EARL KITCHENER OF KHARTOUM

WALTER JERROLD

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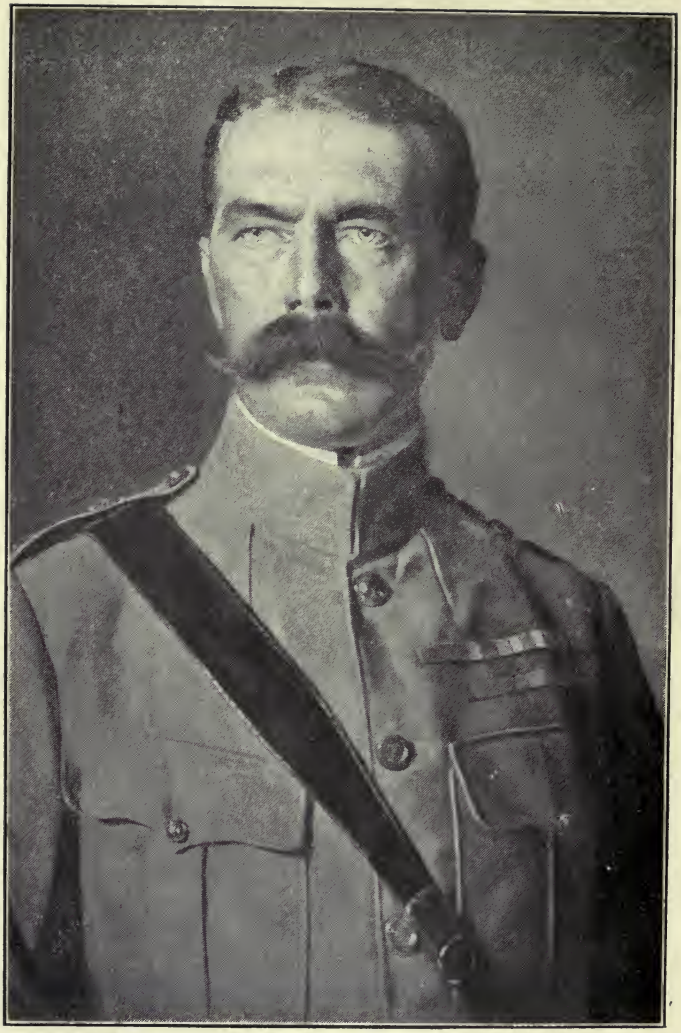

LORD KITCHENER.

Frontispiece. *Photo: News Pictures.*

EARL KITCHENER OF KHARTOUM:

The Story of his Life.

By WALTER JERROLD,

Author of "Field-Marshal Earl Roberts, V.C.: the Life Story of a Great Soldier." "Sir Redvers H. Buller, V.C., the Story of his Life and Campaigns."
etc., etc.

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Lord Kitchener ... ... Frontispiece

Earl Kitchener of Khartoum.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE.

It was not, perhaps, until after the triumphant vindication of his policy as "Sirdar" in Egypt, that the name of Herbert Kitchener became widely known, though for more than twenty years before the final breaking of the Mahdi's power and the completion of the re-conquest of the Soudan, it was familiar to many people as that of a strong, self-reliant young officer of the Engineers who was certain "to be heard of." It was known to those who had studied the progress of affairs in Egypt during the tragic eighties, and it was familiar to those who were interested in the wonderful work achieved in the Holy Land during the seventies by the officers engaged by the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund. During the past sixteen or eighteen years it has become familiar in our mouths as a household word. And during that time, too, there may be said to have grown up something of a "Kitchener legend"; something of an impression of a somewhat sombre,

silent man, almost uncannily capable in carrying out any work to which he sets his hand; sure and remorseless as a machine.

The pen-portrait of Lord Kitchener, drawn by one of the most literary of war-correspondents who ever went campaigning, shows us the hero of Omdurman as he appeared to an acute observer at the time that he was organising that great coup which established his reputation. The portrait has been often cited, for it has become an inevitable part of any presentation of this master of military preparation. Writing in 1898 the late G. W. Steevens said:

"Major-General Sir Horatio Herbert Kitchener is forty-eight years old by the book; but that is irrelevant. He stands several inches over six feet, straight as a lance, and looks out imperiously above most men's heads; his motions are deliberate and strong; slender but firmly knit, he seems built for tireless, steel-wire endurance rather than for power or agility: that also is irrelevant. Steady, passionless eyes, shaded by decisive brows, brick-red rather full cheeks, a long moustache, beneath which you divine an immovable mouth; his face is harsh, and neither appeals for affection nor stirs dislike. All this is irrelevant too: neither age, nor

figure, nor face, nor any accident of person, has any bearing on the essential Sirdar. You could imagine the character just the same if all the externals were different. He has no age but the prime of life, no body but one to carry his mind, no face but one to keep his brain behind. The brain and the will are the essence and the whole of the man—a brain and a will so perfect in their workings that, in the face of extremest difficulty, they never seem to know what struggle is. You cannot imagine the Sirdar otherwise than as seeing the right thing to do and doing it. His precision is so inhumanly unnerving, he is more like a machine than a man. You feel that he ought to be patented and shown with pride at the Paris International Exhibition: British Empire Exhibit No. 1, *hors concours* the Sudan Machine."*

That was the man as he appeared to a very keen observer at the time when he had first greatly vindicated his great ability. Since those words were written Lord Kitchener has again and again proved them justified; has so far impressed all by the strength of his character and the force of his genius that the whole story

* "With Kitchener to Khartoum." By G. W. Steevens. (Blackwood 1898).

of his life takes on new interest for many people. It is a story not only of opportunities taken, but one of opportunities made, for if it be true that "there is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood leads on to fortune," it is also true that the man of character does not sit down and wait for the particular "tide" which is to help him. It is often rather lack of force than lack of opportunity that keeps men back from high achievements among their fellows, but in the case of Lord Kitchener his own force of character and happy opportunity are so often seen working together that we cannot help feeling that it is this combination which has been responsible for what was at one time termed "Kitchener's luck."

At the age of twenty-four Lieutenant Kitchener had his first "chance," a chance eagerly taken, and as his subsequent career was to testify, most profitably employed. Now, at the age of sixty-four he occupies a position unique in the modern history of our country—he is a Field-Marshal of the Army, he is War Minister and a member of the Cabinet. It is largely the story of the forty intervening years that is set forth in this book, forty years of active life in various parts of the world, of work that has won the

widest admiration and has but rarely met with any adverse criticism from those most capable of appreciating its value.

The great soldier of whom this can be said was himself the son of a soldier, as was Lord Roberts, and he was born—as were so many of our most famous military leaders—in Ireland, though, except in so far as he is such by birth-place, he cannot claim to be an Irishman for his father came of an East Anglian family and his mother also belonged to East Anglia, though she was of Jersey ancestry. At the close of the seventeenth century a Kitchener is said to have migrated from Hampshire and settled at Lakenheath in Suffolk, and a descendant of his, Henry Horatio Kitchener, who was born in 1805, entered the Army in 1830, and retired on half-pay, with the rank of Lieut.-Colonel at the age of 44, in 1849. He married Frances, daughter of the Rev. Dr. Chevallier, of Aspall Hall, Aspall, Suffolk, and shortly after his retirement bought an extensive estate in Kerry and settled down to the life of an energetic country gentleman. There were five children born of this marriage—four sons and a daughter—the second son being the subject of this biography.

Horatio Herbert Kitchener was born on June 24, 1850, at Gunsborough, about three and a-half miles from Listowel, in North Kerry, but the family immediately after his birth appear to have removed to Crotter, near Ballylongford, on an inlet of the Shannon estuary, for it was near there, at Aghavallen church, that he was baptised on September 22. Horatio, it may be noted, is said to have been repeatedly used as a name in the Kitchener family in memory of Nelson, and in connection with that it is interesting to learn that the family traces connection with that of Admiral Edward Berry—another East Anglian—who was one of Nelson's most capable lieutenants. When Nelson presented Captain Berry at Court, King George the Third, having remarked on the Admiral's loss of his right arm, Nelson at once said that he "still had his right hand"—indicating the younger officer.

The house known as Crotter or Crotta, at Ballylongford, was the home of the future Field-Marshal and his brothers until they were in their early teens, and it was presumably at home or in a small school in the neighbourhood, that they received their earliest education, and from their military father doubtless imbibed that

GUNSBOROUGH, LISTOWEL : BIRTHPLACE OF LORD KITCHENER.

Opp. p. 12.

Photo : W. Lawrence, Du'lin.

desire for soldiering which is to be recognised in the fact that three out of the four sons of the retired colonel in due course entered the army. Colonel Kitchener is said to have been something of a martinet, but he is said also to have proved himself a capable organiser of the work on his estates, to have gone in thoroughly for the breeding of stock and the making the best use of the land which he had acquired. From him, by heredity and example, his famous son may well have got those qualities which seem to stand out markedly in the story of his career, and by means of which he has come to be regarded as an almost ruthless commander, and a careful planner, whose powers of patient organisation to an assured end have the value of genius.

As a boy Herbert Kitchener is reported to have been of a retiring, even taciturn nature—the child is father to the man—with a taste for books and a distinct ability for figures, but no particular liking for open air games and sports. Despite his leaning to the studious side rather more than is generally associated with the average of boyhood, an early story which has been recorded suggests that his bookishness did not lead to early distinction at school work. It is

said that having to prepare for a certain examination he did so in such a half-hearted fashion that his father declared that if he failed to pass he would be sent to walk in procession with the pupils of the local dames' school, and if he failed a second time that he should be apprenticed to a hatter! The examination came on, and, the boy failing, his father duly insisted on his walking with the smaller children of the dame school. That the second part of the threat did not have to be acted upon the career of Herbert Kitchener has sufficiently proved.

When Herbert Kitchener was thirteen years of age he was sent with his brothers to a school at Grand Clos, Villeneuve, on the shores of Lake Geneva, in French Switzerland, kept by an English clergyman, the Rev. J. Bennett, for Colonel Kitchener appears to have been impressed by the value of the acquisition of foreign languages, and to have thought that such was more important than the following of the regulation round of public school work at home.

It was while the boy was there that his mother died in 1864, but he seems to have remained at Grand Clos until, three years later, it was time for him to go to an army "crammer's" in London to prepare for the Royal Military Academy at

Woolwich. He was appointed to that Academy on the last day of January, 1868, and duly entered as a cadet a few days later. Such scanty recollections of him at this period as have been recorded tell us that he was "rather a dandy." and that the study in which he especially distinguished himself was mathematics.

By 1870 Colonel Kitchener had married again, had sold his Kerry estates and settled at the picturesque mediæval town of Dinan in Brittany, which has long been a place attractive to British residents settling in France. In a brief notice written at the time of his death it was stated that he resided in Ireland until 1864, "when he became the owner of properties in New Zealand." Cadet Kitchener was at Dinan with his family when the Franco-Prussian war was being waged, and—it is said without seeking permission either of the authorities at Woolwich or of his father—the young man of twenty thought there was a capital opportunity of seeing active service, and went off and enlisted in the 6th Battalion of the Reserves of the Mobile Guard of the Côtes du Nord, under the command of General Chanzy, "the strong right arm of French resistance to the invader." If the zealous student of militarism did not see any fighting he seems to

have learned some valuable lessons during this escapade; he learned, incidentally, that the bravest troops cannot achieve victory if they are not organised for victory, and in the disorganisation of General Chanzy's army, the awful mismanagement and lack of discipline, he had object lessons which, judging by his later career, made an indelible impression.

Though he did not take part in actual fighting, the Woolwich cadet who had taken "French leave" in joining the French army nearly paid for his enterprise with his life, for not only was he the victim of a balloon adventure, but he was also laid low by a severe attack of pleurisy consequent upon exposure and privations—an attack which brought to a close his first experience of active service.

And not only did he suffer thus, for the escapade threatened to jeopardise his career, as the authorities at Woolwich were by no means inclined to treat it complacently. Indeed, it is said, that his father had to enlist powerful influence to get the episode overlooked, and allow the young man to complete his studies at "the shop."

The late Major Arthur Griffiths has said that the eve of the last examination at the Military

HORATIO AND WALTER KITCHENER.

Opp. p. 16. *Photo: Daily Mirror.*

Academy is inevitably an anxious moment to the cadet, for it is on the place which he takes in the examination list that his future career depends: "The first cadets on the list have first choice, and they generally take the Engineers although they sometimes elect for the Artillery, and when they do, their future is fixed to work guns, great or small, garrison or field, so long as they serve the Queen actively.

"Not so the Engineers. A great variety of chances may interpose, such as personal tastes and aptitudes, or the luck of being somewhere at a particular time. The mere red tape routine of the roster may allot the young Engineer officer to one of many kinds of work, both inside and outside the profession of arms. Some take to military engineering pure and simple, the construction of forts and strong places, while others are put to control the innumerable scientific appliances adopted into modern warfare—telegraphy, photography, railways, balloons. . . . . A few only, and they may be counted on one's fingers, have found their account in troop-leading, in the manipulation and command of men, whether as staff or general officers; and the nation most cordially recognises the obligation thus conferred, for they have often

achieved great things. Lord Napier of Magdala was an Engineer officer, and so was Charles Gordon, and so to-day is Lord Kitchener of Khartoum."*

It was probably for but a short period that young Kitchener served in the reserves of General Chanzy's army, for he had got through the fateful examination, and was duly commissioned as second lieutenant in the Royal Engineers on January 4, 1871. For the next three years he was mainly engaged in the pursuit of the particular branch he had chosen, that of field telegraphy, at Chatham and Aldershot, while doubtless ready to avail himself of any opportunity which should offer for service that promised adventurous experience. That opportunity was to come, and of a kind which was to have a momentous effect upon his after career.

* *Pearson's Magazine*, April, 1900.

CHAPTER II.

IN PALESTINE.

THE 'prentice work of a man who achieves wide fame is always of interest to those who consider the full career of such a man, and in the case of Lord Kitchener the 'prentice work was in an unusual degree work of notable and lasting value, though its importance has been overshadowed by his later achievements. It was in 1874 that Kitchener's opportunity came, and in a form which could scarcely fail to appeal to any young officer eager for work that should take him off the beaten track.

In 1864 there had been established the Palestine Exploration Fund—a body, the object of which, was to survey the Holy Land with a thoroughness that should make possible the drawing up of a full and reliable map, should identify the sites in which all Christendom is interested, and should make records of all ancient monuments, and reveal by excavation some of the secrets of the country. The actual survey work was started in 1872 by Captain Stewart

and Lieutenant Conder, both of them of the Royal Engineers. The former had to give up the work on account of health, and his colleague was left in command of the surveying party, being joined as assistant by Mr. C. F. Tyrwhitt-Drake.

In the summer of 1874, Tyrwhitt-Drake's health broke down, and he died at Jerusalem. The post thus left vacant was offered to Lieutenant Kitchener who set out for Palestine in the autumn, and joined the survey party on December 19, as the leader duly chronicled.

Violent gales, and illness in some members of the party—one of the non-commissioned officers of which had to be invalided home—interrupted the work of the survey, and the winter was spent in Jerusalem.

"I think it is General Gordon who has somewhere said that for a man to understand the world he should for a time leave the life of busy cities and think out his thoughts alone in the wilderness. Often have I thought that could the critic leave his comfortable study and dwell for a time in this desert of Judah, under the starry sky at night and the hot glare of the sun by day, in a land which men once thought to have been burned by fire, cursed and sown with

salt, and in the great stillness of a world almost without life, he would be better able to understand what Hebrew poets, prophets, and historians have written."*

If it was little likely to be a realisation of this which would weigh with the young officer who seized the opportunity of spending some years of active work in Palestine, such may well have come to be his feelings after intimate experience of the fascinating land. It was work, and adventurous work that offered, and work which afforded opportunities to be taken by a discerning man. To Lieutenant Kitchener it gave the opportunity, eagerly seized, of getting to know the Arab and to learn his language—knowledge that was to be of incalculable value in the future; but then he was one of those who, as he is said to have put it, "could not understand how any young fellow in the army could settle down into the humdrum life of a home station while opportunities were going for adventure and distinction abroad."

There was little of the "hum-drum" in the life of the English officers engaged in the survey: not only had they interesting work to do amid surroundings which could not fail to stimulate

* "Palestine." By Major C. R. Conder.

the imagination, but there were not wanting those elements of risk which gave more than a spice of adventure to the undertaking. Not always were the people of the country friendly, for though on the whole the surveying party were treated tolerantly, there were occasional incidents which called for careful treatment, and at one point such aggressive opposition as led to the actual suspension of the work. To appreciate fully that which was achieved, and to realise the beauty and fascination of the land in which it was done, Conder's book on "Palestine" should be read. Here we must confine ourselves to a summary account of Lieutenant Kitchener's association with the work.

It has been said that the winter of 1874-5 had to be spent in Jerusalem owing to sickness in Conder's party, and Kitchener was one of the victims, being laid low by a serious attack of Jericho fever. Indeed, when Conder, as he put it, "once more took the field" with a light and compact expedition on February 25, 1875, Kitchener was still scarcely convalescent, and he and the Arab headman were left in comfortable quarters while the main party continued the work in the Dead Sea desert. A few weeks later and the young lieutenant joined in the

survey, which, during March and April, was carried to Ascalon, Gaza, and the Philistine plain.

At Ascalon, Kitchener and Conder were swimming in the Mediterranean, when the latter got into difficulties, and was being carried away by a strong current ; fortunately Kitchener, who was nearer the shore, observed his friend's predicament, and struck out to his assistance, caught hold of him, and with considerable difficulty succeeded in getting him back to safety. It was not the only time as we shall see in which he saved Conder's life during this first year of their association in work. After a rest at Jerusalem during the trying east winds of May, the party proceeded north to survey the country from the Sea of Galilee to the Mediterranean. They set out on June 8, and little more than a month later when they arrived, on July 10, near Safed, about a dozen miles to the north-west of the Sea of Galilee, their camp was suddenly attacked by a marauding band of fanatical Moorish settlers under Ali Agha Alan.

Of this episode there are several accounts, but the most trustworthy, it may well be believed, is that which Major Conder himself gave in the book already mentioned : " Our relations with natives of all creeds and races had always

been excellent, and so remained afterwards. A little rigour was occasionally necessary when my men were pelted with stones, or when the muleteers in camp fought with knives, but our actions were always legal, and a Turkish policeman attached to the party was employed to take offenders before the local magistrates. There were no complaints against any of the party, and indeed, as we spent money, employed labour, and bought provisions at a good price, the Survey was always popular in Palestine. But at Safed a Christian was then rarely seen, and fanaticism always lives longest in the mountains. It is possible that some imprudent speech of the dragoman may have enraged the Emir who attacked us. Certainly a pistol belonging to our party was stolen, and was the immediate cause of the quarrel; but I never expected it to become serious until the furious Algerine attacked me with a knife. Few readers will blame me for knocking him down and breaking his tooth; but the result was an attack by his followers with stones and swords and aged guns. Several shots were fired at us, but no one was hit. They, however, broke my head badly with a club, and I was defended by Lieutenant Kitchener, while I lay for a few

moments stunned. I fear that I broke the head of the clubman afterwards even worse, but the party was never out of hand. We were armed with shot guns and pistols but we never fired a shot, and defended our tents without bloodshed until the police arrived. The enraged Algerines threatened to kill us during the night, but we kept watch with our guns loaded with ball cartridge, hastily made up, and only in the morning did we march off the field in good order. The worst hurt was that of my groom, who was an old soldier. His head was laid open with a sword-cut, and had to be sewn up ; but he accompanied us for several years after, and except a cook and a scribe little accustomed to such scenes, none of the natives in our party showed any signs of fear in face of the howling mob."*

In a letter home Conder said : " I must inevitably have been murdered but for the cool and prompt assistance of Lieutenant Kitchener, who managed to get to me and engaged one of the clubmen, thereby covering my retreat. A blow descending on the top of his head he parried with a cane, which was broken by the force of the blow. A second wounded his arm. His escape is unaccountable." It will be noticed

* " Palestine." By Major C. R. Conder.

that Conder's recognition of Kitchener's aid was more emphatic in the letter written shortly after the occurrence than in his narrative presented a few years later. One account goes so far as to say that the young officer's arm was almost severed.

The wounding of the two leaders of the party and the disturbance of the district consequent upon the affray made it necessary for the members of the Survey to retire from the immediate neighbourhood and rest, and they journeyed to Mount Carmel near the coast, where all fell ill with malarial fever, except one of the non-commissioned officers (Sergeant Armstrong) who was assisting in the work at the time. Kitchener is said to have been one of the worst of the sufferers, and a story is told of him that when begging for a drink as he lay in the heat of the fever he saw some beer on a table and pleaded that he might have some of it. Conder said that it would be madness to give beer to one in his state, but another member of the party could not withstand the sick man's appeal and handed him half a glass of the coveted drink. Kitchener hastily drank it, with the result that he was alarmingly sick. Afterwards he fell into a deep sleep, and when he awakened the fever had gone!

In September the men who had attacked the party at Safed were brought to trial at Acre, and both Conder and Kitchener had to attend, when they had the satisfaction of seeing their late assailants sentenced to terms of imprisonment —the ringleader to four months—and the payment of fines amounting to £340. When the trial was over, the two lieutenants returned to England, an outbreak of cholera, following upon the attack on the surveying party, making it advisable to interrupt the field work of the Survey when about four-fifths of the task was accomplished.

The first Quarterly Report of the Palestine Exploration Fund issued after the return of the two young officers included the following passage : "The materials brought home by Lieutenants Conder and Kitchener are of far greater value than was expected. They consist of an addition to our map work of about 1,600 square miles, chiefly lying in the territory of Judah and Philistia. About 180 square miles of Lower Galilee are accomplished. There remain only some 1,400 square miles to complete the map of Western Palestine, from Dan to Beersheba."

For the whole of 1876 the officers were engaged —in rooms at the Albert Hall which were placed

at the disposal of the Fund—in work on the great map which was the primary object of the survey, and the preparation of the accompanying memoirs.

Kitchener's work had included that of photographer to the party, and at Easter, 1876, there was published "Lieutenant Kitchener's Guinea Book of Biblical Photographs,"* consisting of a dozen mounted views with a short account of each. This was, presumably, the first attempt to bring Palestine home to British eyes by means of photography, and the book should to-day have an added interest, beyond that perennially inherent in its subject. The whole series of photographs taken by Kitchener consisted of fifty views of places of Biblical interest.

After a year of office work on the maps, and reports in London, Lieutenant Kitchener found himself appointed to chief command of the party to be sent out to complete the work by surveying the last thirteen or fourteen hundred square miles, left unfinished at the return at the close of 1875. Lieutenant Conder's health made it advisable that he should for some time confine himself to working at home on the

* A few copies of this work are still obtainable at the offices of the Palestine Exploration Fund.

materials already accumulated. The announcement was thus made in the "Quarterly Statement":

"It has been decided to despatch Lieutenant Kitchener, who assumes the command, to Damascus, where he will buy horses, and provide for the starting of the party. Everything ready, he will repair to Haifa, *via* Beyrout and the coast road, there to await the arrival of his staff, who will probably reach Palestine early in February. . . . The survey of Galilee, including the levelling for the depth of the lake below the surface of the sea, for which the grant of one hundred pounds was made by the British Association two years ago, is calculated to take until the middle of August. Lieutenant Kitchener proposes then to finish off the hundred and fifty square miles at the south-west of Palestine yet remaining to be surveyed; and, this done, will then ride through the country to clear up various points of difficulty which have arisen during the execution of the map from the notes."

In the same number of the "Statement" it was reported that £270 had been forwarded to England out of the £340 granted for fines and damages, and that a further £200 claimed for compensation had not been allowed.

In January, 1877, Lieutenant Kitchener set out again for Palestine, reaching Beyrout on February 6, and a few days later journeying to Damascus where he saw the Emir Abd el Kader, "who received me very well, and expressed great regret for the conduct of his people in the late affair at Safed." The whole story of the work as set forth in Kitchener's reports printed in the "Quarterly Statement" is full of interest, but here it is only possible to touch upon one or two points in it. After certain delays the party got definitely to work on February 28, and the survey proceeded regularly and without any hitch. From his camp at Tiberias on the shore of the Lake of Galilee, Lieutenant Kitchener wrote that his previous camp had been on "the field of the last great fight of the Crusaders"—"the Kurn Hattin, or 'Horns of Hattin,' was the last place held by the King and his brave Knights when surrounded by the forces of Saladin. The rocky top seems a very natural fortress, and well adapted to be defended against far superior numbers. The Crusaders were, however, worn out by their long marches and hard fighting, and after driving back the stormers three times, the place was carried, the King surrendered with the remnant of his forces, and

the Christian Kingdom in Palestine ceased to exist." The youthful soldier was moved to military enthusiasm by consideration of the field on which were enacted old unhappy things and battles long ago. On April 10 the party encamped at Safed—scene, just nine months earlier, of the affray in which Kitchener had been wounded. To quote his own words :

"On the 10th we marched to Safed, the scene of our conflict with the natives on a former occasion. Mr. Eldridge, the British Consul-General for Syria, had kindly arranged that I should be well received, and the arrival of H.M.S. Torch at Acre, of which I was informed by telegram, made it certain that I should not be molested on this occasion. The Governor of Safed, with a score of soldiers and followers, came out half way to my camp to meet me, and we rode into the town in a triumphal procession. I remained six days, and was much annoyed by the continual visitors I had to receive. The most interesting of these was Aly Agha, the cause of our former unpleasantness. Now he came as a ruined, humble man, after undergoing his term of imprisonment, to beg for forgiveness. I was glad to be able to remit a small portion of the fine, some sixty pounds, that had not been

paid, on account of their behaviour on this occasion."*

Writing on March 30, Kitchener had said that he would shortly be starting for Safed, adding, "my servants rather dread going back, so I shall have to keep a look-out on the rearguard as well as in front going up the hill. . . . If I am well received at Safed and report satisfactorily would the Committee give up their claim to the rest of the fine imposed? It would smooth matters." The happy suggestion was adopted, and the party benefited by tactful clemency. While at Safed on this occasion Kitchener had a small adventure when he braved the danger of traditional vampires and the possible anger of those who protested against his visiting a sacred place. He told the story to the British Association in the paper already cited:

"I visited a Mohammedan sacred place in the town called the Mukam Benat Yakub, or the sacred place of the daughters of Jacob. Many legends were attached to the place. I was shown without difficulty the little mosque and then into a large square cave, which had originally been a tomb of some importance.

* Paper on the "Survey of Galilee," read before the British Association by Lieut. H. H. Kitchener, R.E., F.R.G.S.

Two rows of recesses for sarcophagi lined the walls. Here tradition relates that Jacob and his children lived, and that when he was old and blind they brought him Joseph's coat, and the smell of it at once cured him. On regaining the outer mosque I saw a small door with a green curtain hanging over it, and incense burning in front; this, I was told, was the tomb of the seven daughters of Jacob. There they were said to be all as in life, their beauty unimpaired, but it was too sacred to be approached by any but a true believer. I insisted, and was then told that these beautiful and holy maids were very quick to take offence, and devoured any who came too near their place of rest. However, after a little persuasion I pushed the sheikh aside and squeezed through the hole, being nearly stifled with the bad incense. After a drop of some feet, I found myself on the floor of a cave that opened into another. I explored the caves, one of which had been a tomb; the roof had fallen in, probably in the earthquake of 1838. No recumbent semitic beauties awaited me, and I was very glad to get out into the fresh air again."

At the end of April, Kitchener received a telegram announcing the outbreak of war between

Turkey and Russia, and expressed the hope that it would not interfere with the completion of his task. He had, indeed, thought that that task might be facilitated rather than otherwise by the fact of the young men of the country having been called to the army, and so it proved, for despite the war he was enabled to complete the work which he had undertaken, and that in less time than he had estimated would be necessary. It had been judged that the survey of Galilee would occupy the time until the middle of August, but on July 11, Kitchener had the gratification of being able to write home: "I have finished the North under my original estimate, and without Armstrong,* and there has been no accident, as you will have been informed by telegram. We are now off for the Lebanon for three weeks' rest, which we sadly want. . . . A report was started in the Beyrout paper that I had been attacked and wounded by Bedouin near Banias. Eldridge sent soldiers and scoured the country. I, in the meantime, had gone peacefully across to Tyre, so there was no end of alarm at my not being found or heard of." That the telegram announcing the com-

* Sergeant Armstrong, who had been attached to the Survey from the first, had apparently returned to England, for he had been announced to be of the party.

pletion of the work had been duly received is to be recognised in the report of the July meeting of the Fund Committee when opportunity was taken of expressing a high sense of Lieutenant Kitchener's ability and zeal—" he has conducted the work for six months without any accident, during a period of suspicion and excitement. His reports . . . are careful and intelligent, and his monthly accounts show due regard to economy."

