Chief Commissioner.

An apron of barbed wire was erected close to their south-eastern boundary from the Kabul River and Fort Michni in the south-west, to the Swat River and Fort Abazai in the north-east. Blockhouses were constructed every eight hundred to four hundred yards. On the enemy side of the obstacle were stretched two strands of "live" wire supplied with electricity from a power-house on the Abazai flank. The current was switched on every evening and withdrawn soon after dawn, while "alarms" were introduced at varying intervals to inform the garrisons of the blockhouses, by the explosion of detonators, that the live wire was being interfered with.

My predecessor (General Sir W. Benyon) had commenced a deep trench running the whole way along our side of the fence, which it was my first object to complete, so as to admit of patrolling under complete cover from blockhouse to blockhouse. In each of these were placed rifle batteries formed of six or seven loaded rifles clamped together in a wooden framework. Trained along the fence with "combined" sights, these could be fired simultaneously by pressing a thin iron rod running through the trigger-guards, and they could be reloaded at once with ease.

It was a matter of extreme importance that this blockade should be so effective as not to allow a single tribesman to cross the frontier, nor any supplies whatever from India (especially salt, a commodity they *must* have), to reach the Mohmands, except by arduous detours round the flanks of the line through alien tribal country, which they were well known to be most unwilling to undertake.

The above preventive measures one would think sufficient, but the Mohmands are so brave, gallant and resourceful that, aided by their own wit and courage, combined with unlimited secretive help from the local inhabitants, there was hardly a single week in which

one or two successful attempts were not carried out, and generally without any loss.

Outside the trench, between it and the barbed wire apron, was constructed a narrow path of loose earth most carefully brushed every evening by each blockhouse so as to show any footprints. From the politicals one would hear that spies, or friendly villagers, reported the advent of one or two of the enemy from between certain blockhouses.

This would be corroborated by both footmarks and alarms, but what beat us was, not only how they had evaded patrols which prowled from piquet to piquet at uncertain intervals during the night, but how they escaped death from the live wire, or the bullets from the blockhouses, so soon as the detonators exploded.

At last a prisoner was caught and, under promise of freedom and reward, he revealed some secrets. It appeared that amongst the enemy was a pre-war pensioned havildar¹ who, having served in our sappers and miners, had gained a superficial knowledge of explosives and electricity. He it was who taught them that dead wood was a non-conductor.

Getting a forked stick of dead wood, and tying a stout cord to one prong, the Mohmands very carefully placed the fork on the live wire with the stick end away from them, keeping a keen ear all the time for the movements of any patrol. If any movement was heard they decamped, and lay doggo until danger was over. Their sight and hearing are both quite abnormal, they can almost see through a brick wall or hear a pin drop on a carpet.

The man holding the cord, together with his companions, then moved away some thirty yards from the wire, and concealing themselves carefully in the undulations of the ground, gave the cord a sharp pull, with the result that the detonators exploded. Off went the rifle batteries, with the weapons too of the sentries of the adjoining blockhouses, and this length of trench and barbed wire received an avalanche of bullets. At the same time the Mohmands, hidden and quite safe, smiled at the success of their ruse!

Waiting patiently—they possess infinite patience—lest some intrepid spirits should stalk along the trench, they

¹ N.C.O. of Indian infantry, equivalent to a sergeant.

would afterwards approach the live wire, bend down the upper strand with the forked stick (the detonators being useless for alarm until renewed next day), step carefully over both strands, throw their resais¹ over the barbed wire, manipulate it, jump the trench and, kicking up their heels with delight like lively young cattle, would make off for the nearest village!

Talking of barbed wire with some of them later on, they expressed the greatest contempt for it, saying that it only stopped cows and donkeys, for men could always get over without even damage to their clothing, with the aid of a charpoy² or a good thick resai.

I feel that I can corroborate this statement, having occasion one day to go to the enemy's side of the fence, by a gap, to select a better site for a particular piquet. This post had suffered much, the day and night before, from sniping. I was no sooner beyond the wire with two of my staff, and a good way from the gap, than a well-directed fire from a ravine about eleven hundred yards away much disconcerted us. We were the more surprised because we had purposely chosen the middle of the day when the enemy, supposed to be feeding, never fired.

However, the bullets came fast enough, some over and some short. A Lewis gun opened on to the enemy at once from the piquet, but there was only a slight cessation and the greater number of bullets were falling between us and the gap! There was nothing for it but to retire through the barbed wire, which we did with remarkable, though ignominious, haste. It was a formidable-looking apron, but appeared quite easy (!) and the only damage was a bad-tear in both my sleeves, and ruination to my brigade major's Bedford cords!

Feeling, after the disclosures of our prisoner, that the live wire current might not be strong enough, though we had many donkey casualties, I sent to Calcutta and got the voltage doubled. It was then extremely powerful and, after finding an occasional dead Mohmand along the line, the attempts to cross became less and less frequent.

A sad tale is connected with one of these attempts. A stalwart young Mohmand tried to cross with his mother. Going first and touching the strand he set off the detonators,

¹ A wadded blanket.

² A native bed of wooden legs and sides and stringed framework.

but somehow they escaped the hail of bullets. His mother then tried to dissuade him from any further action, but he refused to listen. Her tale to an informer was that on bending to put his leg over the upper strand, his waistcoat touched the wire, causing a shock, and he called out, "I am hit." Rushing to him, his mother caught hold of him, when his body came into contact with the live wire and he was instantaneously killed. Fearing his body might be captured, this poor woman dragged it for two miles over most difficult country to her village.

CHAPTER XVII

A STUNT FOR THE VICEROY

IN April, before it had got too hot, we had a visit from the Viceroy and Lady Chelmsford, accompanied by General Campbell, from Peshawar. The latter looked after His Excellency to begin with, while I was told to devote myself to the lady. After getting into the crow's nest above Shabkadr Fort to view the lie of the land all round, the programme was to motor to a blockhouse of regular British infantry, then one of Indian infantry, and finally one of Territorials. Tea was to be taken later with the Frontier Constabulary at Matta Fort, which was situated about one thousand yards in rear of the Territorial section of the outposts.

At the first blockhouse I had arranged a "stunt" with Major Clifton's armoured cars on the Mohmand side of the live wire. Some trenches were dug about eight hundred yards from the fence, and small targets put up to represent an enemy. The bottom of each trench was secretly filled with British soldiers dressed up as tribesmen.

At a given signal the three cars got going, and did some pretty shooting with Maxims and rifles, *on the move*. I had the Viceroy and his party just across the wire on the enemy side, and stopped the firing by a "G" on the bugle when we seemed to have had enough. On the cars ceasing to fire at the targets, out jumped wild parties of tribesmen from the trenches, waving standards, shouting, firing (blank!) and brandishing their rifles!

The soldiers, entering into the spirit of the affair, acted splendidly, and General Campbell's face for a few seconds was well worth seeing. The look of horror and consternation at what he thought for a moment was a Mohmand

surprise, and his glance of distress at me for not having taken better precautions, nearly choked me.

Lord Chelmsford looked rather astonished and somewhat amused, while Her Excellency, putting up her parasol, gasped, and opened her eyes very wide. Meanwhile the armoured cars, getting over the rough undulating ground with their Rolls-Royce chassis at a good pace, manoeuvred to turn the enemy's flanks, coming into action at some rocks and boulders, well over the heads of the imitation tribesmen, who then bolted with yells of scorn. It was quite a good little show, and Clifton managed it very well.

Meanwhile, I was dying for a smoke, but didn't see how I could get it in such exalted company, until a delay occurring with a motor breakdown, General Campbell took Lady Chelmsford off to look at a pet subterranean cook-house of mine, while the Viceroy, seating himself on a boulder, pulled out an old black pipe, and began to fill it. This enabled me to follow suit.

Now I had not been too comfortable about the visit to Matta Fort and the adjoining territorial blockhouse. There was some enemy high ground within two thousand yards, from which a good deal of sniping had taken place from time to time. It is true that the Mohmands, with superb insolence, had sent in word to the Chief Commissioner that they had decided not to interfere with the Viceroy's visit (!), but it did not do to take chances.

Sending a strong piquet to the high ground, the guns were hidden in the vicinity of this very blockhouse, to be ready in case of emergency, and also to assist the eventual withdrawal of the piquet. On entering the blockhouse a staff officer pressed a piece of paper into my hand. Covertly scanning it, I found it contained the information that a party of fifty Mohmands was approaching this piquet from the further side, and firing on them.

Whispering the news to General Campbell, I begged him to hurry things up a bit, and myself tried to hustle Lady Chelmsford in her rounds. But not a bit of it. Were these not Territorials? and hadn't her husband recently belonged to the force? She wanted to know about everything. She would inspect the rifle batteries. She insisted on seeing what kind of view the sentries got, etc., etc.

When, however, she mounted into a bastion and began

a leisurely conversation with a Northumbrian "look-out" on the value of his Zeiss glasses, I lost patience altogether and begged her to hasten. Her reply was that she was enjoying it immensely, and what was the hurry? I then told her bluntly about the Mohmand party, and that I wanted to get the Viceroy away quickly. At this she turned about like a shot, went down the awkward steps of the bastion at a double, and was soon outside.

But apparently she never said a word to Lord Chelmsford, for sitting alone with him at tea, he dawdled over it as if there were no need to get back to Peshawar at all. While I was dying to be rid of them, so as to whip out the guns and withdraw the piquet before it was dark.

The Viceroy's train left Peshawar at 10 p.m., and long before that I was able to report by telephone to General Campbell the safe withdrawal of the piquet with only one or two casualties. He told the Viceroy all about it at the station, and the whole party were greatly interested.

Shortly afterwards the line was taken over by other troops and I returned to Abbottabad, where I found the Nepalese contingents much advanced in training and the two mountain artillery and four Gurkha depots (of two battalions of 5th and two of 6th, all overseas) doing splendid work.

This is no place to discuss the tactics required for successful frontier warfare. Ruse and stratagem, however, are valuable at times, but when it is a case of *movement* you must see that you have the *antidote*, if things do not pan out exactly as you expected. The great Lumsden, the father of the Guides, was a past master in frontier artifice, but the tribesmen were much simpler than they are now, and many of his plans for deceiving them have been taken to heart and handed down.

For years they would never approach a piquet of the Guides isolated on a height, without the most extraordinary precautions. This because of Lumsden's ruse, at first very successful, of teaching the piquet to retire somewhat ostentatiously, only to assemble rapidly in the first dead ground. Approaching the top again the men would lie doggo just short of the crest, until the unsuspecting enemy, taking possession of it, was rushed with the bayonet.

It will always be a matter of regret to me that I was unable to ascertain with certainty the exact result of a

ruse at Michni during the Mohmand blockade. The blockhouse on my extreme left, and some half-mile beyond Michni Fort, was being subjected to continual sniping from vantage posts some eleven hundred to thirteen hundred yards away in tribal country.

It was held by a platoon of the 1st Royal Sussex and was a post I much wanted to move. Indeed it was while examining ground for a new site that I had to beat so ignominious a retreat through the barbed wire! We knew that the bands of snipers came from an adjoining village, visible from the blockhouse, and distant under three thousand yards from Michni Fort.

The sniping became so persistent that the men were hit if they moved outside, even to the cook-house along a communicating trench. The village had been partially destroyed by my predecessor some two months before, but re-occupied and repaired. Owing to a reported gathering close to, I was refused permission to go out and effectively raze it to the ground. Knowing that the tribesmen invariably collected all the lead they could find, to make up into bullets, etc., I gave the following orders :

A mountain artillery battery to move to Michni early next day with two armoured cars; the battery to "register" the village, but without trying to do damage, plumping the shell on a gentle slope *short* of the village, and very plainly visible with glasses from this end blockhouse. I arranged to go out myself to Michni from Shabkadr (about nine miles) with a larger cavalry escort than usual, after breakfast.

At 3 p.m. the armoured cars, the battery (including all the mules, but less the six guns and sufficient men to manhandle them), myself and escort, to return to Shabkadr, raising as much dust as possible. The battery commander to take up his post in the end blockhouse to control his fire by telephone when the right moment came; the guns themselves being then in a position of observation for indirect fire outside the fort, and quite invisible.

It will be hardly necessary to explain that my idea was to convey to the tribesmen the impression that we had finished our day's work, and, together with the guns, etc., had left Michni. I knew from former experience that all movements would be reported by their wonderfully rapid and efficient method of communicating news, by means

of spies and look-out men in every tree, and on every height.

About 6 p.m., as I had anticipated, all the men in the village turned out with blankets and any kind of vessel to collect the precious bullets. When they were really busy at their work, the battery commander let fly, and so rapid was his fire that, even with the old ten-pounder, he had twelve shell in the air before the first one reached its objective. Officers posted in the blockhouse with glasses declared that the firing was wonderfully good and the casualties extremely heavy. The Mohmands, however, would never admit this, though the fact remains that Number 43 Blockhouse—the one in question—was sniped no more.

There is nothing more fascinating than trans-border warfare. The wild and difficult country, the manly and hardy tribesman, the uncertainty regarding his movements, the element of surprise, the necessity for ceaseless vigilance, the calls that are made on the stamina of the troops and on one's own endurance, all tend to bewitch and allure. To try and compare it with trench warfare on the Western Front is, of course, ridiculous. One may be aptly termed a *hideous nightmare*, and the other a very *dangerous sport*.

The late summer of 1917 saw me transferred from Abbottabad to Army Headquarters again—this time as Inspector of Infantry for the South of India and Burma. As the area included all infantry in the Lucknow, Secunderabad, Mhow, Poona and Burma Divisions, as well as the Defended Ports of Bombay, Calcutta, Karachi and Madras, there was a considerable amount of travelling to be done by railway, by river and by road.

Delightful as it was to have the opportunity of visiting the south of India and Burma, which I had never seen, and interesting and instructive as the work would surely be, still, to leave Abbottabad and part with the Nepalese contingent, the six splendid depôts, and the two Gurkha battalions camped twenty-four miles away, was a great wrench. Besides, this was the separation from the mountain warfare school which it had been such a pleasure to visit occasionally.

At that time, in India, force of circumstances had greatly increased the number of troops under certain brigadiers until, what with Indian depôts of enormous

strength, British reserve battalions, newly-formed units, and odds and ends of every kind, brigadiers were sometimes responsible for as many men as were formerly contained in two or three Divisions. The Bangalore brigade, for instance, under General Iggulden, comprised at one time between sixty and seventy thousand troops, while affiliated to my so-called brigade at Abbottabad, in May, 1917, was the equivalent of five brigades, as below, with units scattered all over the place.

1. Abbottabad Brigade (three units at or near Abbottabad, one in the Murree Hills).
2. Third War Brigade (one unit Abbottabad, one Murree Hills, one Hoti Mardan, one Cherat, near Peshawar).
3. First Brigade Nepal Contingent (Kakul, near Abbottabad).
4. Second Brigade Nepal Contingent (Kakul near Abbottabad).
5. Forty-sixth (Reserve) War Brigade (one unit Dagshai in Simla Hills, one Nowshera, one Lahore Cantonment, one Fort William, Calcutta).

The last brigade was formed in case it was necessary still further to reinforce General Beynon's Waziristan Force. It was not eventually required and was never concentrated, but I was directed meanwhile to inspect each unit. The staff detailed belonged to other generals who, being themselves overwhelmed with work, did not at all see the point of parting with a single staff officer even for a short period. Eventually I cajoled one brigadier (R. E. H. Dyer, of Amritsar notoriety later on) into sparing the officer warned as brigade major (Major H. E. Weekes, 10th Gurkhas), and we got round, with some difficulty, in about the hottest part of the hot weather.

It had been the abnormal increase in infantry strengths, especially in the south of India, and the enormous number of young soldiers in all stages of preparation, coupled with the difficulty of finding officers and others capable of instructing them, that had necessitated the appointment of two inspectors of infantry. My colleague in the north was Brigadier-General Gerald Christian, late of the Yorkshire Regiment. As inspectors of infantry spent a large portion of their time in the train—indeed, I

had to make journeys sometimes covering four and five consecutive days—we were allowed inspection carriages containing kitchen, pantry, servants' compartment, etc., besides accommodation for ourselves and staff. The first allotted to me was much too small altogether. Besides my staff officer, there was my wife as well as her maid and the cook, butler, dressing boy and orderly.

Old Christian having snaffled the only bigger one available, I threw myself on the benevolence of Sir Lawless Hepper, over whose railway (Great Indian Peninsular) a lot of running had to be made. The result exceeded all expectations, for on my second tour I walked into a tourist car, at the broad-gauge terminus below Simla, over sixty feet long, with all sorts of bogie wheels, a kitchen, pantry, servants' quarters, dining-room to hold twelve, two four-berthed compartments, one coupé, excellent big bathroom and a smaller one.

It was one of the cars built for American tourists "doing" India, but who were tabooed during the war. Keeping it during the whole tenure of my appointment, we got quite attached to it. There were two drawbacks, however, one being that its size misled passengers into taking it for a refreshment car, and I was always meeting thirsty individuals in the corridor, at halting stations, looking out for a drink. Secondly, as many as twelve chairs in the dining compartment took up an awful lot of room.

As there was no intention of giving dinner parties, I got rid of these by handing over a pair to the stationmaster at the next junction, then two more further on and, finally, near the centre of India, a third pair. Thinking, on arrival at Bombay, that it was up to me to call and thank Sir Lawless, I drove to his office to do so, in a Government House car, between two inspections. This apparently amused him immensely, for he said to the military secretary :

"How extraordinarily punctilious General Woodyatt is. I did him a very small service by allotting him a tourist car, for which there is no use at present. He then takes the trouble at Bombay to drive up in the Governor's motor to thank me. Moreover, leaving chairs behind, out of his carriage, at half the stations in India, he sends me a wire each time to say where they are!"

