served to suffer this device to be of much use to the enemy, for some well-directed shots from our batteries set fire to these defences, and the meditated assault was defeated before it had developed itself into action. The attack on the outer barracks was equally unsuccessful. The enemy swarmed beneath our walls, but were saluted with so hot a fire from Mowbray-Thomson and his companions, that, in a little time, the seventeen had laid one more than their number dead at the doorway of the barrack. The great assault of the Centenary of Plassey, which was to have humbled the Feringhees to the dust, and to have revenged the victory of Clive, was in the issue a disastrous failure. The enemy begged to be permitted to bury their dead; and the remains of their cotton-bales served to stop the gaps in the earthworks of the English. But there was a more deadly foe than this weak and disordered crowd of Hindoos and Mahomedans to be encountered by our distressed people; and the Nana Sahib saw another source of victory than that which lay in the number of his fighting men. 1857. June 23.

For hunger had begun to gnaw our little garrison. Food which in happier times would have been turned from with disgust, was seized with avidity and devoured with relish. To the flesh-pots of the besieged no carrion was unwelcome. A stray dog was turned into soup. An old horse, fit only for the knackers, was converted into savoury meat. And when glorious good fortune brought a Brahminee bull within the fire of our people, and with difficulty the carcase of the animal was hauled into the entrenchments, there was rejoicing as if a victory had been gained. But in that fiery month of June the agonies of thirst were even greater than the pangs of hunger. The well from which our scant supplies of water were Approaches of Famine.

1857. June. drawn was a favourite mark for the Sepoy gunners. It was a service of death to go to and fro with the bags and buckets which brought the priceless moisture to the lips of our famished people. Strong men and patient women thirsted in silence, but the moans of the wounded and the wailings of the children it was pitiable to hear. The bheesties, or professional water-carriers, were soon slain in the exercise of their calling, and then English soldiers addressed themselves to the hazardous work of ministering at the well. A brave-hearted civilian, John Mackillop, appointed himself captain of the well, and, after a week of this hazardous service, was shot down at his post. As he lay dying, his care was still for those in whose cause he had yielded up his life, and he besought, almost with his last breath, a stander-by to carry the precious fluid to the lady to whom it had been promised. And so as day by day our people were wasting under these dire penances of hunger and thirst, the hopes of the Nana grew higher and higher, and he knew that the end was approaching.

The Capitulation. June 25. Three weeks had now nearly passed away since the investment had commenced—three weeks of such misery as few, since sorrow entered the world, have ever been condemned to suffer. No reinforcements had come to their assistance. The looked-for aid from below seemed now to be a grim delusion. Their numbers were fearfully reduced. Their guns were becoming unserviceable. Their ammunition was nearly expended; and starvation was staring them in the face. To hold their position much longer was impossible. To cut their way out of it, with all those

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women and children, was equally impossible. The shadow of a great despair was over them. When thus, as it were, at the last gasp, there came to them a message from the Nana Sahib, brought by the hands of a Christian woman. It was on a slip of paper in the handwriting of Azimoollah, and it was addressed "to the subjects of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria." "All those who are in no way connected"—so the document ran—"with the acts of Lord Dalhousie, and are willing to lay down their arms, shall receive a safe passage to Allahabad."*

There was not a soldier in garrison who did not recoil from the thought of surrender—who would not have died with sword or musket in hand rather than lay down his arms at the feet of the treacherous Mahratta. Sir Hugh Wheeler lifted up his voice against capitulation. To the English General the bitterness of death was as nothing to the dishonour of abandoning his post. He had not yet given up the hope of relief from the lower country, and he mistrusted the Nana of Bithoor. The younger officers were all for fighting it out to the last; but Moore and Whiting, whom the General consulted in this conjuncture, reluctantly declared themselves in favour of capitulation. They had no thought for themselves. Had there been only men in the entrenchments, they would have counselled and clung to the nobler and the manlier course. But when they thought of the women and children, and of what might befall them in the hands of the enemy, they turned hopefully to

* There are contrary statements with respect to the identity of the messenger. Some say that it was Mrs. Greenaway, some Mrs. Jacobi. Mr. Trevelyan speaks of it as an "important point." But I cannot say that I think it is of much use to discuss, or of consequence to determine, the question.