After the needed rest on Lebanon the party went to the south to round off the work in surveying a tract believed to be about two hundred square miles, but which proved to be 340. Despite this, however, the young commander was able to report that he had the work finished in a week less than the time allowed, and at a cost within the estimate. An extract from Lieutenant Kitchener's letter announcing to his Committee the completion of his undertaking affords a hint of some of the difficulties attending the cartographer. Writing from Jerusalem on October 2, he said :

" I am sure you will be glad to hear that the map is an accomplished fact, and six years' work has been finished. We wound up at Beersheba on the 28th of September, much quicker

than I expected, though the work in the south was 340 square miles instead of 200. The fact is we had to work hard; the water was so bad, being salt, and the colour of weak tea, and our bread all went mouldy. The country we have been in is only inhabited by Arabs, who have been at war amongst themselves for the last three years. They said no Europeans had ever been in this part of the country before, which I can believe from the very bad state of all existing maps of the district. You will see by my report the details of our campaign and the discovery of Ziklag. Everybody was very full of the danger of going to Beersheba, but I found no Arabs within five hours of the place. In fact, everyone is so afraid that no one goes there. I had some difficulty in getting rid of the expensive escorts the Kaimacam of Gaza wanted to impose upon me, but at last we started with only our own party. The Kaimacam did it out of civility, and really was afraid of us. We got back here at the end of the month, a week earlier than I had calculated upon. I now have a full fortnight of office work, and will then send you home the results, keeping duplicates; we shall then take up the revision, which I expect will take some time. I cannot say how long it will take

me till I get it well in hand; I will then send you an estimate. Expenses were high among the Arabs, and I had a great deal of travelling, but I still keep on the right side of the estimate."

During this autumn—while riding from Jerusalem to Sidon on the hottest day that had been known in the country for ten years—Lieutenant Kitchener got a slight sunstroke. The seeking to carry out a work which had been entrusted to him caused the young officer an unpleasant experience at the close of his campaign. A couple of members of the Palestine Exploration Fund had contributed £150 to clean out and put a stone wall round Jacob's Well at Nablus, but local prejudice prevented the work being done. "The obstruction of the authorities of Nablus to my repairing Jacob's Well continued during the whole time I was there, in spite of all the measures I took to gain their compliance in a work which could only be for the good of all, Mohammedans and Christians alike. I was subjected to many indignities by the officials, which culminated on the 3rd of November by my being stoned by a mob of boys in the streets of Nablus. My letter of complaint to the acting Governor was sent back unopened, showing that, if they had not connived at the insult to

me, they intended taking no steps to punish the delinquents."

By the end of the year, or in the early days of 1878, Lieutenant Kitchener was back in England and for some months was occupied with Conder on the great map from the materials which they had gathered. The work which Kitchener had done is indicated by a passage in the "Quarterly Statement" concerning his survey of the north of Palestine: "in the course of the work 1,000 square miles of country were surveyed; 2,773 names were collected, and 476 ruins were visited and described, some with special plans. All the villages were also described with regard to the number and religion of the inhabitants, the remains of ancient buildings, and the nature of the country. The water supply has also in all cases been specially described. The whole country has been hill-shaded; the altitudes of a great number of points have been obtained by aneroid readings besides the observed heights; special notes have been taken on the geology, archæology, etc., of the country. The line of levels connecting the Mediterranean and the Sea of Galilee was completed on the 24th March. Photographs have been taken of the more interesting sites."

A description of twenty "Photographs taken in Galilee" was contributed by Lieutenant Kitchener to the "Quarterly Statement" for July, 1878. Two of the most picturesque of these descriptions (the nineteenth and twentieth) may be quoted, both for the interest of the spot dealt with and as examples of the soldier-surveyor's literary work :

"THE SOURCE OF JORDAN.—The great spring at Banias has from an early date been allowed to be the real source of the River Jordan. The water gushes out of a cave situated in the face of a cliff of limestone rock about 100 feet high. Earthquakes have shaken down great fragments of rock, so that the base of the cliff has been blocked up and the cave almost entirely ruined. The water now finds its way through this mass of stones by different channels, uniting immediately below the *debris*, and forming at once a strong stream that irrigates the surrounding gardens and makes Banias the most beautiful place in Palestine. By this stream stood the ancient Panium of the Greeks, and here Herod erected a temple in honour of Augustus. There are three votive niches in the face of the rock, one of which is visible in the photograph. They were once much higher above the ground than

now. Two of them bear Greek inscriptions, in one of which 'Priest of Pan' is mentioned. This was also the site of Cæsarea Phillippi, of the New Testament, and it has been suggested that this rock was intended in our Lord's words, 'Upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'—(Matt. xvi., 18).

"PALESTINE SURVEY CAMP AT BANIAS.—The magnificent olive trees formed a delightful shade, while the trickling stream of water led through our camp, making everything cool and delightful. Under the roots of these great trees we found remains of tesselated pavement in different coloured marbles, showing that some ancient buildings once occupied this site. A hundred yards to the east of our camp was the great source of Jordan, clear and sparkling, and delightfully cold."*

At the general meeting of the Committee of the Fund cordial testimony was paid to the rapidity and efficiency with which Lieutenant Kitchener had accomplished his work, and in this first command of his we find that he was specially commended for methods which have characterised him throughout his career, for the

* Palestine Exploration Fund, *Quarterly Statement*, July, 1878.

THE VALLEY OF MICHMASH.
SCENE OF THE ATTACK OF THE PHILISTINE CAMP BY JONATHAN AND HIS ARMOUR-BEARER.

Opp. p. 40. *Photo by permission of The Palestine Exploration Fund.*

THE VALLEY OF MICHMASH.

SCENE OF THE ATTACK OF THE PHILISTINE CAMP BY JONATHAN AND HIS ARMOUR-BEARER.

" This view is taken from the southern brink of the valley of Michmash, now called Wady Suweinit, a name supposed to take its derivation from the Hebrew Seneh—meaning a thorn. The gorge is called Valley of Thorns by Josephus. The point from which it is taken is at the end of a plateau called " Gibeah in the Field " in Scripture (Judges xx., 31). The spectator looks eastward towards the Desert above Jericho. The northern cliff is in bright light, and the southern in the shade. This is probably the real origin of the name Bozez, or " Shining," which is given in the Old Testament (I. Sam., xiv., 4) to this side of the valley. The cliff retains the name of El Hesn, " the Fortress," a title which may very probably have originated in its being the Philistine fortress in the time of Saul.

" At a later period this terrible gorge proved a considerable obstacle to Senacherib in his advance on Jerusalem (Isaiah x., 28). It is the most precipitous valley in the whole district of Benjamin, and can only be crossed by a winding path leading from Jeba (the ancient Jeba) to Mukhmas (the ancient Michmas). Both of these towns are out of the picture towards the left hand."

Copied from Lieut. Kitchener's volume of photographs of Biblical Sites, published by the Palestine Exploration Fund.

Committee wound up by expressing "their sense not only of the energy and ability, but also of the tact shown by this officer in the conduct of his expedition, and of the careful economy with which he kept his expenses below the estimate."

In the very year in which Kitchener went first to Palestine a young French savant, M. Charles Clermont-Ganneau, was also sent out in charge of an archæological expedition. M. Clermont-Ganneau, who had discovered four years earlier the famous "Moabite stone," and was to become widely known for his establishing of the Shapira forgeries, has recorded something of his impressions of the Kitchener of those days, though he makes the mistake of regarding him as racially an Irishman :

"We often had to meet and consult each other. I have the pleasantest remembrance. Kitchener was a 'good fellow' in the fullest acceptance of the word. Tall, slim, vigorous, dark-haired, he was clearly of the Irish type. One felt him capable of headstrong acts ; indeed, he showed visible signs of the 'hammering' that many Irishmen get on coming into the world. Putting it politely, he did not lack originality. A frank and most outspoken character, with recesses of

winsome freshness. His high spirits and cheeriness formed an agreeable contrast to the serious grave characters of some of his comrades. His predecessor, Lieutenant Conder, for instance, was of a much sadder disposition. Kitchener's ardour for his work astonished us. He drew up excellent maps, but he did not confine himself to cartographic labours. Gradually he began to take an interest in archæological discoveries, and acquired in these matters a marked proficiency. The more important of his researches dealt with the synagogues of Galilee."

It was said by another man who knew him at the time, that "he was as good company as a man could wish to have, full of life and high spirits." Such testimony should be remembered as qualifying the stern unbending, almost dour, personality which is the Kitchener of the later tradition.

An interesting episode in Kitchener's career occurred between his leaving Palestine and his reaching England. In the Holy Land he had heard of the outbreak of hostilities between Russia and Turkey, and had noticed the way in which the young men of the country had been called to take part in the Sultan's quarrel. The opportunity of seeing something of actual

fighting was too good to be missed, and he decided to go to the front in Bulgaria before continuing his homeward journey. Early in December he reached Constantinople, and in company with a friend, on the 12th of that month, the heights of Kamerleh, via Adrianople. The story of the excursion was told by Lieutenant Kitchener himself in the form of a pleasant article which he contributed to *Blackwood's Magazine*,* so that he may not unfairly be regarded as having on that occasion belonged to that race of war correspondents which in the days of his command he did his best to discourage. On the journey by train from Constantinople to Tatar Bazardjik, Kitchener found his knowledge of Arabic useful in allowing him to converse with his travelling companions. One old captain said that he was going through to Sofia, and would look after the two Englishmen—having borrowed some small change from Kitchener that same old captain took the opportunity of disappearing at one of the intermediate stations! Writing of the Chatalja lines, where, it will be recalled, the Turks succeeded during the recent war in the Balkans in

* "A Visit to Sophia and the Heights of Kamerleh. Christmas, 1877." By H. H. K. *Blackwood's Magazine*, February, 1878.

stopping the triumphant Bulgarian advance. Lieutenant Kitchener said that "the slopes in front of the position seemed splendidly adapted for artillery fire, and with a good garrison, and the command of the sea, no army ought to be able to force these lines." At Adrianople the travellers could not find any hotel accommodation and were compelled to ask leave to sleep in the waiting room at the station. When they continued their journey next day Lieutenant Kitchener learned something of the ways of railway contractors in the Near East, which will have been recalled to his memory when it fell to him to forward the building of railways in Egypt. Being struck by the way in which the railway wound about in an absurd fashion in places where it might well have been laid straight he enquired why it was so, and was told that the railway had been contracted for at so much a kilometre, and therefore as many kilometres as possible were got into the level land! Leaving the railway at Tatar Bazardjik they could get no cart on to Sofia until a friendly English doctor in charge of the Red Crescent Ambulance offered them a lift in one of the fifteen ambulances going back to the front. After a trying journey they reached Ichtiman at 9.30 at night—the

doctor being four hours later and the rest of the carts not arriving until many hours later still, after extra horses had been sent to help them over the trying roads. Lieutenant Kitchener tells how he and his friend got to an inn that appeared to have no inhabitant beyond a Bulgarian boy, and how having procured some chickens and eggs, they had to cook their own suppers, after doing justice to which they turned to and prepared a supper for their friend of the Red Crescent.

It was a terrible winter in the Balkans, that winter of the Russo-Turkish War, and Lieutenant Kitchener impresses the fact upon us grimly by pointing out that at the front, though the Turkish sentries were relieved every fifteen minutes, no fewer than twenty-seven of them died at their posts in three nights! They went up to the front to visit Baker Pasha, one of the generals, and "many frost-bitten soldiers were staggering back along the road; some seemed almost in delirium, tearing off their clothes and falling by the wayside." At the last Red Crescent centre before reaching the actual front the young officer fell in with old friends: "Some poor soldiers of the Arab battalions, who had come from the warm climate of Palestine, could

not understand how they were to lose their hands and feet by the cold. They appeared quite delighted to hear me talk to them in Arabic, but though in great pain all they seemed to care to talk about was the beautiful gardens of Jaffa, where there was always a warm sun, and oranges and tomatoes for all, however poor." Leaving their horses the two had a trying and intensely cold climb to Baker Pasha's position, and later to the high-perched redoubt which formed the Turkish right :

"The lines were carried along the mountain side till they ended in the Yeldis or Star redoubt, perched on the top of a pointed mountain 6,200 feet above the level of the sea, and 2,300 above the other redoubts. It must have been an immense labour getting the guns up the steep sides of this mountain. We found some difficulty in getting up ourselves. It took two hours climbing, but they were well repaid, the view from the Yeldis was magnificent. The snow-clad Balkans in successive crags and peaks and wooded valleys led away as far as the eye could reach. The sun threw a rosy tinge over all, making the most perfect scene imaginable. But we did not stop long to look at the beauties of nature. There were the Russians just below

us in the trenches." The view of the whole field showed the positions of the two armies "laid out below us as in a map."

Having snatched his glimpse of actual warfare Lieutenant Kitchener had to set out on Christmas day for Constantinople, and rode by himself and without any mishap to Sofia, where the English doctors had arranged a big Christmas dinner party, "and though the attempted plum pudding more resembled a poultice, we had a pleasant evening." On Boxing Day the journey was resumed and Kitchener duly arrived at Tatar Bazardjik to learn that all the trains had been made military and that only those in uniform were allowed to travel by them. He was, however, equal to the occasion, and instead of inviting a rebuff quietly entered a first-class carriage, and "lay low" for the three hours that elapsed before the train started. He did not dare to ask where the train was going for fear he should be made to leave it by drawing attention to himself, and he concludes his narrative of the escapade by saying "At Tirnova, where the line branches to Yamboli, I was all prepared to throw out my baggage and jump if we were shunted on to the branch, but luckily we kept on, and I arrived at Adrianople at 1 a.m.

and took up my old quarters in the waiting room." The fortnight's excursion had given the young Engineer his first glimpse of actual warfare.

Perhaps some day the accounts of the early travels of the great soldier, his many interesting letters and reports to the Palestine Exploration Fund, and his articles in *Blackwood's Magazine*—there are three or four besides the one quoted—will be collected and republished as a volume.

CHAPTER III.

BEGINNINGS IN EGYPT.

THE achievement of the Engineer Lieutenant in Palestine did not go unnoted, and his opportunity of further work came in a few months, while he was engaged in completing the great Palestine Map in rooms set apart for the purpose in the South Kensington Museum. While he was so engaged the Congress of representatives of the Powers gathered in Berlin was coming to conclusions which were to make it necessary to re-draw the map of South-Eastern Europe. One of the decisions come to was that Britain should occupy and administer the island of Cyprus so long as Russia retained possession of certain specified places. Sir Garnet (afterwards Viscount) Wolseley, was appointed High Commissioner of Cyprus, and among the minor appointments to our new possession was Lieutenant Kitchener, who was entrusted by the Foreign Office with the making of a survey of the island, and the organizing of the land courts. In July, 1878, he had estimated that it would take six

months to finish the map and memoirs for the Palestine Fund, but, once more, well within his estimate, he got the work done on September 10, and on September 19 started for his new field of operations.

Before setting out for Cyprus, however, Lieutenant Kitchener appeared in a role which few people would associate with his name, for he read a paper before the British Association at its annual gathering at Dublin. It has already been said that the British Association had made a grant of money towards the expenses of determining the level of the Lake of Galilee below the sea,* and the subject of Lieutenant Kitchener's paper was the "Survey of Galilee." He explained how the work was done, and gave some description of the country and of special sites that were identified during the course of the survey, and concluded by indicating the work which the Palestine Exploration Fund contemplated undertaking: "Let me add one more result we hope to obtain. We hope to rescue from the hand of that ruthless destroyer, the uneducated Arab, one of the most interesting ruins in Palestine, hallowed by the footprints

* The lake level was established as 632½ feet below the level of the Mediterranean.

of our Lord. I allude to the Synagogue of Capernaum, which is rapidly disappearing owing to the stones being burnt for lime.

"Ought we not to preserve for ourselves and our children buildings so hallowed, so unique? Let us hope that if this expedition succeeds it may be the means of leaving some footprints in the sands of time—

> 'Footprints that perhaps another
> Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
> A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
> Seeing may take heart again.'"

The whole of Lieutenant Kitchener's paper read before the British Association was printed in the October "Quarterly Statement" of the Palestine Exploration Fund, but by the time that it was in type he had doubtless already reached Cyprus and begun his work there.* That work had not proceeded far when there came an interruption in the form of another appointment, when Sir Charles Wilson, on being made British Consul-General in Anatolia, in

*The *Athenæum* of August 24, 1878, announced that "Lieut. H. H. Kitchener's paper, read before the Geographical Section of the British Association, on the Survey of Galilee, in which he was engaged last year on behalf of the Palestine Exploration Fund, has been printed." I have not been able to see a copy of the pamphlet, which appears to have the distinction of being Lord Kitchener's only separate publication, apart from the earlier volume of Palestine photographs.

April, 1879, appointed him military Vice-Consul at Kastamuni.

The principal duty of Sir Charles Wilson and his officers was defined by Lord Salisbury as being to enquire into the conditions of the various classes of the population in their districts, to assist the Turkish authorities with advice and assistance, and with any information that might be useful, to point out the means by which economy could be secured, and administration simplified, and to remonstrate against all cases of oppression and corruption on the part of the executive and justiciary. It was further pointed out that the officials should have urged upon them the importance of the formation in each district of an efficient public force for the repression of brigandage. It was indeed a period of great trouble and distress in Asia Minor, distress consequent upon the recent Russo-Turkish war; and the two years of Kitchener's Vice-Consulship must have been a busy time in which his ability for organization was considerably exercised, and in which he added considerably to his knowledge of the Mahommedan character. When he returned to Cyprus in 1881 for the purpose of completing the survey, Wolseley had gone to South Africa to

supersede Lord Chelmsford in the conduct of the Zulu war, and his place as High Commissioner of Cyprus had been taken by Sir Robert Biddulph.

During a period of furlough, as one version of a story of which there are several versions runs, Lieutenant Kitchener heard that there would be a chance of seeing action at Alexandria, where the high-handed doings of Arabi Pasha were rapidly bringing things to a crisis; he therefore —it is said at the suggestion of a journalist— telegraphed to the High Commissioner, asking for an extension of leave, and saying that he would assume it granted unless recalled by telegraph. The telegram of recall duly arrived, but fell into the hands of the journalist, who did not pass it on until it was too late, and thus, it is said, was Kitchener enabled to see the bombardment of Alexandria by the British ships on July 11, 1882. Little could he guess that the results of the bombardment were to include the giving him his "chance" in a very special fashion, that with Egypt much of his future career was to be associated. Returning to Cyprus, he completed his work in that island, but at the end of the year, hearing that Sir Evelyn Wood had been entrusted with the making of an Egyptian

army, Kitchener offered his services, and was at once appointed second in command of the cavalry regiment, and began those many years of service which were to make him famous, and to leave a lasting impress on Egypt.

To return for a moment to Cyprus, the result of Lieutenant Kitchener's work was not published until 1885, when the series of maps of the "Trigonometrical Survey" were issued in a handsome volume. The size of the island at the time of its being taken over was variously estimated as between 3,700 and 4,500 square miles, but the survey established it at 3,584 square miles. That the British occupation promised well for the prosperity of the country may be gathered from the statement made at the time that the value of land went up a thousand per cent. within a short time of the announcement of that occupation. The actual taking possession of Cyprus was performed a couple of months before the young Engineer officer proceeded to the work of the survey, and an account of the incident tells us that Admiral Lord John Hay landed on July 13, 1878—nine days before the arrival of Wolseley as High Commissioner—and having had the British flag raised, said, "I take possession of this island in the name of

Queen Victoria." As the people recognised the well-known name of Her Majesty they responded in various dialects with a hearty "Live the British Queen!" The apparent ease with which the Admiral went through all these formalities particularly impressed the Cypriotes. "One would think," remarked a native, "that he had been accustomed to take possession of new territory all his life."

One of the most delightful works on Cyprus is Sir Samuel Baker's "Cyprus as I Saw It in 1879," and in that book we have a glimpse of Kitchener who piloted the author about the Kythrea district in February, and was "an excellent guide who could explain every inch of the surrounding country."

It was on the fourth of January, 1883, that Kitchener was gazetted a captain, and at once began the task of helping to create an army out of the seemingly unpromising material that was at hand in the form of the Egyptian fellaheen.

We have a notable pen sketch of him, made by an able war correspondent, Mr. John Macdonald, (*Nineteenth Century*, Oct., 1898). In collaboration with Colonel Taylor, of the 19th Hussars, the task that was set to young Kitchener was to form the fellaheen cavalry, and Mr. Macdonald's

narrative tells how he and the two officers drove to the dingy barracks at which a beginning was to be made at the task of converting the raw material into cavalry soldiers :

" Taylor did most of the talking. Kitchener expressed himself in an occasional nod or monosyllable. At the barracks we found some forty men waiting. I remember Kitchener's gaze at the awkward, slipshod group, as he took his position in the centre of a circular space round which the riders were to show their paces."

" ' We begin with the officers,' said Taylor, turning to me : ' we shall train them first, then put them to drill the troopers. We have no troopers just yet, though we have four hundred and forty horses ready for them.' And now began the selection of the fellah officers. They were to be tested in horsemanship. The first batch of them were ordered to mount. Round they went, Indian file, Kitchener like a circus master, standing in the centre. Had he flourished a long whip, he might have passed for a showmaster at rehearsal. Neither audible nor visible sign did he give of any feeling aroused in him by a performance mostly disappointing and sometimes ridiculous. His hands buried in his trouser pockets, he quietly watched the

emergence of the least unfit. . . . In half-an-hour or so the first native officers of the new fellah cavalry were chosen. It was then that Kitchener made his longest speech : 'We'll have to drive it into those fellows,' he muttered, as if thinking aloud."

"A tall, slim, thin-faced, slightly stooping figure, in long boots, cutaway dark morning coat, and Egyptian fez somewhat tilted over his eyes." "He's quiet—that's his way. He's clever." Such were the summings up of correspondent and colleague.

During this year, Kitchener, in his stern, concentrating fashion, occupied himself with the building up of the native Egyptian army, but towards the close of the year he took leave that he might assist in a further piece of exploration and surveying for the Palestine Fund. It had been decided to send a scientific expedition to the Sinaitic Peninsula and Western Palestine under the direction of Professor Edward Hull, and Captain Kitchener was appointed his colleague for the purpose of completing the trigonometrical survey of the Sinai district. Mr. George Armstrong, late Sergeant-Major, R.E., who had taken part in all the expeditions to Palestine during the previous dozen years, was

also attached to the party. Professor Hull published a narrative of his expedition under the title of "Mount Seir, Sinai, and Western Palestine," and by way of appendix to that work was given Captain Kitchener's report of the survey from Suez, at the head of the Gulf of Suez, to Akabah, at the head of the Gulf of Akabah—and on to the southern end of the Dead Sea where the survey was linked up with that of half a dozen years earlier.

Professor Hull has recorded with what pleasure he received the tidings of Kitchener's appointment as his colleague. "I was aware of his great experience in the work of the Palestine Survey, of his knowledge of the character and customs of the Arab tribes, amongst whom we were to travel, and of his ability to converse in their language. All this inspired an amount of confidence of ultimate success I should not otherwise have felt, and the result proved that my confidence was well founded. In matters connected with our dealings with the Arabs I readily deferred to his judgment, which I always found to be judicious, while he often acted as spokesman in our negotiations with the Sheikhs."

An escort for the party was offered, but was

not regarded as necessary, though little more than a year had elapsed since that distinguished Orientalist, Professor E. H. Palmer, Captain Gill and Lieutenant Charrington had been murdered in the Wady Sudur on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Suez. And the Wady Sudur was the place in which Professor Hull's party made their second camp after leaving Suez on November 10, 1883, but the prompt punishment of the murderers, and the overthrow of Arabi Pasha, had greatly changed conditions, as may be gathered from Captain Kitchener's own words: "I obtained from an Arab of the Haiwat tribe a story of the murder which I have never seen published in any account of it. I give it merely for what it is worth: Arabs, as everybody knows who has had to do with them, have a remarkable facility for making up a story to meet a supposed occasion.

"This was the story in the Arab's own words: "'Arabi Pasha, directed by the Evil One—may he never rest in peace!—sent to his lordship, the Governor of Nakhe, to tell him that he had utterly destroyed all the Christian ships of war at Alexandria and Suez; also that he had destroyed their houses in the same places, and that the Governor of Nakhe was to take care

if he saw any Christians running about in his country, like rats with no holes, that the Arabs were to finish them at once. On hearing this news, a party of Arabs started to loot Ayun Musa and Suez. Coming down Wady Sudur they met the great Sheikh Abdullah and his party; they thought they were the Christians spoken of by Arabi Pasha, running away, so they surrounded them in the Wady. But the Arabs ran away from the English, who defended themselves in the Wady; all night they stopped round them, but did not dare to take them till just at dawn, when they made a rush on them from every side and seized them all.

"'The Arab Sheikh, who had come with the party, ran away with the money. The Arabs did not know Sheikh Abdullah, and did not believe his statement, and when he offered money, his own Sheikh would not give it, so they believed that the party were running away from Suez, and they finished them there. Afterwards the great Colonel came and caught them, and they were finished at Zagez Zig. May their graves be defiled!'

"Such is the story I heard, and there seems to me to be some amount of truth in it.

"Colonel Sir Charles Warren's energetic

action in the capture and bringing to justice of the perpetrators of the crime, has created a deep impression, and I consider that the whole Peninsula is for foreign travellers now as safe as, if not safer than, it was previously. While on this subject I may mention that I found Professor Palmer's death everywhere regretted deeply by the people, and his memory still warm in the hearts of his Arab friends in the country. Many of them came unsolicited to ask me if I had known him, and to express their sorrow at his loss."*

When the expedition reached the Dead Sea Captain Kitchener found there Arabs with a letter for him from Sir Evelyn Baring (later Lord Cromer) telling of the disaster which had befallen the army of Hicks Pasha on November 5, when that force had been ambuscaded and destroyed, nearly ten thousand men being killed. Continuing with Professor Hull's party as far as Beersheba, for the linking up of the new survey with the old, Captain Kitchener accompanied them a march further towards the coast, and then, "with four Arabs of the Egyptian tribe," struck across country for Ismailia,

* "Mount Seir, Sinai, and Western Palestine." By Edward Hull, appended "Report" by H. H. Kitchener."

realising that his services would be needed in Egypt. He travelled as "Abdullah Bey, an Egyptian official journeying back to Egypt after having been at Jerusalem," this being by no means the only occasion on which his mastery of Arabic allowed him to pass as a Mahommedan. The last two days of the journey must have been a very trying experience, though the account of it is very simply presented. Few who had undergone sandstorms, desert thirst, and deserting Arabs, would be satisfied to record them thus: "Passing down a sandy valley at noon, we came to a flat of mud which formed the end of the valley, a barrier of sand having been thrown up and thus stopping up the valley completely. Crossing this ridge an immense extent of sandhills appeared as far as the eye could reach. I do not think I have ever seen so desolate and dreary a country: nothing but ridge after ridge of sand dunes for an immense distance. The wind blew a strong gale from the west, sending the sand up into our faces so sharply that the camels would at times hardly face it. The wind lasted, unfortunately, until we reached Ismailia, and was very trying to the whole party.

"We camped under a sandhill, and had a very cold and wintry night. Next morning it was found we had no water. The Arabs are always most improvident about water, and require continual watching; during the night they had used up the last drop, and in the morning said they could not go on without a fresh supply, as there was no chance of water before Ismailia, and they did not know how long it would take to get in.

"They said they could find water in Jebel Felleh. I, however, insisted on going on, and with some difficulty got the camels under way. Two of my Arabs had been lagging behind for some time, so one of the Arabs and myself went back and drove up the camels; the two Arabs were sulky and deserted; however, we got the camels all right. Pushing on through a blinding storm of sand over hill and valley, with only the compass to guide us, at 4 p.m. I saw Lake Tumah, and skirting the shore reached the ferry over the canal at dusk. I had some little difficulty in getting the party across the Canal, and was not sorry when I reached comfortable quarters in Ismailia."

It was, indeed, a plucky journey across unknown country, for only one of the Arabs had been over the route before and that fifteen

years earlier, and the simple description suffices to indicate that it was really a daring undertaking and one that, with disaffected Arabs, might well have proved hazardous. The leader had, however, determined to get back to his post as speedily as possible, and in characteristic fashion pushed on as though convinced that difficulties were made but to be overcome. About a week after leaving the expedition he got back to Cairo and his duties as an officer of the Egyptian army.

Since the disaster to the force commanded by Hicks Pasha—an Egyptian force acting under the authority of the Khedive—there had been considerable discussion as to what should be done and before Captain Kitchener got back it had been suggested that all the Soudan to the south of Assuan should be abandoned. Then on the 23rd of December came a fresh triumph for the Mahdists in their victory at El Teb, when Valentine Baker's force was almost annihilated. At the beginning of 1884 the policy of evacuation was finally resolved upon. On January 18, General Charles George Gordon left London to assist in carrying it out, and on February 18 he and Lieutenant-Colonel J. D. Stewart reached Khartoum and soon found themselves in a precarious position.

CHAPTER IV.

GORDON AT KHARTOUM.

It is not necessary to tell here anew the whole story of the tragedy of Khartoum, a tragedy the various aspects of which have been set forth by many pens, both of those who played their parts in the long-drawn agony, and of those who have sought to treat the whole as history. It is a subject on which feelings ran high at the time, and on which people still "take sides" for and against those then in authority, excusing or accusing them for that which was done, and that which was left undone. The tragedy was one which touched the imagination of the people in such a way that none who lived through those anxious months of 1884 was ever likely to forget. Here we are only concerned with it in so far as it belongs to the life story of one of the officers who took part in the effort to avert the tragedy, the one who above all others was the means of avenging it after a lapse of many years.