This appointment brought us into contact with all sorts of kind and hospitable people, from governors of provinces to depôt commanders. We generally lived in the railway carriage, even during lengthy halts, except at big places like Bombay, Madras or Calcutta, where it would have been impossible. At Bombay and Calcutta—also Darjeeling—we enjoyed the hospitality, respectively, of Their Excellencies, Lord and Lady Willingdon, and Lord and Lady Ronaldshay. The Willingdons' popularity was extraordinary, and, loved and respected as was the Governor, this was nothing to the esteem and affection extended to his lady.

And no wonder, for, added to her charming and attractive personality, was such an energy and such persuasive force as to make her the object of devoted admiration to all her associates. No woman, I am sure, during the whole war, did more for the comfort, and to alleviate the sufferings, of our sick and wounded. Certainly no one had equal success to this end, in persuading people to part with their valuables, their money, and even their personal property.

We have the pleasantest recollections of our visits to Malabar Hill, Bombay, in spite of an atmosphere of very strenuous exertion in which one was obliged to live. The Bombay climate is not invigorating; a three hours' inspection in the early morning, followed by a second in the evening, takes it out of one; reports on units, if not written at once, are apt to accumulate, with consequent confusion. Yet the following actually happened on the night of the first day:

Lady Willingdon. "Now, what is your programme to-morrow?"

Self. "A very early start for Santa Cruz (fourteen miles from Bombay) and back about 10.30 a.m."

Lady W. "And then?"

Self. (Thinking of a cosy chair, in pyjamas, after a bath.) "Well, I've got reports to write and letters to answer."

Lady W. "How long will they take?"

Self. "Oh! I don't know—an hour and a half or so."

Lady W. "I see." (Then a call to an A.D.C. and I'd hear): "Lord —, have a car ready for the general at 12 noon to-morrow, and take him over the Freeman-Thomas

Hospital. As this takes some time, better lunch at the Yacht Club."

Now this hospital, named after their eldest son, killed in the retreat from Mons, occupied some enormous new offices, cajoled out of the owners by this resourceful lady, equipped by her genius, and managed under her personal supervision. It consisted of several storeys, each containing wards about six hundred feet in length, while the basement was a huge Red Cross store—all of which would have to be visited.

Lady W. "And what are you doing in the afternoon?"

Self. "Inspection of the Bombay Battalion, Indian Defence Force."

Lady W. "When will that be over?"

Self. "About 6.30 p.m."

Lady W. "I see." (Another call and I'd hear): "Captain — You know His Excellency is opening a new Y.M.C.A. branch at 6 p.m., and then we go on to that Cinema rehearsal. Meet the General at — with a car at 6.30 and bring him on to the Y.M.C.A. hut."

Knowing I should be dirty, weary and tired, I had in perspective another vista of pyjamas and cosy chairs before changing for dinner. But I no more dared to think of raising any objection, than I would have dared to enter a lion's den.

To write a chronicle of this wonderful lady's activities in Bombay during the War would take a book by itself, and a very enthralling one, too. Did not the "Queen Mary's Home for Disabled Indian Soldiers" (a most useful and practical institution, and still existing), the beautiful officers' hospital in purple and gold (improvised in the Gaekwar of Baroda's Palace, and commonly known as the "Gilded Cage"), the many women's war societies, and a hundred other establishments in Bombay and Poona, testify to her manifold operations and her amazing energy?

It was the third visit only to Calcutta during my Indian service when inspectorship duties took me there en route to Darjeeling, where we were the guests of the Governor. What struck me at once was the earnestness and industry everywhere apparent in the civil government. With the exception of Lord Curzon, I had come across no high official who put in a longer and more methodical day than Lord Ronaldshay. Both at Darjeeling, and later on at Govern-

ment House, Calcutta, I was astonished at the amount of work he did, at the knowledge he possessed of Bengal and the East generally, and at the grip he appeared to have on all departments of his local government. Served by a military secretary who was a master of his business, everything went like clockwork, and they were very fortunate people who had the honour of being invited to be guests in Government House, Bengal.

Perhaps the most enjoyable of all visits was to the Jhansi brigade as a guest at the house of the brigadier.¹ Enjoyable not only because of the kind hospitality of my hosts, but because he was the first general I had met, except my late divisional commander, who really understood the necessity of "training the trainer."

The method of instruction at Jhansi was a revelation, and I saw nothing else to equal it in India. At most places the utter lack of any system was the weak point. Depôt and other commanders were left to carry on as they thought best. Given a good man it was all right, for he followed the instructions compiled with such care at Army Headquarters. But many had no leaning towards training, and little experience. Here it was left to subordinates, while the real leader busied himself with administration and accounts, of which he had more than he could possibly manage.

General Poore had thoroughly grasped the meaning of "supervision, guidance and control." Every morning he was round somewhere infusing life and spirit into his many units. He had evolved an excellent system of progressive instruction, and being an expert himself with sword, lance, bayonet or rifle (as well as with bat and ball!), the "guidance" was of the greatest value.

He was the first man I knew to see that we must prevent training getting *dull*, and must do all possible to increase the interest and intelligence of the Indian recruit. His system included the novel and most successful experiment of "recruit teaching recruit," which at Jhansi reached a high standard of excellence. Whenever it proved a failure elsewhere, the system was at once blamed, whereas it was not the system that was at fault at all, but the method of supervision.

A very earnest soldier, a deep reader and a strong advocate

¹ Brigadier-General R. M. Poore, C.I.E., D.S.O.

for years of the *straight* sword for cavalry (which by the same token was finally adopted, and in its first "bleeding" went through the Germans like brown paper), it passes comprehension why his services were not utilised in the great war. Instead of that he was left to eat his soul out at Jhansi. A good thing for Jhansi, it is true, as it was impossible for such a man to vegetate, but very hard on the keen soldier.

His name will live long in India amongst trainers of troops, and I dare say he and Lady Flora look back on Jhansi with many happy memories—she because of the lives she brightened amongst British hospital patients and married families, and he because of the memory of thousands of well-trained recruits who owe their efficiency to him.

Burma was a revelation. Nothing that has been written about it, nothing one is told, can in any way convey to the mind the real wonders of the province. The gorgeous beauty of Maymyo,¹ the fairy lakes in Rangoon, the grandeur of the defiles of the Irrawaddy, the splendour of the golden pagodas, the glorious sunsets on the lagoons of Moulmein, together with the gaily-dressed, flower-bedecked, happy, cheery people, combine to make an impression that will last for ever.

Our stay was all too short, and we wished it could have been four months instead of four weeks. I might, indeed, have gone farther up the river to Myitkyina and also have visited the ruby mines. But, being on duty and not on a pleasure trip, it did not appear justifiable to put Government to so much extra expense for the little good I could have done at either place. The same nuisance of a conscience stopped a visit to the Assam hill station of Shillong with only a single depôt. This was a place, too, reported so charming, that I had long wished to see it, and is the only hill station in the whole of India I have never been to.

The great disadvantage of my large area was, it contained no places to speak of where troops were quartered at a high altitude, making it feasible to inspect in the hot weather before the rains. From May to July, travelling by rail is very hot, while sojourning in a stationary railway carriage

¹ A high plateau forty miles from Mandalay and the summer head-quarters of the local government. Called after a Colonel May. In Burmese "myo" denotes "place of" and is equivalent to "abad" or "pur" in India.

is quite impossible. Pointing this out in March, 1918, with the proposal that my area should include the Fourth (Quetta) Division, I was told that I ought to rest a bit at present, but my suggestion would be favourably considered.

Hearing nothing for some weeks, and pressing the C.G.S. for a decision, he asked me to come and see him in three days' time. At my interview he informed me that, as the Derajat¹ independent brigade on the North-West Frontier was to be increased by the addition of the Multan infantry brigade, and as a senior officer was required to command, I had been appointed to it and should join by the 1st May, vice General Beynon, transferred to command the 16th Division at Lahore.

¹ Local name of plain between river Indus and Sulaiman range of mountains. Tract includes and derives its name from the three Deras—i.e. Dera Ismail Khan, Dera Fatch Khan and Dera Ghazi Khan.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE THIRD AFGHAN WAR

THE head-quarters of the Derajat independent¹ brigade, to which I had been appointed, were at Dera Ismail Khan on the west side of the River Indus. The station is not popular and usually known as "Dera Dismal." The troops were split up a good deal, being located, some at Dera Ismail Khan itself, some in a hutted camp forty miles off at Tank, and the remainder on the outposts beyond. By arrangement with the Punjab Government the Multan brigade was taken away from the Lahore division and included in the Derajat command just as I arrived, which considerably increased the work and responsibility.

To reach Dera Ismail you alight at a station called Daryakhan on the North-Western Railway, with a sixteen miles motor drive to the River Indus; crossing it and its branches by pontoon bridges from September to April, and at other times by means of a little steamer. Dera Ismail is most pleasant in the winter, but hot from May onwards, until in July it is really bad. A peculiarity of the bungalows is the quaint appearance of little shelters on each roof, where one sleeps in the summer.

Soon after arrival I felt I must visit Wana, an isolated outpost garrisoned by the South Waziristan Militia and nine marches north-west of Dera Ismail up the celebrated Gomal Valley. Finding the Resident, Sir John Donald, was also going there, we joined forces, and had a very pleasant trip together in June, although it was uncommonly warm. Leaving Sir John at Wana, I returned via Sarwekai and Tank to my head-quarters. This militia corps was

¹ Called "independent" because not allotted to any division.

not under me except when we were mobilised, but I had to inspect and report on it.

At Tank I had a hutted camp of all three arms with a flight of planes. It was an appalling spot, with its eternal dust-storms, inadequate shelter, bare surroundings and scanty water supply. One of the units was a battalion of the 2nd Gurkhas, whose men were feeling the heat pretty badly, having a very large number in hospital. However, the good old "2nd" were not going to grouse, and just making the best of it, were quite cheery.

But what alarmed me was the isolation of Wana, and the serious problem of its garrison in time of trouble. Moreover, after my inspection of the militia, I did not at all like the situation as regards the British officers, feeling that, without any stiffening of other troops, they would fare very badly should their men fail to remain staunch. This seemed to me extremely probable, for the position was very different to that of the North Waziristan Militia at Miran-shah, in the Tochi Valley beyond Bannu, where a whole brigade of regular troops was camped alongside them at Dardoni.

Here it is necessary to say a few words about our North-West Frontier policy. For years there have been two schools of thought: (a) the "back to the Indus" party, and (b) the advocates of occupation practically up to the boundaries of Afghanistan.

Theoretically the latter proposition is of course ideal, but in practice it presents enormous difficulties. This was one of the first problems to face Lord Curzon on his arrival as Viceroy in 1899. He is understood to have been inclined towards the "forward" policy, but not seeing how it was feasible, he decided on a novel experiment. Withdrawing large numbers of regular troops from the advanced posts he replaced them by militia units composed of the tribesmen themselves under British officers. In fact he made the tribesman responsible for his own country. Then there was the important question of material and moral *support*. Lord Curzon was much too clever to forget that, and provided it by means of regular troops placed within our own administrative area.

This system worked very well for twenty years. It broke down in 1919, partly owing to excessive and cunning propaganda; partly to the fact that Afghanistan was the

invader; partly to a weak policy (or lack of any at all), and partly to neglect to provide that very *support* Lord Curzon had been so insistent on.

It must be understood that the moral side of this support is even greater than the material. In times of unrest on the frontier great pressure is brought to bear on the militiaman, possibly by his own people, to be untrue to his salt. Many of the militia are lads who do not want to desert, but, when isolated, find it hard to withstand the supplications of their greybeards and mullas.¹ With regulars stationed near, or sent up to stiffen them, they can point to these, and resist the arguments of their seducers.

Mr. Montagu stated the other day (1921) that Waziristan is "a mountainous district roughly half the size of Switzerland." Rather an apt simile, for that is just what it is, a little compact mountain country on the North-West Frontier contained by the rivers Tochi and Gomal. The inhabitants used to be called Wazirs, or Waziris, and are split up into many tribes and sections, of which by far the most important, of the main branches, are the Darwesh-Khels and the Mahsuds. As a matter of fact the latter are always called by their own name (Mahsuds), and the people near Wana, Wazirs.

The country, consisting mainly of steep, precipitous hills and deep, broken valleys, is a most difficult one to operate in; while numerous "tangis"² continually cropping up are very tricky and dangerous to negotiate, with any kind of an enemy in opposition. The remainder of the country, with the exception of a few valleys, is little better than a desert, owing to scanty rainfall and lack of irrigation.

The inhabitants, especially the Mahsuds, are extremely democratic, and even to their tribal leaders only give a half-hearted allegiance, which can never be depended on. They are a brave, hardy, independent people who live mainly by raiding, simply because the country is too poor to support them otherwise.

The numerous expeditions and blockades of the last

¹ A religious teacher.

² A mountain defile, sometimes of considerable length, and often consisting simply of a cleft in the mountains, at the base of which runs a track frequently only a few feet wide.

fifty or sixty years have met with varying success. The 1917 campaign under Major-General Beynon produced more complete submission, and a greater number of rifles surrendered, than any before, yet these people could not resist joining in against us when the Afghan trouble arose in 1919. The thought of loot, the influence of the Amir's troops, and the strong feeling that our day was over, was too much for them. It certainly was a bad day for us, as they are still on the war-path.

The Waziristan trouble being mainly economic, as has been stated time after time, the best plan would appear to be to devise some means by which the country could be made more fertile. Dams, from which water could be conducted to large areas, have been proposed. Here there is the question of *silt*, but, if this is not insuperable, some measure of extensive irrigation, combined with a system of tribal levies, may prove to be the best solution.

This matter of Wana seeming to be urgent, I decided to report it at once to Simla personally, although a perusal of the old files showed that the question was no new one. It had been vigorously represented by some of my predecessors, notably General Sir C. Anderson.

It happened that I had not yet handed over my inspectorship, the arrangement being that I should go up to Simla to do so, two months after taking over the Derajat independent *brigade*. Rather a misnomer by the same token, as the command, with Multan and its brigadier to say nothing of Tank with its commander and various outposts, had much more the strength and status of a division than a brigade. Doubtless overlooked, however, as I was only paid as an ordinary brigadier.

Anticipating the date somewhat, I set off for Simla the very night of my return to Dera Ismail from Wana. There strong representations were made and some kind of settled policy requested. At the same time I fully stated my apprehensions as to what might happen should trouble occur, but all without any success. Indeed it was said, what was there to fuss about? Wana was certainly very disadvantageously situated—everyone knew that—but it was a strategic point and must be held, and even if troops could be spared—which they could not—it was considered inadvis-

able to transfer any to Wana, though it might be, as I stated, a salubrious spot compared with Tank.

It was also said political reports upheld the belief, that the militia were quite all right where they were. Moreover, had we not just finished the successful 1917 campaign against the Mahsuds and Wazirs? Had they not submitted completely and handed in more serviceable rifles, stolen, captured or surrendered, than had ever been known in frontier history before? Finally, there was no likelihood of any trouble in that quarter for a long time, the relations with the tribes never having been in a more satisfactory condition. That was June, 1918.

There was no more to be said, and yet in less than twelve months' time, when the Afghan trouble came and orders were sent for the evacuation of Wana, out of the nine British officers of the South Waziristan Militia, five were killed by their men and two severely wounded, while only two reached Fort Sandemann unscathed. In addition, the mutineers seized the "keep" with all transport, arms, stores, half a million rounds of ball ammunition, sixty thousand rupees worth of treasure, and various other property.

It is a well-known principle of frontier warfare to deny, at all costs, any initial success to the enemy, simply because such a catastrophe spreads like wildfire. Also because, having been once top dog, even for ever so short a time, the primitive but egotistical tribesman sees no reason why he should not be so again. Therefore the failure to abandon Wana altogether in time of peace—and *not* while hostilities were going on—or else to stiffen its garrison with regulars, would appear to be responsible in a very large degree for all the trouble and enormous expenditure that has occurred since, and is still occurring as I write.

Some thirty miles from Dera Ismail, off the Bannu road, where the low hills on the west bank of the Indus come down to the plain, is the quaint little deserted station of Sheikh Budin, once a favourite summer resort of the Bannu garrison, for the place is full of breezes, and the nights are delightfully cool. Approached by a tortuous thirteen miles of zigzag track from Pezu, it contains about a dozen houses in a shocking state of dilapidation, a church, a racquet court and a large clubhouse with quarters—all situated

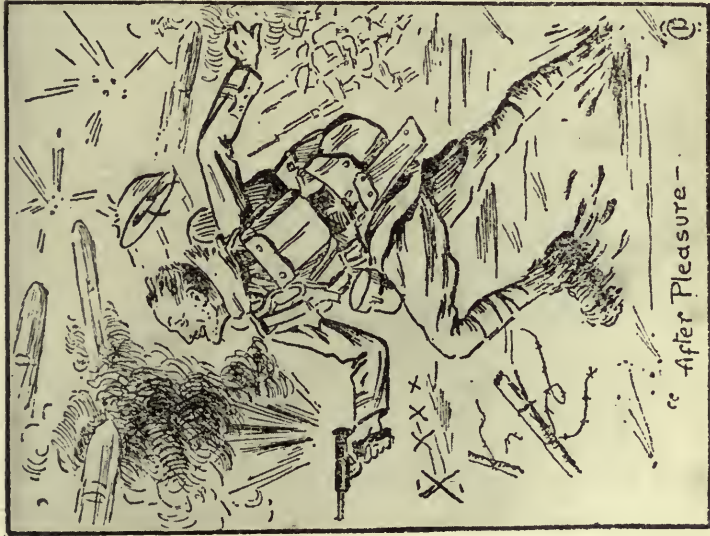
in a little basin of two hundred yards diameter on top of a hill over three thousand feet high.