1857. June 25. whatsoever promised deliverance from the horrors of the past and the greater horrors that might be in the future. There was, too, a great crowd of sick and wounded, who could not be abandoned, and yet who could not be carried off in the face of an opposing enemy. So the overtures of the Nana Sahib were not rejected; and the messenger carried back to the enemy's Camp an announcement that Wheeler and his chief officers were deliberating upon the offer that had been made to them.

June 26. Next morning (there was then an armistice) Azimoollah and Jowalla-Persaud presented themselves near our entrenchments, and Captain Moore and Whiting, accompanied by Mr. Roche, the Postmaster, went out with full powers to treat with the emissaries of the Nana. It was then proposed that the British should surrender their fortified position, their guns, and their treasure, and that they should march out with their arms and sixty rounds of ammunition in each man's pouch. On his part, the Nana was to afford them safe conduct to the river side, and sufficient carriage for the conveyance thither of the women and the children, the wounded and the sick. Boats were to be in readiness at the Ghaut to carry them down the Ganges, and supplies of flour (some added "sheep and goats also") were to be laid in for the sustenance of the party during the voyage to Allahabad. These proposals were committed to paper and given to Azimoollah, who laid them before his chief, and that afternoon a horseman from the rebel camp brought them back, saying that the Nana had agreed to them, and that our people were to evacuate the entrenchments on that very night.

Against this Wheeler protested; and the draft-treaty was returned with an intimation that it was

impossible to march out until the morning. Then the enemy began to gasconade and to endeavour to intimidate our people. They might as well have threatened to move the Himalayahs. Doondoo Punt, Nana Sahib, sent word that he knew exactly the state of our defences, the condition of our guns, and the scarcity of our provisions; that he would open fire at once upon our wretched place of refuge, and that in a few days not a man would be alive. Whiting and Mowbray-Thomson went out to meet the Bithoor emissaries, and the former replied, as became a lion-hearted Englishman, that they might carry our entrenchments, if they could; that their soldiers had generally shown greater alacrity in retiring from than in advancing towards our fortifications, and that we had, at all events, abundance of powder in our magazine to blow up both armies together. This determined language had its effect. The Nana consented to wait till the morrow. And a gentleman named Todd, who had been his English tutor, carried the treaty to the Rajah's quarters, at the Savada Kotee, and obtained his signature to it. 1857. June 26.

The Nana is represented to have been very courteous to his old preceptor. It was the time, indeed, for serenity of manner and suavity of demeanour—nay, indeed, for kindly and compassionate utterances and mollifying assurances. So, also, when Jowalla-Persaud, with two others, went over as hostages to the British entrenchments, he blandly condoled with the British commander, expressed his sorrow that the old General should have suffered so much—that after half a century of service with the Sepoy Army of the Company they should turn against him at the close of his life. But God be praised, it was now all over—deliverance was at

1857. June 26—27. hand. Every care would be taken that the English gentlemen and their families should not be molested on their way to the river. And the companions of Jowalla-Persaud talked to others in the same polite and almost obsequious strain. That night our guns were made over to the enemy, and some of the old Golundauze of the Company were placed in charge of them.

The massacre at the Ghaut. June 27. So forth from their entrenchments, in the early morning, went the remnant of our garrison, with the women and the children, who had outlived the horrors of the siege—gaunt and ghastly, in tattered garments, emaciated and enfeebled by want, worn by long suffering, some wounded and scarred with the indelible marks of the battle upon them. The river was distant only a mile from our starting-point. But to them it was a long and a wretched journey. The wounded were carried mostly in palanquins. The women and children went in rough native bullock-carriages or on the backs of elephants, whilst the able-bodied marched out on foot with but little semblance of martial array, Moore as ever in the van, and Vilbart bringing up the rear of the funeral procession. The veteran Wheeler, with his wife and daughters, is said to have walked down to the boats.* With what faith and hope within him, the

* This is very distinctly stated by Mowbray-Thomson: "Poor old Sir Hugh Wheeler, his lady, and daughters, walked down to the boats." Other accounts, of a more circumstantial, but perhaps not more trustworthy character, indicate that the ladies were conveyed to the Ghaut on an elephant, and that the General himself went in a palanquin. This is the statement of Mr. Trevelyan, who very carefully collated all the evidence that has been produced. Colonel Williams, in his synopsis, says, "Hassim Khan, the rider of General Wheeler's elephant, after taking Lady Wheeler and her two daughters to the first boat on the line, returned for the General, whom meeting on the way mounted on a galloway, he likewise conveyed to the boats." The Christian wife of a musician of the Fifty-sixth regiment, named Bradshaw, says: "General Wheeler came last in a palkee (palanquin). They carried him into the