General Gordon was sent to the Soudan on a

mission to advise the home government as to what was to be done, and to perform such other duties as the Egyptian Government might entrust to him. The Khedive and his ministers at once appointed Gordon Governor-General of the Soudan—a position which he had resigned a few years earlier—and it was agreed that his mission was no longer merely an advisory one, but he was to "evacuate the Soudan, and the Egyptian Government had the fullest confidence in his judgment and knowledge of the country, and of his comprehension of the general line of policy to be pursued, and no effort was to be wanting on the part of the Cairo authorities, whether English or Egyptian, to afford him all the co-operation and support in their power." Little more than a month after Gordon had reached Khartoum, Sir Evelyn Baring (afterwards Lord Cromer), Great Britain's Consul-General and Diplomatic Agent in Egypt, telegraphed home, "the question now is, how to get General Gordon and Colonel Stewart away from Khartoum." This, however, was not as Gordon saw his position; he had gone to bring the people away, and he would not leave without them—indeed, it is said, that at any time almost up to the end he could have got away if he had

been content to save his own skin, and to leave in the lurch those who put their faith in him—but he was not that kind of man. Whatever may be the view taken of the situation, it cannot but be recognised that it was a fine sense of honour that made him stay to his death rather than desert those who had placed their confidence in him.

For month after month during this year 1884 there went on telegraphing and parleyings, and orders from the Government at home which Gordon did not feel justified, as the servant of the Khedive, in obeying. For month after month, London, Cairo, and Khartoum seemed in a tangle of cross-purposes. For month after month went on a "battle of the routes" among those who favoured this, that or the other way of achieving the end which all had in view. Kitchener, who ranked as a Major in the Egyptian Army (his commission to that rank in the Royal Engineers was dated October 8, 1884), is said to have been among those who drew up a scheme for the relief of Khartoum in June, but it was over-ruled. Not until the end of August was a relief expedition finally decided upon, and the Nile route adopted for it.

Before proceeding to the narrative of the pro-

gress of that delayed and ineffectual expedition in so far as it belongs to a narrative of Kitchener's career, a few words may fittingly be devoted to recalling who the Mahdi was, and how his power had grown. He was one, Mahomed Achmet, born at Dongola about 1848, who had studied religion in a village near Khartoum, and in 1870 became a Sheikh. He lived on the island of Abba on the White Nile, about three hundred miles south of Khartoum, and there, gaining a considerable reputation for sanctity, gathered many dervishes or holy men around him. It was in 1881 that he first set up a claim to being the prophet foretold by Mahomed, and was hailed as "El-Mahdi" by the followers who began to gather round him. Discredited by the official heads of Mohammedanism, he yet succeeded in rallying to his banner large numbers of adherents and before the close of the year was in active rebellion. During the rest of the year, and the two following years, up to the battle in which Hicks Pasha's force of ten thousand men was annihilated (only about two hundred Egyptian soldiers survived), fighting went on with varying success, though with continued accessions to the ranks of the Mahdi's force.

By the time that Gordon reached Khartoum early in 1884, it was a question, as we have seen, as to whether the Soudan should be evacuated or an expedition sent out to destroy the Mahdi's power. Evacuation was decided upon, but an expedition became necessary to avoid even that being disastrous. When tribe after tribe was joining the Mahdi's army, it was advisable to find which tribe could still be relied upon, and Kitchener made courageous use of his knowledge of the Arab character and language when he set out upon one of the most adventurous of his camel rides into the desert. His object was to visit Dongola—the birthplace of the Mahdi—and to establish the friendliness or otherwise of the Mudir of that important position on the Nile. He set out with a small party of Arabs, who had sworn to be faithful to him, himself disguised as an Arab, and with a goodly sum of money as forcible arguments for enlisting the Mudir's loyalty. For six days the little party journeyed up the Nile, and arrived at Dongola when the Mudir, it is declared, was already contemplating becoming one of the Mahdi's Emirs. Though Dongola may well have been regarded as a sacred spot to the Mahdists, as that is where their prophet was born, the people are said to have been

divided, and Major Kitchener only arrived in the nick of time, and by his diplomacy (and golden arguments) won the Mudir, whom he described as "exactly like a Dervish, and very religious." He journeyed through the whole province of Dongola, satisfied himself that the Mudir really intended to be loyal to the Egyptian Government, and collected a great deal of important information as to the state of affairs.

When the Nile expedition started, Major Kitchener was appointed Deputy Assistant Adjutant and Quarter-Master General under Sir Charles Wilson, who wrote: "The Government intend to make the Mudir independent governor of the whole Soudan after Gordon has been brought back, and to allow him about £100,000 a year. Some months ago Kitchener was asked if the Mudir could be made the independent governor of Dongola, and he was dead against it as every sane man must have beeen. You can therefore imagine my feelings when I found that the Government seriously intended to offer the whole Soudan to the Mudir!"*

As things fell out, the intention was not fulfilled, but the episode is one of those examples so frequent with our Home government of

* "Life of Sir Charles Wilson," by Sir Charles M. Watson.

ignoring the judgment of the man on the spot, examples plentiful enough in the tragic story of General Gordon's last year.

Major Kitchener seems to have been for some time at Debbeh, nearly a hundred miles above Dongola, and from there he managed to get several letters through to Gordon, who waxes sarcastic over some of them in his "Journal." Colonel J. D. Stewart made a dash from Khartoum in one of General Gordon's "penny steamboats," hoping to get down the river into touch with the relief expedition, but he and his party were all murdered. On September 21, Gordon wrote in his journal that the following letter had arrived for Stewart from Kitchener:

"Dear Stewart, Can I do anything for you or General Gordon? I should be awfully glad if you will let me know. The relief expedition is evidently coming up this way, but whether they will go by Berber or attempt the direct road from here,* I do not know. The Mahdi is in a bad way; he has abandoned Parfur, and has no reinforcements to send to Khartoum and Sennaar, which are asked for.

"Yours always,

"H. H. KITCHENER."

* Presumably Debbeh.

Two days later Gordon noted the receipt of another letter from Kitchener, dated from Debbeh on August 31, mentioning the progress of the relief expedition, and saying "a few words about what you wish done would be very acceptable." In reading the sarcastic comments which Gordon made in his generally fascinating but not infrequently irritating "Journal," we have to remember the trying, and appallingly lonely position of great responsibility in which he was placed. At the end of November Gordon wrote, "I had a letter saying Government had given Kitchener *carte blanche* to pay the Mahdi up to £20,000 for me; but adds, 'the writer does not think I would accept such a proposition,' in which he is quite right; neither would the Mahdi. I like Baker's description of Kitchener." After writing those words Gordon pasted against them a cutting from a letter which he had received from Sir Samuel Baker: "The man whom I have always placed my hopes upon, Major Kitchener, R.E., who is one of the few *very superior* British officers, with a cool and good head and a hard constitution, combined with untiring energy, has now pushed up to Dongola, and has proved that the Mudir is dependable. The latter has given him a letter

received from you, asking about reinforcements, and stating that you have 8,000 troops at Khartoum, and that Sennaar is still occupied by the Government forces."

Baker's testimony appears to have impressed Gordon greatly for he wrote "Whoever comes up here had better appoint Major Kitchener Governor-General, for it is certain, after what has passed, *I am impossible.* (What a comfort !) . . . If Kitchener would take the place, he would be the best man to put in as Governor General."

We have a graphic account of Kitchener at this advance post up the Nile written by one of the most vigorous and adventurous of war correspondents, the late Bennet Burleigh : "It was at Debbeh ninety miles south of Dongola, in 1884, that I first learned to know him well. He was then living with the Mudir Mustapha Yawer's irregulars. Wearing the dress of an Arab, he was scarcely distinguishable from a native. He had gone in advance of the British forces on a delicate and dangerous mission, for which he had volunteered. I had wandered, unauthorised, to Debbeh, attended by one servant, in search of news and adventure, and easily found both. On the upward trip I passed

a risky night in the Mahdi's ancestral home with his uncle and nephews, and had ridden among bands of fierce Kabbabish. To my astonishment and delight I found one Englishman within the mud walls of Debbeh—Captain Kitchener, R.E., for such he then was. He gave me a hearty welcome, and added to my debt of gratitude by producing two bottles of claret, his whole store, which we most loyally drank at dinner. For weeks he had not heard the English tongue spoken, and he naturally was glad to see a countryman able to tell him something of what was happening outside the Soudan. . . . . In manner he is good-natured, a listener rather than a talker, but readily pronouncing an opinion if it is called for. All his life he has been *par excellence* a 'volunteer' soldier — volunteering, time and again, for one difficult and dangerous duty after another."*

Kitchener was at this time attached to the staff of Sir Charles Wilson, Chief of the Intelligence Department, who recorded that on October 15 he reached Debbeh and met Major Kitchener, who had been living for some time with the Mudir's troops at that place. When Sir Herbert Stewart's column set out Khartoumwards from

* "Sirdar and Khalifa." By Bennet Burleigh.

Korti in December, Kitchener went with it, and won the admiration of British troops, as one of the correspondents said, by an act of cool courage, when he rode on far ahead of the Hussars, near Gakdul Wells, and summoned a band of Dervish spies, headed by the notorious robber chieftain of the Bayuda, to surrender. Before the fight at Abu Klea in the middle of January, when Sir Herbert Stewart was mortally wounded, Kitchener had been ordered back, "much to his disgust," as Sir Charles Wilson noted, to Korti, and was thus not of those who penetrated nearest to Khartoum, only to learn that the town had fallen and Gordon been killed two days earlier, that the expedition was "too late."

The coolness, courage, and success of Major Kitchener as an adventurous officer of the Intelligence Departnent were generally noted. He went alone and unarmed said Mr.H.H.Pearse, one of the war correspondents, among semi-hostile tribes, meeting the sheikhs in the desert, and winning them over by strength of will and something of a sublime self-confidence which impressed them greatly. He argued, cajoled, threatened, "and if any showed signs of anger, he met their fierce outbursts with the steadfast

glance of the eyes that in such moments grew curiously cold, as if the fearless light in them were suddenly frozen. One of those chieftains told me afterwards that nothing had impressed them so much as the self-reliant bearing of the blue-eyed, red-bearded young Englishman, who never carried any weapon or seemed to want any escort."

A story told by a Canadian journalist bears striking testimony to the coolness and courage of the Intelligence Officer, and incidentally suggests that the winning over of the Mudir of Dongola was not quite so easy a matter as it would seem: "In Bishareen tents, throughout Dongolese bazaars, and on the caravan trail they tell this story. The House of Lords knows nothing about it. . . . But it is worth telling." Mr. Charles Lewis Shaw says that he was at Korti in January, 1885, when the news of the Battle of Abu Klea came in. Things were at a state of tension, and there was a doubt as to the loyalty of the Dongalese—"The Mudir of Dongola, who was more than suspected of being a Mahdist was in camp. English sovereigns and bayonets had changed his politics for the time being, but several thousand traitors living in your midst create an unpleasant feeling."

One January night, when Mr. Shaw was writing in his tent, an Irish-Canadian friend came in and told him that there was likely to be a "scrap" in the camp, owing to misunderstandings between the Bashi-Bazouks and some newly arrived Arabs. The two men went out to see the row, the Irish-Canadian was soon mixed up in it, and Mr. Shaw went to his help—with the result that they soon found themselves removed to the guard-tent, with about a dozen Arabs.

"The affair didn't bother McBurney or myself very much. We knew that Canadian voyageurs would be released in the morning, after going through a little formality before a subaltern. I was listening to the regrets of McBurney at having got only one punch at the man who had nearly drowned him at Ambigol, when a tall man, tied apparently hand and foot, was thrown amongst them. I thought he looked a different brand of Arab than I had been accustomed to. He was; he was Kitchener. He was after the conspiracy.

"I didn't know much Arabic in those days, but we could hear the Dongalese—they were all Dongalese—talk and talk in excited tones the whole night, the bound man occasionally saying a few words.

"When we paraded before the large open-faced orderly tent next morning, we were almost paralysed to see Lord Wolseley himself seated at the little table with Kitchener beside him, both in full staff uniform. . . . We seemed to have been forgotten. A tall, fine looking Arab, the handsomest Dongalese Arab I ever saw, was being examined through the interpreter. He didn't seem impressed by the glittering uniforms or the presence of the Commander-in-Chief, or embarrassed by their questions. Once or twice an expression of surprise flitted over his face, but his eyes were always fixed on Kitchener, who would now and again stoop and whisper something in Lord Wolseley's ear. Once he raised his voice. The prisoner heard its intonation and recognized him. With a fierce bound the long lithe Arab made a spring and was over the table, and had seized Kitchener by the throat. There was a short swift struggle. Wolseley's eye glistened, and he half drew his sword. Kitchener, athletic as he was, was being overpowered, and the Arab was throttling him to death. There was a rush of the guard—and within ten minutes a cordon of sentries surrounded the Mudir of Dongola's tent. Within three days he was a prisoner in his palace at

Dongola, guarded by half a battalion of British soldiers. The conspiracy was broken.

"How widespread it was, only half-a-dozen white men knew at that time, but that it embraced the Courts of the Khedive, the Mudir, and the Mahdi leaked out in after years. To it the treachery of the Egyptian garrison at Khartoum and the death of Gordon was due, and the preservation of the desert column can be placed to its discovery."*

It fell to Kitchener to piece together, so far as could be done, the official narrative of the fall of Khartoum. His intimate knowledge of the native character and mastery of Arabic marked him out as peculiarly fitted for the task, and after all those survivors from Khartoum who could be reached had told their stories, these were checked and collated and the result is the history of the last six weeks of the siege of Khartoum, from the close of Gordon's "Journal" to the time of his death. The fact that it was Major Kitchener who drew up this history has been overlooked by his biographers, and therefore, despite its length, it may fittingly be given in its entirety in closing this chapter. The document, issued by the War Office at the

* *The Canadian Magazine*, March, 1899.

beginning of October, 1885, runs as follows:

"The last accurate information received about Khartoum is contained in General Gordon's diary, and dated the 14th of December, 1884. The state of the town was then very critical, and General Gordon states 'the town may fall in ten days.'

"The fort of Omdurman had been cut off from communication with Khartoum since the 3rd of November; it was at that date provisioned for one and a-half months, and the Commandant, Farag Allah Bey, had requested further supplies of ammunition. The garrison may therefore be considered to have been in great difficulties for food and necessaries after the 20th of December.

"General Gordon had so weakened himself by sending away five steamers (four to meet the English Expedition and one with Colonel Stewart) that he found it impossible to check the Arabs on the White Nile, and therefore to keep open communication with the fort of Omdurman. According to General Gordon's statement, there were in the stores at Khartoum on the 14th of December, 83,525 okes of biscuit and 546 ardebs of dhourra. From the almost weekly statement of the amounts in store, it is calculated

that, although General Gordon was able to reduce considerably the issue of dhourra, the biscuit ration to the troops had not been reduced up to the 14th of December. The amount in store would represent approximately 18 days' rations for the garrison alone. Gordon had already, on the 22nd of November, found it necessary to issue 9,600 lbs. of biscuit to the poor, and he then says : 'I am determined, if the town does fall, the Mahdi shall find precious little to eat in it.'

"There is little doubt that as the siege progressed it was found necessary to issue a considerable amount of provisions to the poorer native inhabitants of Khartoum. It may, therefore, be considered that even on reduced rations the supply in store must have been almost, if not quite, exhausted about the 1st of January, 1885.

"The town was then closely encircled by the rebels, who doubtless increased the intensity of the attack as they approached nearer and nearer to the works.

"The Mahdi was fully aware from deserters of the straits to which the garrison were reduced from want of food; and it was his intention that the town should fall into his hands without

fighting, being obliged by famine to surrender. About the 6th of January, General Gordon seeing that the garrison were reduced to great want of food, and that existence for many of the inhabitants was almost impossible, issued a proclamation, offering to any of the inhabitants who liked free permission to leave the town and go to the Mahdi. Great numbers availed themselves of this permission, and General Gordon wrote letters to the Mahdi requesting him to protect and feed these poor Moslem people, as he had done for the last nine months. It has been estimated that only about 14,000 remained in the town out of a total of 34,000 inhabittants, the number obtained by a census of the town in September.

"General Gordon kept heart in the garrison by proclamations announcing the near approach of the English Relief Expedition, and praising them for the resistance they had made, as well as by the example of his unshaken determination never to surrender the town to the rebels.

"It appears probable, though the precise date cannot be exactly verified, that the fort of Omdurman fell into the hands of the rebels on or about the 13th of January. The garrison were not injured, and Farag Allah Bey, the

commander, was well treated in the rebel camp, as an inducement for any waverer in the Khartoum garrison to join the Mahdi's cause.

"The fall of Omdurman must have been a great blow to the garrison of Khartoum, who thus lost their only position on the west bank of the White Nile. The Arabs were able then, by the construction of batteries along the river bank, entirely to close the White Nile to Gordon's steamers. Having accomplished this, they could establish ferries on the White Nile (south of Khartoum), and have constant and rapid communication from Omdurman village and camp to their positions along the south front.

"About the 18th of January, the rebel works having approached the south front, a sortie was made by the troops, which led to desperate fighting. About 200 of the garrison were killed, and although large numbers of the rebels were said to have been slain, it does not appear that any great or permanent advantage was obtained by the besieged garrison. On the return of the troops to Khartoum after this sortie, General Gordon personally addressed them, praising them for the splendid resistance they had made up to that time, and urging them still to do their utmost to hold out, as relief was near; indeed,

that the English might arrive any day, and all would then be well.

"The state of the garrison was then desperate from want of food, all the donkeys, dogs, cats, rats, etc., had been eaten; a small ration of gum was issued daily to the troops, and a sort of bread was made from pounded palm tree fibres. Gordon held several councils of the leading inhabitants, and on one occasion had the town most rigorously searched for provisions; the result, however, was very poor, only yielding four ardebs of grain through the whole town; this was issued to the troops. Gordon continually visited the posts, and personally encouraged the soldiers to stand firm; it was said that during this period he never slept.

"On the 20th January the news of the defeat of the Mahdi's picked troops at Abu Klea created consternation in the Mahdi's camp. A council of the leaders was held, and it is said a considerable amount of resistance to the Mahdi's will and want of discipline was shown. On the 22nd the news of the arrival of the English on the Nile, at Metammeh, which was thought to have been taken, led the Mahdi to decide to make at once a desperate attack upon Khartoum, before reinforcements could enter the town. It

is probable that next day the Mahdi sent letters to Farag Pasha, commanding the black troops, who had been previously in communication with him, offering terms for the surrender of the town, and stating that the English had been defeated on the Nile. Rumours were also prevalent in Khartoum of the fighting at Abu Klea and the arrival of the English at Metammeh. It has been said that helmets were exposed by the Mahdi's troops in front of their works to induce the garrison to believe that the English had been defeated; but this has been distinctly denied by some who can hardly have failed to observe anything of the sort.

"On the 23rd General Gordon had a stormy interview with Farag Pasha. An eye-witness states that it was owing to Gordon having passed a fort on the White Nile which was under Farag Pasha's charge, and found to be inadequately protected. Gordon is said to have struck Farag Pasha on this occasion. It seems probable to me that at this interview Farag Pasha proposed to Gordon to surrender the town, and stated the terms the Mahdi had offered, declaring that in his opinion they should be accepted. Farag Pasha left the palace in a great rage, refusing the

repeated attempts of other officers to effect a reconciliation between him and Gordon. On the following day General Gordon held a council of the notables at the palace. The question of the surrender of the town was then discussed, and General Gordon declared, whatever the council decided, he would never surrender the town. I think it very probable that on this occasion General Gordon brought Farag Pasha's action and proposals before the council; and it appears that some in the council were of Farag Pasha's opinion that the town could resist no longer, and should be surrendered on the terms offered by the Mahdi. General Gordon would not, however, listen to this proposal.

"On the 25th Gordon was slightly ill, and as it was Sunday he did not appear in public. He had, however, several interviews with leading men of the town, and evidently knew that the end was near. It has been said that Gordon went out in the evening and crossed the river to Tuti Island on board the Ismailia, to settle some dispute amongst the garrison there. This statement has not been verified by other witnesses, but owing to it the rumour subsequently arose amongst the black troops in Omdurman that Gordon had escaped that night on board

the Ismailia. The facts, however, that both steamers were captured by the rebels, that the Ismailia was afterwards used by Mahommed Ahmed when he visited Khartoum, and the very full and complete evidence that General Gordon was killed at or near the palace entirely dispel any doubt on the matter. If he crossed the river to Tuti, there is no doubt he returned later to his palace in Khartoum.

"On the night of the 25th many of the famished troops left their posts on the fortifications in search of food in the town. Some of the troops were also too weak, from want of nourishment, to go to their posts. This state of things was known in the town, and caused some alarm; many of the principal inhabitants armed themselves and their slaves, and went to the fortifications in place of the soldiers. This was not an unusual occurrence, only on this night more of the inhabitants went as volunteers than they had done on previous occasions.

"At about 3.30 a.m. on the morning of Monday, the 26th, a determined attack was made by the rebels on the south front. The principal points of attack were the Boori Gate, at the extreme east end of the line of defence on the Blue Nile; and the Mesalamieh Gate, on the west

side, near the White Nile. The defence of the former post held out against the attack, but at the Mesalamieh Gate, the rebels having filled the ditch with bundles of straw, brushwood, beds, etc., brought up in their arms, penetrated the fortifications, led by their Emir Wad-en-Nejumi. The defenders of the Boori Gate seeing the rebels inside the fortifications in their rear, retired, and the town was then at the mercy of the rebels.

"General Gordon had a complete system of telegraphic communication with all the posts along the line of fortification, and there must have been great irregularity in the telegraph stations to account for his being left entirely unwarned of the attack and entry of the rebels. Doubtless, Farag Pasha was responsible, to some extent, for this.

"Farag Pasha has been very generally accused of having either opened the gates of Khartoum himself, or to have connived at the entrance of the rebels; but this has been distinctly denied by Abdullah Bey Ismail, who commanded a battalion of irregular troops at the fall of the town, as well as by about 30 refugee soldiers, who lately escaped, and came in during the last days of the English occupation of Dongola.

The accusations of treachery have all been vague, and are, to my mind, the outcome of mere supposition. Hassan Bey Balmasawy, who commanded at the Mesalamieh Gate, certainly did not make a proper defence, and failed to warn General Gordon of the danger the town was in. He afterwards appears to have taken a commission under the Mahdi, and to have gone to Kordofan with the Emir Abu-Anga.

"In my opinion Khartoum fell from sudden assault when the garrison were too exhausted by privations to make proper resistance. Having entered the town, the rebels rushed through the streets, shouting and murdering every one they met, thus increasing the panic and destroying any opposition.

"It is difficult, from the confused accounts, to make out exactly how General Gordon was killed. All the evidence tends to prove it happened at or near the palace, where his body was subsequently seen by several witnesses. It appears that there was one company of black troops in the palace besides General Gordon's cavasses; some resistance was made when the rebels appeared, but I think this was after General Gordon had left the palace. The only

account by a person claiming to be an eye-witness of the scene of General Gordon's death relates, "On hearing the noise, I got my master's donkey and went with him to the palace. We met Gordon Pasha at the outer door of the palace. Muhammed Bey Mustapha, with my master, Ibrahim Bey Rushdi, and about 20 cavasses, then went with Gordon towards the house of the Austrian Consul Hansel, near the church, when we met some rebels in an open place near the outer gate of the palace. Gordon Pasha was walking in front, leading the party. The rebels fired a volley, and Gordon was killed at once; nine of the cavasses, Ibrahim Bey Rushdi and Muhammed Bey Mustapha were killed, the rest ran away.'

"A large number of witnesses state Gordon was killed near the gate of the palace, and various accounts have been related from hearsay of the exact manner in which he met his end. Several reliable witnesses saw and recognised Gordon's body at the gate of the palace; one describes it as being dressed in light clothes.

"The Soudan custom of beheading and exposing the heads of adversaries slain in battle was apparently carried out, as was done by the Mudir of Dongola after the battle at Korti.

The Bagara savages seem to have had some doubt which was Gordon's body, and great confusion occurred in the Mahdi's camp at Omdurman, where the heads were exposed, as to which was Gordon's head ; some recognising, others denying the identity of Gordon's head. One apparently reliable witness relates that he saw the rebels cut off Gordon's head at the palace gate after the town was in their hands. The massacre in the town lasted some six hours, and about 4,000 persons, at least, were killed. The black troops were spared, except those who resisted at the Boori Gate and elsewhere ; large numbers of the townspeople and slaves were killed and wounded. The Bashi Bazouks and white regulars, numbering 3,327 and the Shaigia irregulars, numbering 2,330, were mostly all killed in cold blood, after they had surrendered and been disarmed. Consul Hansel was killed in his own house. Consul Nicola, a doctor, and Ibrahim Bey Fauzi, who was Gordon's secretary, were taken prisoners ; the latter was wounded.

" At about 10 a.m. the Mahdi sent over orders to stop the massacre, which then ceased. The rebels fell to looting the town, and ordered all the inhabitants out of it ; they were searched

at the gate as they passed, and were taken over to Omdurman, where the women were distributed as slaves amongst the rebel chiefs. The men, after being kept as prisoners under a guard for three days, were stripped and allowed to get their living as best they could.

"It has been stated that the Mahdi was angry when he heard of General Gordon's death; but, though he may have simulated such a feeling on account of the black troops, there is very little doubt, in my opinion, that had he expressed the wish, Gordon would not have been killed. The presence of Gordon as a prisoner in his camp would have been a source of great danger to the Mahdi, for the black troops from Kordofan and Khartoum all loved and venerated Gordon, and many other influential men knew him to be a wonderfully good man.

"The want of discipline in the Mahdi's camp made it dangerous for him to keep as a prisoner a man whom all the black troops liked better than himself, and in favour of whom, on a revulsion of feeling, a successful revolt might take place in his own camp. Moreover, if Gordon was dead, he calculated the English would retire and leave him in peace.

"The Mahdi had promised his followers as

much gold and silver as they could carry when Khartoum fell, and immense disappointment was expressed at the failure to find the Government treasury.

"Three days after the fall of the town Farag Pasha was brought up to show where the Government money was hid. As he was naturally unable to do this, owing to there not being any, he was killed on the public market place at Omdurman.

"Many others were put to torture to disclose where their wealth was hid, with varying results.

"On the third day after the fall of Khartoum many of the prisoners saw Sir Charles Wilson's steamers off Tuti Island, with the English on board; some were present in the batteries at Omdurman when the rebels opened fire on the steamers.

"The number of white prisoners in the Mahdi's camp has been variously stated. A Greek, escaped from Khartoum, reports when the place fell there were 42 Greeks, five Greek women, one Jewess, six European nuns, and two priests; of these, 34 Greeks were murdered. The survivors were all at liberty, but in extreme poverty.

"Abdullah Bey Ismail relates that 'all the

European ladies are at Omdurman, living in a zeriba, where they form a little colony, guarded by the European men. They earn a meagre sustenance, by sewing, washing, etc. Not a single one was taken by the dervishes; they all wear Moslem dress.' A letter from the Mahdi was received relative to the white prisoners, who he declared preferred to remain with him. The document bears 96 signatures of Europeans; but some of them are undoubtedly spurious, as that of Father Luigi Bonomi, who has since escaped from El Obeid, never having been at Khartoum.

"A large number of the Bagara Arabs left the Mahdi shortly after the fall of Khartoum, much disgusted at their failure to obtain a larger amount of loot. On the Mahdi attempting to bring them back by force they joined the party in Kordofan who are now fighting against the Mahdi's cause.

"The memorable siege of Khartoum lasted 317 days, and it is not too much to say that such a noble resistance was due to the indomitable resolution and resource of one Englishman.

"Never was a garrison so nearly rescued, never was a commander so sincerely lamented.

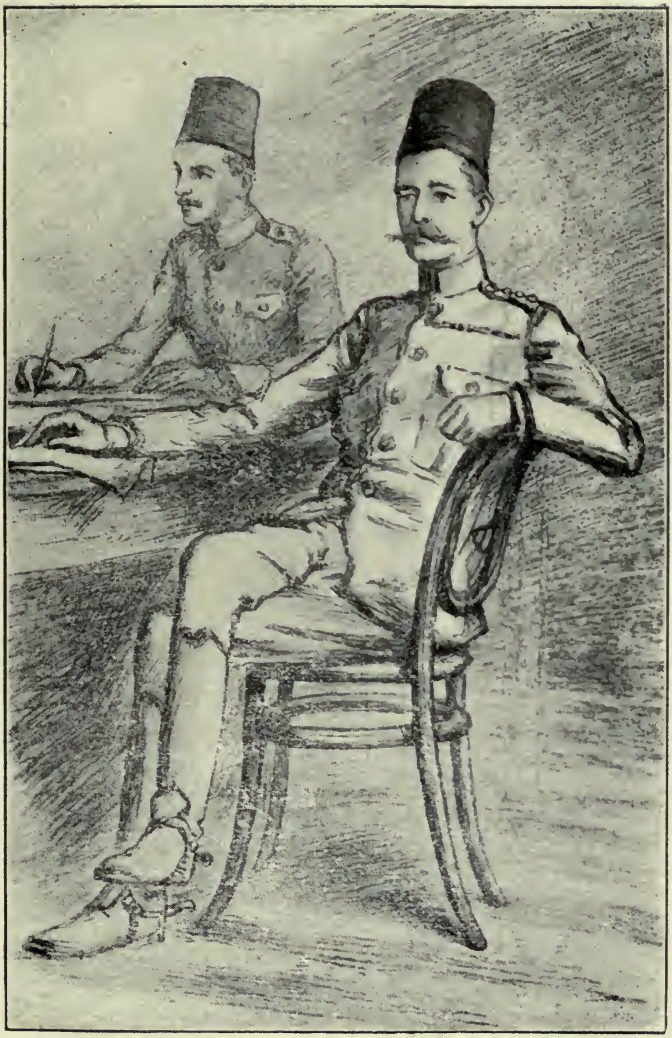
"H. H. KITCHENER, Major.