These houses were built some fifty years ago all round the edge of the basin, and being little used of late are now almost entirely unfit for habitation without very extensive repair. There is no water on the hill at all, with the exception of four large masonry tanks in the middle of the basin containing very suspicious-looking rain-water. A dry well is alongside which tradition says once held a large amount of good water. A zealous sapper officer, however, trying to increase the yield, investigated with dynamite and effectively stopped the supply altogether, for it has been dry ever since!

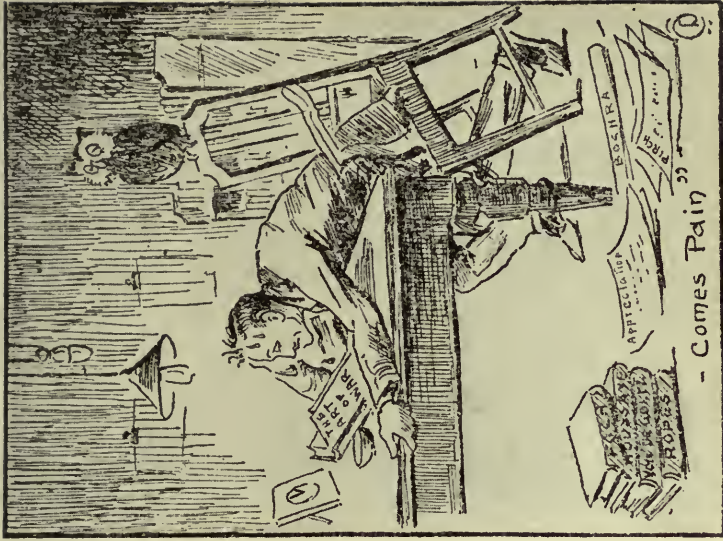
Such was the hot weather head-quarters of the Derajat brigade, and we had to *borrow* it from the Bannu garrison. They indeed said we might have it for ever so far as they were concerned! The clubhouse was sufficiently repaired to make it fairly safe to live in, the owners of one or two houses were induced to plaster a little mud on the walls, a hundred mules for daily carriage of water were sent to Pezu, and before I got back from Simla the office had gone up to Sheikh Budin for the remainder of the hot weather.

Early in 1919 the authorities got out their orders for the demobilisation of INDIAN units with somewhat feverish haste, and without due regard to all the factors that required consideration. Doubtless there was a good excuse, pressed as they were by the Home Government to reduce military expenditure in every way. But the question needed looking at from every point of view, and was a matter for very mature reflection, and not for the hasty issue of dogmatic instructions described, I am told, by one irreverent staff officer, as "undigested froth."

Especially was this the case as regards the North-West Frontier where, the climate having greatly reduced effectives, the majority of infantry battalions could not put in the field more than some four hundred trained men apiece. Yet, under the hard and fast rules circulated, many hundreds were got rid of who did not in the least want to go, and whose retention with the colours was very desirable. Strong representations were made by me, vigorously supported by fellow, as well as higher, commanders, that, on account of our present reduced units, a minimum strength of one



"After Pleasure -"



- Comes Pain"

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QUETTA STAFF COLLEGE XMAS CARD, 1919, AT END OF FIRST TERM HELD AFTER THE GREAT WAR.

thousand two hundred and fifty per battalion should be the standard fixed, instead of the figures laid down. This seemed to us absolutely necessary for the time being, so as to deal effectively with any eventualities on the North-West Frontier. My recommendation, however, was not accepted, with the result that when trouble came, a few weeks later, units were woefully below strength.

On the 2nd May the Afghans crossed our frontier near Landi Kotal, in the Khyber, and on the 6th I was appointed G.O.C. Waziristan Force, which included the Derajat and Bannu Brigades, together with the north and south Waziristan Militia at Miranshah (Tochi Valley) and Wana respectively.

This is no place, nor would space suffice, to describe in detail the third Afghan campaign, which can be read elsewhere. It will be sufficient to say that the "plan" contemplated active operations on the Dakka side (beyond the Khyber Pass) only, to meet which all other fronts were denuded of mechanical transport, aeroplanes, etc. On my side even one flight of the latter would have made all the difference. I feel indeed that even *one plane* would have had an enormous influence on the decision of the various tribes near the Gomal, Tochi and Kurram Valleys to be on our side, or against us. But from the Gomal to the Kurram we had not even a single plane for weeks after hostilities commenced.

At this time was also formed the Baluchistan Force with head-quarters at Quetta. It consisted of troops of the 4th Division, as well as the Eastern Persian Cordon, with line of communications from Nushki to Meshed. As the permanent commander of the 4th Division moved up to command this force, it was necessary to find a new one for the division. General Sir Harry Brooking, just back from Mesopotamia, was appointed. Being unable to join owing to ill-health, I was promoted to the vacancy in his place, and joined at Chaman¹ at the end of May. Over this there was some extraordinary mishap to a telegram which, instead of reach-

¹ An outlying cantonment on Afghan frontier, about 78 miles by road and 88½ by railway, north-west of Quetta, over the Khojak Pass. Consists of two small forts, some bungalows and native infantry lines. Is the terminus of the Quetta-Peshin-Chaman branch of the North-Western Railway, which runs through the Khojak Tunnel.

ing me about the 16th May, did not arrive until the 24th. This prevented me joining in time to conduct the operations against Fort Baldak (an Afghan stronghold some five miles from this border cantonment of Chaman), attacked and captured by the 4th Division about the 26th May, without much difficulty, in spite of its formidable strength.

This journey to Quetta was about the hottest we ever undertook. At one period my wife suddenly asked me what the first symptoms of heat-stroke were like, as she felt red-hot needles darting through her head. Putting a hand up, she withdrew it quickly, for her hairpins were so hot it had been painful touching them. When all the hairpins were taken out there was no more trouble.

One fortunate thing was that we managed to keep motor truck, horse box, luggage van, etc., with us. An excellent A.D.C. (Lieut. Salmon, 2nd Gurkhas, one of the best I ever had) looked well after ice for the horses, and they got through the journey very well.

Chaman, being the advanced base for any forward movement on what is termed the southern line (i.e. towards Kandahar, distant only seven marches), has innumerable troop sidings, comprehensive water scheme, some stores, and a supply of rails, etc., for any railway extension necessary. I found it in a partially protected state, but with a great deal more work to be done. Arrangements were made at once for an all-round perimeter defence by means of barbed wire and trenches, as suitable for the troops available. In the middle of this, orders were received to commence an elaborate scheme of outlying "strong posts," supported by lunettes, connected by deep zigzag communicating trenches, and protected from one flank to the other—a distance of about twelve miles—by an apron of barbed wire.

Studying this scheme closely it seemed to me unsuited to frontier fighting, and to be carrying trench warfare a bit too far. I infinitely preferred a reliable perimeter defence with full freedom of movement for aggressive action wherever required. I telegraphed this to headquarters, begging to be allowed to scrap the new scheme. Imagine then my amusement when the answer came that my request could not be acceded to, ending: "It is desired therefore that you carry out as expeditiously as possible

the scheme of defence *evolved by you* with so much care and forethought!" The italics are mine. I had no more to do with its evolution than the Archbishop of Canterbury.

It is a matter of sincere thankfulness to me that there was never any occasion to hold this line against a serious attack. At the same time the work was most beneficial to the troops in every way, keeping them abnormally fit and strong. The occupation of so many small posts was excellent training too for platoon and other sub-unit leaders, in the exercise of their command, and the conduct of those essentials so indispensable for the health, protection and welfare of their men.

Reports from other fronts in 1919 indicated heavy mortality from sickness, evidently connected with water and unclean surroundings. Sanitation and hygiene being amongst my hobbies, I determined that Chaman should be beyond reproach in these matters. Here it is a pleasure to record I was backed up so wholeheartedly by all my staff and commanders (and especially by the Royal Artillery, who became a model) in the many improvements and changes introduced, that when the travelling Health Committee visited my camp I was told they couldn't find a single fly, and stated in their report that the sanitary conditions were far ahead of any other area they had visited.

Although the 4th Division was composed of very fine troops we were quite immobile, having nothing but our first and second line transport and a few camels. A wire came one day asking how long I considered it would take me to get to Kandahar, if not seriously opposed. I forget the number of days given in reply, but with the transport at my disposal it was well over twenty. The journey indeed is only seven stages, but lack of transport would have necessitated long halts to send back for, and get forward, supplies.

Opposed to us at Chaman was a fluctuating force of Afghans bivouacked within a few miles, here one day, there the other, but not out to do us any damage. They were occupied much more in efforts to induce the surrounding tribesmen to rise, than in plans for the discomfiture of the division. Nor were we allowed, after the capture of Fort Baldak, to take any aggressive action whatever,

pending the result of negotiations which were in progress, and which ended shortly in an armistice followed by peace terms in August.

Commanding these Afghan troops was an interesting celebrity in the person of Sardar Abd-ul-Quds. He was appointed Prime Minister of Afghanistan in 1919, when the present Amir Amanulla came to the throne. In April of the same year he was sent to command the Kandahar front. He was recalled to Kabul in October, 1919, and returned to Kandahar as Governor in March, 1920. A whilom wanderer in exile with Abdur Rahman,¹ in the seventies he returned with him when the latter was made Amir of Afghanistan in 1879.

Flying low over his camp one morning, my airman on duty that day came and reported how he had seen a very fascinating young female, in pink, issue from the Sardar's tent, and wave her hand to him. So struck was he that he begged permission to return there in the evening and drop her a box of chocolates; a request I was reluctantly compelled to refuse!

Although well over seventy (born about 1845), the Sardar had all his wits about him, and being inordinately fond of writing used to send in an envoy bearing a flag of truce and carrying letters for G.O.C. Baluchistan Force, the Political Officer, or myself, two or three times a week. They began with sentence after sentence of effusive compliment, and then in a most roundabout way came to the subject-matter. Abd-ul-Quds was really tired of the war, and would gladly have taken his men away, but felt he could not do so until Fort Baldak was restored² to the Afghans.

He was always referring to this. Used to call it the "purdah of his modesty," which he wanted my help to lift, by restoration of the fort. He said his men would refuse to withdraw until this had been accomplished, and talked of the impossibility otherwise of their meeting

¹ The great Abdur Rahman, Amir of Afghanistan for over twenty years, who died 3rd October, 1901. He was succeeded by his son Habibullah, who will always be remembered for his loyalty and staunchness to us during the Great War. Habibullah was murdered on 20th February, 1919, and followed by his third son, Amanullah, the present ruler.

² Eventually restored about September, 1919.

their women folk. He described most graphically how the latter would ask, "In whose care is Fort Baldak?"

On one occasion I had to call his attention to a breach of the terms of the negotiations referred to by his men.

Back came his reply, sheets of it, from which I extract the following. The translation is literal.

"You have written that a few tribal Ghazis¹ entered the British territory which will not be so. The places where the Ghazis live are limited and belong to the Afghan Government. Of course it is possible that they might have entered your border to collect firewood with a view of lull owing to armistice. As your men had fired on them, it is just possible that they might have answered, as our tribal Ghazis never expected such unkindness. After that it can be considered against friendship that you bombed. If you and all your officers of your Government possess one-tenth of the good feeling that I possess, there will be no such occurrences. How it can be possible for me to work without senses who have been doing work with wisdom for the long past period and which is an admitted fact by all the wise men. And now owing to the lack of discipline of your subordinates if such act is done by you, it is considered to be my mistake. I would kill myself if such a wrong act had been committed by me during these forty years. In that condition if God please my death will take place in such a way so as to live eternal life as regards religious point of view and that my name be known throughout the world as regards worldly affairs.

"Walu Mohid Khan my messenger says that Major St. John (Political Officer) stated that who will stand a surety if British vacate the Baldak Fort and hand over the traders' property and see there is no taking up of wrong way against British in future? I write to you that the way adopted by me during the last forty years will stand as your surety. So far I have not asked anything from your soil. As a corner of our modesty (Baldak Fort) has fallen in your hands, I am desirous that you should vacate so that I may be able to speak to my nation as to enable me to open the entrance of conversation with you."

Altogether it was a very pleasant time at Chaman.

¹ Fanatics.

There were the delightful morning and evening gallops round the camps, looking at protection and sanitation. Then on to the defences with the cheery working parties and vigilant "look out" groups. All this with the good going and the communicating trenches as "leps" will long live in my memory, and I hope in the memory of those who went with me.

CHAPTER XIX

THE TERRITORIALS IN INDIA

OF the Territorials in India I could write chapters, if space permitted. As it does not, I must be content simply to give a brief record of what I saw of them, of what people thought of them, of what they had to do, and how well they did it.

It is not an easy subject to tackle, nor is it an easy one on which to write so as to engage attention. In the first place, they came to India, these Territorials, at the call of duty, soon after the commencement of a great war, of which no one could foretell the outcome. Therefore a situation so full of anxiety, and pregnant with such grief, precludes light-hearted treatment. Nor do I know many amusing anecdotes concerning the force, with which to enliven the narrative.

Secondly, the units were scattered over an enormous area. I certainly came into contact with them in a large portion of that area, but not sufficiently so to give full details about all. Where I do go into detail regarding certain regiments, and certain individuals, it must be understood that I mean it to be typical of the *whole*. They were part of that whole, which was actuated by the same motive, and displayed equal zeal and energy in making itself efficient. Moreover, all were included in a category, embracing thousands, who never thought to see the East, but suddenly found themselves pledged to four or five years' soldiering in various parts of Asia.

Thirdly, this record, not being a history of the Territorial Force, can have little value except as a statement of facts. It is written more as a tribute to all ranks for their efforts and conduct in India. Indeed, it would seem that, in justice to the "Terriers," a brief account of their doings, trials and good work is really called for.

Lastly, a narrative of the actions of any body of troops is very apt to assume the character of a despatch; and despatches are dull reading, generally very dull reading. I do not mind confessing that I have already written and re-written this chapter four times. The first attempt was simply a despatch, stupid beyond words, I confess it myself. The second and third efforts were not much better. The fourth I thought an improvement, but my publisher, I know, still looks on it as dull. I am not sure he didn't say so, but with some hesitation lest—as he insinuated—I slew him with a kukri.

My fifth and last endeavour I now commit to paper. The number directly interested should be very large, as some 55,000 Territorial troops went out to India. Should others, who know not these men, find it dull, I hope they will skip the chapter altogether. As for my publisher, if he still dislikes it, well, there is always the kukri handy.

In the early part of the war, i.e. up to January, 1915, thirty-nine field artillery batteries and forty-five infantry battalions of Territorials went to India. Some others arrived later on. My qualifications to write on this force consist of the fact that between 1915 and 1920 no less than ten battalions of infantry and three batteries of artillery were under my command, at one time or another; while in 1917-18, as inspector of infantry, I visited some fourteen battalions more. Moreover, when commanding at Abbottabad, I came across hundreds of Territorial officers, and others of all ranks, attending the Mountain Warfare School, established there in 1916 by Army Headquarters.

The senior Territorial units had volunteered for service abroad hoping for the Western Front. The thought of India instead was very distasteful, but they were buoyed up by promises at home that it was only a temporary duty, mainly necessary for purposes of training. When this was *fully completed* they were to be sent back. The exigencies of the service and the aggravated submarine menace made it impossible to fulfil these promises, to the everlasting regret of both officers and men.

If only the Australians and New Zealanders could have been utilised to provide India with white troops, what a saving in shipping, and what a convenience it would have been. As it was, troops from home, going out to India,

actually passed, en route, colonials coming to Europe. Again, when one hears at the present time of a shortage of white soldiers in India to meet certain eventualities, thoughts of the use that could be made so rapidly of these colonial troops come into one's head at once.

Perhaps the people who were most puzzled at the advent of the Territorials were the ordinary natives of India. Led to believe by seditious busybodies that England was at her last gasp, and could never replace the British garrisons sent overseas, they were astonished at these fresh troops pouring into the country. The men, too, were so different from the pre-war regular. Instead of calling them "gora Log,"¹ they felt inclined to designate them "sahibs." All the more so, because of the absence of drunkenness or crime, and their greater command of ready money. This was well expressed by a native shopkeeper in Multan enquiring: "Who are these new soldiers who have cheque books?"

From the very first a weak point in the Territorials was a want of knowledge of "administration" and of Indian regulations—which was natural. This resulted in a good deal of unnecessary discomfort to all ranks. "Conducting parties" from the regular battalions left in India were detailed to meet territorial units, and remain attached for instructional purposes. These afforded them a certain amount of help, but the requirements of the war had already called away the more senior officers and N.C.O.s.

Another serious handicap of the earlier arrivals was the recall to their own units of the regular adjutants they had always possessed. Some were gathered in before the battalion left England, and others soon after its arrival in India. Indeed the Territorials had many difficulties, disappointments and obstacles to contend with. It is all the more creditable to them that, nothing daunted, they played the game all round, from the moment of their arrival until their final departure.

With "complete training" as the objective, it is only natural that their main desire was to reach this goal as quickly as possible. Every effort was made to help them by allotting units to stations where they would remain for some time, and where they would receive every facility

¹ Lit. "gora" = white, fair complexioned, and "log" = people. The general term used by Indians to denote the British soldier.

for training. As regards the infantry, the demands of climate, and the pressing necessities of a world-wide war (combined with an everchanging, and at times somewhat menacing internal situation), made obligatory not only large detachments, when concentration was so necessary, but also frequent moves from station to station, which to them seemed absolutely pointless.

Army Headquarters called early for returns direct from every unit, giving each man's trade, qualifications and former occupation. Commanding officers therefore found themselves denuded, willy-nilly, of N.C.O.s and men, sometimes their best, for clerks, supervisors, mechanics, chauffeurs, signallers, machine-gunners, artificers, and every other kind of specialist and workman. This naturally brought each C.O. to the depths of despair as regards the improved efficiency of his command. Yet it was evident this constant drain was unavoidable, and for the good of the whole.