Major Kitchener had also drawn up the official memorandum on the murder of Colonel Stewart and his companions in their attempt to get down the Nile to the Relief Expedition.

CHAPTER V.

SIRDAR OF THE EGYPTIAN ARMY.

After the evacuation of the Soudan which followed upon the fall of Khartoum, Major Kitchener resigned his commission in the Egyptian army and returned to England, and on June 15, 1885, was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel; he also received the medal with clasp, the Khedive's star, and another Egyptian decoration. During this stay in London, Colonel Kitchener joined with the late Sir Augustus Harris, Lord Londesborough, and Sir John Gorst in founding the Drury Lane Lodge of Freemasons. At about this time, too, he made an appearance in an unexpected role, as we learn from the genial reminiscences of that veteran journalist, Mr. Thomas Catling. Mr. Catling tells us in "My Life's Pilgrimage" how he was one of the few people present at a rehearsal at Drury Lane Theatre of "Human Nature," a drama in which occurred a very stirring military scene. Another of the favoured few was Colonel



THE SIRDAR, SIR H. H. KITCHENER AND HIS A.D.C., BIMBASHI J. K. WATSON.
(A Sketch from Life).

Opp. p. 96.

Kitchener. When the battle scene opened it was arranged in the form of a square with a surrounding low wall of Oriental pattern, at which the soldiers came with springing leaps and tumbled over on the stage. Kitchener immediately jumped up exclaiming, "No, no; that won't do," and Augustus Harris at once stood aside and told the actors and "troops" to do exactly as the Colonel told them. The scene as revised by the experienced soldier became far more effective, and, it is added, the manager ever afterwards strove in mounting a play to have all technical details made as correct as expert judgment could render them.

Before the close of 1885, Colonel Kitchener had accepted a fresh post, in which his earlier surveying experience must have proved of value, when he was appointed a Boundary Commissioner for the delimitation of Zanzibar. In the year before a small band of enterprising Germans had landed on the East African Coast and begun to acquire for their country the nucleus of what was after to be recognised as German East Africa, and in that year also the European Powers were represented in a conference at Berlin dealing with "spheres of influence" and other matters concerning the partition of the Dark Continent.

Not for long, however, was Colonel Kitchener engaged in Zanzibar. It is not difficult to believe that his work over the establishing of the Egyptian army, and his experiences during the attempt to relieve Khartoum had impressed him with the necessity of overthrowing for good and all the power of that which the Mahdi and his satellites represented. The Mahdi had died in the summer of 1885—surviving the heroic Gordon but a few months—his successor, the Khalifa, was yet more of an "undesirable" whose power waxed with the evacuation of the Soudan, and if Colonel Kitchener counted on the coming of a time when Gordon should be avenged and the Soudan won back for Egypt, he may well have dreamed of being able to bear a part in the work. In the early autumn of 1886 he was to have his opportunity of working towards that wished for end, as in August he was appointed Governor-General of the Red Sea Littoral and Commandant of Suakin. His task was to keep the "friendlies" friendly, and to add as far as might be to their numbers.

Despite the death of the Mahdi in the summer of 1885, Mahdiism had spread all over the Soudan, until Khartoum was but the centre of the great tract of country dominated by the

Khalifa's adherents. Though Suakin was garrisoned by Egyptian troops, the Red Sea shore on either side of that port was occupied largely by Dervish fanatics and their supporters, or tribes but doubtfully loyal, and Osman Digna was their most formidable leader. Colonel Kitchener arrived to take up his duties at Suakin on August 25, 1886, and was soon able to report an improved condition of things in the district though the rebels still held Tokar to the south, and the emissaries of Osman Digna were busy in seeking to stem the tide of desertions from the Khalifa's cause. This went on for some months, when in June Colonel Kitchener took a small force to Halaib, on the Red Sea, where a colony of slave dealers who had fired on a boat of H.M.S. *Dolphin* were dispersed. A number of "friendlies" were gathered to attack Tokar in October, but dissentions among them led to their retirement when they were attacked by the enemy. Then the reduction of the Suakin garrison by the removal of two battalions of Egyptians and Soudanese troops encouraged Osman Digna before the end of the year to think that he might successfully attack the place. He left his headquarters at Kassala with a force of five thousand men for Tokar, and then proceeded to Handub,

some miles to the north-west of Suakin, whence his scouts pillaged around, but not only did not succeed in winning over new adherents to enable him to capture the place, but suffered from the attacks of local tribes. In the beginning of January 1888, he determined to punish these tribes, and prepared an expedition for the purpose. News of this reached Colonel Kitchener who thought he saw in it a possible opportunity of breaking up Mahdiism in his part of the country by the capture of Osman Digna. Having telegraphed to Cairo for permission to do so, he set out on January 17 with a mixed force of about 500 men, and four other British officers. Handub was reached, and the camp fallen upon suddenly, so that Osman Digna's men fled, and he himself only just escaped, but the advance body of irregulars, who precipitately made the first attack, too readily thought the fight won, and by the time the rest of the force came up the enemy had reformed and recaptured their arms and ammunition. Colonel Kitchener received a severe bullet wound in the face, and the actual capture of the camp being impossible, the force retired in an orderly fashion to Suakin. Two days later Kitchener left, invalided, for Cairo, but returned, though still suffering from

his wound, when the rebel activities were renewed in March. On April 11 he was gazetted Colonel, and a few weeks later was invalided home to England, and was honoured by being made Aide-de-camp to the Queen.

When Colonel Kitchener returned to Egypt it was as Adjutant-General of the Egyptian army, and as such he took command of the First Brigade at the brilliantly successful attack on Gemaizeh, near Suakin, on December 20, 1888. Months later, and in August 1889, at Toski, where he led the mounted troops, he was able to help in a more smashing blow at the forces of Mahdiism, and to his "activity and foresight" the Sirdar, Sir Francis Grenfell, attributed much of the completeness of the victory. For his part in this engagement, Colonel Kitchener was honoured by being made a C.B.

After the battle of Toski, Colonel Kitchener was for some time engaged in his work as Adjutant General of the Egyptian army, carrying on the development of that force which, as one of Sir Evelyn Wood's assistants, he had helped to create, and which had already given notable evidence of the way in which the most unpromising material might be made serviceable. To many critics the making of an army out of

the Egyptian fellaheen had seemed a hopeless task. Indeed, one observant writer declared bluntly that as a soldier the Egyptian fellah was worthless: "He cowers at alarm, and shrinks from a contest involving physical suffering to himself. For any practical purposes an Egyptian army is useless, and their maintenance is but a waste of money. No amount of personal example and European officering will prevail upon them to offer stubborn and desperate battle even in a situation where their lives are forfeit."

Those words were written in the early days. Nearly twenty years later another writer speaking of Kitchener's work in the building up of the Egyptian army said: "He did not create the force, of course, but he gave the finishing touches to its discipline, drill, and demeanour; he deserves much, if not all, the credit of perfecting it into a first-class man-slaying machine." The change effected by the first ten years of the Egyptian army, of which Sir Evelyn Wood became Sirdar in 1882, is well described in the History of the Soudan written by the distinguished soldier who was himself to become in turn Sirdar, and in succession to Kitchener. The secret of the success achieved was the same as that shown in other

times and in other parts of the world—"the Englishman's power to inspire confidence." Service in the old-time army had been something to be avoided at all costs, even that of self-maiming by cutting off fingers and destroying sight; new conditions gradually came to breed new confidence:

"As the Army owed its success to the confidence inspired by its English officers, so in its turn the army has been the most powerful means of spreading throughout the people of the land a confidence in the honesty and fair dealing of the English servants of His Highness the Khedive; and the recruit of the new army returning to his village on his annual furlough, is perhaps one of the most effective means of impressing this fact on the peasant classes of Egypt. . . . He is well-clothed, and fed, regularly paid, and treated with justice by his commanding officers, and on the expiration of his furlough he no longer bemoans the sad fate which drags him once more away, but returns happily enough, and perhaps inwardly rejoicing to escape from the squalor of his native home back to the clean and airy barracks or camp."*

* "Mahdiism and the Egyptian Soudan." By Major F. R. Wingate.

Lord Cromer, writing sixteen years later, testified to the wonderful work achieved in the creating an army superior to anything that Egypt had before possessed, and attributed that success to the fact that the British officers had been allowed a free hand.

For a time, 1890-91, Colonel Kitchener was in temporary command of the Egyptian police, and in 1892, on Sir Francis Grenfell resigning the position of Sirdar, or Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian Army, Colonel Kitchener was selected on April 9 for that responsible office. The position was the more responsible in that it was beginning to be realised that the reconquest of the Soudan and the taking of Khartoum were gradually becoming necessary. Kitchener was himself, we may be sure, convinced of the necessity of achieving those ends though the patience which he had exercised in the helping to make an army was a characteristic which kept him from acting in any ill-considered impulsive fashion. We may be sure, also, that he was convinced of the absolute necessity of "smashing" Mahdiism, and nursed the hope that Gordon would yet be avenged. His new position, as head of the army which he had helped to create, gave him more power than he

had hitherto enjoyed, and he may well have thought that the time for action was approaching. If he had not already mused upon this he must have done so after reading the following letter addressed to him by Sir Samuel White Baker, a letter which was strikingly prophetic :

" My dear Kitchener,

" As I feel sure that the task of regaining the Soudan will fall to yourself, and by its success will sustain the good fortune which I trust will ever favour you through simple merit alone, I send you some remarks on 'Military Routes towards Berber.' The memoranda may be of service to you some day when active operations shall be determined upon. My opinion is very strong upon the necessity of quietly preparing for the event beforehand, so that when the moment shall arrive, the success may be accomplished without loss of time. In all our recent expeditions one notes a general absence of military science. You will have the opportunity of preparing for a blow, and delivering it with undoubted result, which will bring honour upon the force you command and to yourself.

" Ever sincerely yours,

" Samuel W. Baker."

Acknowledging that letter the newly appointed Sirdar wrote from Cairo on May 1, 1892: "I am immensely obliged to you for your Notes, which no doubt give the key to the whole question of the re-occupation of the Soudan. I only hope it may fall to my lot to use your Notes and to recover the country. There is no doubt that some day it must be accomplished. I wish something could be done to clear up the Slavery question, which, I believe—now that the religious mania of Mahdiism is dying out—is the main cause that prevents the Soudanese from driving out their present oppressors. They dread the general freedom of slaves, which, they believe, would be bound to follow the re-occupation of the country."

Sir Samuel Baker's "I feel sure that the task of regaining the Soudan will fall to yourself" was to prove a happy forecast, though four years were to elapse before the actual forward movement was to be made, and two more before the climax. Meanwhile the Sirdar was improving and strengthening the Egyptian army, and was also perfecting those arrangements without which the bravest army can achieve but little. Progress, however, was not without trouble, for in 1894 the young Khedive Abbas,

who had succeeded Tewfik in 1892, took occasion at a review of Egyptian soldiers to sneer at their quality, declaring, it is reported, that he could have made better troops out of the horse-boys of Cairo! The insult may well have been inspired by some enemy of the strong silent man who was Commander-in-Chief of the Khedive's army, but that man was not one to allow such words to pass unheeded, and Kitchener promptly resigned. It was only after the Khedive had apologised for the stupid remark that the Sirdar withdrew his resignation, and at about the same time, as though to add point to the incident, he was honoured with the K.C.M.G., and thus became Sir Herbert Kitchener. In 1894, too, the Sirdar lost his father, Colonel Kitchener, who passed away in his 88th year, having lived to see his son win to high distinction with every promise of higher.

Knowledge of the state of affairs in the abandoned Soudan under the villainous Khalifa was ever being added to from the reports of spies, and in 1891 and 1895, two long-held prisoners, Father Ohrwalder and Slatin Pasha, escaped from among the Mahdiists and brought valuable information into Egypt. The "shame and horror" of the evacuation of the Soudan

was brought home with cumulative force, and people of the most opposite views came to regard the reconquest of the territory as not only desirable but demanded. As Mr. Winston Churchill put it: "The name of Gordon fused the military, the fanatical, and the philanthropic spirits into one strong and moving influence; to this were added the impulse of the national pride in the regeneration of Egypt and the momentum of modern Imperialism; and these three forces—the sentimental, the intellectual, and the political—gradually overcame the fear and hatred of Soudan warfare which a long series of profitless campaigns had created in the mind of the average taxpayer. The reconquest of the Soudan became again, as far as British public opinion was concerned, a practical question."* Here we are concerned with that reconquest as it forms a part of the story of the life of one of the two men by whom it was mainly brought about, and not as part of the history of Egypt. As history it will be found fully and illuminatingly dealt with both in the work just quoted and in Lord Cromer's "Modern Egypt."

Financial difficulties consequent upon the

*"The River War." By Winston Spencer Churchill.

Dual Control of England and France in Egypt having been overcome in a dramatic fashion which resulted in England being left with a free hand in the matter, the Cairo authorities and the home Government decided upon an expedition for the re-occupying of Dongola. On March 12, 1896, shortly before midnight as it is recorded with minute particularity, Sir Herbert Kitchener received the instructions authorising the expedition to the province of Dongola, and instructing him to occupy Akasheh forthwith. At once he gave evidence of that forethought in the matters of organisation which has characterised his work all through. On March 12 "shortly before midnight," he was authorised to move; on March 15 the first troops, having been inspected by the Khedive, started for the front; on March 18, the frontier force began the actual invasion of the territory that had been abandoned ten years earlier; on the 20th it occupied Akasheh, and within three weeks the whole long line of communications—over eight hundred miles from Cairo to the frontier post at Akasheh—was completed. This has been noted as "the first, and not the least remarkable instance of Sir Herbert Kitchener's strange powers of rapid and comprehensive arrangement."

On March 22, the Sirdar himself left Cairo and proceeded to Wady Halfa, there to superintend the concentration of troops and supplies, and to press forward the extension of the river-side railway on which he depended as one of the most effective arms in the work which he had before him. That railway had previously run as far as Akasheh, but much of it had disappeared in the period of abandonment. Steadily and surely the plans for the advance were matured, and on May 1, the Sirdar went on to the advanced base at Akasheh, the Dervish forces being known to be at Firket, about fifteen miles further up the Nile. Though so near, the Dervishes did practically nothing to interfere with the steady preparations that were being made for their undoing, and the Sirdar was able to complete those preparations. Then on June 6 he decided upon a forward move, and sending part of his forces, mounted, by way of the desert to take up a position in the rear of the Dervish position, marched his infantry through the night that he might surprise the enemy at dawn. His plans worked perfectly, the two columns together began the attack at 5 o'clock in the morning of June 7, and a little over two hours later the battle had been fought and won. This

being the first general engagement in which the new Egyptian Army had been employed, their behaviour may well have caused considerable anxiety to their leaders, but the organisers of that army had the satisfaction of finding that their troops triumphantly stood the crucial test of action; and what is more, those troops had been taught by victory to have confidence in themselves.

After the battle of Firket the Sirdar set about preparing for his next "pounce." A fresh base was formed about five miles further up the river at Kosheh, and the military railway was again pressed rapidly forward, and so effectively, that by July 24 the first train was running over the battlefield of Firket, and within two months of that battle rail-head had been carried to Kosheh. Now, however, set in a period which tested the Sirdar's powers of leadership and organisation to the utmost. For a time everything, as the saying is, "went contrary." Cholera broke out virulently, and many valuable lives were lost. In place of the expected seasonal cool north wind that would have carried the flotilla of boats with stores up the river and have brought health to the troops, there was long continuance of hot wind from the south; there were violent storms

which demoralised the troops and washed away twelve miles of the all-important railway and telegraph. When a splendid gunboat which had been brought out piecemeal from England was put together at Kosheh, and about to start on a trial trip, she was at once put out of action by a burst cylinder that was irreplaceable! Certainly it must have seemed as though "Kitchener's luck" was out, yet it is said that "the Sirdar's equanimity was scarcely ruffled."

Mr. Winston Churchill has given us a memorable sketch of the commander in this time of trial, when the success of the whole campaign hung in the balance: "In this serious emergency, which threatened to wreck his schemes, the Sirdar's organising talents shone more brilliantly than at any other moment in this account. Travelling swiftly to Moghrat, he possessed himself of the telephone, which luckily still worked. All depended on him. But his grasp of detail and power of arrangement were never better displayed. He knew the exact position of every soldier, coolie, camel or donkey at his disposal. In a few hours, in spite of his crippled transport, he concentrated 5,000 men on the damaged section of the line, and thereafter fed them until the work was finished. In

seven days traffic was resumed. The advance had been delayed, but it was not prevented."

That trouble had scarcely been surmounted when the fresh one happened with the gunboat, which had been regarded as so valuable an auxiliary. As that vessel had slowly grown, as piece by piece of the seeming jig-saw puzzle had been put together, we are told that the Sirdar watched it with fascinated attention; "it became his toy, his pet." Then on September 11 came the trial trip and the fresh trial of Kitchener's fortitude. We owe the story of this episode also to Mr. Churchill's historical account of 'River War':

"The Sirdar and his Staff embarked. Flags were hoisted, and amid general cheering the moorings were cast off. But the stern paddle had hardly revolved twice when there was a loud report, like that of a heavy gun; clouds of steam rushed up from the boilers, and the engines stopped. Sir H. Kitchener and Commander Colville were on the upper deck. The latter rushed below to learn what had happened, and found that she had burst her low pressure cylinder, a misfortune impossible to repair until a new one could be obtained from Halfa and fitted. The Sirdar was still waiting on the deck,

expecting to hear of some trifling accident, when the naval officer returned. 'She has burst her cylinder,' he said. A slight flush passed over the General's face. 'How many days,' he asked, 'will it take to repair her?' 'To repair her is impossible. You will have to wait until a new one is sent up.' 'Then she is absolutely useless, and put out of action?' 'Absolutely.' The Sirdar stood immovable, while everyone, remembering all the disappointments and misfortunes, watched and expected another explosion of a different kind. His face was impassive, and only a slight twitching of the eyes betrayed his intense emotion. There was a long and unpleasant silence. Then he said: "By God, Colville, I don't know which of us its hardest luck on—you or me. Well, get her guns out at once, and put them on board the other steamers,' and with that he left the ship. . . . The Sirdar, in bitterness and vexation, shut himself in the cabin of the *Dal* steamer, figuring out his calculations again, and estimating his forces, now deprived of so powerful a factor. It was not until the next day that he reappeared, and only the passionate telegrams which he despatched to Cairo, revealed the depths of his emotions."*

* "The River War," p. 255.

How bitter must have been the disappointment of the leader of the expedition over this contretemps may be gauged from the fact that it happened when things were just ripe for the fresh advance, when it was known that the Dervishes had come down the river some distance from their stronghold at Dongola. Indeed, a few days before the mishap to the gunboat the activity of the enemy had been manifested by the cutting of telegraph wires by a Dervish patrol, and only the day before the Sirdar had learned that a position nearly thirty miles north of Dongola was strongly held. Without the powerful gunboat the advance had to be made with but the three older and smaller ones that remained, and on the 23rd of September, after a "picturesque and bloodless affair" that has been "solemnly called the 'Battle of Hafir,'" Dongola itself was occupied, and the expedition brought to a successful termination. "At a cost of 411 lives, of whom 364 died from cholera and other diseases, and of £715,000 in Egyptian money—a figure which bore testimony to the Sirdar's economical administration—the province of Dongola had been reclaimed from barbarism."

The accomplishment of the task was at once a great feather in the cap of Sir Herbert Kitchener

and a sufficient vindication of the value of the Egyptian Army as a fighting force. Lord Cromer, who was British Agent and Consul General in Egypt, has recorded how all details of the plan of the campaign were left entirely at the discretion of the Sirdar, and he has paid a tribute to the soldier which must form an inevitable part of any sketch of that soldier's career. Writing of the campaign which, beginning with the Dongola Expedition was to culminate in the reconquest of the Soudan, Lord Cromer says :

"The command of the force was left to the Sirdar of the Egyptian Army, Sir Herbert Kitchener. A better choice could not have been made. Young, energetic, ardently and exclusively devoted to his profession, and, as the honourable scars on his face testified, experienced in Soudanese warfare, Sir Herbert Kitchener possessed all the qualities necessary to bring the campaign to a successful issue. Like many another military commander, the bonds which united him and his subordinates were those of stern discipline on the one side, and, on the other, the respect due to superior talent and the confidence felt in the resourcefulness of a strong and masterful spirit, rather than the affectionate

obedience yielded to the behests of a genial chief. When the campaign was over, there were not wanting critics who whispered that Sir Herbert Kitchener's success had been due as much to good luck as to good management. If, it was said, a number of events had happened, which, as a matter of fact, did not happen, the result might have been different. The same may be said of any military commander and of any campaign. . . . The fact, however, is that Sir Herbert Kitchener's main merit was that he left as little as possible to chance. A first-rate military administrator, every detail of the machine, with which he had to work, received adequate attention. Before any decisive movement was made, each portion of the machine was adapted, so far as human foresight could provide, to perform its allotted task.

" Sir Herbert Kitchener also possessed another quality which is rare among soldiers, and which was of special value under the circumstances then existing. He did not think that extravagance was the necessary handmaid of efficiency. On the contrary, he was a rigid economist, and, whilst making adequate provision for all essential and necessary expenditure, suppressed with a

firm hand any tendency towards waste and extravagance."*

It was possibly his work in the building up of the Egyptian Army that developed and strengthened those powers of organisation, and that regard for economical administration of which he had given examples when a lieutenant working for the Palestine Exploration Fund. Speaking in 1895 on behalf of that Fund, of which he was for many years secretary, the late Sir Walter Besant said: "the military record of Colonel Kitchener promises to eclipse his civil distinction. But ir must never be forgotten that before he went to Egypt he surveyed Galilee for this Society and Cyprus for the Colonial Office." It may also be remembered that in his civil work the officer learned such things as fitted him peculiarly for the military tasks which fell to him later.

After the stage in the progress of the Nile Expedition which closed with the reoccupation of the province of Dongola, the Sirdar paid a short visit to England, and on his arrival at Dover, on November 9, made a statement as to the situation in Egypt to an enterprising journalist who met him on his arrival. As he must

* "Modern Egypt." By The Earl of Cromer.

surely be one of the notable men of his time least approachable by the interviewer, this occasion is the more noticeable, but it is interesting as affording his view of coming events in Egypt, and also as his tribute to the soldierly qualities of the fellaheen of whom he and his predecessors in command had made an army. At Dongola he said that the Dervishes had "bolted in utter rout on seeing the troops advancing" and he attributed this to the fact that the army was much larger than they had expected, and to stories that they had heard of the fight at Firket; "the presence of the gunboats, too, had of course a very salutary effect." It was quite a mistake, he added, to suppose that the Khalifa's power was in any way broken, and it was too early to judge of the full effects of Dongola. Questioned as to the possibility of an advance on Omdurman the Sirdar said, "Much depends on the effect of Dongola upon the Dervishes and of this we are ignorant. The Khalifa will undoubtedly make a stand, but until we know more from Omdurman it is quite impossible to judge of the extent of the difficulty of taking the place. . . . The Khedive is perfectly delighted with the way in which his troops have come out of the campaign. The Egyptian

troops behaved excellently, and the credit that they have received is nothing more than they deserve. Their discipline was perfect. There was not a single case of insubordination during the whole campaign, and they are all eager to go on."

CHAPTER VI.

THE BEGINNING OF THE "RE-CONQUEST."

A STAFF OFFICER, who had taken part in the work of the "re-conquest" wrote in one of the magazines a few years later that the Cabinet Council, which had decided upon the advance to Dongola had made a fortunate hit for their party, for England and for Egypt, though he goes on to suggest that it was all the result of happy chance rather than considered statesmanship. As he put it: "It was all so simple. There was a big map, fortunately not a large scale map, on the table, and someone chanced to see Dongola written in big letters. What more natural than that Mr. Chamberlain should remark 'Let's go to Dongola.' It sounded quite reasonable, and nobody made any objection. Off went a wire, and before Lord Cromer had time to turn round, the army had taken wing. That was, literally and without exaggeration, the beginning of the reconquest of the Soudan." If this is to be accepted "literally and without exaggeration" it may be assumed that the

Ministers who thus easily decided to "go to Dongola" did not realise at the time that they would have also to take the further step and go to Khartoum, and would indeed have to smash the Khalifa and the forces of Mahdiism finally and completely. It may well be believed that the Sirdar himself fully realised this, and went on patiently working to that end. As he is reported to have said in the interview during a visit paid to England after the conclusion of the Dongola Expedition, the Khalifa was by no means crushed, though the sphere of his abominable rule was shorn of a goodly province. It was, however, some time before the full significance of the situation came to be recognised.

On September 25, 1896, the Sirdar was promoted to the rank of Major-General in the English Army, and after his first visit to England he returned to Egypt to take up his duties again, and to take his part in that organisation of victory which was finally to avenge the bitter evacuation policy carried out after Gordon's death. It is said that someone enquired of the Sirdar when the final attempt on Khartoum was to be made, and that he replied that it would be in thirteen months time. "Thirteen months, that is a long while," exclaimed his friend.

"Some of us have waited for it for thirteen years," retorted Kitchener grimly. Whether the story be actually true or not, it is thoroughly in character as illustrating the careful preparation and planning of things before proceeding to action, which has again and again been noted as the peculiarity of Kitchener's genius.

It was in February, 1897, that a Cabinet Minister, speaking in the House of Commons, declared that "Egypt could never be held to be permanently secure so long as a hostile power was in occupation of the Nile valley up to Khartoum," and further stated that the duty of destroying the "Baleful power of the Khalifa" must fall upon England; but, as Lord Cromer pointed out, the British Government was before that pronouncement practically and irrevocably committed to an offensive policy. The pushing forward of the desert railway was the means to an end—as it was happily put, "the desert conquered every invader of the Soudan, but Kitchener subdued the desert." From Wady Halfa along the Nile to Kerma the railway had been laid, and then it was decided to take a "short cut" line from Wady Halfa across the Nubian Desert to Abu Hamed, between which places the

river makes a great sweep to the westward, and "in the existence of the railway lay all the difference between the extempore scrambles of Wolseley's campaign and the machine-like precision of Kitchener's." And two-thirds of this railway had been completed even before Abu Hamed, its objective, had been occupied! Well might Lord Cromer say that he was haunted by the idea that the Dervishes might make a raid that should cut the railway. They did not attempt anything of the kind, and in August, 1897, the Sirdar determined upon the occupation of Abu Hamed, which was duly accomplished, the whole Dervish force that had held it being destroyed.

In the building of this railway, the Sirdar, relying upon his own judgment, ran counter to the advice alike of engineer and military advisers. As Mr. Churchill has neatly put it: "Eminent railway engineers in England were consulted. They replied with unanimity, that having due regard to the circumstances, and remembering the conditions of war under which the work must be executed, it was impossible to construct such a line. Distinguished soldiers were approached on the subject. They replied that the scheme was not only impossible, but

absurd. Many other persons who were not consulted volunteered the opinion that the whole idea was that of a lunatic, and predicted ruin and disaster to the expedition. Having received this advice, and reflected on it duly, the Sirdar ordered the railway to be constructed without more delay." Men had to be got and trained, and their provisioning arranged for, materials had to be secured for a line 230 miles in length across a barren desert, but the Sirdar and Lieutenant Girouard, his right hand man in all railway matters, set to work vigorously and confidently and in due time the "impossible" was achieved. "Everybody knows that the railway from Halfa across the desert to Abu Hamed was an impossibility," said George Steevens, "until the Sirdar turned it into a fact," and as the same picturesque writer said, "the battle of the Atbara was won in the workshops of Wady Halfa." The line across the unsurveyed desert was actively begun at the beginning of May, 1897, and on November 1 following it had reached Abu Hamed, and two days later Sir Herbert Kitchener had the satisfaction of journeying in sixteen hours a distance which had previously required ten days, and of knowing once more that his confident daring had been justified.

It had been believed that above Abu Hamed the Nile was regularly navigable, but this was soon found to be an error, and it was decided that the desert railway must be continued another hundred and fifty miles to where the Atbara river flows into the Nile. As soon as possible this further task was entered upon and prosecuted with untiring energy, and on July 3, 1898, it was finished, and the "impossible" railway ran for 384 miles south of Wady Halfa, to the confusion of the experts and the lasting credit of the Sirdar and his wonderful staff of helpers. And a wonderful staff of officers he had, men whom he seemed to inspire with his own qualities, or whom he had selected for the possession of those qualities. For many stories are told of his independence in the appointment of members of his staff. One such, told by an officer who had himself served on Kitchener's staff may be given as representative :

"No one knows, no one perhaps will ever fully know, the extent to which Kitchener was implored, beseeched, cajoled by the highest in the land to employ A, B, or C on his staff, or anywhere. Kitchener was adamant to such requests. I remember one case of a really first-rate officer who came out armed with a letter from a very

illustrious personage, almost amounting to a command, that the officer should be employed. The letter was duly delivered: whether it was answered or not I cannot say, but Kitchener chose his own men and not other people's, and the officer in question, after kicking his heels in Cairo for several weeks returned to London without hearing a word about employment. This happened in hundreds of cases. Kitchener was not then the power he is now, and his implacable disregard of the pets of society argues a strength of character which has always seemed to me one of the greatest proofs of his fearless independence."*

As Steevens said, it was part of the Sirdar's luck—"the luck that goes with genius,"—that he always secured the best of subordinates. He looked for men with something of his own quality, "unafraid of responsibility and equal to it." The same story was told by all who accompanied the expedition for the reconquest of the Soudan. As in other matters of preparation, the Sirdar left nothing to chance in the selection of the men who were to carry out his plans; he had an eye for character and the men he chose were generally the right men for doing that which he

* *Blackwood's Magazine.* 1902.

wanted done, though it is said that he showed unbending severity to all who failed in any way —" if no chief ever acknowledged more fully and generously good work well done, no one was also ever more unforgiving of failure, to no matter what cause the failure might be due." Himself a master of the art of overcoming difficulties he expected his subordinates to be equally ready—and equally successful, whatever the circumstance. This is illustrated in another of the many capital stories recorded by the "Staff Officer" already quoted. When Commander Keppel was making a river reconnaisance with a gunboat it was aground for seventeen hours on the falling Nile, with Dervishes around, and a hundred miles from the army outposts. There were no small boats so a raft was made of odds and ends, and the anchor, weighing about a ton, was ferried on to a sandbank by forty stalwart "gippies"—Egyptian soldiers—working up to their necks in water, the gunboat being successfully warped off. A member of the party told a portion of the story to Kitchener on his return, "'And how did you get the anchor to the sandbank?' he asked. 'Oh,' I answered, 'one of the crew swam across with the anchor in his mouth.' 'Oh, really,' was all Kitchener

said, as if it was the most natural thing in the world. If we had been in a worse plight, I really think he would have expected Keppel to swim back with the gunboat in his mouth, and would only have said, 'Oh, Keppel, I want you kindly to start again in half-an-hour. . . .'"*

Thanks to his own daring and resourcefulness the months of preparation had been so well employed, so loyally and completely had all worked that it could be said confidently that when the railway reached the Atbara the Dervish power was broken, though months were to pass before the victory of Atbara, and yet more months before the crowning success of Omdurman. After the establishment of the camp at the railhead at Atbara, preparations for the final advance went steadily and methodically forward. The Sirdar knew of all that had to be done; he was organising victory not merely preparing for a spectacular display, and was not the man to strike if he could help it before the right moment had arrived.

The stories that are told of a distinguished man may not always be in detail true but their currency generally shows them to be illustrative

* *Blackwood's Magazine*. 1902.

of his character. One such concerning the preparations that preceded the Battle of the Atbara may be taken thus as well found if not historically well founded. It runs to the effect that the Sirdar had applied to the Home Government for some particular kind of guns, and by way of reply got a suggestion that another kind should be sent. He answered that he preferred those for which he had asked, but was shortly informed that the others were being sent! On learning this he sent a politely sarcastic message to the Home authorities that they could keep their guns, as he could throw stones at the Dervishes himself! After that the guns which he had asked for were duly forwarded.

It was known at the close of 1897 that the Dervishes were contemplating taking the offensive, and on the first day of 1898 the Sirdar sent to Lord Cromer what the latter terms an historic telegram: "General Hunter reports confirming news of a Dervish advance. I think that British troops should be sent to Abu Hamed, and that reinforcements should be sent to Egypt in case of necessity. The fight for the Soudan would appear to be likely to take place at Berber." And Lord Cromer adds: "Four British battalions were at once sent up the Nile. The Cairo

garrison was increased. Manifestly, the curtain had gone up on the last scene in the drama, which commenced with the destruction of General Hick's army fifteen years previously." How well the Sirdar knew how to adapt his means to his ends is well illustrated, as the same writer points out, by the fact that the force of British troops, which at the beginning of 1898 Kitchener said would be necessary, was precisely the force which in the autumn took part in the final advance on Khartoum.

At the end of March a forward move was made. Reconnaissances had shown that the Dervishes under Mahmud, a brave lieutenant of the Khalifa's, were strongly entrenched in a large zeriba or camp on the right bank of the Atbara river. As Mahmud did not venture forth to give battle to the "Turks" the Sirdar resolved upon attacking him in his zeriba. The Anglo-Egyptian force had but about a dozen miles to go to the enemy's position when, at sunset on April 7, they began marching forward to a point about half-way, and there they halted for four hours, the men lying down in their squares. At one o'clock the slow and silent march was resumed, and at sunrise the army was within 900 yards of the Dervish camp, the

bombardment of which began at a quarter past six. Within a couple of hours the struggle was won, the troops had stormed the zeriba, broken through its terrible thorn defences and in hand-to-hand encounter, slain, captured or driven off the forces of Mahmud and made that leader himself a prisoner.

"Remember Gordon!" is said to have been the Sirdar's final appeal to his army before the battle began, and the troops may well have done so as they destroyed the stronghold of one of the worst of Mahdiist leaders, and killed and scattered all his fanatical adherents. The battle was a triumph alike for the troops which took part in it, both British and Egyptian, and for the leader who had justified the unquestioning confidence which Lord Cromer reposed in him. It is recorded that the Sirdar, stern and undemonstrative as a rule, was moved by the ringing cheers of his troops as they acclaimed him after the fight; as an officer present whimsically put it "he was quite human for a quarter of an hour."

"A Staff Officer" has described an incident which happened when the Sirdar and his staff rode through the Dervish camp: "Lord E. Cecil (the Sirdar's aide-de-camp) joined us and

presently Kitchener pulled up among the charred corpses on the burning ground to make some enquiries. Cecil made a grimace and pointed to the ground: it was strewn with Dervish shells, lying all under our horses' hoofs and the hoofs of the chief's horse, with the grass on fire all around them. Neither of us spoke, but kismet, destiny, or whatever it is that sits behind the crupper, impelled Kitchener to move on, and a few minutes later a column of smoke shot up into the air—the shells had exploded. But Lord Kitchener had passed on, for his hour had not struck—destiny had need of him still."* A ridiculous incident is also associated with the Battle of the Atbara, concerned with a long-standing feud between Kitchener's and General Hunter's coloured standard bearers. After the conflict Hunter's flag was tattered and torn, much to the annoyance of the bearer of the Sirdar's undamaged flag, who at once took steps to reduce the flag he bore also to tatters. This being pointed out to the Sirdar he smiled at the man's zeal—and ordered a new flag.

The victory had been won with comparatively small loss to the Anglo-Egyptian force, but the severity of the defeat suffered by the Dervishes

* *Blackwood's Magazine.* 1902.

was such that it was for a time hoped that it might have the effect of disheartening the Khalifa's followers and thus lead to a peaceful re-occupation of Khartoum. But that was not to be. Though Mahmud had been captured, the elusive Osman Digna, who was also within the zeriba, once more managed to escape. The late Mr. Bennet Burleigh has told the story of the way in which the Dervish leader came before his conqueror. Kitchener was writing his despatches when the prisoner was brought in. "He held his head up and scowled at his guard. The Sirdar and General Hunter wheeled round and Mahmud was brought before them. I was an onlooker. 'This is the Sirdar,' said General Hunter, indicating Sir Herbert Kitchener. General Hunter spoke quite angrily, for he was vexed at the Baggara leader's assumed indifference; besides he held in fine contempt the brutal and cruel Taisha chief. Mahmud paid no special attention. 'Sit down,' quietly said the Sirdar to him, which, in Eastern parlance, was rather an ominous beginning for Mahmud—an omen of death. 'Why have you come into my country, to burn and to kill,' said the Sirdar. 'I have to obey the Khalifa's orders as a soldier without question, as so must you the Khe-

dive's,' replied Mahmud, speaking for the first time."*

The army marched back to the camp whence it had made its strikingly successful night march, and later there was something of a triumphal procession through Berber, when the Sirdar rode through the town followed by the wretched Mahmud as a prisoner, with his hands bound and preceded by an enormous banner inscribed in Arabic, "This is Mahmud who said he would take Berber."

For this Kitchener has been criticised, but it may well be believed that it was not done in any liking for spectacular display, for such is not the character of the man; it was done because he knew the effect that such evidence of the Dervish downfall would have on those who witnessed it, and was therefore fully justified.

After the Battle of Atbara the different portions of the Anglo-Egyptian army went into various summer quarters, while the Sirdar himself set about perfecting the arrangements for the next and final step in the reconquest of the Soudan. These arrangements included the putting together of three new gunboats which had been sent out from England in pieces, and from which

* 'Sirdar and Khalifa." By Bennet Burleigh.

much was expected in the final phase of that expedition, which though it might seem long drawn out to the onlooker, and to those who were impatiently waiting for the new command to advance, was a triumph of orderly arrangement and careful planning.

From the fifteen newspaper correspondents who accompanied the expedition we had many accounts of its achievements, in some of the books in which those accounts were finally given to the world we have works of rare excellence, notably Mr. Winston Churchill's "The River War," and G. W. Steevens' "With Kitchener to Khartoum." But it was not only England that was interested in the story of the avenging of Gordon; among the correspondents was one who represented the Allahabad *Pioneer*, and in a small book which he published is to be found a striking tribute to and description of the Sirdar, in words that are the more notable when we remember that one of the distinctive periods of service which Kitchener devoted to the Empire was to be spent in India. The *Pioneer* correspondent, who remained anonymous when he republished the messages to his paper wrote:

"Louis XIV. said of France: *L'Etat c'est moi!* The Sirdar could use those words of the

Soudan with much more truth. Consequently, in speaking of the causes which have led to the success of the Soudan expedition I find myself compelled to speak of what, as I think, are the causes which have led to the success of the Sirdar: for the Sirdar is the Soudan, and the Sirdar was the Expedition.

"South of Assouan there is absolutely no civilian government. Steamboats and sailing craft, railway and telegraph, are under the sole control of the Sirdar. The steamboats are under the orders of his subordinate officers; the railway is worked and repaired by his 'railway battalion'; the telegraphs and post offices are manned by privates of the Royal Engineers. Even those merchants who have no regular contract to supply the army and who are enterprising enough to penetrate to the Soudan on private commercial ventures, nust needs apply for leave to the Sirdar before passing Assouan. Unless they obtain the sanction of the Sirdar neither they nor any other civilian can enter into his kingdon of the Soudan. The civilian population being therefore so limited, and there being few women even in Halfa, I think the question of the administration of civil justice does not arise at all. But, anyhow, there is a

large and fully occupied military prison at Wady Halfa. The Sirdar has his own postage stamps, and his own telegraph stamps. Money there is little need for. Life in the Soudan is so simple, and is cut and dried like everything military. Your expenses are either deducted from your pay, or, in the case of transactions with the few civilian merchants in the Soudan, settlement is made by a cheque on Cairo. Otherwise, I have no doubt that the Sirdar would have his own coinage. You will see from this how every department of the Soudan State comes completely under the Sirdar's control; his will is law. And this is so not only in public, but also in private life. No officer, unless he is very senior, is allowed to marry. He signs a promissory document to that effect before he enters the Egyptian Army.

"You probably know well the appearance of the Sirdar. He stands over six feet, and he carries his head high, as if he was thinking of other things and people than those he sees about him in everyday life. His constitution, I should say, is as hard as his disposition. He knows exactly what men he can trust to do the work which he requires. If they do it, he rewards them in just such a way as ensures their con-

tinuing to do more work of the same sort. If they fail once, he gets rid of them; if they go sick, he gets rid of them too. He has no weakly or incapable men in the whole of the Soudan. He has an army of admirers; but I do not think he has many personal friends, nor do I believe that the Sirdar has ever felt excessive joy or sorrow. He is free of those ups and downs to which the spirits of ordinary men are subject: nothing would superlatively please or pain him. His work is so great and so absorbing that he has no time to bind himself with those ties of friendship or affection which trammel common humanity. The death of any man or woman, most closely connected with him, would not distress him greatly. I cannot help being reminded of those lines—

'White hands cling to the tightened rein,
Slipping the spur from the booted heel
Tenderest voices cry—'Turn again!'
Red lips tarnish the scabbarded steel,
High hopes faint on a warm hearthstone,
He travels the fastest who travels alone.

'One may fall, but he falls by himself;
Falls by himself with himself to blame.
One may attain, and to him is the pelf,
Loot of the city in gold or fame;
Plunder and earth shall be all his own
Who travels the fastest and travels alone.'

"The Sirdar travels alone, and is travelling fast. Although he has every appearance of trusting his subordinates, he trusts no one until he sees for himself. He rises very early, and his energies and power of work are indefatigable. He has a wonderful knowledge of human nature which not only leads him to choose just the most suitable men as the heads of his departments, but also gives him an instinctive knowledge of what his enemies are thinking and doing. Just as a good captain of a cricket team should be a good all-round player, so I think the Sirdar is a fine general because he is contented to perform the duty of supreme control and supervision without interfering with any particular *forte*. He is careless of his personal appearance, as are those who do not come into frequent contact with women; and I believe that what Napoleon I. falsely and boastfully said of himself is true of Sir Herbert Kitchener—'that all the fairest women in the world could not beguile him into sacrificing one hour of important work!'"

Another of the correspondents with the expedition describing the preparations that went forward said "and there with the hardest worked, you see the tall white-clad Sirdar working—now breaking a man's heart with curt censure, now

exalting him to heaven with curt praise. Now antedating a movement, now hastening an embarkation, now increasing the load of a barge —for where the Sirdar is there every man and every machine must do a little better than his best."

CHAPTER VII.

RE-CONQUEST OF THE SOUDAN COMPLETED.

It has been said that time was on the side of the Sirdar in his great work of re-conquering the Soudan by civilization, where time had been dead against Lord Wolseley in the campaign of thirteen years before, and that this was so is evident to any student of the two campaigns. The desert was a greater enemy than the Dervishes and time and genius were both needed to overcome it. The Battle of the Atbara had been won in April of 1898, but there was no precipitation in trying final conclusions with the enemy. "The main quality required to meet these difficulties was a good head for business. By one of those fortunate accidents which have been frequent in the history of Anglo-Saxon enterprise, a man was found equal to the occasion. Lord Kitchener of Khartoum won his well deserved peerage because he was an excellent man of business; he looked carefully after every important detail, and enforced economy."*

*"Modern Egypt." By The Earl of Cromer.

During the summer of 1898 the "organising of victory" went steadily forward, and in August the advance was begun, the new point of concentration being Wad Hamed, more than a hundred miles further south than the point where the Atbara flows into the Nile, and less than sixty miles from where Khartoum stands at the confluence of the Blue and White Niles. Early in August the Sirdar had suggested that the great fight would take place about the 1st of September and "his calculations of time were never once at fault." By the 26th of August the concentration of troops and material had been completed, and the force of about 25,000 British and Egyptian soldiers on that day began the final advance on the stronghold of the Khalifa, to which the Mahdiist leader had retired all his forces. Following the story of the advance in detail it seems surprising that the Dervishes did not dispute the progress of the Sirdar's army miles before Omdurman was reached, but fanatic courage rather than military skill was their most notable asset, and believing the visions of their leader they looked forward to overwhelming the "Turks" when they should arrive at their very gates.

The Dervish forces of Omdurman are esti-

mated to have been about 55,000 in number, or just double that of the attacking army, including the body of Arab irregulars which proceeded along the right bank of the Nile. The difference of equipment, however, more than outbalanced the numerical inferiority of the attackers.

From his camp at Tamaniat—some twenty miles short of Omdurman—the Sirdar addressed the following letter to the Khalifa on August 30, though probably scarcely expecting that his advice would be taken :

"To Abdula, son of Mohammed El-Taaishi, Head of the Soudan. Bear in your mind that your evil deeds throughout the Soudan, particularly your murdering a great number of the Mohammedans without cause or excuse, besides oppression and tyranny, necessitated the advance of my troops for the destruction of your throne in order to save the country from your devilish doings and iniquity. Inasmuch as there are many in your keeping for whose blood you are held responsible—innocent, old, and infirm women, and children and others —abhorring you and your government, who are guilty of nothing; and because we have no desire that they should suffer the least harm,

we ask you to have them removed from the *dem* to a place where the shells of guns and bullets of rifles shall not reach them. If you do not do so the shells and bullets cannot recognise them and will consequently kill them, and afterwards you will be responsible before God for their blood. Stand firm, you and your helpers, only in the field of battle to meet the punishment prepared for you by the praised God. But if you and your Emirs incline to surrender to prevent blood being shed, we shall receive your envoy with due welcome, and be sure that we shall treat you with justice and peace.

"KITCHENER,

"Sirdar of the Troops in the Soudan."

Whether any answer to this was vouchsafed cannot be said, but the successor of the Mahdi was little likely to think of submitting, indeed it is scarcely conceivable that the fanatical horde which looked to him as its spiritual head, would have followed him to the point of submission. They had been told that the Mahdi had appeared in a vision to the Khalifa telling him that the enemy would be defeated and driven into the Nile, and they were eager for the fray.

Camp by camp the Anglo-Egyptian force

steadily advanced to the field on which it was to be proved whether the Khalifa's "vision" or the Sirdar's organisation was to triumph, and on September 1 it was fixed within sight of the massed Dervishes on the river but a short distance from the outskirts of Omdurman. "The Sirdar led the march in person," says one of the chaplains who accompanied the army, "and the sight of his strong masterful figure, seated on his Arab charger was in itself a source of inspiration. As I overheard a man in the ranks say, 'He looks as if he means business and it 'ud take a dozen nigger Khalifa's to get the best o' him.' "*

With the coming of the light on September 2 the long waited-for battle began, and by noon it was over, the vast army of the Khalifa had been defeated, and in large measure destroyed. The massed tens of thousands with all their frenzy of barbaric courage were unable to withstand all that European science could bring into the field. It is not necessary to tell the story of the conflict in detail, though it may be said that there was one ugly moment when the Sirdar's army was moving on Omdurman itself,

* "With Kitchener's Army." By the Rev. Owen Spencer Watkins.

and the enemy made a sudden attack, seeking to regain what they had lost in the first phase of the battle. New dispositions were immediately effected by the commander, and what appeared to be a threatening situation was converted into an emphasising of the victory. Describing this incident, Mr. Churchill in his fascinating and detailed history of "The River War" says: "Thus the long line moved forward in irresistible strength. In the centre, under the red Egyptian flag, careless of the bullets which that conspicuous emblem drew, and which inflicted some loss among those around him, rode the Sirdar, stern and sullen, equally unmoved by fear or enthusiasm."

On the completion of the defeat of the Khalifa's army, the Sirdar marched his forces into Omdurman, and was received cordially by the inhabitants, though here and there implacable Dervishes made a futile but indomitable stand against the conquerors. The Sirdar interpreted the acclamation with which he was received as expressing the gratitude of the inhabitants at being relieved from the intolerable tyranny of the Khalifa, but a critic has declared that the gratitude of the people was for having their lives spared. Other criticism was directed

against the destruction of the Mahdi's tomb and against the killing of wounded Dervishes. As to the former action it seems thoroughly justified by all the circumstances, and as to the latter it appears to have been greatly exaggerated and in part to have been necessary owing to the frequency with which the wounded Dervishes wielded their rifles or spears, refusing to be "put out of action." Though the Khalifa escaped, with many thousands of his adherents, to the south, and the action was therefore not as conclusive as was hoped, it was a memorable victory. For another year the Khalifa was to be at large before being finally destroyed by Kitchener's successor, but the Battle of Omdurman was the climax to the reconquest of the Soudan.

A correspondent has given us a thumbnail sketch of the close of the day: "Soon it was pitchy night; where the bulk of the army bivouacked I know not, neither do they. I stumbled on the Second British Brigade, which had had a relatively easy day, and there, by a solitary candle, the Sirdar, flat on his back, was dictating his despatch to Colonel Wingate, flat on his belly."

Just across the broad Nile was the ruined

town of Khartoum where Gordon had waited thirteen years earlier for that relief which came not, and now at long last he was "avenged."

Two days after the Battle of Omdurman, on September 4, detachments of officers and men representing all the regiments, both British and Egyptian which had been engaged were taken in the steamers across the river to the ruins of what had been Khartoum, and there the British flag was raised and a movingly simple service in memory of Gordon was performed by the chaplains attached to the expedition. It must have been a most touching and impressive scene, and one that to Kitchener himself must have had a very special significance, as he could not fail to recall the fruitless attempt of the Relief Expedition in which he had himself taken part, to think of the disappointment with which he had been sent back to Korti before the fighting at Abu Klea, or to remember that sense of failure which fell over all when the little steamers that had got within hail of the walls of Khartoum returned to say that they were too late! That during the years which had elapsed since then he had ever looked forward to the moment at last arrived, it is easy to gather from his own word "some of us have waited for thirteen years."

"It would be difficult," wrote a Staff Officer who was present at the scene, "to imagine a greater contrast between Kitchener in the saddle, with work still remaining to be done and the same man, his task completed, standing under the shadow of the great tree on the river front before Gordon's ruined palace on the 4th September. He was softened, gentle, almost affectionate to all; and those—there were many—who had often misjudged and misunderstood him, must at last have realised that down—deep, deep down—in the often forbidding and always stern self-reliant nature, there was a soft spot and a human sympathy, a something which throbbed and felt and suffered and rejoiced in reasonable resemblance to the ordinary heart, of an ordinary man."

The memorial service, in which Roman Catholic Church of England, and Nonconformist chaplains took part was followed by the gunboats firing a salute (of live shells, for they had no blank ammunition), the bands playing a dirge, the Highland pipers wailing a long "lament," and the Sirdar's calling for three cheers for Her Majesty the Queen. Possibly it was then that Kitchener musing over the dead hero, whose memory they were honouring, first thought of

making of that memory a living force by the establishment of a centre for educating the Soudanese. How he translated thought into action will be seen in a later chapter.

Omdurman was won, the Dervish power was destroyed at its very centre, the British and Egyptian flags flew again over Khartoum, and the organiser of victory might well be pardoned a feeling of elation over the success which he had achieved. Then but five days after the battle, a disturbing incident happened. A small steamer, the *Tewfikeyeh*, arrived at Omdurman from the far south to claim support from the Khalifa against a black force commanded by white officers flying a strange flag which was occupying Fashoda, and had dared to fire on the Dervish steamer. Seeking the Khalifa the men on the steamer arrived to find him defeated and fled and the Sirdar in possession of the centre of the Soudan. Fashoda lay on the White Nile, over 450 miles to the south, but the day after this disquieting news reached him, General Kitchener set off with five steamers carrying troops and guns to enquire into this trespass. Ten days later he arrived at Fashoda where he found the brave French Major Marchand, and his seven compatriots, with a force of 120 black

soldiers. Marchand had arrived there on July 10, after heroic journeyings during two years and had with his inadequate little company, taken formal occupation of the Soudan. It was a ticklish situation, which the Sirdar handled with considerable tact. When he landed, Major Marchand, attended by a guard of honour, came to the gunboat to meet him, and the two cordially shook hands. "I congratulate you on all you have accomplished," said the Sirdar. "It is not I, but these soldiers who have done it," answered the Frenchman, indicating the troops that accompanied him, and the Sirdar in recounting the incident is reported to have said, "Then I knew he was a gentleman." Kitchener's own despatch concerning the incident, was written on board the *Dal*, "White Nile, Sept. 21," and sent down to Cairo; from it we learn that leaving Omdurman on September 10, with five gunboats and a goodly company of troops (about 2,000) he had an encounter with Dervishes on the 15th, which resulted in his capturing a steamer and eleven large boats. On reaching the old government building where the French flag was flying, M. Marchand came on board, when Kitchener protested in the strongest terms against the hoisting of the French flag in

the dominions of the Khedive. M. Marchand declared that he had but carried out his orders—and must await further orders. "I then said to him: 'Do I understand that you are authorised by the French Government to resist Egypt in putting up its flag and re-asserting its authority in its former possessions—such as the Mudirieh of Fashoda?' M. Marchand hesitated, and then said that he could not resist the Egyptian flag being hoisted. I replied that my instructions were to hoist the flag, and that I intended to do so."

Kitchener's message suggested a certain degree of stiffness between the parties, and before leaving he gave a written protest against the French action. A false move on Kitchener's part might have led to his Nile Expedition having an appalling sequel in a European war, but he left the matter to be dealt with by diplomacy, and though there were for a brief while such strained relations between the two countries concerned as made a conflict possible, the matter was finally arranged. Here we are only concerned with the part that the Sirdar played in the "Fashoda incident," and may close with the admirable tribute which he paid to Major Marchand in concluding the despatch which he sent to Lord Cromer:

"It is impossible not to entertain the highest admiration for the courage, devotion, and indomitable spirit displayed by M. Marchand's expedition, but our general impression was one of astonishment that an attempt should have been made to carry out a project of such magnitude and danger by the despatch of so small and ill-equipped a force, which, as their commander remarked to me—was neither in a position to resist a second Dervish attack, nor to retire; indeed, had our destruction of the Khalifa's power at Omdurman been delayed for a fortnight, in all probability he and his companions would have been massacred.

"The claims of M. Marchand to have occupied the Bahr-el-Ghazal and Fashoda provinces with the force at his disposal would be ludicrous did not the sufferings and privations his expedition endured during their two years' arduous journey render the futility of their efforts pathetic."

The heat engendered during the stress of the Fashoda incident led to many charges and exaggerations, so that it is pleasant to find that the Sirdar himself paid such instant homage to the heroism of Marchand. In some writings by compatriots of the gallant Frenchman it is said that the wounded on the field of Omdurman,

to the number of many thousands, were killed "by order of the Sirdar," which is certainly false. The Dervishes' religion demanded that they should die fighting, and the knowledge of the Egyptian troops that the "Fuzzy-wuzzy" is "generally shamming when 'e's dead," that when at the last gasp he would seek to stab or shoot, may well have led to the killing of some of the wounded at the hands of those to whom reprisals seemed a fair incident of warfare. The most that can be said by fair-minded critics of the Sirdar is that he did not repeat before Omdurman the order which he issued before Atbara to the effect that those of the enemy who cried quarter should be spared—a very different matter from the ordering that the wounded should be killed.

With regard to these charges the straightforward and emphatic denial of the Sirdar himself may well be given in extenso, for it is notoriously difficult to catch up with exaggerated statements once set afloat, and even now, nearly twenty years later, these statements are sometimes repeated as though they had never been met. Lord Kitchener wrote from Omdurman to Lord Cromer on February 1, 1899:

"My Lord,—It seems to me scarcely necessary

to enter at length into the cruel, and, to my mind, disgraceful charges brought against the troops under my command by Mr. Bennett in the 'Contemporary Review,' and somewhat modified in his subsequent explanation.

"Had such enormities really been committed, it would hardly have been left to Mr. Bennett, a somewhat irregular correspondent, to bring them before the public more than three months after their supposed occurrence.

"As regards the charges against myself personally, I can only say that, considering the condition of the troops and the means at my disposal, I did all that I could to relieve suffering amongst the enemy.

"As regards the troops, I was proud of their conduct and discipline during the battle and the subsequent occupation of Omdurman, and agree entirely with Mr. Bennet Burleigh's statement, that great humanity was displayed by them under trying circumstances.

"I hardly think it likely that Mr. Bennett will find an exponent of his views in Parliament, but should he do so, I categorically deny the following charges :—

"That I ordered, or gave it to be understood, that the Dervish wounded were to be massacred.

"That the troops under my command, whether British, Egyptian, or Soudanese, wantonly killed, wounded or unarmed Dervishes when no longer in a position to do us injury.

"That Omdurman was looted for three days after its occupation.

"That, when we were rapidly advancing upon the town, fire was opened by the gunboats on mixed masses of fugitives in the streets.

"I would add that my action regarding the tomb of Mohamed Ahmed, the so-called Mahdi, was taken after due deliberation, and prompted solely by political considerations.

"I have, etc.,

"KITCHENER OF KHARTOUM."*

Several matters that have come to be regarded as features of any plan of campaign undertaken by Kitchener were first prominently noted during the course of this Nile Expedition, which he had brought to a successful close. His "imperfect sympathy" with the newspaper correspondent was one of these, and this may be looked upon as but a necessary corollary of that secrecy which, as it has been said, was his guiding principle as it has been that of all good military commanders. If war correspondents had come

* Parliamentary Papers—Egypt, 1899.

to be regarded as necessary camp followers they should at least be kept within bounds, he appears to have decided; and one of their number has given an amusing illustration of this in his story of the Nile campaign:

"We fifteen correspondents were summoned before the Sirdar this morning. The conversation was humourously guarded.

"The Sirdar: 'Well, I am glad (?) to see you have all arrived safely. Your number is rather larger than it ever was before. Is there anything I can do to help you?'