In the ranks were a large number of public schoolboys and others very suitable for commissions. As the question of the shortage of officers in both British and Indian services became more acute, it was necessary to tap this source of supply. In many cases, the boys themselves were anxious for promotion, and their commanding officers did not care to stand in their way. Anyhow, orders were soon received which, after reviewing the situation, directed that all those considered in any way eligible were to be encouraged to apply. Thus hundreds of excellent officers were provided, but it did not tend to make matters easier for the C.O.

As regards his own officers he fared little better; for as the demand owing to wastage became more insistent, he was called on to supply them not only for personal, general, technical and administrative staffs, but also at a moment's notice to fill the place of casualties in the field.

So much has been said to show the difficulties and perplexities confronting commanding officers, that one may well ask how did they get along at all, and how did they keep up their strength? They got along by steadfastness and grit, and their strength was maintained by frequent drafts of both officers and men from home. At first poor, the drafts gradually improved, although naturally requiring an immense amount of regimental instruction. Many

of the recruits had not even fired a shot from their rifles.

So much for their earlier troubles. It will for ever remain to the glory of the Territorials in India that they never once looked back in their path of progress. Many battalions became so efficient, after two or three years, that there was little to choose between them and some of the best pre-war regular units.

A word about their efficiency on arrival and its gradual improvement. As was only to be expected in such a force, the officers were very uneven. In all units there were some good ones, in many the majority were good, while in a few the standard of officer efficiency was very high. Many were born soldiers, who had really mistaken their profession in remaining civilians. These soon came to the front, and a considerable number were utilised on the staff and elsewhere, where they did most valuable work.

There was Major H. W. Woodall, of the 4th Dorsets, who acquired particular merit, and was rewarded with a Companionship of the Indian Empire. I had three staff officers with me when Inspector of Infantry, one succeeding the other,¹ and all did me extremely well. They had good military knowledge, and their former business experience made them very reliable staff officers.

Speaking generally, and especially of the junior officers, there was at first an absence of the true military instinct, forcing one to class such officers as partially trained civilians instead of soldiers. This instinct in many cases had to be acquired, and it came in due course. In the early days, for instance, few officers had been taught how to give a command, with the result that there was too much unnecessary politeness in issuing orders to the men. This wore off in time, but until it did, orders were apt to be perfunctorily carried out, without any "jump" or alacrity in compliance.

The best officers, and the number was large, had an exceptionally good theoretical knowledge of their profession. It is much to their credit that they had studied their manuals so well, and were able to impart the instruc-

¹ Captain Satterthwaite, 1/4th R.W. Kents; Major Goodman Whiffen, 1/5th East Surreys; Captain Chance, 1/4th Border Regiment.

tion gained. As good a lecture as I ever attended was one given on "protection"¹ by a company commander to his men. He knew his subject thoroughly, put it to his audience in the simplest language, explained the leading principles very lucidly, and gave apt illustrations from military history.

The commandant of the Mountain Warfare School at Abbottabad told me he was astounded as much at the knowledge of his books by the Territorial officer, as at the difficulty he found in practical application in the field. Adding that his astonishment was far greater when he saw their progress in this matter with instruction and practice.

The non-commissioned officers were most zealous and diligent, with good, sometimes very good, knowledge of their duties. Their weak points were want of initiative and power of command, attributable to inexperience and to lack of opportunity.

The men were most intelligent, fairly well drilled, and very anxious to do well. There was hardly any crime. As an instance, the 1/4th Wiltshire Regiment from the time of their landing in India in 1914 to their departure for Palestine in 1917 had not a single court-martial and no case of drunkenness. I think this must be a record.

Physique and age varied tremendously. The physique in some units was extraordinarily fine, while in others it was not so good. As regards age, one example will suffice. The 2/6th Hants appeared to be mainly boys, while the 23rd Rifle Brigade at Multan were nearly all old soldiers.

The latter² was one of seven Territorial battalions formed in October, 1915, and attached to the Rifle Brigade. The men came from the "national reserve" who at the outbreak of war offered their services for any duty required of them. They had been employed up to date guarding railways, docks and other vulnerable points, and some 250 of this unit possessed war medals or long service and Volunteer decorations.

It came under me at Multan, where it had been

¹ A lecture on outpost duties by Major the Honourable E. Strachey, 1/4th Somersets.

² 23rd Battalion (North Western) (Territorials), raised by Colonel T. E. Turnbull, O.B.E., V.D.

stationed nearly two and a half years. On marching into barracks on arrival the natives had been heard to remark, "These are pukka soldiers and not to be played with!" Multan is a hot place and in the summer of 1918 it struck me the men were feeling the effects of the heat. Getting them moved, they went to Bareilly, looked upon as a very healthy place. Results proved that Multan, though hot, is not unhealthy.

This battalion did some really excellent, though by no means exhilarating, work at Multan. Besides heavy garrison duties, it had to furnish detachments innumerable, including a company at Amritsar. The garrison gunners having left Multan, the guns and machine-guns in the fort had to be manned by the 23rd Rifle Brigade. Fortunately their cosmopolitan composition enabled them to provide teams without difficulty.

One summer the environs of Multan were not only infected with cholera and malaria, but also with a very virulent outbreak of plague. This necessitated a strict cordon round cantonments, towards the city, and involved heavy piquet duty admirably performed. For the Marri expedition the battalion furnished many N.C.O.s and men for various services, while the adjutant was taken as a base commandant. One N.C.O. left at Amritsar as electrician, after the company was withdrawn, was brutally murdered by the natives in the rebellion of April, 1919.

This is not a tale of woe, but simply a partial record of one Territorial battalion's sojourn in India, with an account of all it was expected to do, and how well it did it. There was none of the exhilarating excitement of hard-fought actions in the field. Only difficult and uninteresting garrison duty with the thermometer reaching 124° in the shade. Such an achievement, cheerfully performed, by a Territorial battalion of old soldiers speaks well for the force, deserves much of the State, and merits the approbation of soldiers and civilians alike.

With such grand material to work on, it is not surprising that its further training was a source of much interest to the brigadiers concerned. What pleased me so much, just the same as with the Nepalese contingents, was the wonderful responsiveness of the territorials, their eager desire for efficiency, and their keenness to make good.

Advance in proficiency of course varied, and it varied much more in proportion to the help and understanding given by higher leaders on the spot, than to the original standard of preparedness. No troops were more susceptible to *sympathy*. Given sympathy, combined with a thorough understanding of their characteristics, idiosyncrasies and needs, then you were able to get at these people, when there was nothing they could not do. These pages teem with references to sympathy, simply because personal experience is always revealing the fact that it is the most valuable attribute a leader can possess.

As a general rule, and especially with the older units, the Territorial force was to be congratulated on its commanding officers. The first to come under my command was Colonel the Earl of Radnor, commanding the 1/4th Wiltshire Regiment. He had been commanding for some years, knew every man in the battalion, kept a strict discipline, and, looking carefully after the welfare of his unit, had his finger on its pulse in every way. Blessed with a good second-in-command and an excellent body of officers, it is not surprising that the unit was in very good order. To illustrate the fine spirit imbued in the mind of this officer, the following is worthy of mention :

The battalion was quartered at Delhi, and half of it was to remain there for the hot weather, while the remainder went up to Chakrata, a hill station in the Himalayas above Dehra Dun. Lord Radnor was not a young man and had not sojourned in India before. Giving him the option of taking his head-quarters up to the hills, so that he himself would have the advantage of a delightful climate all the summer, he asked me for a little time for consideration. Next morning he told me that feeling responsible for his men, who came from his own country, he could not think of leaving them to swelter below, while he himself enjoyed the cool breezes of Chakrata.

Soortly afterwards Lord Radnor was promoted to succeed me in command of the Delhi brigade, with the rank of brigadier-general, which appointment he retained until his return to England. From there he was deputed to France as director of agriculture at general head-quarters.

He was succeeded in the command of the 1/4th Wiltshires by his second-in-command, Lieut.-Colonel Armstrong, who was an excellent officer much liked and respected

by all ranks. After being severely wounded in Palestine, this officer died of his wounds at the advanced aid post the day his battalion gallantly captured Miskeh (19th September, 1918).

I came across many other C.O.s far above the average. Playfair of the 2/6th Hants was an old regular, and just the man to raise and train a young battalion of Hampshire lads. Harvey of the 1/5th East Surreys had an excellent unit, he looked well after his officers, knew the men individually, and took the greatest interest in their welfare. He afterwards held commands in S. India and Hong-Kong, not getting home until something like 1920. Waterlow commanded a very thoroughly trained battalion in the 1/4th Border Regiment, which acquired wonderfully good reports, both in Burma and in India.

Then there was Colonel Frank Johnson, D.S.O., 1/6th Royal Sussex, who achieved undying fame as the administrator of martial law in the Lahore area during the disturbances of 1919. His many proclamations, all commencing "Whereas," are admirable models of how such official notices should be framed. The firm, just and unflinching rule he established at a most critical period, not only earned for him the admiration and gratitude of Europeans and law-abiding Indians alike, but the honour of having his portrait hung in the hall of the Punjab Club at Lahore. Beneath is no name and no inscription, simply, in gold letters, the one word "Whereas." A fitting tribute indeed, for all time, to a Territorial officer of exceptional merit.

These few names are given not only as typical of the Territorial battalion commander, but also to bear witness to the valuable services rendered to the State by Territorial officers in a higher and more extended sphere.

The county of Hampshire was very largely represented in India. Besides seven batteries of field artillery, four battalions went out with the 1st Wessex Division on 12th October, and three more followed on the 12th December, 1914. In addition the 9th battalion arrived in 1916 and remained until October, 1918, when it proceeded to Siberia via Vladivostock. No units had a better record in India than the Hampshires, or were more genuinely liked. As regards the 9th battalion, it is interesting to add that it

was the only British unit to go to Siberia (except Colonel Ward's ¹ battalion) and that it did very well there.

As related before, anent the Delhi brigade, an order was issued early in 1915 that all Territorial infantry battalions were to undergo a modified form of the "Kitchener test" ² at the hands of the brigadier concerned. This was somewhat premature as regards many units. However, remarks about putting the cart before the horse were ignored. Army Headquarters gave their decision, that all those in India must be tested at once. Their idea was to get the relative value of the various battalions. Any modification in the test considered necessary was to be made by the local general concerned. For the Territorials of course the "test" went no farther than the brigade.

At this time there were three Territorial infantry units under my command, namely one senior, 1/4th Wilts, and the others, 2/6th Hants and 2/4th D.C.L.I., much more recently formed. I took the 1/4th Wilts before the others and subjected it to a test of about thirty-three consecutive hours, in which it did exceedingly well, and had not a single casualty from first to last. This was so gratifying that on addressing them for a few minutes after it was over, I gave them the highest praise I could by telling the Colonel that I envied him his command.

Never once did the officers or men get rattled, and yet my system of giving each order on a slip of paper for the next action, as the current one was nearing completion, combined with the unrevealed nature of the whole programme, must have been disconcerting in its novelty alone. Coming back, after delivering the fourth order, as the sun was setting at the end of the first day, I asked my staff officer if the C.O. seemed at all disturbed, and he told me his only remark was: "What, *another*?"

It was now the end of March with two more battalions to test, one at Agra and the other at Bareilly. Well-knowing Agra's capability for heat at this season, it was necessary to hasten there at once. Colonel Playfair's battalion, the 2/6th Hants, was newly raised, the men only partially trained, and until a short time before split up into detachments since arrival in India. I thoroughly agreed with him that the "test" came before the unit was

¹ Colonel John Ward, C.B., C.M.G., M.P.

² See Chapter x. (Lord Kitchener).

ready for it, but as a matter of fact it did very well. The "covering" and "overhead" fire in an attack with ball was so bold and so realistic that I marvelled at its temerity and said so. Playfair, with a laugh, muttered something in the sense of, "Where ignorance is bliss, etc."!

There still remained the unit at Bareilly (2/4th Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry), also a very young one and with little help or guidance given it to date. The material, however, of sturdy Cornishmen, was about the best I had seen. Solid vigorous boys with plenty of life, full of spirits and much interested in their new surroundings.

The heat was pretty bad in any case for a fifteen-mile march followed by an attack with ball, but the intensity of the "test" was much enhanced by a misunderstanding of orders. This resulted in the men having to lie down in the sun for an unconscionable period, and then advance over heavy sand. By the evening they were quite cooked and I was so anxious about their prostration that all night work was cancelled, though the officers and senior N.C.O.s were taken on by themselves.

It was reassuring to find the C.O. quite tranquil about his men. He told me they were very tough customers, and would be all right in a few hours, which confidence was fully justified. It speaks well for the grit and stamina of the men of Cornwall that they were able to come successfully through so severe an ordeal. They were all just as cheery and happy next morning as if they had only attended a picture palace entertainment the day before.

About March, 1916, it was evident that, on account of the aggravated submarine menace and other considerations, it would be impossible to transfer any battalions to the Western Front from India. At the same time possibility of their employment on the North-West Frontier opened up the question of training in mountain warfare, of which neither officers nor men had any experience. The Abbottabad School referred to before was primarily intended for officers and N.C.O.s of Territorial units only, but was later on extended, mainly at my instigation, to instruct officers of all services in this important subject.

A word about this school. From remarks in the public Press after the third Afghan War in 1919 it is evident an opinion prevailed that instruction in this branch of warfare

had been entirely neglected. Nothing could be further from the facts.

The school was first established in the summer of 1916 for forty-eight territorial officers and N.C.O.s at one time for a course of about six weeks' duration. The combination of officer and N.C.O. was found to be a mistake, so separate courses were assembled. Later on the school was enlarged so as to accommodate a hundred senior officers of all services, for a course of about one month. Bar a short period in each winter it has been running almost continually up to date, and only the other day (October, 1921) I heard from General Birdwood that he had been inspecting it.

The course is very practical and most useful to the thousands of officers who have now completed it. The commandant ¹ is a man of ripe knowledge and experience with the happy knack of being able to impart his knowledge. You can generally gauge the success and utility of a school by consulting men who have attended it, and whose opinions count. Without any exception those opinions were very flattering, and all were loud in praise of the instruction given.

Speaking of the social side, the advent of the Territorials was a great event to the European population of India. People, especially civilians, were particularly struck with their patriotism and example. All were anxious to show their appreciation of the splendid way these citizens had abandoned homes, relatives, professions and trades, often at great personal sacrifice and loss, to volunteer for service abroad.

On the arrival of the first Territorial Division in Bombay, Lord Willingdon's warm welcome, and the noble hospitality of the Yacht Club in entertaining ninety-seven of its officers at dinner the first night, aptly voiced the feelings of the whole European community.

Later on people vied with one another in fêting the men, asking them out in batches to tennis, musical parties, concerts, expeditions, motor drives, etc. All this came under my own knowledge in places so widely apart as Karachi, Lahore, Multan, Lucknow, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

The Y.M.C.A., as usual, came to the front and did much for the amusement and welfare of the men. Especially

¹ Lieut.-Colonel W. Villiers-Stuart, C.B.E., 5th Royal Gurkhas.

useful and greatly appreciated were their lectures on the country, and the tours they organised all over India. Without these a great number of Territorials would have had no opportunity of visiting in comfort such historic and interesting places as Agra, Delhi, Jeypur, etc.

One wealthy jute merchant in Calcutta invited batch after batch of eight Territorial N.C.O.s and privates, at a time, to his beautiful house there. Entertained them royally on the fat of the land, and sent them out daily in his motor-cars to the zoo, cinema, races, etc., etc.

Nor were native princes and Indian gentlemen behind-hand in offering hospitality and welcome. The Maharajah of Mysore himself received and entertained the 2/6th Royal Sussex Regiment at Mysore, and had them shown over his palace with its priceless treasures. This was a privilege never granted before, or since, to British troops. Entertainments and refreshments were provided at many railway stations and cantonments by Indian gentlemen of various classes.

The Territorials were both touched and gratified at their reception from the social point of view. They reciprocated on their side by forming troupes of players and musicians out of the undoubted talent at their command. Also by getting up "sports," boxing tournaments and musical evenings, not only in the larger stations, but in all sorts of out-of-the-way places.

To bring my British units up to strength when commanding the 4th Division at Chaman in the third Afghan War, the authorities sent me some hundreds of demobilised territorial officers and men from Deolali and Bombay. Men who were actually about to sail home, and men who gulped down their disappointment in the most splendid way, when told their services were absolutely essential. Splitting them up amongst various corps an early opportunity was taken to visit and address each party, to tell them how much we sympathised with their disappointment, and how greatly we admired their stoicism and spirit. I was most sorry for these good fellows almost pulled off the ship to come up to the North-West Frontier. Pulled off too just as they had said "Good-bye" to India, and were looking forward so eagerly to meeting their wives, children and relatives once more.

Little opportunity was given me of testing Territorials

in the field. I had indeed the 2/4th Border Regiment.¹ with me in the Mohmand blockade line, but there was little serious fighting. The men of this unit were of very fine physique, well disciplined and keen as mustard. It was a great pleasure to deal with them, and have a chat with individual N.C.O.s and men in the blockhouses.

On one occasion a temporary piquet was heavily sniped, and on being withdrawn, when the duty was completed, was followed up by the enemy. I happened to be present as the piquet was nearing camp, and noted the extreme reluctance with which the men withdrew, under orders. As they approached close to me I saw that their eyes were blazing, and they were full of suppressed excitement. Quite a right fighting spirit.