"Some rather nervously expressed and muttered thanks were our answer. Then one of us asked: 'Can we go on to Wad Bishara?'

"Sirdar: 'Not till I have gone on the 27th.'

"'Can we start any time, however early, on the 27th?'

"Sirdar: 'Yes, I think you may.'

"One of us: 'How are you going, General, by boat or marching?'

"Sirdar: 'You may go either way you please.'

"The answer was so evasive that we all felt that laughing was permissible, and even not altogether unexpected from us."*

* "With the Sirdar to Khartoum." By the *Pioneer's* Special War Correspondent, Allahabad, 1898.

The Sirdar's first stand against the ubiquity of war correspondents—he refused to let one of them accompany him from Khartoum to Fashoda—has since been emphasised by other generals, until the journalist has come to be relegated more and more to the position of a mere camp follower reduced to picking up such scraps of news as he can in the rear instead of watching the battle front. Not unconnected with the "guiding principle of secrecy" too was his method of attaining his end, "all patience for a month, all swiftness when the day comes." As the "Staff Officer" who has already been cited put it, "from an instinct of self-preservation nobody ever slept with more than one eye shut when Kitchener was with the army," and he goes on to tell a story that was current of a somewhat deaf and somnolent old general who woke to find that the camp had been struck and an army of 20,000 moved silently off at the whisper of the word "Dervishes!"

Another notable feature of the campaign was that it was something of a triumph for temperance, for the Sirdar seems early to have resolved that in the organising of victory alcohol is one of the most treacherous of allies. In this connection, Lady Elizabeth Biddulph, addressing

a meeting in London told an interesting story. She was in Cairo at the time that part of the British force was leaving for the front, and there was talk to the effect that Sir Herbert Kitchener had sent back all the beer that had been forwarded with the supplies. Speaking of this matter to Lord Cromer, Lady Elizabeth Biddulph was told that if beer was allowed in the camp there might not be much work done. "But what about the Nile water?" she objected. "We have Pasteur filters in the camp," was the reply, "and plenty of good tea and coffee, which you will find our troops will be able to fight on." "They had fought," added the narrator, "and what was the result? A great temperance as well as a great and brilliant military victory. A Greek merchant contrived to smuggle some spirits of an inferior quality, which she believed was manufactured in Germany at five shillings per dozen, into the camp. The matter was brought before the notice of the Sirdar, who at once called the men together, and in their presence poured the liquor on the sands." The beginning thus made is having a notable sequel in the gigantic contest of the present time, when other commanders have recognised the wisdom of the Sirdar's decision and have dealt yet more drastically with the problem.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE VICTOR OF OMDURMAN.

LEAVING the British and Egyptian flags neighbouring that of France at Fashoda, and a delicate situation, which he for his part had dealt with in most tactful fashion, to be cleared up by diplomacy, the Sirdar returned down the Nile. Passing the successive scenes at which after months of careful preparation he had made his swift forward movement he may well have felt thankful that to him, one of the disappointed of 1885, it had been granted to sweep away the engulfing barbarism, to win back the Soudan for civilisation, and thus to avenge Gordon in the only way in which he could properly be avenged.

General Kitchener left Egypt for Marseilles in the mail steamer *Senegal*, arriving at the French port in the early hours of October 26. In the French books which were written for the idolising of the brave Major Marchand it is to be feared that the writers drew upon their imagina-

tion for their facts. Because Captain Baratier, bearing Marchand's report for his Government, travelled by the same steamer, long conversations between him and Kitchener on board are recorded, the authenticity of which may be gauged from the statement supposed to be made by the Sirdar that for his victory at Omdurman the Queen had rewarded him with a peerage and a sum of £30,000. Yet the peerage was not gazetted until October 31, and the Parliamentary grant was not made until seven months later!

Those of us who remember the blank feeling of despair with which the news of the tragedy of Khartoum affected England, nearly thirty years ago, cannot fail to recall also the sense of elation which attended on that other news that the patience and forcefulness of Sir Herbert Kitchener had won through, that the Mahdiist horde was scattered, that the British flag flew again over the place where Gordon fell. It is not too much to say that there had been something of a feeling of national shame over the tragedy of 1885, and that this had its effect in producing the sense of national relief over the Sirdar's triumph of 1898. He returned to England to find himself at once something of a popular idol, his name on everyone's lips, and

he himself the subject of many proffered honours for the Crown, from cities, boroughs, and universities. Thus did the nation seek to requite the organiser of victory. He reached London at the end of October and the *London Gazette*, October 31, announced that he had been raised to the peerage. In selecting his title as Baron Kitchener of Khartoum and of Aspall, in the county of Suffolk, he associated the place where he had won to this new dignity and the place in East Anglia at which his mother was born. As Lord Kitchener he obeyed the command of Queen Victoria and on the very day on which his title was announced, journeyed to Balmoral as a guest of Her Majesty. He was received by the Queen immediately on his arrival, and was included in Her Majesty's dinner party on that and the following evening. From Sir Sidney Lee's biography of Queen Victoria we learn that Kitchener's campaign had been a source of immense gratification to her and that "she proved the alertness of her memory by reminding him of incidents in former Soudan campaigns which had passed from his recollection."

On November 2, Lord Kitchener left Balmoral and an amusing story is told of his journey.

His only travelling companion on the first part of the way was a railway director who fell into talk with him without knowing who he was, and when they reached Edinburgh was surprised to find a small gathering headed by the Lord Provost awaiting the arrival of the train. The Lord Provost was wishing to obtain Lord Kitchener's approval of the fixing of a date for his visit to Edinburgh, to receive the freedom of the borough. Quite a crowd had gathered, when someone, thinking that the train was about to start, called for "Three cheers for Lord Kitchener"—and the call was readily responded to, the recipient acknowledging the compliment with a smiling salute. Having entered the railway carriage, Lord Kitchener was taking leave of the Lord Provost when a small newsboy kept hovering near, trying to draw the distinguished soldier's attention to his wares. Lord Kitchener ignored the zealous youth, who, however, resolved not to be ignored, and advancing to the carriage door, stretched a book upward until it actually touched the general, who, glancing downward read the name of the volume—it was "With Kitchener to Khartoum," by G. W. Steevens!

Returning to London Lord Kitchener had to

submit to being lionised on the great scale. Banquets, presentations, and receptions in many parts of the country, followed each other rapidly, with private gatherings and visits to country houses in between. It is not necessary to chronicle all the ways in which his countrymen sought to express their appreciation of his achievement, but a few of the representative gatherings may be noted, more especially those at which the honoured guest spoke of past and future work in the ancient land in which he had established his fame. On November 3, he was given the freedom of the Fishmongers' Company—and this was but the first of the honours accorded him in the City of London. On the following day there was a gathering in civic state at Guildhall, when the City of London presented him with a superb sword of honour, richly decorated with gold and jewels. It is amusing to find that the Sirdar's over-punctuality—he arrived a quarter-of-an-hour before the expected time—caused a little embarrassment to his civic hosts. In acknowledging the magnificent gift, Lord Kitchener paid tribute to those who had so loyally served under him, and also to the man whose name is writ large in the history of modern Egypt—Lord Cromer. "All

I can say is that every one worked with the utmost resolution during the two and a-half years we were engaged towards the great end we had before us, and it was due to that oneness of purpose and cheerful determination that, I think, the success of the campaign was greatly due. . . . For a great enterprise a master mind is necessary. Lord Cromer was our master mind. It was due to his able direction that the re-conquest of the Soudan was accomplished."

On the evening of the same day there was a banquet at the Mansion House—one of those wonderful assemblages of notable people that the chief city of the world can bring together to do honour to a great man—and the toasts gave occasion for some memorable words concerning the Sirdar, both as a soldier and as an organiser.

Lord Rosebery, in the course of his speech proposing the toast of the Army and Navy, said: "We celebrate to-night a campaign, the most consummate that has occurred in the annals of English military history for eighty years; one more far-reaching and beneficent in its results than any, perhaps, of which history has record. It has been accomplished without much loss of life to the Army that has been victorious. It has added lustre even to the immemorial fame of

the British arms. More than all that, it has paid off a debt which for thirteen years has lain near the heart and conscience of every Englishman. We have not spoken of it. We have not liked to think of it. But deep, deep down that memory has lain by us, and we thank the Sirdar and his gallant comrades for removing it for ever from us."

The toast of the evening "the health of the Sirdar," was proposed by the late Marquess of Salisbury (the Prime Minister), who, after paying tribute to "the Egyptian Army as it has issued from the hands of Sir Evelyn Wood, Sir Francis Grenfell, and the Sirdar," went on to indicate some of the special qualities of the man whom they were met to honour. "It is one of the great qualities of the Sirdar that he has been able to attract the races that are under him, to make them effective and loyal soldiers, to attach them to himself, and to ensure their good conduct on the field of battle. He has many other qualities upon which I might dilate if time permitted. . . . Lord Cromer is in the habit of saying that the Sirdar has almost missed his vocation, and that if he was not one of the first generals in the world, he would be one of the first Chancellors of the Exchequer. . . . It is a hazardous thing to say,

but I am almost inclined to believe that the Sirdar is the only general who has fought a campaign for £300,000 less than he originally promised to do it."

Lord Kitchener in reply paid fresh tribute to the army which had enabled him to be victorious, and pointed out that if the two and a-half years' campaign had cost two and a half millions of extra military credit, "against this large expenditure we have some assets to show; we have, or we shall have, seven hundred and sixty miles of railway, properly equipped with engines, rolling stock, and a track with bridges in good order. I must admit that the railway stations and waiting rooms are somewhat primitive, but then we don't wait long in the Soudan. . . . We have two thousand miles of telegraph line, six new gun-boats, besides barges, sailing craft, and—the Soudan."

This tersely summed up the fact that the Sirdar had waged a constructive war as well as a destructive war—the very means which he had employed to destroy barbarism remained as a valuable line of communication for the progress of civilization, and this alone would give to the expedition an important place in the story of British achievements abroad.

Wherever he went Lord Kitchener was at this time the recipient of public addresses of welcome and was acclaimed as a popular hero. It is not necessary to follow the story of his successive orations, but one or two episodes may be mentioned. At Cambridge after having been given the freedom of the borough and granted the honorary degree of LL.D. of the University he was also made a member of the Union Society, at the gathering of which he said: "I am sorry that owing to the want of a University training, I did not have the chance of exercising eloquence in a society such as this in my early years, and I am not very good at speaking. As this house is the first in which I have spoken, and as I have now been graciously placed in another House, where I may have to speak—I hope I may meet a great many of you there—all that I can say is that this warm and enthusiastic reception you have given me shows that soldierly spirit and enthusiastic patriotism still exist in the young generation that is growing up to hold the Old Country together. I only wish I had some of you with me in the Soudan."

At the end of November Lord Kitchener visited the Prince and Princess of Wales at

Sandringham, and thence went to Dalmeny to stay with Lord Rosebery. On November 29 he and Lord Dufferin together received the freedom of Edinburgh, and in acknowledging the compliment Kitchener said that it was greatly due to the gallant deeds of the Camerons and Seaforths who were with him at Atbara and Omdurman that he himself owed the honour which was done him. At the banquet in the evening, Lord Rosebery in proposing the toast of "the youngest Burgesses," said of the Sirdar that he had been barely a month at home, but all the time he had been "occupied in the proud duty of receiving from every class and sect of his countrymen, from the Sovereign down to the humblest man in the street, the homage due to the great services which he had rendered," adding "if I were to sum up all that I could say in praise of the Sirdar himself it would be this—that he has written a new page of British history and that he has blotted out an old one." In those words Lord Rosebery crystallised in his felicitous fashion a sentiment which all were feeling.

In his reply Lord Kitchener showed how closely his thoughts ran to the organising of peace as the desirable sequel to necessary warfare,

and propounded a scheme which he had been cogitating to that end during this month that his countrymen had been honouring him as a successful soldier. He pointed out some of the things that had to be done towards civilising the Soudan now that it was re-conquered. "We shall have to organise a police force. There is a great civilizing power in the policeman." He went on to propose the erection at Khartoum of a Gordon Memorial College, which should be conducted on English lines and by English masters, where the children of the poor people who had been oppressed for thirteen years might be educated. For this purpose he wished to raise a sum of £100,000 and he appealed towards that end with special confidence to Scotsmen, asking them to "Remember Livingstone, remember Moffat, remember Gordon."

Before thus announcing the scheme which he had prepared, Lord Kitchener had evidently consulted with many friends and despite much encouragement had feared that the proposal might not prove successful. A hundred thousand pounds seemed a large sum to ask for, and he had resolved that anything short of that amount would be inadequate. One who was a fellow-guest with him at a country mansion has recorded that:

"He wanted £100,000, and he doubted whether he should get it. In vain his friends urged him to make his appeal.

"'No,' said Lord Kitchener, 'nothing less than £100,000 will be of use. It is a large sum. I should not like to fail, and if they gave me only part of the amount, to have to return it.'

"He was told that his name would be enough. It was the psychological moment. Delay would only injure his chances. Lord Glenesk offered Lord Kitchener £1,000 across the dinner table, and other sums were offered there and then, and the support of two powerful newspapers was promised. Still he hesitated, and still he repeated, 'I should not like to fail.' At last one of the company said,

"'Well, Lord Kitchener, if you had doubted about your campaigns as you do about this you would never have got to Khartoum.'

"His face hardened, and his reply was characteristic of the man :

"'Perhaps not; but then I could depend on myself, and now I have to depend on the British public.'"*

That he could safely depend upon the British public a short time was to make plain.

*"Anglo-American Memories." By G. W. Smalley.

On the very day that he announced at Edinburgh his proposal for the establishment of a centre of education at Khartoum which should serve also as a memorial to General Gordon, Lord Kitchener issued his appeal through the press, and was able to announce that Queen Victoria had become Patron, and the Prince of Wales Vice-Patron of the movement, and that it had won cordial support from a number of prominent publicists. The greater part of this appeal may well be quoted as an illustration of the writer's views on the business of peace made possible by war; its simple directness would be spoiled by paraphrase:

"I trust that it will not be thought that I am trespassing too much upon the goodwill of the British public, or that I am exceeding the duties of a soldier, if I call your attention to an issue of very grave importance arising immediately out of the recent campaign in the Soudan. That region now lies in the pathway of our Empire, and a numerous population has become practically dependent upon men of our race.

"A responsible task is henceforth laid upon us, and those who have conquered are called upon to civilize. In fact, the work interrupted since the death of Gordon must now be resumed.

"It is with this conviction that I venture to lay before you a proposal which, if it met with the approval and support of the British public and of the English-speaking race, would prove of inestimable benefit to the Soudan and to Africa. The area of the Soudan comprises a population of upwards of three million persons of whom it may be said that they are wholly uneducated. The dangers arising from that fact are too obvious, and have been too painfully felt during many years past, for me to dwell upon them. In the course of time, no doubt, an education of some sort, and administered by some hands, will be set on foot. But if Khartoum could be made forthwith the centre of an education supported by British funds and organised from Britain there would be secured in this country indisputably the first place in Africa as a civilizing power, and an effect would be created which would be felt for good throughout the central regions of that continent. I accordingly propose that at Khartoum there should be founded and maintained with British money, a college bearing the name of the Gordon Memorial College, to be a pledge that the memory of Gordon is still alive among us, and that his aspirations are at length to be realised.

LORD MILNER, LORD KITCHENER. GEN. DE WET.
SIGNING THE PEACE TREATY AT PRETORIA.

Opp. p. 174.

Photo: Graphic Photo Union.

"Certain questions will naturally arise as to whom exactly we should educate, and as to the nature of the education to be given. Our system would need to be gradually built up. We should begin by teaching the sons of the leading men, the heads of villages, and the heads of districts. They belong to a race very capable of learning, and ready to learn. The teaching, in its early stages, would be devoted to purely elementary subjects, such as reading, writing, geography, and the English language. Later, and after these preliminary stages had been passed, a more advanced course would be instituted, including a training in technical subjects specially adapted to the requirements of those who inhabit the Valley of the Upper Nile. The principal teachers in the college would be British, and the supervision of the arrangements would be vested in the Governor-General of the Soudan. I need not add that there would be no interference with the religion of the people.

"The fund required for the establishment of such a college is £100,000. Of this £10,000 would be appropriated to the initial outlay, while the remaining £90,000 would be invested, and the revenue thence derived would go to the maintenance of the College, and the support of

the staff of teachers. It would be clearly impossible at first to require payment from the pupils; but as the college developed and the standard of its teaching rose, it would be fair to demand fees in respect of this higher education, which would thus support itself and render the college independent of any further call upon the public. It is for the provision of this sum of £100,000 that I now desire to appeal, on behalf of a race dependent upon our mercy, in the name of Gordon, and in the cause of that civilization which is the life of the Empire of Britain."

Although less than ten days elapsed from the issue of this appeal before the Sirdar set out on his return to Egypt, it was long enough to show that there would be ample response; indeed, the amount finally subscribed was £120,000.

At a Mansion House meeting of men representing banks and mercantile interests of the City called to consider the proposal, Lord Kitchener said that by giving the people of the Soudan this College the British would be making their flag a sign that where ever it waves the people there would have friends here.

Besides such public gatherings as have been indicated, Lord Kitchener found time for meeting with old Service and other friends; he visited

Woolwich, and dined at the "shop," the Royal Military Academy, from which he had emerged as a lieutenant more than a quarter of a century earlier; he dined with the Royal Engineers both at Chatham and at Aldershot, and on December 1 he attended a luncheon arranged in his honour by the Drury Lane Lodge of Freemasons, of which he was one of the founders, when, as Mr. Thomas Catling tells us in "My Life's Pilgrimage," he expressed a wish to remain a subscribing member "and greeted all who were introduced to him with a handshake they could not readily forget." A few days later and the Sirdar left London—a little tired it may well be believed of the weeks of being lionised—and his departure was the occasion of a pleasant little incident, when a daring young school-girl achieved that which many of her elders would probably have liked to do. This girl approached Lord Kitchener's aide-de-camp, Lord Edward Cecil, and requested permission to present the Sirdar with a bunch of violets that she had brought for his buttonhole. Lord Kitchener accepted the gift with a smile, and thanking the donor, at once decorated himself with the flowers.

On December 30, Lord Kitchener was back at Khartoum, and there with Lord Cromer on

January 5, 1899, he laid the foundation stone of the Gordon Memorial College, little more than a month after he had published his appeal for funds to make that college possible, and but four months after Khartoum had been recovered from the baleful power of the Khalifa. Lord Kitchener had now been appointed Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of the Soudan, and at once took up that constructive work of which he has shown himself a master, and of which the college was but an item. Khartoum began to grow again, a new Khartoum more worthy of the renewed Soudan, and the railway that had proved so serviceable an adjunct to military progress was pushed on to the revived city as a pioneer of civilization. A year after the foundation stone of the Memorial College was laid the first through train ran from Cairo to Khartoum.

It was in June, 1899, that the House of Commons voted a grant of £30,000 to Lord Kitchener for his services in the Soudan—a grant that was not made without some echo of the charges that had been brought against the Sirdar in relation to his campaign, charges which he had already explicitly refuted in the document which has already been quoted.

Mr. Balfour, in moving the grant, said that his fellow countrymen should realise what it was that the Sirdar had done for the Soudan, for Egypt, and for England, and should not think of him merely or chiefly as he was before the lines at Atbara or on Omdurman plain; they should think of him through those long months and years of patient, arduous anxious preparation; they should think of him as the man whose foresight was never at fault—who never turned his eye from the object which he had in view, who immersed himself with unwearied and almost superhuman industry in every detail which could secure the final triumph, who never even amidst the utmost complexity of detail, allowed himself to lose sight of the final object towards which every measure was intended to converge.

"The large, strong mouth, heavily covered with the typically military and brush-like moustache; the strong square jaw; the tremendously heavy brows; the strange, glittering eyes, and even the red-brick complexion—the complexion that told so many tales of hard rides for many hundreds of miles under blazing Egyptian suns, through wild and treacherous Egyptian sands; all the features of a strong, fierce dominant

nature were really brought out into greater relief by that occasional smile. . . . Through it all the face seemed strangely familiar to me. . . . In the end it all at once struck me why—it was the typical face of the Irish Resident Magistrate." Thus did Mr. T. P. O'Connor describe the victor of Khartoum as he sat in the Peers Gallery of the House of Commons listening to the debate on the grant.

CHAPTER IX.

IN SOUTH AFRICA.

It has been said that Lord Kitchener was back in England in the summer of 1899, and at a dinner of the Fishmongers' Company he indicated the progress that was being made in the Soudan, by pointing out that whereas in Gordon's time the journey from Cairo to Khartoum occupied twenty-five days, it could be easily done in less than a fifth of that time, and by saying that since he had dined with his fellow freemen in the previous November the Soudan telegraphs—civilization's slenderest but surest links—had been extended for 450 miles up the Blue Nile to the frontier of Abyssinia, and up the White Nile half-way to Fashoda. On July 25—introduced by Lord Roberts and Lord Cromer—he took his seat for the first time in the House of Lords, and in the autumn was back again in Egypt.

In the summer of this year of 1899 the long mutterings of trouble in South Africa became

ever more ominous, but Kitchener can have had little idea that he, whose fame had been won at the north end of the one-time Dark Continent, would be called upon for service in the South. It is not necessary to tell anew the old story of South African discontent nor even of the long and bitter war that was waged, except in so far as it is part of the story of Lord Kitchener's life. When it was seen that war was inevitable, Sir Redvers Buller was sent out as Commander-in-Chief, and when he arrived at the Cape on October 30, the first significant battles of the war had been fought. Then came a period of trial; it began to be recognised that in entering upon the war the British had—it is a common fault—under-estimated the strength of the enemy, that the conflict was a more serious one than had been believed, and that Sir Redvers Buller who had been sent in complete command had sufficient to engage him in the Natal field of operations alone.

When early December came, and the "black week" of successive reverses, it was decided that Lord Roberts should be sent out in supreme command, and that Lord Kitchener should be appointed Chief of his Staff. This decision was come to on December 16, and Kitchener was at

Khartoum when the telegram summoning him to the new field of action was received. He at once started down the Nile, and journeying with all haste joined Lord Roberts, who left England on December 23, at Gibraltar. They arrived at Capetown on January 10, 1900, when the situation was rendered serious by the fact that Kimberley, Ladysmith, and Mafeking were all being besieged, the troops that had been sent to relieve them being reduced to acting on the defensive. New and comprehensive command was urgently needed, and it has been said that one of the first duties that Lord Roberts had to perform was to create an army out of the "tangle of units" in Cape Colony, while the state of the transport is suggested in a story told of Lord Kitchener, who was asked on his arrival whether he intended to reorganise the transport. "*Re*-organise it?" he is said to have echoed, and then added drily, "I shall organise it!"

Another story of the method of the Chief of the Staff at this time runs: "Before Lord Roberts left Cape Town he called into his office a certain Colonel, and charged him with a certain mission. 'Now,' said the chief, 'how soon can you put this through? I know you'll do the best you can.' 'Well,' replied the Colonel,

'I'll try to do it in a fortnight.' 'Well,' Lord Roberts replied, 'I know you will do the best you can,' and with a pleasant smile he dismissed the officer. Outside the door he met Lord Kitchener. 'Well?' said Kitchener, with business-like abruptness. 'Oh,' said the Colonel, 'I have just seen the Chief; he wants me to do so and so.' 'When are you going to get it through?' 'Well,' said the Colonel, 'I promised to try and do it in a fortnight.' 'Now, Colonel,' was Kitchener's retort, 'if this is not done *within a week* we shall have to see about sending you home!' And done it was!"

Yet a further story of the Kitchener way is to the effect that Lord Kitchener came into a room where a group of young officers were engaged playing cards. He rapidly glanced over the men, and then informed them that a train left Cape Town for the front the next morning, and a ship would sail for England in the afternoon—those who did not take the one would take the other! In such stories, as has been said, we may not have veritable history, but we have in their currency a light upon the character of the man of whom they are told.

After nearly a month of preparatory planning and organisation, Lord Roberts was ready for

his forward movement, and began that progress which soon had a marked effect on the future of the war. Sweeping up to the north he soon came in touch with the large force of Boers under Cronje, and engaging them, gave opportunity for the relief of Kimberley (February 15), and also helped to diminish the pressure on Ladysmith. The final contest with Cronje's force took place at Paardeberg on February 27—the nineteenth anniversary of the disaster of Majuba—when upwards of four thousand Boers surrendered with their commander. The day after, Buller at last succeeded in relieving Ladysmith, and though the stubborn resistance of the Boers was by no means broken, the tide had made a definite turn. A fortnight later the British occupied Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State, and there was something of a pause in the operations while supplies were made good and transport arrangements completed for the next advance. In May the Free State was formally annexed, Johannesburg was occupied, and President Kruger fled from his threatened capital of Pretoria, into which the British marched on June 5.

Any hope that the capture of the two capitals of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State

would bring the war to a close were soon seen to be fallacious. Fighting went on in all parts, while the mobile companies of Boers under their "slim" leaders proved remarkably elusive, attacking and disappearing in the most skilful fashion. On October 25, the Transvaal was formally annexed, and President Kruger left an East African port for Europe, possibly with the idea of obtaining support from one of the Powers, but in effect as it has been bluntly put, deserting the countrymen whom his obstinacy had visited with war. In November, Lord Roberts, who had been appointed Commander-in-Chief at home, handed over the command in South Africa to Lord Kitchener on the last day of that month, it being believed that the war was virtually over. Immediately on his arrival home, Lord Roberts took the first opportunity of paying a tribute to his assistant—become his successor—a generous tribute which did honour alike to the man who spoke and the man spoken of:

"As Chief of the Staff of the Army in South Africa, Lord Kitchener has been my right-hand man throughout the campaign, and I am glad to take this opportunity of publicly expressing how much I owe to his wise counsels and ever-

ready help. No one could have laboured more incessantly or in a more self-effacing manner than Lord Kitchener has done, and no one could have assisted me more loyally without a thought of self-aggrandisement."

It was by no means an easy task with which Lord Kitchener found himself faced when left in sole command in South Africa; it is true that the two Boer states had been formally annexed and had nominally become colonies, but Boer forces were scattered all about them, and it was soon recognised that more troops would be necessary for the rounding up of these many bodies of active enemies. There are said to have been as many as ninety active columns of the enemy at one time! Here once more it was that Lord Kitchener's gifts as an organiser were brought into play. Marching and counter-marching in search of such an elusive enemy over so vast a tract of country might have gone on indefinitely, and the British commander realised that something more than the pursuit by brave troops of a brave enemy was necessary to bring the guerilla warfare to a close. Thus it was that he came to devise his two systems of concentration camps for the Boer women and children, and chains of blockhouses. The system

of concentration camps was greatly criticised by sentimentalists at home, but Lord Kitchener is too strong and self-reliant a man to trouble about such a matter. On him rested the duty of bringing the war to a successful termination as speedily as possible, and he has never failed to realise that war is a grim business which must be pursued grimly. When there was some public impatience at the slow progress in South Africa, Lord Kitchener offered to resign the command (October, 1901) but the Government refused to accept it.

If the gathering of the women and children into camps relieved the Boers of the responsibility of providing for them, it also removed from those Boers many bases for the supply of food and of information. The farmsteads were at once a danger to the British and a help to the enemy, and it was but the necessary ruthlessness of warfare that they should be destroyed. Fortunately, Lord Kitchener's courage is of a kind that ignores popularity or unpopularity, and works steadily to the completion of the task set. Undeterred by the criticism of sentimentalists he pursued the course which he had mapped out, pursued it steadily and relentlessly month after month. To watchers at home, in their impatience

for decisive results, it may have seemed long drawn out. Once more, however, the patience of the commander was to prove patience well employed; it was not the patience that sits with folded hands waiting for things to happen, but the patience that works with set determination to attain its end.

For eleven months as Lord Roberts' "right hand" Lord Kitchener had played his part in strong but unobtrusive fashion in what was of necessity the more spectacular part of the war—the part which saw the relief of the beleaguered garrisons, the fighting of definite battles—and for eighteen months he was engaged in bringing to an end a war that had already been "virtually won." The second part of the task was less showy, but it was no less difficult, and was only achieved by firmness of purpose and by consummate organisation of means to an end. To reverse the familiar saying and apply it to a system of concentration camps and blockhouses it may be said that it was war if it was not magnificent. It was a means, if not of a spectacular kind, to the desired end, and a means that was to prove successful. Peace negotiations in the spring of 1901 came to nothing, and it was a year later, when Kitchener's tactics had

narrowed the field in which the mobile columns of Boers could operate, that they were re-opened with a more hopeful prospect. The Boers had made a brave stand, as it were a forlorn hope carried through months, with the desire that when the settlement came their republics should retain some measure of independence; but the majority at length came to recognise the futility of continuing that stand, and in the spring of 1902 negotiations were opened anew.

On the last day of November, 1902 (Lord Kitchener had taken over the chief command, on the last day of May, 1902), he had the satisfaction of seeing the Boer leaders sign the articles of peace at Pretoria. And the terms of peace were such as should enable the late combatants to work together in the future with as little as possible of smouldering feelings of resentment. It is said that when De Wet, who was one of the negotiators, looked doleful over some part of the terms, Lord Kitchener gave him a clap on the back, saying, "Come now, old chap, don't be sulky."