About a month before this, a hundred men of this unit² joined a column of mine to destroy villages. They had to start soon after 4 a.m., and didn't get back until about 7 p.m., having marched twenty-six miles and helped to destroy two villages. It is not exactly child's play pushing over mud walls, and burning houses. This was a very good test of endurance, and they were most cheery over it at the finish.

Did space permit I should like to follow up the subsequent happenings to the battalions I knew when fully trained, and despatched to various fronts. This, however, would take a volume of itself. Some small detail, of two units only, I do append as an illustration of the fact that the battalions from India bore their full share of casualties in the field.

1/4th Somerset L.I., to Mesopotamia from India, 1916.

Casualties in the field.	{	Killed	officers	3,	O.R.	105
		Wounded	"	10,	"	130
		Died on service	"	3,	"	68

1/4th Wilshire Regiment, to Palestine from India, 1917.

Served with the 233rd, and, after capture of Jerusalem, 232nd brigade of 75th Division. Continually in action in November, 1917, and from March to September, 1918. Lost several officers killed and wounded (including the C.O., Colonel Armstrong), and about 35 per cent other ranks.

¹ C.O., Colonel J. F. Haswell, C.I.E., V.D.

² Under Lieutenant R. T. Bruckman with two other officers.

But it is not only the units fortunate enough to get on service in Mesopotamia, Palestine, North-West Frontier, etc., who are to be congratulated on their prowess, but also those left behind to the bitter end to deal with revolutionary movements in India itself. As an example, the case of the 2/4th Buffs at Multan under Colonel G. Gosling comes to mind.

Besides keeping that area quiet during the risings of 1919 the men were utilised in the district beyond to travel about in the hottest part of the hot weather, upholding the prestige of the British Raj. Their capable brigadier¹ sent me daily reports of the excellent work they were doing. Amongst other things, he described how they had improvised an armoured van out of railway trucks and sheet iron, which they named "The Multan Lamb." In this the men dashed up and down the line to any threatened point immediately information of pending trouble was received. These services were most valuable, and the mere knowledge that parties of British soldiers could arrive in an incredibly short space of time at any seat of disturbance had a very salutary effect.

In conclusion let me say I shall always regard it as a privilege that I was enabled to watch—and in some cases do a little to help—the progress towards proficiency of a large portion of this fine body of Territorials. My connection, with some units or other, remained unbroken from soon after they landed in India in 1914, to the year 1920, long before which latter date they may be said to have become the "finished article." By that time they had officers and N.C.O.s possessing power of command and certificated at the various schools, signallers complete and well trained, Lewis gunners and bombers handy with their weapons, while the men, confident, hardy and acclimatised were fit to go anywhere and do anything.

It is a record of which any body of troops may well be proud.

But in addition to the Territorials there were other "War winners" in India from 1914-20, for whom a meed of praise is due.

First come the "Boys of the Old Brigade," that force of veterans formed into "Garrison Battalions" of which no less than eighteen came out to India between November,

¹ General P. J. Miles, C.B., C.M.G.

1915, and March, 1917. They came out to "do their bit," with their plucky, but aged, officers to whom years were nothing if they could but serve their country.

I came personally into contact with four pre-war officers well over *seventy*, who were the admiration of all who met them. Poor old Colonel Shepherd, late of the Norfolks, died in harness at Calcutta to everyone's deep regret, for his was the most happy and cheery personality. Colonel Martin, late of the 21st Lancers, and who commanded them in their famous charge at Omdurman, died at Karachi while O.C. troops there.

Colonel Marriott-Smith of the Royal Artillery, and Colonel Wood, late of the Connaught Rangers, I am glad to think, got safely home after a long period of duty in India.

Homage is also due to the civilians of the Indian Army Officers' Reserve and members of the Indian Defence Force, who came forward in their thousands at the moment of their Emperor's need. Some idea of the growth of the former may be gathered when it is stated that in April, 1914, the strength of this reserve was forty-one and in April, 1920, five thousand seven hundred and sixty-seven.

Nor must one forget the Volunteers in India who tried so hard, and for so long, to be taken seriously, and at last to their great content became a Defence Force. Not that their troubles were then ended, for they had only just begun! Mistakes were made and needless hardships were incurred, but to one who like myself in 1917 inspected thousands, there could be but one opinion regarding their earnestness and zeal. Day after day the Calcutta maidan ¹ (to mention only one area) was a veritable *champs de mars* with light horse, machine guns, infantry squads, companies and battalions, training away for all they were worth.

The best of the "Indian civil service," and of other State departments, who could be spared to go, set an example by taking on some form of military duty. Many joined the Reserve already referred to, and numbers were killed in action. The more senior ones, even those of the highest standing, who were not already commissioned officers in the old Volunteers, joined the defence force as privates. It was nothing uncommon to find in the ranks high court

¹ Big open plain surrounding Fort William.

judges, commissioners, collectors, private secretaries to the governor of a province, and the like.

Many men, and boys too, for various reasons came from England to India, individually, to "do their bit." The Cadet Colleges of Quetta and Wellington were filled with an excellent type of lad keen on entering the Indian Army. An old friend¹ of mine at home (who retired before he was a major) thinking his knowledge of hill men and hill fighting might be useful, volunteered. His services being accepted he came out at once and was given the 1st battalion 50th Kumaonis to raise. This he did so well that the unit gained much kudos in Palestine, proving itself so efficient that it is to be kept on and not disbanded. An immense gratification to one who left his civil work to take up arms again, and took them up with such splendid zeal and energy.

It has been whispered that India might have done more than she did in the Great War. A complete refutation of this will be found in a pamphlet printed in August, 1919, and now lying in the archives of the India Office in Whitehall. It is entitled:

"Memorandum on India's contribution to the war, in men, material and money."

A truly astounding record, which must be read to be appreciated.

As a true lover of India I shall be happy if any words of mine in this chapter convey to my readers the patriotic and helpful spirit that existed, from 1914 to 1920, throughout our great dependency.

¹ Lt.-Col. E. M. Lang, late of the 1st Gurkhas, and now a partner in Messrs. Lea & Perrin, of Worcester.

CHAPTER XX

SOME TRIALS OF A COMMANDER

ABOUT the time of the Afghan armistice I was transferred to the officiating command of the Poona Division, and soon found myself engaged in dealing with a very unpleasant situation connected with discontent amongst British troops regarding their demobilisation. It is necessary to explain that on the Great War ending, a very heavy task was thrown on the military accounts department in settling up the field accounts of the thousands of soldiers killed, invalided, demobilised, to be demobilised, and still serving.

To meet this in India large drafts of N.C.O.s and men, likely to be of use as clerks and accountants, were demanded from every British unit, and concentrated in spare barracks, camps, etc., at Poona, where the work was to be completed. At one time the number was over four thousand, though considerably reduced by weeding out and demobilisation, at the time we are speaking of. Alongside them was the head-quarters of the signal service with a varying British strength of from one to three thousand, and a few miles away the remnants of a British reserve battalion, whose numbers fluctuated according to circumstances.

The trouble starting with the military accounts clerks was backed up by the signal corps, and spreading to the Reserve Depot, soon threatened to be most serious. I had, moreover, no British troops whatever with which to coerce the malcontents, and the use of Indian troops was of course impossible.

Dissatisfied with the tales they heard of abnormal delay at Deolali (the embarkation base). Discontented with the earlier release of what were called "pivotal men," i.e. those required at home to revive special trades and pro-

fessions. Disgusted at the ruling that men from Mesopotamia, with whatever service, should go first, and displeased at the communiques issued from Simla, which they considered contradictory and vague, their attitude became very threatening, while "direct action" was openly discussed.

One morning at office, my brigadier-general, administration, entered my room in some perturbation to say that several hundred men were marching to the divisional offices in "fours." That one of the senior colonels of the military accounts department had tried to stop them, but they had simply walked quietly past his car. A few minutes later they appeared near the buildings, and formed up in a crowd on one side.

I first sent out the camp commandant, who after being received with hooting and hisses, returned in a few minutes, very pale, to say he couldn't get a hearing. The infantry brigadier having turned up was sent next, and with a voice like a bull of Basan, managed to get them to listen, and to agree to disperse while a deputation of leaders remained behind to be received by me.

A very unpleasant task it was, especially when the principal spokesman, stepping out of the ranks and tapping his side of my broad writing-table with his knuckles, said he wished to speak to me as "man to man"! His argument was that a period of six months from the Armistice having now expired, he was, by law, no longer a soldier. This was quite a unique experience for me, not having before found myself, as a general, practically in the dock with my rank and file as judges! He presented an ultimatum on a dirty piece of paper containing four demands. To these he said he was instructed to require an answer by 6 p.m., or the men would take steps to prove they were very much in earnest, as they were thoroughly disgusted with their disgraceful treatment by Simla.

The man—a sergeant—was a very good speaker, and although his action was unusual—not to say ill-disciplined—he was by no means aggressively disrespectful. He very evidently meant all he said, and there was a good deal on the men's side of the question, which fact I felt very strongly. Listening patiently, and promising an immediate investigation, the deputation withdrew.

After communication with Simla and more negotiations (!) with the men, lasting some days, it was suggested by the

Southern Command and finally arranged, that a deputation should proceed to Simla to state their own case personally. This resulted in the men getting rather more than the four demands in their ultimatum, and the trouble was over.

The suggestion to send up these men was an inspiration, and required much firmness on the part of the Southern Command, for "Simla" was extremely reluctant to receive the deputation. Indeed, had it not been for the active assistance given by the Governor of Bombay—Sir George Lloyd—I don't think Head-quarters would ever have consented at all.

It was a great pleasure to be brought in contact with a real "live wire" like Sir George Lloyd. The hold he acquired so quickly over the people of the Bombay Presidency, Europeans and Indians alike, was most marked, while his keen energy, driving force and business instincts have been of inestimable benefit to a city like Bombay.

It is no exaggeration to say that when he lays down his office, the record of progress in housing and sanitation, of difficulties overcome and of improvements carried through, has seldom been approached before. His kindness to me is ineffaceable, as is the memory of the interest he took not only in the welfare of the troops, but in little personal matters coming under his notice.

Lady Lloyd soon endeared herself to the people of Bombay, Poona and Karachi. To hear her speak in public is a revelation, and a matter of much envy to anyone called upon to do likewise. Absolutely at her ease, confident, fluent and never at a loss for the right word, she is indeed a valuable coadjutor to a public man occupying so high a position.

The permanent incumbent of the Poona Division, having been passed fit by the India Office medical board, returned to India, and I was moved on to the command of the 16th Division at Lahore. This I was to hold until *anno domini*, and a fresh distribution of the Indian Commands (which made Lahore a British service vacancy) came into force.

Except for parting with our kind friends at Government House, I do not know that we were sorry to leave Poona. To those who have continually resided in the Punjab, United Provinces, or Quetta, the climate is not congenial.

The Poona season proper is July, August and part of September, when the monsoon breezes up the ghats make the plateau very pleasant. It is then a real good station, but at other times somewhat depressing.

The hunting is not bad, and I had many good gallops there, but the great feature, during the season, is the succession of race meetings held under the auspices of the W.I.T.C.¹ These are really well run with experienced stewards and secretary, comfortable grand stands, a beautiful course, and, last but not least, abundant entries. A great attraction is the totalisator,² which does a tremendously big business, taking the place of bookmakers abolished in the days of Lord Sydenham.

This totalisator is a source of much profit, as five to ten per cent. of the takings go to the fund. By this means the W.I.T.C. has become extremely wealthy, but they spend their surplus money wisely and well, in general improvements for the benefit of the racing public. Also in very handsome donations to deserving institutions and charities. Indeed, so great is their benevolence that I doubt if there is a single worthy object in the Bombay Presidency of late years that has not received assistance from their hands, especially during the Great War.

The officer accommodation question at Poona is perhaps more acute than anywhere else, though it is bad enough everywhere. At Poona it may be attributed to the large increase in the garrison's strength of officers, and to the fact that many wealthy Parsees and Indians have now elected to take up their residence there, especially during the season.

¹ West India Turf Club.

² A method of gambling in horse-racing introduced into India from Australia some twenty years ago. It consists of a building, or booth, with windows like a railway ticket office. You go to a window before a race and take as many tickets as you like on the horse or horses you have selected. The price varies, but in Calcutta and Bombay it is usually ten rupees (at present rate of exchange, say, 12s. 6d.) a ticket. As soon as the start is declared the windows are shut. Winners are paid directly the numbers go up and you get your share of all the money invested on the particular race, less five or ten per cent. for the Race Fund. By a mechanical contrivance the number of tickets taken on each horse is indicated, one by one, on a large disc above the ticket windows. By this means you can judge the odds before making your investment.

Houses in cantonments are very limited in number, and those outside of a high rental and often very inconvenient. As my predecessor, having no wife in India, lived in the club quarters, there was no house whatever for us when we arrived in the middle of the season. Strange as it may seem, still it is true that as the divisional commander I had to wait weeks before I could get one.

I am not at all sure that it was not through the good offices of the Governor that one was eventually procured. Anyhow he asked me one day if it were really true that I couldn't get a house, and when I said "Yes," he remarked, "Well, I'll see you *do* get one." Shortly afterwards one of his high officials, whose wife had just gone home, went to live in the club and, offering us his house temporarily, at the usual rental, we gladly accepted it.

At this time we were receiving from home the post-war regulars for the garrison of India, preceded by advance parties of two or three officers of each unit with some fifty N.C.O.s and men. As these parties were primarily located at Poona for some time, while their destinations were being decided, and as many battalions, drafts, married families, etc., also made a brief sojourn there, I had every opportunity of getting to know them.

The advance parties consisting, as they mainly did, of selected officers and trained soldiers who had been out in India before, were delightful to deal with. Later came the new units themselves, of surprisingly good material, but extremely raw and untrained.

The officering of these units varied in a very marked degree. In one you would find hardly any officers who had been in the ranks, and in another quite the reverse, until the climax was reached in a battalion which had only half a dozen officers who were *not* "rankers," including the C.O. in the latter category.

Many of these "rankers," being married, complained bitterly of the impossibility of living in India on their pay, whether they had their wives with them or not, saying it was much more difficult to do so than in England, with the good allowances existing there. The Indian Government at once sanctioned an increase of pay to subaltern officers from the ranks, and many too were transferred home at their own request.

It was most gratifying to note how quickly these new

troops settled down, how easily they got accustomed to Indian conditions and how rapidly they picked up the traditions of their corps. Both in the Poona and Lahore Divisions I was extremely pleased with the work done, the progress made and the keenness shown by all ranks to reach the pre-war standard.

It was with the married families we had the most difficult task, owing to want of knowledge of their probable date of arrival. For example, getting official intimation that those of the battalion which had recently arrived to form part of the Poona garrison would leave England in a month's time, all their quarters were colour-washed and got ready.

It all took time, however, for a great deal of alteration was required owing to a much enhanced establishment to that existing before the war. This was probably due to the extraordinary number of war marriages, and the fact that the War Office did not wish these women and their families to remain behind, if willing to come out. Almost as soon as the above intimation was received, the infantry brigadier called at the office to tell me the battalion commander had just informed him that his women and children were actually on the sea, and would arrive shortly.

"Quite impossible," we all said, and the official document was produced, at which the C.O., who had come in, shook his head, but was unconvinced, his private information being entirely different.

The next day was Sunday, and at about 4 p.m. I was informed that a wire had just been received from Bombay saying these married families—fifty-two wives and many children—would reach Kirkee railway station (a suburb of Poona) at 5 a.m. next morning!

Now Sunday evening is not a favourable time to catch people, nor are twelve hours sufficient in which to allot furniture, arrange transport, prepare food, procure good milk, engage servants and have everything conducive to their comfort ready, for a lot of women and children who have never seen India before.

My staff were pretty busy that night—and so were others—and they told me next day how much they owed to the officers and N.C.O.s of the artillery at Kirkee, who had worked like Trojans, and were meeting these people and feeding them for four days. This they did so well that all declared they had never eaten such good food in

their lives before. I have always said: "If you want a thing done quickly in an emergency and want it done *well*, ask a gunner." They've never let me down.

It was fortunate the families were given a good breakfast, for on reaching their quarters afterwards, and seeing how small they were, what little furniture there was, and how much they had to do, many of them sat down on the steps and cried bitterly. Thus my wife found them on going round to see if she could give any help.

This influx of batches of married people all over India, with no knowledge whatever of the country and no nucleus of pre-war families to show them the way about (moreover women of a superior class to former days and accustomed to a higher standard of living), was a very difficult situation to deal with. What made it still more difficult was the fact that the War Office were unable to say, straight off, what the fixed establishment should be.

I am afraid there was a good deal of discomfort at first. The husbands had certainly to put their hands in their pockets to a very considerable extent, in addition to grants from regimental funds, to provide what in the old days might have been called luxuries, but are now requisites. So far as I could ascertain the average came to about Rs. 200 (say £13) per man.

The matter was of course immediately represented by me, and doubtless by others, and the Government of India took action as soon as possible. There was unavoidable delay in completion, but before the question was represented by the Esher Committee, a much more liberal household outfit was sanctioned. In addition, the construction of a large number of extra quarters, of a far superior type, was put in hand.

It is interesting to note that attention is now concentrated on good hill accommodation, while the winter months will be spent on the plains under canvas. Some of the old stagers, of whom there are a few left, will not care about this for, like the pre-war British soldier, they much prefer the ease, comfort, big bazaars and facility for getting servants in the plains. They think nothing of the heat, even putting aside any consideration for their children.

Later, at Lahore, I was to experience an instance of this where the wife of an old artillery sergeant, who had been

in India before, influenced the women of several new units to refuse to move to the hills. She pictured them as bleak, horrible mountains full of wild animals, with no bazaars, no comfort and every movement done on foot. She had no children, but others had.