In all the circumstances it cannot be said that the terms imposed erred on the side of harshness, and self-government was led up to within a period which at the time of the establishing

of peace would have seemed short to the most optimistic.

The story of the peace negotiations, and of the final signing of the terms of peace is told most impressively at the close of a very interesting book by the Chaplain to President Steyn.* There we are made to feel something of the intense sadness which came over the Boers at having to recognise that, however they prolonged their resistance, there was no possibility of retaining their independence. Mr. Kestell tells how the Boer "Governments" visited Lord Kitchener at his house in Pretoria, on April 12, and how President Steyn began by indicating that the Republics were serious in their wish for peace, if they could attain the object for which they still fought.

"Here Lord Kitchener interrupted President Steyn with a question which seemed to express great astonishment. He drew up his shoulders, threw his head forward to one side, and asked, 'Must I understand from what you say that you wish to retain your Independence?'

"President Steyn: 'Yes, the people must not be reduced to such a condition as to lose

* 'Through Shot and Flame." By J. D. Kestell, Chaplain to President Steyn and General Christian De Wet.

their self-respect, and be placed in such a position that they will feel themselves degraded in the eyes of the British.'

"Lord Kitchener: 'But that could not be; it is impossible for a people that has fought as the Boers have done to lose their self-respect; and it is just as impossible for Englishmen to regard them with contempt. What I should advise you is, that you should submit to the British flag, and should now take the opportunity to obtain the best terms in regard to self-government and other matters.

"President Steyn: 'I would like to know from Your Excellency what sort of self-government it would be? Would it be like that in the Cape Colony?'

"Lord Kitchener: 'Yes, precisely so.'

"President Steyn: 'I thank Your Excellency. I put the question merely for information.'

"Lord Kitchener then proceeded to say that one should bear in mind the British Colonists. 'The Colonists,' he said, 'were proud of their own nationality. If anyone, for instance, asked a Colonist in Australia whether he was an Englishman, then his answer would be, "No, I am an Australian." And yet such a man felt himself to be one with the British nation, and was proud of being a British subject.'"

When President Steyn sought to introduce the Irish question, Lord Kitchener "said that he himself was an Irishman, and therefore better able to judge in Irish affairs."

Up to the end of May the negotiations went on, the final British terms having been given to the delegates with the limit of midnight of May 31st for their acceptance. It wanted a few minutes more than an hour of that time when the delegates arrived at Lord Kitchener's house; it was five minutes past eleven when Acting President Burger signed the fateful document,'—"after him the other members of the government of the South African Republic; then Acting President De Wet, and after him the other members of the Free State Government. Lord Kitchener followed, and Lord Milner signed the last of all."

As the delegates rose to depart Lord Kitchener passed from one to the other shaking hands with all. "We are good friends now!" he said, and the describer of the scene adds "he spoke as a soldier should to a brave enemy who had been forced to give up his sword; and the members of the Governments strove to take what he said in the spirit in which it was spoken. But their hearts were broken."

One of the principal signatories to the treaty of peace was General De Wet, the leader whose elusiveness in the field had been one of the remarkable features of the "Three Years' War" of which he later wrote the story. The closing words of his book have a curious significance to-day. He wrote as a brave man, defeated but not dishonoured: "It was a never-to-be-forgotten evening. In the space of a few short minutes that was done which never could be undone. A decision arrived at in a meeting could always be taken into re-consideration, but a document solemnly signed, as on that night, by two parties, bound them both for ever. Everyone of us who put his name to that document knew that he was in honour bound to act in accordance with it. . . . To my Nation I address one last word. Be loyal to the new Government! Loyalty pays best in the end. Loyalty alone is worthy of a nation which has shed its blood for Freedom!"

For the reputation of General De Wet, it is a pity that he lived to stultify those brave words by becoming the traitor of 1914.

The long war having been brought to an end, Lord Kitchener prepared to leave South Africa and on June 17 was present at a great farewell

banquet at Johannesburg, when he addressed a telegram to Generals Botha, Delarey, and De Wet, highly complimenting them on their unflagging energy and unfailing tact in promoting the loyal fulfilment by the burghers of the agreement to surrender.

Before leaving South Africa, Lord Kitchener issued an address to the troops which is interesting, for its tribute to the soldiers whom he had commanded, its happy prophecy of the friendship that was to be between Boer and Briton, and as a characteristic utterance :

"The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief wishes to express his best thanks to all general officers, officers, non-commissioned officers and men for the excellent service they have rendered since he first took the command eighteen months ago. The period in question offered few opportunities for those decisive engagements which keep up the spirit of an army and add brilliance and interest to its operations. On the other hand, officers and men have been called upon for increasing and ever-increasing exertions, in the face of great hardships and other difficulties, against dangerous and elusive antagonists.

"The conduct of the troops under these trying circumstances has been beyond all praise. Never

has there been the smallest sign of slackness or impatience. It seems to Lord Kitchener that the qualities of endurance and resolution they have displayed are much more valuable to a commander than any dashing or short-lived effort whereby some hard-fought actions may be won in a campaign of ordinary duration.

"The Commander-in-Chief also has special pleasure in congratulating the Army on the kindly and humane spirit by which all ranks have been animated during this long struggle. Fortunately for the future in South Africa, the truth in this matter is known to our late enemy as well as to ourselves; and no misrepresentations from outside can prevail in the long run against the actual fact that no war has ever yet been waged in which the combatants and non-combatants on either side have shown so much consideration and kindness to one another.

"This message would be incomplete if reference were not made to the soldierly qualities displayed throughout the campaign by our quondam enemies, and to the admirable spirit displayed by them in carrying out the surrender of their arms. Many Boer leaders, who, at an earlier date recognised the futility of carrying on the devastating conflict beyond a certain

point, have already for some time served with us in the field, and the help which they rendered us will not be forgotten. Many, also, of those who continued to struggle to the end have expressed the hope that on some future occasion they may have an opportunity of serving side by side with His Majesty's forces, from whom Lord Kitchener can assure them they will receive a very hearty welcome."

Britain was just breathing with relief over the convalescence of King Edward VII., when Lord Kitchener returned to England, and his arrival was made the occasion of a great demonstration of popular enthusiasm. When he reached London he was met at Paddington by the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Cambridge, the Duke of Connaught, Lord Roberts, and the Head-quarters Staff, and it was through vast cheering crowds that he drove to St. James's Palace, where he lunched with the Prince of Wales. Later in the day he proceeded to Buckingham Palace, where he was decorated by King Edward with the newly instituted Order of Merit. Other honours immediately accorded him were military promotion to the full rank of General, peerage promotion to a Viscountcy—as Viscount Kitchener of Khartoum, of the Vaal in the Colony of the

Transvaal, and of Aspall in the county of Suffolk, with special remainder to his brothers and their children—the thanks of Parliament and a grant of £50,000. In the debate in the House of Commons Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman said that Lord Kitchener had shown himself a great soldier, and more than that a great administrator, a master of the art of organisation, a tactful negotiator, and a large-minded man.

As on his return as "the avenger of Gordon" so on his return as "the pacificator of South Africa" Lord Kitchener had to submit to a long course of lionisation. There were banquets to be attended and presentations to be received, but only one or two of the events need be mentioned especially. On the last day of July he was the principal guest at the annual South African dinner, when the Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Cape Town Corporation, presented him with a sword of honour, in acknowledging which Lord Kitchener expressed the confident hope that in South Africa at any rate the sword might never again have to be drawn from its scabbard. A week later he and Lord Roberts were guests of the City at Guildhall, when they were presented with illuminated addresses and plate; and during the next two months he had

many similar experiences. In September he visited Ipswich, and received the freedom of the borough—his immediate predecessor on the roll of honorary burgesses being the great Duke of Wellington, for the honour was one which Ipswich had not granted since 1821. Earlier honorary burgesses had been Lord Nelson and the Duke of Marlborough. After the ceremony and Kitchener's speech, in which he noted his family association with East Anglia, he drove out to Aspall Hall, the home of his maternal ancestry, whence he afterwards made a tour through the county from which he takes his English title.

At the end of the month, after receiving the freedom of Sheffield, Lord Kitchener was a guest at the famous Cutlers' Feast, where he made a speech, in the course of which he emphatically refuted charges which had been brought against the British Army in South Africa. "It is perhaps fitting on this occasion that I should briefly allude to the conduct of the troops in the war. It was to be regretted that while the war was in progress certain unfounded charges were brought against the good conduct of our men. Those accusations, however, were repudiated by the people of this country and of the colonies,

including the civilian population of South Africa among whom we were fighting. This was a source of great satisfaction to us at the time; and I should now like to tell you that from the commencement of the year 1900 to the end of the war every case of serious crime by a soldier was brought before me, with the result that I can conscientiously state that, very high as my opinion previously was of the conduct of the British soldier, it is far higher now that I know how well our men behaved in circumstances of great temptation during the war."

Again and again, in the speeches which Lord Kitchener made in various parts of the country he emphasised the necessity of the youths of this country receiving some military training, as it was "the bounden duty and high privilege" of every man to defend his country, and to train himself for so doing.

Lord Kitchener has shown himself so strongly possessed of the power of concentration, of devoting all his attention to the particular business which he has in hand, that we may probably trace to this invaluable characteristic the reputation which he has for aloofness, and relentless severity. Not all who have had the privilege of knowing him have carried away this

impression; indeed, an officer who met him in Pretoria in this year in which the South African war was brought to a close, described him as a tall, frank, genial man, "no hide-bound ascetic, as he has been pictured, fully ready to have a talk or a glass of wine with any duly authorised person." Mr. G. W. Smalley, whose "Anglo-American Memories" have been already referred to, met Viscount Kitchener at a country house dinner party at this time, and gives this further impression:

"As Lord Kitchener sits there talking at luncheon, the hardness of the face softens. The merciless eyes grow kindly and human; you may forget, if you like, the frontal attack at Paardeberg, and the corpse-strewn plains of Omdurman, and remember only that an English gentleman, who has made a study of the science of war, sits there devoting himself to the entertainment of two English ladies. It is a picture which has a charm of its own. And it is a Kitchener of whom you hear none too often. That is why you hear of him in these social circumstances from me. Most men have a human side to them. Even 'K.' has, and sometimes allows it to be seen."

Another writer—the late Major Arthur

Griffiths—said : "No doubt he is an iron man ; hard, unemotional, at least upon the surface, with seemingly no weaknesses, caring little for the softer influences and graces of life. This, coupled with his persistent bachelorhood and known refusal to allow the officers of the Egyptian army to marry, has gained for him the reputation of being a misogynist. It is altogether an erroneous impression, for no one can make himself more agreeable in general society or more charming to ladies." In this connection it is interesting to recall too, the words of Queen Victoria after Lord Kitchener had visited Balmoral in 1898 : "They say he hates women. I can only say he was very nice to me."

CHAPTER X.

IN INDIA.

THE news which followed close upon the termination of his work in South Africa that Viscount Kitchener had been appointed Commander-in-Chief in India, was received with mixed feelings. Though it was recognised that he was eminently suited for the high command it was suggested that there was other and yet higher work awaiting him. Lord Rosebery, indeed, frankly condemned the appointment, on the grounds that it was a mistake to send our most valuable military asset to do work which many other generals could do, adding that there was only one Lord Kitchener, and that he "would not have shrunk from recommending him for the position of Secretary of State for War." Another critic of the appointment declared, "There is one post to which Kitchener is suited, and which is suited to him—namely, the Chief of Staff, call it by what name you will, the sole solitary and exclusive duty of preparation for war." On the other hand it was pointed

out that Lord Kitchener had proved himself a really great organiser, and that it was precisely such that was at the moment required in India.

Shortly after his return from South Africa, Lord Kitchener went down to Hampton Court, where in the park, the Indian troops who had come to take part in the pageantry of King Edward's Coronation, were encamped, and there he made the acquaintance of representatives of some of those regiments belonging to his new command.

On October 17, Lord Kitchener turned his back on all the social functions of which he had been the centre, and succeeded in leaving London in an unostentatious fashion for Paris, where he stayed for two or three days. He persistently refused to be interviewed by French journalists, but one of the papers neatly announced his arrival in the French capital, by glancing at his brief period of service in 1870, in saying that there was in Paris one ex-French soldier the more, his name being Kitchener, and his address the British Embassy. Continuing his journey by way of Rome, he reached Alexandria just ten days after setting out. At Cairo, Lord Kitchener met with a very hearty reception. A few days later he started with Sir Reginald Wingate, his

successor as Sirdar, up the Nile for Khartoum, where he was to open the Gordon College. The great reservoir works at Assouan were inspected on the way, and on November 5 the party reached Khartoum—the new city which was rapidly growing where four years earlier ruins had been found by the victors at Omdurman.

It was on November 8 that the impressive ceremony of declaring the Gordon Memorial College open was performed, and the seal thus put to the winning back of the Soudan, to the hopes of Gordon, and the achievement of Kitchener. Sir Reginald Wingate having extended a welcome to the man whose ideas gave birth to the College, Lord Kitchener responded in a speech which emphasised the object with which the place had been founded :

"Your Excellency and Gentlemen,—I desire to thank the Sirdar for the words of welcome he has addressed to me in the name of so many old friends in the Soudan. I assure everybody that I have been much touched by the way in which I have everywhere been greeted, and by the tokens of affectionate remembrance which I have received from those with whom I was so closely associated formerly. When I was summoned from the Soudan to South Africa I had

to leave to the Sirdar's care the scheme for giving the Soudanese a higher education which the liberality of the British people had enabled me to formulate. One of my greatest pleasures on returning was to find how well advanced are the steps taken for attaining that object, and how energetically and ably the original design has been interpreted and carried out. I quite agree with the Principal of the college, Dr. Currie, that time is still required for the complete development of the project, but I never anticipated or hoped for more rapid progress than has been made, and I feel sure that if the same spirit which has hitherto directed the destinies of Gordon College is continued, there is no fear that the result will not fully equal, if not greatly exceed, what I originally hoped for in my most sanguine anticipations.

"We now see the Soudan people of all classes, anxiously desirous of education for their children, also that the steps which we have taken for their future in this respect meet entirely with their approval, and that they encourage us by every means to push forward the scheme. In the Soudan primary schools we find excellent material to work on. During the short time that

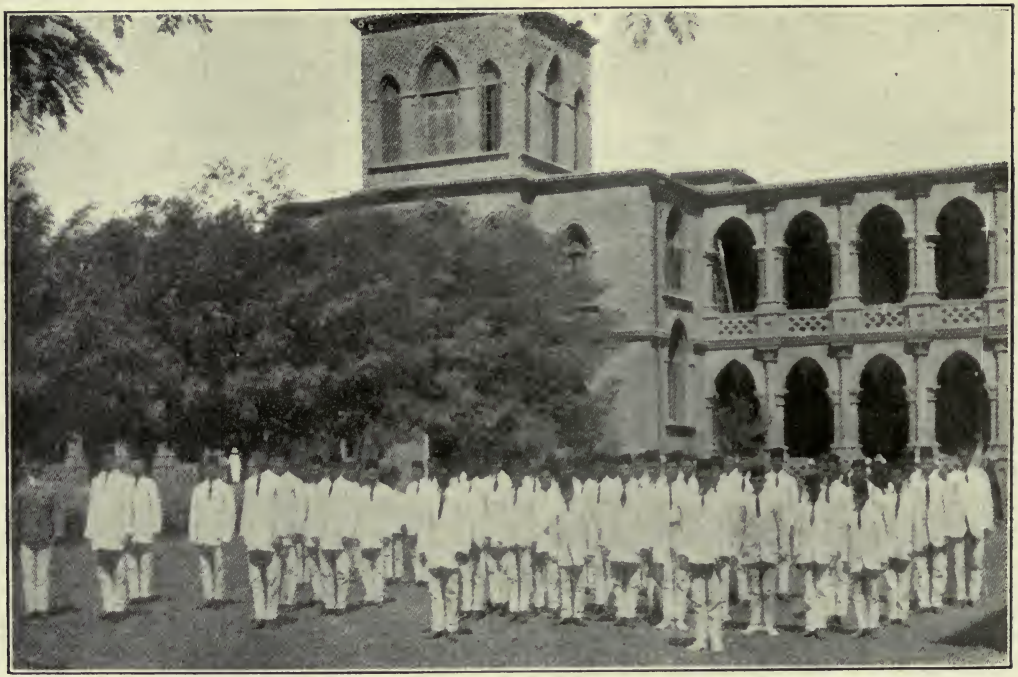
they have been established, I am informed that they have become already fully equal in efficiency to the primary schools of Egypt; therefore, we cannot fail now to recognise that there is no lack of room for developing education in the Soudan, nor of youths eager to learn and capable of learning. I am delighted to see those who are here to-day. They are an excellent type, and clearly show the fruitful field there is here for work which, if developed, will surely result in making this country a prosperous centre of civilization instead of what we all remember it to have been formerly.

"But, though great steps have been made, we must still look forward for the actual realisation of the original scheme. This memorial to General Gordon has not been called a college without due consideration. It was hoped, and fully foreseen, that it would in the future become the head and centre of secondary and more advanced scientific training and education of the youths of the Soudan in literary and technical knowledge. Here they will be brought up and taught so as to be able to go out into the world equipped to fill many posts for which they are already required in this country. I, for one, am quite willing and happy to wait patiently

for that result, which is undoubtedly the future of the institution.

"I quite agree, in the meantime, that the funds of the college should be used to hasten this result by advancing primary education in the Soudan, and, as the principal, Dr. Currie, has remarked, I hope that after five years in India I shall return to find that the establishment of the college on the lines originally conceived has been attained. Glancing ahead, we confidently hope to see the institution supporting 300 students, with a proper staff of English masters, with whom they will be so closely associated during their four or six years of residence that their native views of life will be greatly modified and gradually moulded to a morally higher and more efficient standard, while their intellect and knowledge will be so developed and increased as to open to them careers either in the army, in civil life, or in technical work, thus raising them to the level of others who have long enjoyed the benefits of civilization and progress."

Lord Kitchener went on to say that while the endowment fund of one hundred thousand pounds with which the College started might hardly give sufficient annual funds for the work to be



KHARTOUM: THE GORDON COLLEGE, SHOWING STUDENTS.

Photo: Exclusive News Agency.

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done, he hoped that such endowment would be strictly maintained for all time and that money for increasing requirements would be forthcoming in the form of Government grants or private donations, and thus the place be a lasting centre for the development of education in the Soudan.

It was for the opening of the College that Lord Kitchener had paid this visit to the country from which he had been so suddenly called to South Africa three years earlier. On November 19 he left Cairo for Ismailia to catch the steamship *Egypt* on which he was to journey to Bombay; and on the 28th he arrived at the last-named port where he met with a cordial reception, despite the fact that some weeks earlier the Corporation had rejected a proposal to present him with an address of welcome.

Then he began six and a-half years of steady work which was to have a marked effect on the army administration of our Indian Empire. Less "showy" than war service the service of organising an army that shall be prepared for any emergency that may befall is no less necessary, and though Lord Kitchener's new task was not to assist in the creating of an army as in Egypt, it was the no less difficult one of bring-

ing antiquated administrative machinery up-to-date. In India, as the familiar saying puts it, he found himself "up against" an anomalous position in which the Commander-in-Chief, occupying a supreme position in theory, was in practise the victim of a hampering dual control shared with the Military Member of Council. As he put it, though responsible for the military efficiency of the army, all his plans, instead of being explained directly to the supreme authority, the Indian Government, had to be "filtered" through the lips of another military officer. He insisted that if he was to carry out the trust put upon him he must be allowed to put his plans before the Government to which he was responsible without the employment of any intermediary. It was on this matter that the Commander-in-Chief and the Viceroy, Lord Curzon, came to join issue in a controversy, which, though carried out with fitting dignity, was not altogether an edifying spectacle as between two public men placed in such prominent positions. Here we need not go into the details of the controversy, suffice it to say at the moment that in the long run the Commander-in-Chief attained his end and the Viceroy resigned.

Before these matters came to a head however,

Lord Kitchener had met with a serious accident that might have put an early termination to his work in India. He had been there not quite a year (November 15, 1903) when, riding near Simla, his horse became restive in passing through a small hillside tunnel, and dashed him against the side with such violence that he received severe injuries, including a compound fracture of one of his legs.

It was in 1905 that the fact that there were strained relations between the Commander-in-Chief and the Viceroy over matters concerning the military administration of India came to be known; and at Simla on May 17, the Viceroy's private secretary issued the following statement: "Lord Kitchener has represented to the Viceroy that he desires it to be known that the statements to which currency has been given that there is, or has been, any disagreement with the military policy in general which he has recommended to the Government of India, or that his proposals for the re-organisation and strengthening of the Indian Army and the defences of India have been refused or thwarted by the Government, are destitute of foundation. The question now under examination with His Majesty's Government is exclusively

concerned with the administrative management of the Indian Army." This was sufficient to show that there was at least some reason for the rumours that were afloat. Indeed, Kitchener's own remarkable Minute indicating this difference was dated January 1, 1905, a few months earlier, and a few months later Lord Curzon resigned. It should, however, be noted that the Viceroy supported many of Lord Kitchener's plans for the re-organizing of the Indian Army. It was as to the continuance or termination of the old system of dual control that they were diametrically and irreconcilably opposed; as Lord Curzon put it, "He and I differed on a grave constitutional and administrative issue which had nothing to do with army organization."

Lord Kitchener bluntly declared that under the then existing system "the army can only with difficulty be brought to a state of efficient training, and even preparatory training for war is interfered with." Peace routine, he said, had overshadowed preparation for war, and though admitting that he wrote strongly, he insisted that his remarks applied to the system, and in no way to individuals. His lengthy Minute—which Lord Curzon described as "a sustained indict-

ment of the military administration of India during the last forty years."—is a very notable piece of clear thinking and plain speaking. As he said at the outset :

"This question is an Imperial and not merely an Indian one, except in so far as the maintenance of the solidarity of the Empire is incumbent alike on its each and every part. For these reasons I consider it essential that the system of our army administration in India and the co-ordination of the work of the army with the directing powers at headquarters, should now be discussed, and that changes to place it on a sounder basis should if necessary be introduced. I feel that it is my imperative duty to state my conviction that the present system is faulty, inefficient, and incapable of the expansion necessary for a great war in which the armed might of the Empire would be engaged in a life and death struggle. . . . The time for action has arrived ; unless, indeed, like the natives of the country we live in, we are satisfied with the fatalist formula 'Whatever is, is best.' No one dislikes change more than I do ; but if necessary I do not fear it. I would certainly not continue a rotten system because I was afraid to stretch out my hand and take a sound one."

That Lord Kitchener objected — to use his own happy phrase—to the "paper-logging" of the soldier's way with unnecessary "orders" and reports is amusingly shown by the Staff Officer who contributed reminiscences of the Khartoum campaign to *Blackwood's Magazine*, and Lord Kitchener himself pointed out how the dual control which he sought to do away with, resulted in "paper-logging" of the offices of both the Commander-in-Chief and the Military Member of Council. He continued his protest in these terms :

"One of the chief faults of the Indian system is the enormous delay and endless discussion which it involves. It is impossible to formulate or carry out any consistent military policy. No needed reform can be initiated, no useful measure can be adopted, without being subject to vexatious, and, for the most part, unnecessary criticism—not merely as regards the financial effect of the proposal, but as to its desirability or necessity from the purely military point of view. The fault lies simply in the system, which has created two offices which have been trained to unfortunate jealousy and antagonism, and which, therefore, duplicate work, and in the duplication destroy and defeat the true ends of

military efficiency. The system is one of dual control and divided responsibility. It is a system of 'want of trust' such as that which has recently been condemned and abolished in the army at Home."*

There were, of course, not wanting those who thought that the unfortunate position arose rather from Lord Kitchener's dominating individuality than from anything inherent in the situation. One critic bluntly declared: "We have placed a square man in a round hole which he is too big for. But while the man will go the hole will remain, and before we set about enlarging and altering the hole to shape the man, and perhaps make it too big for his successor adequately to fill, might we not appeal to the strong good sense and feeling of the man to contract his straight and square angularities for a time till a square hole for him can be found?" The writer of those words can have but little understood the man of whom he was writing; for it may safely be assumed that Lord Kitchener was thinking more of the future efficiency of the Indian Army than of any personal discomfort to the occupant of his post. As it

* "Correspondence Regarding the Administration of the Army in India." 1905.

has been said change was already "in the air" when he took up the command in India, and it was well, therefore, that the changes could be effected under the auspices of one so efficient and self-confident. When his term of service came to a close, it was admitted that he had carried out not only many administrative reforms, but a complete reorganization and redistribution of the British and native forces that would be found of real strategical value in the event of war.

In October, 1906, Lord Kitchener suffered from an attack of fever at Simla, and on recovering from it went for a change of air to Umballa, whence he started on a tour to Nepal, following the example set by Lord Roberts fourteen years earlier of visiting Khatmander, the capital, which continued to be jealously guarded against ordinary travellers. There Lord Kitchener reviewed nearly 20,000 Nepalese troops and attended a Durbar held in his honour by the Maharaja. The Prime Minister of Nepal gave an address of welcome in which he said that nothing could be so dear to the heart of the true Gurkha as the sight of a man who had been the hero of a hundred fights, and added that though it had not been the good fortune

of troops maintained by the Nepal Durbar to participate directly in the glories of a British campaign, it was a great satisfaction to know that there had not been for nearly a century a single war fought by the Indian Army in which Gurkha regiments had not taken part. The speaker could not have guessed that in 1914 the Gurkhas would have the "good fortune" of fighting side by side with British troops on the Continent of Europe.

It was in the autumn of 1909 that Lord Kitchener's term as Commander-in-Chief in India came to an end, and it was recognised that the period formed an epoch in the development of the Indian Army, no less noteworthy than that in which Lord Roberts had held the command. An anonymous critic in *Blackwood's Magazine*, summing up the work achieved by Lord Kitchener in India said that "when all justice had been done to those who paved the way for Lord Kitchener's reforms, the fact remains that without his reorganisation their work would have been incomplete, and without him the reorganisation would hardly have been attainable. His scheme recognised for the first time in the history of our Indian Army the fact that no organisation

can be efficient which is not an organisation for war."

If the firm and resolute line which Lord Kitchener took in India aroused some opposition it has generally come to be recognised that his work was of great and abiding value; that he left the army in India far more efficient as a fighting machine than he found it, while his efforts in the direction of establishing a Staff College at Quetta, and in organising the manufacture of military supplies were also planned with something of statesmanlike consideration of the future.

The need for the establishment of a Staff College appears to have struck Lord Kitchener soon after his arrival in India; as he had put it in his official "Memorandum on the Higher Training and Military Education of Officers," of April 11, 1904, "nothing was more essential for complete preparation in peace and for successful operation in war than that an army should have a thoroughly trained and highly educated general staff. . . .

"We must follow a system of training for war suited to the vastly changed conditions of the present day, and steadfastly eliminate all obsolete traditions. In all ranks, from the

private soldier to the General Officer, each step up the ladder requires a corresponding increase in knowledge, in self-reliance, in the power of initiative, in the habit of readily accepting responsibility, and in the faculty of command, qualities which can be attained only by unremitting study combined with constant practise.

"It is recognised that it is the duty of a commanding officer to educate and train his men in all branches of soldiering, but hitherto it has not been so generally understood that this holds equally true as regards the education and training of the officers serving under him. The plea that teaching is a difficult art, which it is given to few to acquire is one which cannot be accepted. The whole secret of preparing for war is a matter of training and instruction, and commanding or other officers who profess or show their incapacity as instructors, and their inability to train and educate those under him for all the situations of modern war, must be deemed unfit for the positions they hold.

"The system at present in force in India, whereby officers are sent to garrison classes to prepare for their promotion examinations, is particularly faulty. Knowledge thus crammed up in the course of a few weeks, only to be for-

gotten as soon as the examination is passed, is in no sense education. In future the military education of officers must be imparted within their regiments; it must commence from the day they join, and continue until they leave the service."

In the course of this Memorandum, Lord Kitchener laid stress upon the need for educating all ranks in intelligence, and he concluded by saying, in words that are worth recalling at the present time: "Last, but not least, comes the preservation and maintenance of discipline, which distinguishes the army from an armed mob, and without which all other training is of small value. The true combination of discipline, with a proper exercise of individual intelligence and initiative cannot fail to give the army in which these qualities have been inculcated a decided superiority over one in which they have been neglected."

On August 20, 1909, Lord Kitchener made a farewell speech at Simla on relinquishing the command, in the course of which he said that the object of his efforts had been "to raise the level of the army administration, not merely for a few years, but continuously; to leave the army in India with improved organisation, more

efficient, healthier, and more ready to take the field at a moment's notice, and thus to leave India permanently stronger and safer from attack and better able to confront the dangers and the vicissitudes of the future. How far I have attained this I must leave to the test of time." When this speech duly reached England it was promptly pointed out by means of "deadly parallels" that Lord Kitchener had in drily humorous fashion taken Lord Curzon's description of his civil administration of nearly four years earlier and applied it "word for word, and point for point" to the measures of army re-organisation; "to have put his answer (after a long and dignified silence) in this particular form is a delightful stroke of irony." The neatness with which the words of the retiring Viceroy were adapted to other ends by the retiring Commander-in-Chief can only be appreciated by those who have compared the two speeches, and it must be said that such comparison reveals an unsuspected kind of grim humour in Lord Kitchener.