Hearing of this I suggested a circular should be sent round giving a true account of the horrors of the plains in the hot weather. The beauty and advantages of the hills were to be dwelt on, and a point made of the benefit derived by the children. At the same time my staff proposed to all brigadiers that the regimental ladies should further the matter by personal visits and explanation. This had very good results except in the very battery to which this obstructionist belonged, where a bombardier's wife with two children absolutely refused to budge.

Meeting the major's wife and asking how her propaganda was progressing she mentioned this case, adding she had tried every kind of persuasion in vain. She added she had even gone so far as to say that the major-general commanding the division was interesting himself very much in the matter and thought no woman should stay down in the plains. To this the bombardier's lady had replied: "Major-general or no major-general, I am not going to them 'orrid 'ills full of snakes and wild animals, and nothing but working and walking from morning till night!" Eventually she was left below, but the children were sent up with another family.

To arrive in Lahore as G.O.C. Division, but a perfect stranger, at the very beginning of the 1919 Christmas week, with its hunt meets, races, polo tournament, dances and horse show, was something of an ordeal, but perhaps not a bad preliminary introduction to all grades of society.

This was the first year since 1913 that any serious attempt had been made to revive the pre-war glories of the Lahore Christmas festivities, and what with hunting twice a week, two full days at the horse show, and some kind of tourney every afternoon, one was kept pretty busy. I had brought with me, from Poona, my Australian hunter "Warrior," and at Lahore he repeated his Poona successes by taking first prize in both "Hunter" and "English and Colonial" classes, as he did again two months later at Rawalpindi.

The hunting was very good, and indeed all through the season the M.F.H. (Lieut.-Colonel W F. S. Casson)

showed excellent sport to large fields. I took a bad toss on the 29th February owing to my horse putting his foot in a hole when going fast. But I always look back on it as really a piece of good luck, because it happened on the very last day of the season.

For the benefit of those who do not know, it may be said that the Lahore Cantonments are situated six miles from the capital itself, a distance which is just far enough to make the journey a nuisance, and yet not far enough to cause the visit to be a real change or novelty.

Tradition has it that in 1851-2 it was decided to transfer troops from Anarkali (suburb of Lahore), on account of its unhealthiness, to a new cantonment outside. This the Lahore general was instructed to select. Seeing no object in placing troops anywhere except in Lahore itself, he protested, but was overruled.

Time went on until, no plans or proposals being submitted, Simla sent very urgent orders for the selection and report to be carried out immediately. Calling for his staff and his horse, the general galloped hard across country until his mount was clean cooked, when dismounting, he said: "This will do for the site of their damned cantonment!" A stone opposite the present church marks this spot, but the inscription on it fails to do justice to the above legend. The name given was Mian Mir.

In face of the question asked in the House of Commons, during the war, as to whether it was true that certain Territorials had been moved to the unhealthy climate of Mian Mir, and the reply: "No, sir, but to the salubrious station of Lahore Cantonments," it may be as well to explain that the two places are identical, except in name!

As a matter of fact Mian Mir got such a bad reputation for malaria that, after General Walter Kitchener's campaign against this disease, when he closed all irrigation aqueducts in the place, it was thought as well, in 1906, to change the name to Lahore Cantonments. This compulsory stoppage of innumerable little channels of water, running in excavated ditches, certainly made a difference from the health point of view, but the lack of irrigation also made the station extremely dusty and barren. So much so, that as funds became available, brick channels

were substituted for the old excavations and the water was reintroduced. The place is not particularly unhealthy now, but the decrease in malaria may be as much due to the present habitual use of mosquito curtains and to other health precautions, as to the change in the methods of irrigation.

I arrived in Lahore too late to have any connection with that prince of lieutenant-governors, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, but in his successor, Sir Edward Maclagan, the new ruler of the Punjab, I was to find a very charming gentleman.

CHAPTER XXI

GENERAL DYER AND AMRITSAR

TO throw light on happenings in India since 1914 necessitates reference to the Amritsar Affair as well as to the political situation in India, comments on both of which I had hoped to avoid.

I write as a soldier, and look at things from a soldier's point of view. It is true I was on the spot, but the political situation can, and probably will, be described much better by someone with a greater inside knowledge and a far abler pen. In a very able, clear and moderate speech, Lord Sydenham called the attention of the House of Lords to the situation in India.¹ His remarks had evidently been prepared with great care. His statements were concise and logical, while his deductions were unanswered, because many of them were probably unanswerable. Is it any wonder therefore that I desired to omit all reference to this subject?

But as I wrote—and my words were nearly all penned three months before Lord Sydenham's speech—I realised two facts. Firstly, that people have very short memories, especially on subjects that do not interest them. Secondly, that they labour under the disadvantage of obtaining their information in serial form from the newspapers, and so lose all sense of perspective.

Therefore it seemed to me essential that I should describe the conditions prevailing in India during and after the war, especially as regards the Punjab. Further, that I should lead up to the Dyer Case, and give a brief outline of what took place at Amritsar. Finally, that I should

¹ October 25, 1921.

present a bird's-eye view of the situation to-day from a soldier's standpoint.

In 1907-8 there were seditious movements, but I need scarcely refer to these, except to note that they *did* occur. In 1914-16 there were risings in the South-West Punjab, hardly anti-Government, for no Government officers were attacked, nor was any Government property looted. They were dealt with and suppressed, mainly by the armed Police. In 1916 Mrs. Besant hoisted her Home Rule flag in Madras.

During the same period there was the *Ghadr* conspiracy. This was in existence before the War, and composed chiefly of Sikhs in the United States of America, who were in touch with disaffected Sikhs in the Punjab. After the outbreak of war it was financed by German money. A party of Sikhs left India for Canada in the early autumn of 1914. Being refused admission into Canada, they had to return to India, and landed in Calcutta, October, 1914. Failure to search them for arms on disembarkation, and some other mismanagement, led to serious rioting at the railway station of Budge-Budge, near Calcutta, which spread and had to be put down by the military. The aim of the *Ghadr* party was the overthrow of British rule in India.

In the winter of 1918 political agitators were extremely active everywhere, especially at Amritsar, in the Punjab. Every measure of Government, such as attempts to control prices and commandeer stocks for the needs of the Army, or people, at reasonable prices, was seized on for misrepresentation. Then came the publication of the Rowlatt Bill in January, 1919. This was a measure, advised by the Rowlatt Committee, to enable Government to deal with seditious movements more speedily than by ordinary law, and was rendered necessary owing to the Armistice and the approaching lapse of the Defence of India Act (the D.O.R.A. of India). Its introduction gave the extremists the very opportunity they were looking for, namely, an excuse to combine, and to focus their anti-Government agitation on a particular measure.

The Bill was passed in March, 1919, and was a signal for that violent and unprecedented agitation all over India with which Government had been threatened in the native Press and on many a platform. It also led to Gandhi's

passive resistance movement, i.e. non-co-operation with any Government work whatever. This was accompanied by *hartāls* (lit. a strike, i.e. passive resistance as evinced by the closing of all shops, etc.), as decreed by Gandhi, upon dates and in places fixed by him.

The result of all this was the outbreak at Delhi on the 30th March. This, had it been firmly dealt with, might have ended the matter, but the leniency then showed encouraged the party of violence, and it was followed by the April disturbances in Lahore and insurrection and open rebellion at Amritsar and elsewhere.

Seditionists had everything in their favour, for there was a general restlessness during 1919-20. This was mainly the aftermath of the Great War, for unrest was abroad, and India could little expect to be immune. It became a kind of mental disorder, which got on the nerves of the people, making them discontented as well as restless. Nor were their grievances entirely unreasonable, for a great deal of serious economic distress actually existed. Food was very much dearer, the luxuries the better class had become accustomed to were often unprocurable, and the price of clothes was prohibitive.

The people did not understand the reason for all this, and, blaming the Government, as they do in all periods of distress, became most fruitful soil for the seeds of sedition, which agitators of all classes were not slow to take advantage of. Any stick was good enough to beat Government with, and bring it into discredit.

Amongst the more successful movements was their emigration scheme¹ in connection with the Khilāfat²

¹The emigrants were also called "Muhajirin" (see footnote, page 219). By this term Indians meant to imply that these people were abandoning their country from religious conviction, i.e. "making a flight" from India under a Christian Government to Afghanistan under a Mahomedan power. Probably connected with Mahomet's flight from Mecca, known as the "Hegira."

²The Khilāfat movement was organised by the Mahomedans in India as a protest against the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire. The Mahomedan looks to Turkey and the Sultan of Turkey as the "Khalif," or head of the Mahomedan world, and protector of the Holy Places of Islam, which include Adrianople, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Mecca, Nejf and Bagdad. All of these, prior to 1914, were under the suzerainty, if not under the actual control, of Turkey. Mahomedan Holy Places being now in the hands of the, to them, infidel (Greek or British) is, so they declare, contrary to the tenets

agitation which, engineered with much skill and ingenuity by extremists of all creeds, caused me a great deal of anxiety in the Lahore Division as likely to seriously affect our Mahomedan soldiery.

Speaking briefly, it may be explained, that seizing on the proposed Turkish peace terms as likely ground to afford proof of England's desire to debase a Mahomedan Power, these agitators made deceptive and misleading statements regarding the transfer of the Khilâfat or custody of the Holy Places from the Sultan of Turkey, and persuaded many thousands of Mahomedans, as a protest, to migrate from India to Afghanistan.

They were told that the Amir and the Afghans would receive them with open arms; that the country was one flowing with milk and honey; that they would be given land rent free, and even cottages, cattle and fodder. Backed up, as all these statements were, by doles of money and railway expenses, raised by subscription, many thousands of poor, misguided followers of the Prophet, disposing of their holdings and selling their stock and cattle at a great loss, embarked on this disastrous adventure by special trains to the frontier.

As is well known, they were very soon disillusioned, and finding their welcome in Afghanistan, and the conditions existing there, the very opposite from what they had been led to expect, the majority of those who did not succumb—and many did—hastened to get back to India alive. On return, in a miserable plight, they had immediate and undoubted proof of the paternity and generosity of the Government they had been foolish enough to dishonour and abuse. They were received, like the prodigal son, with feasting and gifts in the shape of restored holdings, fresh cattle, and some money with which to start again. In fact over large areas the counsel of the political agitator was at a discount, while the prestige of and belief in Government became higher than ever before on the North-West Frontier.

My forebodings regarding the danger of this movement, as regards our Mahomedan troops, were no illusion. In September, as the Khilâfat emigration was progressing, I

of their religion. As a matter of fact Indian Mahomedans had never looked to Turkey before. This protest was, therefore, simply a move in the political game.

was called to Multan in connection with uneasiness in the 127th Baluchistan Infantry on this very question, and for which the men were in no way to blame. The battalion had lately returned from service overseas, and about half the men had proceeded on leave to their homes on the North-West Frontier. A large number, however, immediately returned, to report that they could find neither wives, homes, nor relatives, as all had disappeared and emigrated into Afghanistan. Such a state of affairs naturally caused the greatest disquietude.

In the interim, the exigencies of the times necessitated the move of this unit for active service on the frontier, as soon as the leave men had all returned. It was at this juncture that Major Kennedy-Craufurd-Stuart, the O.C., reported the matter, begging for guidance and help. On reaching the regimental lines I noticed large groups of men standing about, and a good many talking excitedly to someone in a car. They would have stopped mine, but, by a piece of good fortune, this someone happened to be an inspecting brigadier from Simla, who was just ahead of me. Thinking he was the divisional commander, the men formed up across the road and, while speaking to him, as his car pulled up, I slipped quietly by.

I was soon closeted with the O.C. and his Subadar Major (senior Indian officer) in the orderly room. I had not met Major Stuart before, but was struck at once with his capacity, and level-headed grasp of the whole situation. His S.M. appeared to me about the best type of a manly, honest, straightforward frontier soldier I had ever come across.

The result of the investigation was a "clear line" wire to Army Headquarters, explaining the facts of the case, with a strong recommendation that the projected move of the unit to the frontier be cancelled and the men given very liberal leave to their homes. [I had information that a great number of the emigrants were returning by batches.] Both were sanctioned and, as this was just what the O.C. wanted, and what the Subadar Major said would make matters quite all right, confidence was restored.

Harking back to the unprecedented agitation on the passing of the Rowlatt Bill (March, 1919), followed by the outbreak at Delhi, it must be noted that the situation everywhere was soon one of extreme tension. The heads

of all local Governments were full of anxiety, for disturbances in various other provinces pointed to a common organisation.

Every revolutionary eruption in India endeavours to establish itself in the Punjab for the following reasons :

(a) It is the province which is the mainstay of the army.

(b) Its proximity to the frontier and Afghanistan assists the movement in becoming much more dangerous, and in developing more rapidly than elsewhere.

(c) The martial and excitable character of the people lends itself more readily to the designs of the political agitator.

The Punjab all along had been effectively dealing with the situation in its midst. Sir Michael O'Dwyer realised long before what was likely to occur. By advice and exhortation he tried to bring home to both Hindu and Mahomedan extremists the vast danger of the path they were treading. At the same time, he encouraged all the loyal elements (the vast majority and including the fighting races who had done so splendidly in the War) to help in maintaining peace and order.

Away from the towns these efforts were entirely successful, but they failed with that section of the *urban* population which had held back during the War and was directly influenced by the extremist platform and the virulent native Press. Even here, however, there were results, for the disturbances were confined to certain towns and areas adjoining them or along the railway influenced by such towns.

It was only the prompt repression of the rebellion by the Punjab Government, and its effects on the military and political situation on the frontier and with Afghanistan, which prevented much more serious outbreaks in other provinces, and averted what might easily have become a regular revolution. Indeed, it is an undoubted fact that the measures taken prevented other serious risings, not only within the province, but outside it. Moreover they restored the internal situation before Government had to meet the more serious crisis, namely, the Afghan War. This came, as I have related elsewhere, early in May, and was precipitated by the Amir's belief that the whole Punjab was in a state of revolt against Government.

When I arrived in Lahore the Punjab was still smoulder-

ing under the supposition that the retribution enacted at Amritsar for cold-blooded murder and arson, followed by unlawful assemblage, was quite unmerited, and that the questions of the Khilâfat¹ and Turkish peace terms were being treated by the British Government in such a way as to insult the feelings of all Mahomedans. When I say, "The Punjab was still smouldering," I should be more correct in saying, "seditionists and evil disposed people in the Punjab." The mass of the population knew little about these matters, and cared less, until worked up by the visits, speeches and propaganda of these ubiquitous undesirables.

Here it is as well to relate, that undoubtedly fostered by the machinations of these people, a new development appeared, one which I had seldom seen a sign of before, and one which gradually increased as the disinclination of Government to take adequate action against such political agitators was more and more evident.

What was in the mind of the authorities we never knew. Lord Chelmsford told the House of Lords, when speaking on Lord Sydenham's debate on 25th October last, that the policy of the Government of India had been to let the non-co-operation movement kill itself. Exactly what Lord Sinha said in 1920, when Under Secretary of State for India, and speaking of Gandhi's agitation.

To us on the spot, both then and later, when Gandhi's policy of non-co-operation² progressed, it looked as if they were gambling on the chance of excitement over the elections to the new reform councils³ absorbing all the attention and activities of these demagogues, to the exclusion of everything else. Be that as it may, the unbridled licence allowed, both on the platform and in the native press, to vilify Government and defame British rule made things very unpleasant.

The Government's plan, if plan it was, was entirely frustrated by the extremists boycotting the elections altogether! It may be permitted perhaps to enquire, *en passant*, what will be the condition of affairs, if these men elect to stand at the next elections, and are returned, as they certainly may be?

The development I refer to was *racial hatred*, quite foreign indeed to the men of the Indian Army, and to the

¹ See footnote 2, page 284. ² See page 284. ³ See page 295.

humble ryot,¹ but very noticeable elsewhere. It arose from the cunning appeals of the agitator to racial feeling, which is perhaps the strongest sentiment in human nature. Such reference undoubtedly caused a loss of respect for a, so-called, ruling race, which he pictured as paralysed with fear, and afraid to govern. He instanced, as proof, the immunity of the leading members of this band of extremists in their open defiance of all authority. It was a crafty argument, and likely to bear weight even amongst much more intellectual and intelligent audiences than those to which it was presented in the Punjab.

People in England seem quite incapable of understanding that the dumb millions of India were more than content with the British Raj, and that it was only a proportion of the ridiculously small majority of natives educated by us, on Western lines, who were "agin the Government." The "moderates," amongst those educated in this way, are to have their chance, and from what I saw before leaving India they are getting that chance. Moreover the way they have, in some cases, taken it makes the future, *with certain provisos*, more full of hope than pessimists would have one believe. But I must paint the picture as I found it in December, 1919, and January, 1920, after the gaieties were over, and I was able to move about.

Taking the earliest opportunity of visiting Amritsar before Christmas, I was a good deal struck by the sullen demeanour of the inhabitants, and the distinct indication of that racial hatred I have already referred to. As the extremist congress was just about to assemble there for a huge conference, this was not perhaps a matter of wonder. However, with tactful handling of the situation by the civil authorities, and firm action by the military in certain cases of insubordination amongst various classes of followers, there was much less evidence of this feeling later on. At least I thought so, but casual visits, assisted only by reports of junior officers, are not conducive to a very clear perspective.

As regards the Dyer case, I cannot commence better than by quoting from a report I have been privileged to read :

" Briefly the situation was this. On the 13th April, 1919, Amritsar, a city of 160,000 people (with a strong

¹ Indian peasant of the rural population.

leaven of the lawless and desperate element), had been in a state of open rebellion for four days (since the 10th). Five Europeans had been murdered. European ladies had been savagely assaulted, and in one case left for dead (Miss Sherwood). The church and other missionary buildings had been burnt. Two English banks, whose managers had been murdered, had been looted. The railway goods station had been set on fire. The railway passenger station had been attacked and only saved by the timely arrival of a troop train with Gurkhas.