Before the end of Lord Kitchener's service in India it had become known that on relinquishing his post he proposed to make an extended tour, and it was announced that the Australian

Commonwealth Government desired to obtain his advice generally on the organising of its military forces. After a surfeit of banquetings and farewell gatherings he had a great "send off" on his departure from Simla on September 6, and was described as being visibly affected by the remarkable demonstration of popular feeling. Saigon, Pekin, Port Arthur, Mukden, Korea were visited, and in early November Lord Kitchener reached Japan where he attended the military manœuvres. From Japan he passed to Australia, where he had something of a triumphal progress, studied the problems of military defence that might face the island continent, and embodied the results of his observations and impressions in a report, in the course of which he said that he found that the Commonwealth had good fighting material (he had seen something of the value of that material in South Africa), but went on to say that "excellent fighting material and the greatest zeal, although of course indispensable adjuncts to the creation of an army, are not in these days of themselves enough to enable a force to take the field against thoroughly trained regular troops with any chance of success."

Australia's attempt to carry out some modi-

fication of Lord Kitchener's proposals—the Commonwealth's Defence Bill had been passed just before his arrival—cannot so far be said to have been crowned with success ; though the present situation emphasising the value of those proposals may not be without its permanent effect on the popular attitude towards them. Here, however, the larger questions of compulsory as against voluntary military training need not be considered, we are only concerned with them in so far as they are dealt with in Lord Kitchener's report. In the course of that document he said that :

"The first and imperative principle of the enrolment and maintenance of an efficient citizen force is that the nation as a whole should take a pride in its defenders, insist upon the organisation being designed for war purposes only, and provide the means for properly educating, training, and equipping their officers and men. Unless these requirements be met, no military system can be devised which will be other than an illusion and a source of waste of public funds."

In February and March, 1910, Lord Kitchener was in New Zealand, where he proved a most popular visitor, it being noted that he "always

did and said the right thing." On March 16 he sailed thence for England, *via* Tahiti and San Francisco, and just a month later was the guest at a banquet in New York.

CHAPTER XI.

BACK TO EGYPT.

At about the time that Lord Kitchener left India he was promoted to the highest rank attainable, that of Field-Marshal. It had been pointed out in the House of Commons in 1902 that in eight years Colonel Kitchener had passed through all the grades to that of full General, leaving but a single step in rank open to him. Another seven years passed and that step had been taken, and it was as Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener that he went on the extended tour indicated in the previous chapter. His position in India had been one of the very highest military posts in the Empire, and there was something of a sense of disappointment to many people on learning that on relinquishing it he had accepted the position of Commander-in-Chief and High Commissioner in the Mediterranean in succession to the Duke of Connaught. This was a somewhat anomalous place in which to put our "chief military asset," and that Lord Kitchener did not see in it sufficient scope for his energies

may be gathered from the fact that in the spring of 1910 it was stated that he had declined to take up the appointment, the duties of which were more of an inspectorial than administrative character. In the autumn it was announced that Lord Kitchener had been appointed a member of the Imperial Defence Committee, a position for which his gifts and his experience alike eminently fitted him.

Towards the end of the year Lord Kitchener took one of his rare holidays, and went to Egypt up the Nile, the scene of his triumphs of a dozen years earlier. The last ten days of the year were spent in a shooting trip up the Blue Nile, and at the end of December he returned to Khartoum. On January 2, 1911, he rode through Omdurman and had a great reception from the inhabitants whom he had been the means of rescuing from the Khalifa's tyranny. Twelve years had wrought as it were magical changes in these Soudan towns and the victor of Omdurman may well have felt a thrill of pride at realising the part which he had borne in making those changes possible. A holiday to him must have been a fairly strenuous experience for between the 3rd and 7th of January he had visited Suakin and returned to Khartoum, and

BROOM PARK.

Opp. p. 226.

Photo: Graphic Photo Union.

then on the next day after reviewing the Egyptian Army he set off up the Nile to visit Uganda. By way of sequel to this trip, it may be, came the acquisition of land, near the Uganda Railway and about forty miles from the Victoria Nyanza, which it was said Lord Kitchener designed to utilise for rubber growing. At about the same time that it was announced that he was buying land in Uganda came news also that he had purchased an estate in England.

Nearly mid-way between Canterbury and Dover at the south-eastern end of Barham Downs, where the roads from Dover and Folkestone meet is the beautiful old estate of Broome Park, noticeable for its fine beeches, and notable for its connection with the "Legends" of "Thomas Ingoldsby" whose "Tappington" is but a brief distance to the south. In April, 1911, it became known that Lord Kitchener had purchased Broome Park—the fine old mansion of which is sometimes said, inaccurately, to be Tappington itself—and there he has established his country seat in a lovely part of the Garden of England, though it may well be believed that his public service has as yet given him but little time to spend in it.

At the coronation of King George V., in the

summer of 1911, Lord Kitchener was bearer of the Third Sword, or the Pointed Sword of Temporal Justice, and was in chief command of the troops assembled in London for the pageantry of that occasion.

While he had been on his Colonial tour during the preceding year Lord Kitchener had been appointed High Steward of the Borough of Ipswich, and it was as holder of that office that at the beginning of June 1911, he attended the Suffolk Agricultural Show, and at the luncheon delivered a speech, which is particularly interesting as touching a personal note rare in his public utterances. Having reminded his hearers of his family associations with their county he said that some of them might remember that he was a grandson of Dr. Chevallier, of Aspall, who introduced the famous Chevallier barley; "several years ago, whilst I was in India, some of my previous Boer opponents, who have since become warm friends, wrote to me stating that their wheat in South Africa was suffering greatly from 'rust,' and, having heard that Thibetan wheat possessed certain peculiar properties which rendered it immune from this disease, asked me if I could assist them by obtaining a sample of some grown in that

country. During the expedition to Thibet, which took place whilst I was in command, I was able to do this, and sent them some dozen sacks. These they gratefully acknowledged, and I heard nothing more on the subject. Last March, when I was at Nairobi, in East Africa, which is a grand country, with a magnificent climate, now entering the number of the wheat exporting countries of the world, I naturally visited the Government agricultural farm, and was there shown a small plot of growing corn, and told that this was 'Kitchener' wheat, and that it possessed the satisfactory peculiarity of being unaffected by 'rust,' and was being successfully used to blend with other samples of wheat in East Africa. It transpired that this wheat had been obtained from South Africa, some 2,000 miles away, and was a product of blending by my Boer friends of the wheat I had sent them with their own wheat, to which, without my knowledge, they had given my name. So as my grandfather's name has been handed down in connection with barley, mine is now attached to a special kind of wheat. If any of my friends here would like a sample of 'Kitchener' wheat I have no doubt it could be procured."

Lord Kitchener was in Ireland when early on July 13 came news of the death of Sir Eldon Gorst, who had succeeded Lord Cromer in Egypt; at once he crossed to England, and before the day was over had had a long interview at the Foreign Office. It was generally recognised that he was the most fitting successor to Sir Eldon Gorst, and the announcement was soon made that the new British Agent and Consul-General in Egypt would be Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener. If there was some criticism of the appointment, owing to a national prejudice against the placing of military officers in civil employments, it was more or less silenced by the Foreign Minister's frank recognition that Lord Kitchener was the best man available for the work. As he said in the House of Commons:

"I am confident that the qualities possessed by Lord Kitchener, his special knowledge and experience in Egyptian affairs, and his impartiality and capacity make the appointment one which will command general confidence. He has shown great capacity, not only as a soldier. The appointment in Egypt is an exceedingly difficult one to fill, as everybody knows. It requires special knowledge, specia' experience, and special qualities. I do not

know of anyone who possesses that special knowledge and experience and those qualities in so high a degree."

It is not too much to say that in a very special sense Lord Kitchener was the only man for the post at the time; the man whose long, varied and highly successful work in Egypt and the Soudan made him peculiarly acceptable to many, and one whose power as an organiser was well tried and well known.

The strong line which he had taken ever since his experiences in South Africa in emphasising the need of some training for the young manhood of the nation must have made him watch with interest the growth of the Boy Scout movement, and it is not surprising that he agreed to become the president of a detachment of these earnest lads. This detachment was the First North London Boy Scouts, and in presenting prizes to some of them in July he said that he was glad to know that they were to spend a week in camp in Broome Park, and told them that he had postponed a visit to Scotland so as to be at home when the troop arrived, that he might welcome them there in August. When, on September 17, he left Liverpool Street on his way to take up his new work in Egypt, the

Scouts turned up at the Station to bid him farewell, and he made them just such a little speech of recognition, kindliness, and encouragement as they were most likely to appreciate: "Now, my boys, it is very good of you to come to see me off to Egypt, and I am glad to see you. I hope you will all work hard, and keep the scout law while I am away. When I come back I hope to see you again at my home at Broome Park, and I trust you will again be able to have some sport with the rabbits. Once again, I am glad to see you all."

Reaching Egypt at the end of September, Lord Kitchener duly presented his credentials to the Khedive, and is reported to have said in the course of the interview that he was particularly pleased with the prospect of being called upon to maintain the deep sympathy which animated his predecessor in his relations with His Highness, and that he hoped that such sympathy, added to sixteen years of friendship for Egypt, would facilitate his task. He added that he had watched with profound pleasure the progress of the country, and that all his wishes and efforts would be towards the maintenance and furthering of that progress. How well his work was done the record of Egypt during the following two

and a-half years plainly shows, and may be gathered in detail from the periodical reports on that country presented to Parliament. An American critic declared that "Sir Eldon Gorst's mild and tolerant rule was breeding anarchy. The hour called for a strong man." In Lord Kitchener that strong man was found.

Some remarkable stories were told about the appointment a few months after it had been made notably that by arrangement between England and Italy the latter country did not send her ultimatum to Turkey in the matter of Tripoli until Lord Kitchener had arrived in Cairo. The story had probably nothing more of truth in it than an assumption based on the fact that the day after the arrival of the new British Consul-General at his post, Italy did send an ultimatum to Turkey. Various anecdotes were repeated indicating his tactfulness in dealing with the situation that arose when Turkey—then suzerain power over Egypt—was at war with Italy; one may be cited as a specimen.

A deputation of Bedouin chiefs is said to have waited on Lord Kitchener to prefer a request that they might raise their tribes and go to Tripoli and fight against the Italians. Lord Kitchener is reported to have complimented

them on their courage, and then to have pointed out that their tribes being nomadic had hitherto not been called upon for military service, but that if they were so anxious for fighting he would see that in future they were made subject to the conscription law; a hint that sufficed to make them refrain from pressing their request.

These stories, which appeared in an article in one of the leading reviews, two months later received a very direct contradiction in an article by Sir George Arthur*, in which he declared emphatically that "not one of the spurious anecdotes cited in supposed illustration of the arbitrary tendency attributed to the British Consul-General, is significant of anything but the gullibility that credits them, and the irresponsibility that gives them currency." Of Lord Kitchener's work as Administrator, Sir George Arthur said, "Lord Kitchener is of those who think the end more important than the means—who believe that the work to be done matters more than the particular machine to be employed in doing it. His long and intimate knowledge of Egypt and the Egyptians assures him that the prosperity of the country depends, not on a pedantic and indiscriminate

* *Fortnightly Review*, July, 1912.

adherence to any particular dogma or formula, but on the continuous application of a well-tried policy of enlightened administration and constructive social effort." That policy worked with considerable success, and despite the Turko-Italian war Egypt remained quiet but for more or less insignificant episodes, and the prosperity and progress of the country continued in a gratifying fashion.

In the early part of the new year (1912) Lord Kitchener journeyed to Khartoum, where he had a most cordial reception, and delivered a speech, in which he was able to speak confidently of the future of the Soudan. There, too, he must have felt much gratification at learning how his confidence had been justified in the matter of the Gordon Memorial College, for in the annual report for 1911 it was stated that over five hundred students had passed out of the College and become employed by the Soudan Government and not more than ten per cent. had failed to give complete satisfaction! Eloquent testimony this to the statesmanlike view which the victor of Omdurman had at once taken of the re-conquered Soudan and its possibilities.

In May of 1912, Lord Kitchener travelled

to Malta to meet the Prime Minister (Mr. Asquith) and the First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Winston Churchill), when much gossip was rife as to the meeting and its significance, despite the fact that it was stated to be of a merely private character. Shortly after there was published the first report in which the British Consul-General reviewed the position of affairs in Egypt; a report which showed that much was going forward both in the establishing of public works which should be aids to future prosperity and in the amelioration of the condition of the people, no less important a factor in that prosperity. To the latter end, as might be gathered from his record in connection with the Khartoum College, Lord Kitchener has always laid stress upon the value of a wisely planned system of education. In one of the tours of the Egyptian provinces that he made in these early months of his Consulship, Lord Kitchener may well have appreciated the appreciation shown in an inscription that met him in one of the towns—"Hail! Friend of the Fellaheen."

Though there was not wanting among the mixed populations of Cairo and the other chief towns some of that political agitation which has

long been a feature of Egyptian life, the influence of Lord Kitchener had a steadying effect, and that though he relaxed the drastic laws against agitators. Despite this fact, however, in the summer of 1912—just as the British Agent was about to return to England for a brief holiday—a plot was discovered which had for its effect the assassination of the Khedive, the Egyptian Premier and Lord Kitchener. Three of the conspirators were arrested and shortly brought to trial, the ringleader being sentenced to fifteen years hard labour, and the other two each to fifteen years imprisonment.

At the end of September Lord Kitchener returned to Egypt, and for the succeeding nine months was continuing his steady work in the organising of a country's prosperity; he visited the Soudan to see the progress of certain agricultural tests, the results of which gave sufficient encouragement to start on a development scheme on a large scale; he inaugurated the new town drainage works planned for Port Said, and went on a tour through Lower Egypt. In issuing his second report (1913) he was able to draw attention to the lessening of party feeling and the growing confidence in the Egyptian Government which augured well for the future; he

touched upon the attitude of the Egyptians in the Balkan Wars, and showed how neutrality was maintained despite the fact that only a few of the people had any real idea of the deterioration sapping the power of Turkey; he pointed out that financially the prosperity of Egypt depended upon the price of cotton, thus rendering the country peculiarly liable to alternations of inflation and depression; and further he stated that the completion of the Assuan Dam in the preceding December would provide for considerable addition to the existing cultivated area, and that other irrigation schemes in hand and proposed for further increasing the cultivable area of the Delta and the Upper Nile included the erecting of a new dam at a point on theWhite Nile about forty miles above Khartoum.

While thus helping forward in all ways the prosperity of the country in which he held so powerful and responsibie a position, Lord Kitchener it had been noted did not neglect those tactful, personal things which helped to strengthen the ties between the occupying power and the people of the country occupied. He appointed a native aide-de-camp, and he made himself as far as possible accessible to those wishing so consult him.

When at home during the autumn of 1913 Lord Kitchener stayed for several days with King George at Balmoral. Shortly after his return to Egypt there were rumours that the health of Lord Hardinge, Viceroy in India, might make it necessary for him to resign, and it was suggested that Lord Kitchener might be appointed so succeed him, one newspaper correspondent going so far as to state that he was known to desire the appointment. After long years of service in Egypt, he had returned to that country as occupant of the highest post it offered, and there would have seemed something peculiarly happy in his repeating that proud experience in India—but destiny had other work in store for him.

CHAPTER XII.

THE GREAT WAR.

SINCE, in 1902, Lord Rosebery had suggested that the most fitting position which the great master of military organisation could be called upon to fill should be one that would give him the opportunity of remodelling our War Office, the view had been repeated by several critics. But, as one of them put it Lord Kitchener's hour had not struck. It was to strike with wholly unexpected suddenness during the summer of 1914, and at a moment when men of the most diverse views should realise that with the hour he was the only possible man. The events of the past few months are, however, so fresh in men's memories, that it will not be necessary here to enlarge upon them.

It may be regarded as something of a piece of national luck that during those closing days of July, when the madness of Germany was seen to be making the coming of war on a stupendous scale inevitable, that the British Agent and

Consul General in Egypt should have been in England, and immediately available for occupying the post to which British confidence at once nominated him. In the very week in which war was declared Lord Kitchener had arranged to return to Egypt, and it is not too much to say that there was something of a national sigh of relief when the Prime Minister announced that in view of the crisis that had arisen he had undertaken the duties of Secretary of State for War.

On the evening of August 5th it was known all over the world that Great Britain was at war with Germany; on the evening of the next day Mr. Asquith in the course of a magnificent speech in the House of Commons announced that it would no longer be right for him to double the parts of Prime Minister and Secretary of State for War and he added: "I am very glad to say that a very distinguished soldier and administrator in the person of Lord Kitchener, with the great public spirit and patriotism that every one would expect from him, at my request stepped into the breach. Lord Kitchener, as every one knows, is not a politician. His association with the Government as a member of the Cabinet for this purpose

must not be taken as in any way identifying him with any set of political opinions. He has at a great public emergency responded to a great public call, and I am certain he will have with him in the discharge of one of the most arduous tasks that has ever fallen upon a Minister the complete confidence of all parties and all opinions. I am asking on his behalf for the Army power to increase the number of men in all ranks, in addition to the men already voted, by no less than half a million men."

Mr. Asquith's tribute felicitously expressed the national feeling, for it is not too much to say that Lord Kitchener has never forfeited that "blind confidence of the British public" which as it was put some years ago he gained as the Sirdar; the English public had come to believe in him so thoroughly as to expect him to be allowed a free hand in carrying out the work which he had undertaken. Nor has that confidence only been felt at home, it was and is Empire-wide; while early in the war the way in which Lord Kitchener has won and held the esteem of Egypt was illustrated by the splendid gift, from the Sheikhs of Egypt and the Soudan, of fifteen hundred high-bred Arab horses for the use of the British Army; a gift which was

said to be a personal offering to Lord Kitchener.

It has been recorded that during his Soudan campaign Lord Kitchener would talk openly and convincingly upon the need of reforms in the War Office and the Army, that his ideas as to changes were frequently novel and always radical, and calculated to cause considerable disturbance of the equanimity of those who supported the routine of things as they were. Now Lord Kitchener has arrived at the War Office his task is one immeasurably greater; it is not an office that he has to organise but a war, and a war on a scale without any precedent in our history. Of the organisation and course of that war it is too early to speak though the first six months have shown us much that is heartening in both respects, and have served to stiffen the public resolution in carrying through a struggle in which the national honour, and even the national existence is at stake, and the public confidence in the man on whom falls the duty of organising that resolution.

When in August, the first portion of the British Expeditionary Army went to the Continent, Lord Kitchener issued to every soldier a message to carry about with him, a message which in its simple straightforwardness, and un-

preachy insistence upon the moral attitude looked for in a British soldier, is a characteristic utterance which must be quoted in its entirety in any story of its writer's life :

"You are ordered abroad as a soldier of the King to help our French comrades against the invasion of a common enemy. You have to perform a task which will need your courage, your energy, your patience. Remember that the honour of the British Army depends on your individual conduct.

"It will be your duty not only to set an example of discipline and perfect steadiness under fire, but also to maintain the most friendly relations with those whom you are helping in the struggle. The operations in which you are engaged, will for the most part, take place in a friendly country, and you can do your country no better service than in showing yourself in France and Belgium in the true character of a British soldier.

"Be invariably courteous, considerate, and kind. Never do anything likely to injure or destroy property, and always look upon looting as a disgraceful act. You are sure to meet with a welcome and to be trusted ; your conduct must justify that welcome and that trust.

"Your duty cannot be done unless your health is sound. So keep constantly on your guard against any excesses. In this new experience you may find temptations both in wine and women. You must entirely resist both temptations, and, while treating all women with perfect courtesy, you should avoid any intimacy.

"Do your duty bravely,

"Fear God,

"Honour the King.

KITCHENER,
Field-Marshal."

It was on August 25 that Lord Kitchener, on the reassembling of Parliament, made his first speech in the House of Lords, that chamber of which he had been a member for sixteen years; and that "maiden" speech was made as a member of the Cabinet, thus establishing what is probably a Parliamentary "record" quite in accordance with his whole career. The War Minister began by emphasising Mr. Asquith's statement of nearly three weeks earlier, dissociating himself from any party predilections with the simple words "I have no politics," and he went on to class himself with the recruits of what had come to be known as "Kitchener's

Army"; "The terms of my service are the same as those under which some of the finest portions of our manhood, now so willingly stepping forward to join the colours, are engaging —that is to say, for the war, or if it lasts longer than three years, then for three years. It has been asked why the latter limit has been fixed. It is because, should this disastrous war be prolonged and no one can foretell with any certainty its duration—then after three years war there will be others fresh and fully prepared to take our places and see this matter through." The whole speech was remarkable for its straightforward, unrhetorical statement of the case, of what had been and was being done in the mobilising of the forces of the Empire, and of what it might still be necessary to do in the protracted struggle: "The Empires with whom we are at war have called to the Colours almost their entire male populations. The principle which we on our part shall observe is this—that while their maximum force undergoes a constant diminution, the reinforcements we prepare shall steadily and increasingly flow out until we have an Army in the field which, in numbers not less than in quality, will be not unworthy of the power and responsibility of the British Empire.

I cannot at this stage say what will be the limits of the forces required, or what measures may eventually become necessary to supply and maintain them. The scale of the Field Army which we are now calling into being is large, and may rise in the course of the next six or seven months to a total of thirty divisions continually maintained in the field. But if the war should be protracted, and if its fortunes should be varied or adverse, exertions and sacrifices beyond any which have been demanded will be required from the whole nation and Empire, and where they are required we are sure they will not be denied to the extreme needs of the State by Parliament or the people."

The speech from which these passages are cited created an admirable impression and served to strengthen the national feeling towards the speaker. Three weeks later Earl Kitchener delivered another speech in the House of Lords when he was able to say "the tide has now turned" and to pay well deserved tribute to Field Marshal Sir John French, the Commander-in-Chief, of the British Army co-operating with the French armies in the field, and to the officers and men who were so finely and doggedly maintaining the best traditions of the British

Army in peculiarly trying circumstances. The speech was listened to with the greatest interest, and its spirit was of that kind which resolutely recognises the difficulties of a situation and by that very fact is strengthened to face them. One of Lord Kitchener's hearers on this occasion said, "as he stood at the table, rigid and erect, he impressed one as a man of unusually powerful frame. His strongly marked face has a stern, set look; it is somewhat lacking in animation, but power, grim power, is writ over it in indelible characters."

In November, as a guest of the City at the Lord Mayor's banquet, Earl Kitchener made a further speech in which he took the opportunity of rendering "tribute of praise, of highest appreciation and of warmest gratitude" to "our gallant Allies"—French, Russian, Belgian, Japanese, Serbian and Montenegrin—each of whom was heroically bearing its part in the struggle against the dominating, demoralising and deadening cult of militarism.

On November 14 Lord Kitchener's old comrade in arms—the greatest soldier of his generation, and perhaps the most widely popular of all England's military heroes—Lord Roberts, died suddenly while visiting the Indian troops

at the Front in France. Five days later one of the pall-bearers, when all that was mortal of the beloved "Bobs" was buried at St. Paul's Cathedral, was Lord Kitchener who the night before had paid eloquently simple homage to his old chief "the greatest soldier of our day," saying, "I, more than most men, had occasion to learn and admire his qualities of head and heart; his ripe experience and sage counsel were fully and freely offered me to the end."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TRAGIC CLOSE.

When the earlier chapters of this narrative of Lord Kitchener's life were written, the great soldier-statesman was occupying one of the most onerous positions not only in the British Empire but among all the great Allies engaged in the grim task of destroying the monster of German militarism ; he was utilising his genius for organisation and action unostentatiously but powerfully, and retaining the quiet confidence of all. Now, with the greatest part of his work achieved, but with the end at which that work was directed as yet unattained, though, thanks to his unflagging energy and grip, brought appreciably nearer, it has become sadly necessary to speak of Earl Kitchener in the past tense. With terrible, almost stupefying suddenness, at a dramatic moment in the world contest, the great figure that had commanded our respect, our admiration and our trust disappeared.

It was on the evening of June 5, 1916, in

stormy weather to the west of the Orkneys that H.M.S. "Hampshire" struck a mine and disappeared. With the news of her loss came also the first intimation that the cruiser had on board Lord Kitchener and his staff bound for Russia, and that with the rough weather prevailing at the time there was little hope that any of them could have been saved. The news proved to be tragically true. Of the hundreds of men aboard the "Hampshire" but a raft load of a dozen members of the crew came safely to land.

The work achieved by Lord Kitchener during the twenty momentous months of his service as Secretary of State for War was of a character which we shall scarcely be able to appreciate to the full until the Great War is over; then it may be well believed it will be seen that his great abilities were greatly used to the end. What we see broadly now is that his organising and administrative genius raised an army of millions of men, trained, equipped, and despatched them to the fronts in a fashion which would have seemed impossible of achievement a few years earlier. It was, indeed, a happy thing for the country that it was able to command the services of a man who would not recognise the word

"impossible" and who had for his motto the single word "Thorough." Lord Kitchener knew his countrymen better than they knew themselves, and his successive demands for more men for training were cheerfully and readily responded to, even to the acceptance of compulsory service, when such was shown to be necessary to the successful prosecution of the war. This side of his work as organiser of victory is known in its general result; time alone will reveal in full detail the part he played. His unhasting strength, cool confidence and stern resolution were shown on the rare occasions on which he was called upon to report progress which he did from time to time in terse direct statements, which were but the more impressive from their lack of any attempt at rhetorical speaking for effect.

Of single episodes notable in these closing twenty months of Lord Kitchener's career, there are but few calling for mention in a personal biography. His life story during that period may be said to be part of the story of the Great War itself—a story as yet unfinished, but one in the course of which the name of Lord Kitchener will inevitably be seen as that of a strenuous single-minded worker whose genius was of in-

calculable value to his country in the time of deepest trial.

Before the close of the year 1914 honour was done to Lord Kitchener by his being appointed to the position of Colonel-in-Chief of the Irish Guards, in succession to his mourned comrade-in-arms, Earl Roberts—thus associating his name afresh with the land of his birth. In the following year he was still further honoured by the rare distinction of being made a Knight of the Garter. Apart from his work at the War Office, though of course connected with it, Lord Kitchener's service during the War included visits to the armies in the field, and to the Staffs of Britain's Continental Allies. There were journeys to Paris, and the front in France and Flanders; there was a momentous visit to the Gallipoli peninsula, preceding the withdrawal of the Allied forces from their positions there; and it was in response to an invitation to confer with our Russian Allies at Petrograd that he started on that northern voyage which was to have so early and tragic a close.

Only three days before setting out on that fateful voyage, in consequence of a certain amount of criticism which had been levelled against him as War Secretary, Lord Kitchener

had adopted with soldierly directness a novel method of dealing with his critics. As a member of the House of Lords he was unable to meet the elected representatives of the people in Parliament, therefore he invited the members of the House of Commons to meet him privately so that he might frankly discuss the situation with them. The meeting took place on Friday, June 2, a date which will assuredly remain memorable in Parliamentary annals. Of those who attended that gathering it may well be believed that many who came to criticise remained to praise. That, in effect, was the last public appearance of the great soldier-War-Minister. On Friday he had his private straight talk with members of Parliament—on Tuesday came the news, sudden, appalling, stunning, that he was drowned.

Speaking in the House of Commons on the last day of May the Prime Minister had paid ready tribute to his colleague at the War Office, declaring that for Lord Kitchener's services rendered since the outbreak of the War "the Army, the Country, and the Empire are under a debt which cannot be measured in words," and it is pleasant to realise that the eulogium was paid while its subject was still in the full

flush of his powers, when none could dream that the end was so near.

Something of our debt to Lord Kitchener may be realised by considering the extent to which the personality of the master-organiser had impressed itself on the imagination of the people of the Empire—so that to him more than to any other single individual it may be said that the confidence of the most diverse men was unhesitatingly and unquestioningly given. From the first he had recognised that the War would be a long and stubborn struggle, and had steadily set himself to the perfecting of his country's forces for the end in view. In this, the great task to which he was called as it were by acclamation, he showed those qualities of concentration on the perfecting of means to an end which had characterised the whole of his career. Not for him the dash of hazardous enterprise for a spectacular result that might not be achieved, but rather that thoughtful and patient preparation which is the nearest we can get to commanding success by deserving it.

Perhaps one of the most remarkable tributes to the personality of Lord Kitchener is that instead of looking, as so many did in the earlier

months of the War, for some brilliantly impossible *coup* which should bring about instant victory, we may say that the nation as a whole has acquired something of his sternness of purpose, something of his forceful determination and grim resolution, and settled down to win through by patient work whatever the cost. The national confidence which called Lord Kitchener to the War Office was never forfeited, perhaps it may be said that essentially it was but strengthened as the months passed—that by the time Kitchener died the whole nation had become informed with something of "the Kitchener spirit."

In mournfully closing this story of a life thus prematurely rounded off by death, it may not be inappropriate to use once more those words of Lord Kitchener's which may be regarded as a revelation of the character of the man himself, and a lesson to us all: "The development and elevation of the character of a people depends mainly on the growth of self-control and the power to dominate natural impulses, as well as on the practice of unobtrusive self-reliance and perseverance, combined with reasoned determination."