“The Central Telegraph office in the city had been assaulted and damaged, the European telegraph master being only saved by the arrival of Indian troops. The railway stations adjoining Amritsar had been wrecked and looted. A goods train had also been looted. An attempt had been made on the Calcutta mail proceeding to Lahore, but this was repulsed by fire from the railway police guard. The Town Hall had been set on fire, and various post offices in the city plundered.”

I am told the Civil Commissioner of the division was specially sent down to Amritsar by the Lieutenant-Governor on the 10th April. Assured that the civil power could do nothing, he made over charge of the situation to the Officer Commanding troops, to re-establish, by military power, the authority of Government. The next day (11th April), Brigadier-General Dyer arrived at Amritsar with reinforcements, and taking over command, issued a proclamation on the 12th in all the main thoroughfares, forbidding any public meetings, and warning the people that such would be dispersed by force. He was an officer of long and varied experience with a great knowledge of the country also.

On the same day he issued a further proclamation and, marching troops through the city, got control of the exits. The city was still in a state of tumult and revolt, the attitude of the mob on this day being so hostile that the question of opening fire had to be seriously considered. General Dyer, however, decided to issue a still further proclamation first.

Meanwhile, emissaries from the rebels had taken an active part in stirring up an outbreak at the adjoining railway station of Kasur on the 12th. Here a furious mob attempted to kill every European in the train, and



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BRIGADIER-GENERAL R. E. H. DYER, C.B., INDIAN ARMY.

actually did murder two warrant officers. On the same date they had also attacked the Government treasury of Taran-Taran.

These facts were known to General Dyer when, soon after issuing his final proclamation on the 13th, he discovered that a large gathering had assembled at the Jalianwala Bagh (Garden), in open defiance of his order, of which few, if any, in the circumstances, could have been ignorant.

It seemed to him, therefore, that there was no alternative but dispersion by force, and on this afternoon of the 13th April, he proceeded with an armoured car and ninety Indian troops, all he could spare, to the Jalianwala Bagh gathering for this purpose.

The meeting had been convened by the rebel who led the attack on the National Bank on the 10th, when the two European employés were murdered. Before Dyer's arrival it had been addressed by eight speakers, all of whom had taken a leading part in the rebellion, and five of whom were subsequently sentenced to transportation for life. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the object of the meeting was to stimulate sedition and rebellion, as well as to defy the proclamations of the military authorities.

As General Dyer was clearly dealing with a rebellion the Lieutenant-Governor, that same day, sent a wireless message to Simla (all other means of communication having been cut) proposing the application of martial law to Lahore and Amritsar. This was sanctioned the same night, and proclaimed on the 15th April.

Now the approach to Jalianwala Bagh was by a small alley too narrow for the armoured car, which was left in the main city street, and not utilised. On arrival with his men at the end of the alley, overlooking the garden, General Dyer saw that an excited mob of some thousands was being harangued by political agitators. He ordered fire to be opened at once in order to disperse the hostile gathering. The death-roll was 397. I have heard it said that women and children were shot. This is incorrect, for there were none there. Moreover, of the 397 killed, 300 were lawless and desperate characters belonging to Amritsar city.

A visit to this Bagh and reflections on the incidents

that had occurred on the 13th April, and before, brought home to me the very difficult situation in which General Dyer was placed. It appeared to me to be his mission to disperse that mob by force, and prevent further acts of rebellion in Amritsar. His action not only effectively stopped them there, but, as the news spread, in many other places. I knew this to be a fact myself, months afterwards, and in a locality so remote as Poona, near Bombay.

Very high authority does not hesitate to affirm that Dyer's action that day was the decisive factor in crushing what was a very serious rebellion. Further, this same authority is convinced that if he had not dispersed the gathering by force, the rebellion would have assumed such dimensions that its suppression would have involved infinitely greater loss of life and suffering than was caused at Amritsar on the 13th April, 1919.

There has been much controversy over General Dyer's action that day, not only as to whether he used too much force, but also as to whether he was justified in using greater force than the actual situation required, in order to create an impression elsewhere. I do not wish to revive that controversy. The decision was against him, and it is useless flogging a dead horse.

I understand the highest military authority in India asked for an immediate Government enquiry. This was not sanctioned; but, later on, the Hunter Committee was appointed from home, and began its enquiry seven months after the events had happened, and when hostile propaganda had made it most difficult to ascertain the true facts. Meanwhile General Dyer was given a better appointment on the frontier, and remained uncensured during this period.

He was called as a witness before this court of enquiry and cross-examined by the three expert Indian lawyers, who had been appointed to the committee, much as if he had been a criminal in the dock. Whether he was offered legal assistance or not, I do not know. Anyhow he had none, and, being a simple, frank soldier, suffered badly in that examination, which was distinctly adverse in tone. Asking me, just before he left India, what I thought of his action on the 13th April, and of his evidence, etc., I told him plainly, that I considered he was bound



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THE STREET IN AMRITSAR CITY, PUNJAB, WHERE MISS SHERWOOD WAS LEFT FOR DEAD BY THE REBELS IN APRIL, 1919.

to get the worst of it ; *not so much for what he had done, but for what he had said.*

As regards what he *did*, we have now before us the case of two young officers in the Leinsters operating recently with a platoon in the Moplah country. They are said to have been cut to pieces and horribly mutilated because they hesitated to fire, and therefore gave the rebels the chance of rushing them. The inference is obvious, but I have wished to tread in this delicate matter with all caution, and it will be quite sufficient if I conclude by giving my own feelings on the Dyer Case, which are shared by the majority of my brother soldiers.

We feel, that whatever excesses or errors of judgment it may be thought he committed, his actions effected the immediate object in view, i.e. the suppression of the rebellion at its very centre, and were primarily approved by the highest authorities. This being so, no political or other influences should have induced the same authorities, later on, to reverse their judgment and let him down. True, the findings of the Hunter Commission were adverse, and this was really the final verdict. True also is it, that his own evidence before it was self-condemnatory. Yet, it seems to us, that, the just line to have taken would have been to clearly and emphatically disavow his acts—or rather his subsequent explanation of them—where necessary, while at the same time refusing to be a party to his professional ruin. The reason being, as I say, that his action had already been tacitly confirmed, and because it was agreed, on all sides, that he had acted in good faith, in a way which, to his lights, seemed absolutely necessary and quite unavoidable.

On my visit to Amritsar in December, 1919, were still standing, in the fort, the tents and other shelters in which the British, Indian and American missionaries had been accommodated when fleeing for their lives the April before. Here and about the adjacent railway, a busy day was spent settling the new scheme of defence to deal with any future eventualities. Later on, I camped in the public gardens a strong company of Gurkhas as an addition to the ordinary garrison, which, except for garrison gunners and a platoon of British infantry in the fort, was located some distance away in cantonments, on the farther side of the civil lines.

The Gurkhas enjoyed these gardens immensely and were very happy there. The company belonged to a battalion to which I had been adjutant, when it was raised, some twenty years before, and it knew me well. The men told me that on first arrival it had been unpleasant, and almost dangerous, for less than a group of half a dozen or so to walk into the city. If they did so, they were met with scowling looks and an offensive remark about shooting down the speaker's brothers, an accusation which was most unfair, as I believe no Gurkhas were employed to fire on that 13th April, 1919. However, in a month or two—such is the fascination and attractiveness of the Gurkha—they could go in singly, and make what purchases they liked without any disagreeable comment whatever.

CHAPTER XXII

INDIAN UNREST AND " BIRDIE "

WE now come to the present time, i.e. the end of 1921, when the Reform Act has revolutionised the system of government in India by placing the control in the hands of a combination of Britishers and Indians, with the Viceroy in chief command. As even members of the new Government themselves would emphatically refuse to express any opinion on the probable success of the scheme, I am certainly not going to be so foolish as to pretend to pronounce judgment.

It may suffice to say that the new councils, both imperial and provincial, have, in some cases, begun fairly well, and shown more moderation, statesmanship and sense of responsibility than we expected. At the same time it is a great experiment, not unfraught with danger, and will require much firmness in the handling. More than that, it will require far greater *courage* on the part of Governors and the Viceroy than they have ever been called upon to display before. With the eyes, in many places sceptical eyes, of the whole world looking on, their task is uncommonly difficult.

For the benefit of those who know nothing about India and, I am afraid I must add, care less, let me try to make myself a little clearer. Successful government in India has always depended on the prestige of the British Raj (Rule) being preserved. We do not yet know how this transfer of authority to a combination will be viewed by the masses, who have always looked upon the authority of Government as paramount. The question is whether they are sufficiently advanced, and the educated moderates sagacious enough, to understand the change ; also whether

the latter are brave enough to have the courage of their convictions.

Let me give an illustration. The new Viceroy (Lord Reading) granted five interviews this last summer to Gandhi, who is at present the one great outstanding personality on his country's political stage, and whose dangerous policy of "non-co-operation" I have already alluded to. He had, until lately, the Ali brothers as his most zealous supporters, but they have now been tried, convicted and sentenced to terms of imprisonment for attempting to seduce the Indian soldier from his allegiance.

The interviews were of course given with the best intentions, and perhaps we should not, at this distance, criticise. But there have been occasions, before Lord Reading's time, when the treatment of this misguided person has been very weak, and has been misunderstood. No good appears to have resulted from these meetings, therefore the belief that Government (in the person of the Viceroy) is paramount is in great danger of vanishing, while the credit for supremacy will be transferred elsewhere. Political agitators have already fastened on this by preaching that Gandhi is superhuman, and most cleverly paint a picture of his immunity from arrest, and his power over the highest authorities.

Indeed their ingenuity does not end here. That is the ingenuity of Gandhi and Co. His last, almost despairing, promise to the people regarding *Svaraj* (Home Rule) was, that he would attain it before the end of this year (1921). As this promise is unlikely to be redeemed something must be published to the dupes by way of explanation. In some districts, I am credibly informed, the villagers have been actually told that India is no longer in possession of the British. The worst of it is the majority believe it!

In one district, at least, a fable has been circulated—to captivate the villagers and to meet the case of those who disbelieve the other fabrication—that before *Svaraj* can come a child, with only one eye, is to be born of a virgin, and a colt, with one eye, foaled by a mare. Delightfully vague of course as to when and where, but very clever. Doubtless when Gandhi and Co. consider the time is ripe, the child and colt will be duly born!

As a matter of fact these men, who direct sedition and undermine the Government, are past masters in gulling the Indian public. They know too well, not only how to play on this most touching frailty of the masses (of being so easily gulled), but also on the excitable and unformed persuasions of the partially educated student.

The main object at present of these malcontents, inspired by Gandhi, is to upset every attempt to introduce successful reform leading to the government and administration of India by any combination of British and Indian. In spite of arrests to date (October, 1921) and in spite of the fact that Gandhi's influence may be somewhat on the wane, this intrigue will continue, unless the *very firmest steps* are taken to stop it entirely.

Hence my meaning that courage and firmness are now so essential. That is to say, prompt and resolute action must be taken immediately events tend to show there is some doubt as to whose authority is paramount. For various reasons a loophole has sometimes been given. There must be no loopholes and no sign of weakness.

Some people may think it is absurd to suppose that even simple villagers in India could possibly credit such tales as I have quoted. I can assure them it is so. My "shikar" experiences alone have taught me the absolutely incredible stories these peasants will believe. Indeed, although it sounds ridiculous to say so, it is a fact, that the more incredible, the more impossible and the vaguer the fable, the more likely is it to be accepted as true. To give only one instance—a natural history one—thousands of forest villagers are convinced that a bird which sleeps on his back, does so because he is a nervous bird and fears the sky may fall on him!

During the war the natives in the United Provinces District were taught, and *firmly believed*, that the Germans had captured Calcutta and the German fleet had sailed up the Ganges. Further, that they, the Germans, eventually were defeated by the civil police at Mirzapore (near Benares) under the collector!

In one conspiracy against us, the Arya Samaj, two points were often raised by agitators with much success, and to which we always had much difficulty in giving an effective reply. The natives entirely believed them both. The first was that we have introduced plague to

reduce their numbers, as no European dies of plague, while millions of poor native martyrs die every day of it. If any of the audience express incredulity, the spouter—a trained as well as a born orator (as most natives are)—rounds on them at once :

“How many people died this cold weather of plague in Narain Das’ household?” he demands.

“Seventeen,” is the answer.

“O ho,” says the speaker, “and how many left this transitory world of the family of Baldeo?”

“Twenty-three.”

“So ho,” he goes on, “in two houses in this tinpot hamlet of yours, nearly half a hundred have been destroyed by the ‘demons’ (the word usually applied to Europeans by these demagogues) in a few weeks, and you dare to doubt me when I tell you that these ‘demons’ introduced this disease—of which *they* never die—to kill you off in droves.”

The second point made is that the “demons” kill hundreds of thousands of lovely cows and calves every day in every slaughter-house in India to give beef to themselves and their soldiers; and that if they did not the agriculturists’ *plough cattle* would be half the price they are!

All very clever and most convincing to the audiences to which addressed, because of the knowledge that plague *was* amongst them, and that slaughter-houses for cattle *do* exist in every cantonment where British troops are quartered.

Prisoners on the North-West Frontier have often confessed that they boldly advanced, without fear, because their spiritual leaders had told them they (the priests) had rendered our bullets futile, and the tribesmen themselves immune. When fighting the Bunerwals, those intrepid warriors at first rushed headlong to death against my quick-firing field-guns. The survivors explained, with touching simplicity, how they had been assured by their “mullas” that all our shells had been rendered entirely innocuous.

Therefore the story of the one-eyed child and colt is so *clever*, because it is just the tale to appeal to, and is so admirably suited to the capacities of, the Indian democracy!



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"MAHĀTMĀ" GANDHI, THE INSTIGATOR OF NON-CO-OPERATION.

A word about the personality of "Mahatma" ¹ Gandhi, as he is commonly called by his followers, who, from a commander's point of view, is a very dangerous man. He is himself supposed to be actuated by quite disinterested and honest motives, but he has now overstepped all limits by openly tampering with the loyalty of the Indian soldier, and openly inviting arrest. He and his associates are stated to be at the bottom of the present Moplah trouble, a rising which it will be difficult to suppress, even with the intervention of troops not only shooting, but shooting hard. Yet as I write he is at large, and even if now arrested he has collected his crore of rupees (say £700,000) and perfected his organisation.

It should scarcely be necessary to say that there is no duty so distasteful to the soldier as firing upon civilians. But, when to this is added the fact that many of the troops employed may, unavoidably, be fellow countrymen of the rioters, it will be easily understood what grave anxiety the activities of this fanatic causes to us soldiers. Up to the date of writing, his policy of non-co-operation has, in my opinion, made no headway at all in the Indian Army. But one never knows what may happen in a country where feelings are so easily excited, and where any trivial action is often misconstrued so as to beget doubt and mistrust. That is why it is evident Gandhi is so dangerous a man, and his plan for non-co-operation so dangerous a movement.

The influence he has gained over the masses is enormous, both on account of the purity and asceticism of his personal life, and the conviction abroad of his honesty of purpose and devotion to what he considers duty. Again, his appeal to the glories of an imaginary past, before India came under foreign influences, flatters the vanity of the crowd and stimulates hatred of the foreigner. Personally I have never believed in his honesty of purpose. He is certainly no self-seeker, nor does he wish for comfort, luxuries or wealth, but when his "non-co-operation without violence" has utterly failed, he may stick at nothing.

Another cloud in the political sky is the position of the Native States under the new reforms. These rulers are getting nervous, foreseeing, as they do, that the

¹ Lit. great souled: also possessing preternatural powers and versed in occult mysteries.

extremists will continue their efforts to stir up trouble by instigating the populations of Native States to press for a greater share in the conduct of their own affairs than, in such different circumstances, it is possible to allow them. These rulers will require more help and backing than it has heretofore been the custom to give them.

Then we come to Afghanistan and its Amir. Without going into details, I may explain that a mission has been in Kabul since January, 1921, in the hopes of putting through some kind of treaty or agreement between the British and Afghan Governments. The Amir formed a treaty with the Soviet Government in March, whereby, in return for their support and additional territory, he is to establish Soviet Consulate posts in his country. He was also in league with the Kemalists, with the result that Turkish instructors were to be lent to train the Afghan army. Further comment on this is needless.

Besides the reasonable request, with limitations, that any treaty should recognise the right of Afghanistan to maintain direct relations with other countries it is common knowledge (as reported by *The Daily Telegraph* correspondent's cable from India on 7th June, 1921) that the Amir's demands include: a free Afghan port at or near Karachi, importation and exportation of arms into and out of Afghanistan without let or hindrance, free intercourse by Afghanistan of every kind with the frontier tribes, and the establishment of so-called "Consulates" of Soviet Russia at Ghazni, Jelalabad and Kandahar, all close to our borders. Demands¹ so preposterous,

¹ Since writing this (October, 1921) a notification has been issued by the India Office, dated 23rd November, 1921, that a treaty of friendship with Afghanistan was signed in Kabul the day before, as satisfactory written assurances had been given that no Soviet Consulates will be permitted in these three areas.

Under the treaty, which, though subject to ratification, is immediately operative—

(1) Great Britain reaffirms her recognition of Afghanistan's complete independence, and there is to be an interchange of Ministers in London and Kabul and of Consuls in India and Afghanistan.

(2) Afghanistan reaffirms her acceptance of the existing Anglo-Afghan frontier, with a slight re-alignment of boundary demarcated by the British Commission in the autumn of 1919.

(3) Misunderstanding between the two Governments over the tribes on either side of the border having been removed, each

that if the Mission remains in Kabul until they are conceded, Sir Henry Dobbs may resign himself to a sojourn there until he becomes superannuated.

From all I have said it is easy to understand the dangers and difficulties civilians and soldiers alike have had recently to face in India, but it is my last intention that too pessimistic a view of the situation should be taken.

The Reforms have been launched, and they must be persevered with. In this connection it is interesting to note that, some thirty years ago, in the account of his father's life, Sir Auckland Colvin wrote :

"The art of British government in India has hitherto been not to destroy but to correct Eastern methods of administration by applying to them the discipline of the Western mind. Now it is the undisciplined Eastern mind which is to introduce into India Western methods of administration. The experiment will prove of interest and, it is earnestly hoped, of value. But the lesson of 1857 must not be forgotten. Whatever may be hazarded with the educated minority, the real India is to be found only in the masses of her ignorant millions. To govern this real India authority and justice should be in full view, but in reserve must be ample force. These are the only methods which under their own rulers the masses of that country have ever respected ; nor even at the desire of the British Government will they readily adopt any other."—*Life of John Russell Colvin.*

It can hardly yet be too late for the Government of India to show clearly that they mean *their* authority to be paramount. With a firm rule the mental disorder of unrest, already referred to as being by no means common to India, will surely work itself out and pass away. What

Government engages to apprise the other beforehand of any major operation it may find necessary to institute for the maintenance of order near the frontier.

(4) Subject to the continuance of friendliness and the provisions of any general Arms Traffic Convention that may hereafter come into force, the privilege formerly enjoyed by the Afghan Government of importing munitions of war through India, is restored, and the Customs duty is remitted, under the usual conditions in regard to goods in transit, on goods that pass through India from ports into Afghanistan.

(5) Provision is made in the treaty for the conclusion of separate trade and postal conventions.

is needed is sympathy between all classes and all races, combined with the very strictest adherence to the principle that the *maintenance of law and order must at all times be upheld.*

There are already some hopeful signs, such as serviceable beginnings made by the new councils under the Reforms Act; the arrest and imprisonment of the Ali brothers; the decision of the Viceroy to agree to no further reduction of British troops; and the acceptance, for the welfare of the army in India, of so many of the recommendations of the Esher Committee.

This last is an enormous gain, for India must have a contented soldiery at all costs. We soldiers look upon that report as the most human and far-reaching document that has seen the light for many a long day. To mention only one item, the generous enhancement of the Indian soldier's family pension, which the Committee so strongly advocated, has caused the utmost satisfaction already. In short, although some of the clauses of the report will have to remain a dead letter until the present financial stringency is relaxed, still, its revelations have opened the eyes of British and Indian alike to the real needs of the officer, the married soldier, and the men generally, in an up-to-date army of the present day.

In case the opinion of an old soldier may be of any interest, let me say at once that I am not one of those who are despondent regarding the future of the Indian Civil Service, or the British officers of the Indian Army. Nor shall I, it is my fervent hope, ever join the present multitude who are continually inveighing against the entry of our boys into either service.

As regards the first (Indian Civil Service) let us trust that our lads are still made of the same good stuff to enable them, as of old, to rise to every occasion, and remain *leaders*, even in the rôle of guide, philosopher and friend. Things may not be quite the same, especially socially. They might even be most distasteful to those of us who have lived in India under different conditions. To assert, however, that there is now no career in these services, no good and useful work to be done, no opportunity to come to the front, are fallacies I can never be a party to.

It seems to me, that under the new reforms, whereby

the Indian becomes a partner of the Britisher, there is more opportunity for the man of character than ever before. When once the situation is fully understood, I shall be vastly surprised if the mere fact of being continually on his mettle does not develop the young Indian Civil officer even more than the glorious traditions of his service have proved to be the case in days gone by.

As for the young British officers of the Indian Army, much the same equally applies. I have talked to many. Few have any original ideas on the subject, only opinions picked up from their seniors. Those who had taken up sport, as a relaxation from their duties, had to confess there was no reason why, in this respect, there should be any diminution. India is, and will still remain, the happy hunting ground of the true sportsman, and those who have not been fortunate enough to gain this grand experience are lucky if they are unable to realise how much they have missed.

Some young officers, influenced by idle talk, dilated on the disadvantageous emoluments in India compared with the new pay and allowances of their confrères at home. This has been touched on by the Esher Committee, suitable recommendations have been made, and many concessions already granted or are in process of consummation.

I would like to add one piece of advice, namely, not to heed vituperative letters in the press, nor the ill-advised vapourings of idle, discontented grumblers. Let young officers weigh for themselves, without prejudice, the many advantages of an Indian career. Further, may I tell them, with the experience of over thirty-seven years' service behind me, that, personally, I have always found the India Office and the Indian Government both fair and honourable in dealings with their servants.

The only other matter of importance, also referred to by the Esher Committee, brought forward by young officers, was their position in the future, with so many commissions given, and to be given, to Indians. It may comfort them somewhat to consider attentively the fact that the ordeals of Sandhurst and its examinations, professional examinations later on, confidential reports, and the amount of time and study to be devoted to his

duties by the officer of the present day, will most certainly eliminate all those Indians but the very best. With these it should be nothing but a pleasure to serve. Moreover, with the Indian Territorial force an accomplished fact, employment is available for those commissioned Indians considered unsuitable to officer units of the regular army.

With the exception of shooting experiences¹—which will be the easiest of all to write—my reminiscences are now drawing to a close. They read to me more like the memoirs of other people, so much am I indebted to events in the lives of my friends for interesting and unusual incidents. I feel I cannot conclude, more fitly and more happily, than by a reference to the Indian Army, to which I owe everything, and whose members I love so well. (By the "Indian Army" I refer of course to Indian units, as opposed to the "Army in India," which comprises both British and Indian.)

Now the backbone of the Indian Army is the Indian officer, than whom no finer class of man exists. He is our great *asset* and, treated with sympathy, justice, liberality and respect, as I feel is now the case, it is difficult to imagine how things can possibly go wrong. In every good regiment, battery and battalion he wields an enormous influence, and is the link between the British officer and the Indian ranks. The senior one, the risaldar-major of cavalry, or the subadar-major of infantry, in a good corps, has his finger on the pulse of the whole unit, knows and reports every happening in the regimental lines and every feeling that exists amongst all ranks. So loyal, upright and straightforward have our Indian officers proved themselves, as a rule, that it is interesting to relate an episode which occurred to my knowledge in the early part of 1915, when the mutinous Ghadr² party were so active.

The Criminal Investigation Department having received information of the place and time of a secret meeting of Ghadr leaders, deputed one of their most trusted Indian subordinates to endeavour to hear what they had to say. With infinite bravery and resource, this

¹ These are too lengthy to appear in this volume, and my publisher has decreed that they shall have a separate identity.

² See page 283.

man concealed himself below the flooring of the room where the conspirators were to meet, well knowing, besides suffering extreme discomfort for hours, that his discovery meant instant death.

In addition to other useful knowledge gained, he heard a resolution, passed unanimously, to discontinue any further attempt to tamper with the Indian officer. This was stated by the rebels to be not only useless and a waste of time, but very injurious to their own cause, owing to the probability of the matter being immediately reported.

To one devoted to military training, like myself, it was a great privilege, both as a commander and as an inspector, to move amongst, and have intercourse with, the grand soldiers of our Indian Army. Their keenness, their desire to please, as well as their anxiety to excel, is prodigious, and makes service with them a veritable delight. Well trained, well led and well treated, they are very hard to beat, as we have proved on many a field. To look on them as super-men is ridiculous and extremely hard on the soldiers themselves. For this reason my readers can imagine our disgust at the fulsome flattery and absurd eulogy poured out regarding them, in the Press, in September, 1914, on their first arrival in France.

For some time during the War I had under me no less than eight depôts, or units, of the old "Punjab Frontier Force."¹ It was such a real pleasure inspecting them, that it was difficult to keep away. Taking them, however, exactly as they were, that is seeing them at their ordinary work, I knew that they liked my visits, just as much as I myself did the time spent over them. To see their faces lighten up at a word of praise, to hear their mirthful laughter at a well-timed joke, to note their appreciation of a useful bit of training advice, and to converse and chaff with their manly Indian officers, all are joyous memories I shall carry with me to the grave.

Knowing the Indian Army as I do, I can only view with great apprehension—shared by many of my contemporaries—the recent reduction in the cavalry by eighteen regiments. It is easy to disband, but it is not so easy to build up again. Putting aside the extinction

¹ Commonly called "Piffers."

of honoured names, glorious tradition and esprit de corps, India and the countries adjoining it are so eminently suited to the employment of mounted men. Again, the Indian cavalry soldier combines the rôle of mounted infantryman, *par excellence*, with his activity, endurance and good shooting. Extremely mobile infantry is not to be despised.

There is also another aspect to the case, that is, whether the moment for disbandment is well chosen? *All* reductions must fill the villages with discontented men, and reductions in the cavalry hit a class whose loyalty and goodwill are specially valuable assets at the present moment. A class whose forbears have been cavalymen and whose sons look forward to joining a *risāla* (regiment of Indian cavalry).

In these days anything which causes discontent amongst that small percentage of the millions of India who furnish the army with soldiers must be a dangerous move. Without a loyal and contented army—with a loyal and contented people to recruit it from—all government is very difficult in a country like India.

The reason for this reduction is, of course, financial. With only a limited sum available for the army one understands it must be spent on what the authorities consider essential. What is desirable goes to the wall. It is devoutly to be hoped that the great value of this cavalry has been duly weighed, and that a great mistake has not been committed.

No reference to the Indian Army would be complete without an allusion to its brightest ornament, its finest soldier and its most senior serving general. I mean, of course, Sir William Birdwood, so often referred to in these pages, and affectionately known as "Birdie" of the Indian Army, though also "Birdie" of the Anzacs.

I have known him for a great number of years, soon after the time when as a very smart young officer of the 11th Bengal Lancers he was the best man-at-arms at a big assemblage in Calcutta. I think our first meeting was when he was commandant of the Viceroy's bodyguard at Dehra Dun, where he was as good an administrator and farmer of the bodyguard acres as he proved himself a valuable staff officer and matchless leader in the days to come.



To face page 306

Photo: Elliot and Fry, Ltd.

GENERAL SIR WILLIAM BIRDWOOD, BT., G.C.M.G., K.C.B., K.C.S.I., C.I.E., D.S.O.

He is a man of many parts, and has never failed, while his experiences have been unique. What knowledge must be possessed by, and what secrets must lie buried in, the bosom of one who, besides holding many appointments in the field, was for over seven consecutive years closely connected with Lord Kitchener, mainly as his military secretary; then for three years a brigade commander, followed by Q.M.G.; and finishing, before the War, as secretary to the Government of India in the Army Department.

It was as a military secretary that his kindly, helpful nature first became manifest to the enormous number of officers with whom he had to deal. He was always ready to do a good turn to a competent man, always thinking of the welfare of the Indian Army, and always most jealous of its reputation and good name. Wishing to know where the shoe pinched, and what officers really felt, he never discouraged letters, and his daily correspondence must have been immense. Yet he was never known to leave a letter unanswered, however trivial the subject.

His value to Lord Kitchener was very great, for not only was he impervious to fatigue and possessed of unbounded tact, but he had a very wide inside knowledge of India and India's soldiers. Moreover, if he did not know a thing he would go and ask the best man who did, and everyone was always ready to help "Birdie."

As a brigade commander he was also a great success. With his usual energy he soon learnt all there was to know, which his troops were not slow to discover. His firmness, justice and sympathy endeared him to all ranks, and when he left Kohat to become Q.M.G. the ovation he received at the railway station was quite unprecedented.

But what pleased him most, I think, was the fact that, when touring in later years, crowds of Indian officers trooped to his saloon (when his train stopped at various cantonments for a few hours), because they wanted to see, and shake hands with the beloved general they had known at Kohat.

Sir William Birdwood's name is best known to the public as the successful commander of the Australian New Zealand Army Corps (A.N.Z.A.C.), first in Gallipoli and then in France. Everyone has heard of "Birdie's"

fame and popularity, and many know how Ian Hamilton in his picturesque despatches so truly called him "the soul of Anzac."

I have before me a letter from one of Sir William's divisional commanders,¹ extracts from which I cannot resist quoting :

"It was the luck of my career to accompany General Birdwood from India to Egypt to join the Australians, in November, 1914. From that time till July, 1918, when I left the Australians, I had daily experience of his kindness and consideration. During the whole of that time I may truthfully say I never saw him lose his temper and never heard an acrimonious expression, while his capability of keeping in touch with everything that was going on was prodigious. His eye missed nothing, and no good deed passed his notice. All ranks knew this, and no commander was ever more adored than was "Birdie" by the Australians. His energy was unbounded, and he had the knack of remembering everybody.

"He was early ashore at Anzac on the memorable 25th April, and though we had experienced a trying time, with many casualties, 'Birdie' was unperturbed, and inspired confidence on all sides. It was a debatable matter whether we could hold on at Anzac, but the decision to dig in was made, and, after some four or five days' strenuous fighting, we established ourselves on the line which we held up to the evacuation.

"From the date of landing 'Birdie' commenced to make the acquaintance of nearly every individual man in the Australian and New Zealand forces. His average daily tour of the trenches was eight hours. Armed only with a periscope, he moved along, speaking and talking to this man and that, varying the programme by periodical inspections of the Turkish trenches.

"In one of these he had a narrow escape, a sniper's bullet ploughing the parting of his hair; a fraction lower, and the wound would have been fatal.

"He was generally to be seen bathing off the beach in spite of 'Beachy Bill,' a Turkish gun, which took daily toll of those whose duty (or pleasure) took them to the beach.

"The necessity to evacuate Gallipoli must have caused

¹ Major-General Sir H. B. Walker, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O.

him great pain, where so many Australians had fallen. He left many intimate friends and admirers behind there, and it is no exaggeration to say that many of the deeds of valour performed were inspired by the personality of 'Birdie.'

"In France he showed the same fearless energy. Eight hours in the trenches, and then office work, was his daily routine. He knew his trenches as well as any divisional or brigade commander, and always had a kind word for those who manned them, thus leaving behind him a much more cheerful frame of mind.

"Divisional commanders actually used to look forward to being sent for to Corps Head-quarters for conferences, etc. There one always found praise for good work and encouragement to again rise to the occasion."

A mighty tribute indeed from a distinguished officer who served directly under Sir William for nearly four most strenuous years. Later on, when commanding the Fifth Army in France, one heard very much the same tale regarding Birdie's wisdom and popularity.

Mentioning the word tale reminds me that there are many stories about Birdie and his Anzacs. So numerous indeed that, during his recent triumphant tour in Australia, *The Sydney Mail* offered a prize for the best one produced. The response was enormous, but unfortunately the subject of these efforts had to acknowledge, later, that he could only recognise an infinitesimal number of them all.

I have never been able to get quite right the one with a play on his name, but it was something like this:—Birdie was starting off one day for his usual tour in the trenches, with his helmet in one hand, periscope in the other, and his hair cut with clippers very close to his head. One of his staff, noticing that a certain sentry did not salute or stand to attention as the corps commander passed, fell behind to ask the reason. The man replied that he didn't know who it was. The staff officer, walking away, heard the sentry say *sotto voce* to himself: "How can I tell, with his head like that; why doesn't he wear feathers like any other *bird would!*"

That periscope was in constant use. "Birdie" was once telling a friend about a "look peep" he was taking from what seemed a very quiet corner. Though he did

not know it, the spot was a favourite mark for the enemy's snipers, and many casualties had lately occurred there. A sentry, close at hand, spotting a sniper's rifle, and being nervous at the imminent danger to his general, called out in his excitement :

"Duck your b . . . y head, Birdie." "Great Scott," said the friend, "that was a 'let off,' and what did you do?" Looking at him, Birdie replied, very quietly: "I ducked my b . . . y head!"

A very amusing tale is one regarding one Australian officer who happened to know the King fairly well, and had been granted an interview at Buckingham Palace. The King said to him: "You really must not allow General Birdwood to continue these daily visits of his to the front-line trenches." Thinking for awhile, this officer said: "Look here, sir, it can't be done"; adding after a pause: "unless your Majesty will give me a collar and chain, and the requisite authority to chain him up. There is no other way of doing it!"

General Birdwood's welcome in Australia was extraordinary; quite embarrassingly so, especially when every old comrade wished to be personally recognised. "Don't you remember the last time you saw me?" said one man. The general expressing regret, he retorted: "Well, you ought to, because you were going through the trenches at Lone Pine one night, and put your foot in the middle of my stomach." Contact (!) with Australians having taught Birdie great power of repartee, he answered at once: "Well, the incident evidently made a much deeper impression on you than it did on me!" That sort of good-humoured "give and take" was what the Australians loved so.

One day in the West Australian goldfields, an old comrade jumped on to the step of his car and said in a very confidential manner: "I tell you what, Mr. Birdwood, don't you go for to write a book like some of those other fellows are doing." Appalling visions of !!! flashed across Birdie. He told the man it was as good a piece of advice as he had ever given, but he needn't bother about it, as though the possession of a small Australian grandson might grade him as an old man, yet he hoped he had not quite reached the period of "anecdotage"!

Such is "Birdie" of the Anzacs, now once again *in situ* as "Birdie" of the Indian Army. Is it any wonder

we are proud of him, and proud to think of all he has done to uphold our good name?

At the present moment he is General Officer Commanding in Chief of the Northern Command, perhaps the most responsible post in India. Before I left the country, besides other inspections, he had already visited every single Indian unit under his command, diffusing contentment, satisfaction and good feeling wherever he appeared.

As I have said before, he possesses in a marked degree that wonderful gift of *sympathy*, and that magnetic personality, so like Lord Roberts, which at the present time in India is worth untold gold.

THE END

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