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poor old man turned his face towards the Ghaut, He alone who reads the secrets of all hearts ever knew. But there were many in that woe-begone train who, although there was no sunshine on their faces, had glimmerings in their hearts of a peaceful future, and who were fain to carry with them as they went such of their household gods as they had saved from the great wreck, or little memorials of the past, relics, perhaps, of departed friends, to be treasured after long years in the old home beyond the seas. Little was all they could take with them, weighed against what they had left behind; parents, husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, children, friends. The beautiful had left their beauty, the young had left their youth, in those battered barracks; and even the children had old and wizened faces, which told that they had lived long years in the last miserable month.

The place of embarkation was known as the Suttee Choura Ghaut, so called from a ruined village hard by which bore that name. The road ran across a wooden bridge, painted white, which reminded a traveller, who afterwards visited the spot, "of a bit in a Surrey common."* Over this bridge they defiled down into a ravine, which led past the compounds of some of our English residences to the Ghaut on the river-side. Near the Ghaut was a Hindoo temple,†

water, near the boat. He said, 'Carry me a little further towards the boat;' but the Sowar said, 'No, get out here!' As the General got out of the palkee, head foremost, a Sowar gave him a cut with his sword in the neck, and he fell into the water. . . . My son was killed near him. I saw it, alas! alas!" Another statement is: "The General and some officers were on elephants—Mrs. Wheeler was in a palkee." The further the investigation is pursued, the greater the uncertainty that is left upon the mind. This is given as another instance of the difficulty of extracting the truth from a mass of conflicting evidence.

* Mr. Trevelyan: "Story of Cawnpore."

† "Small but in good repair, resembling nothing so much as those summer houses of a century back, which at the corners of old houses overhang Dutch canals and suburban English bye-ways."—*Trevelyan.*

1857. June 27. known as the Temple of Hurdeo, or the Fisherman's Temple, a structure of somewhat fanciful and not unpicturesque design. The incidents of this mile-march were not many. The Sepoys, as our wretched people huddled on towards the river, sometimes crowded round and talked to their old officers, uttering words of admiration or of compassion, which were not wholly feigned. But as everywhere the Sepoy stands out as a living inconsistency of the strangest kind, no one can read with surprise any story illustrating the malignant and cruel hatred that, at the same time, burned in the bosoms of some who had once served in our ranks. Among those who left the entrenchments on that June morning were Colonel and Mrs. Ewart, a brave and good man, with a wife every way worthy of him. He, sorely wounded, was carried on a bed or litter, and the lady walked axiously beside him. But their progress was slow; they fell in the rear before they had reached the bridge, and some Sepoys of his own regiment—the First—seeing his helpless condition, thus severed from his countrymen, came up to him and taunted him. Ordering the litter to be placed on the ground, they mocked and mimicked him, saying, "Is not this a fine parade, Colonel; is not the regiment well dressed up?" Saying which, they fell upon him with their swords and killed him; and though some made profession of not slaying women, Mrs. Ewart was presently cut down, and lay a corpse beside the body of her husband.

That the boats were ready on the river-side had been ascertained by a Committee of our own people; and when the dreary procession reached the appointed place of embarkation, the uncouth vessels were seen a little way in the stream, in shallow water;

for it was the close of the dry season, and the river was at its lowest. The boats were the ordinary eight-oared budgerows of the country—ungainly structures with thatched roofs, looking at a distance like floating hay-stacks, and into these our people now began to crowd without order or method, even the women with children in their arms, with but little help from others, wading knee-deep in the water, and scrambling as they best could up the sides of the vessels. It was nine o'clock before the whole were embarked, and some, Heaven only knows, for their voices are sealed, may have breathed more freely as they awaited the friendly order to push off and to drop down the stream towards the great goal of ultimate deliverance. But there were those on the river banks—those even in the boats themselves—who had far other thoughts, far other expectations. Every boat that had been prepared for our people was intended to be a human slaughter-house. They had not gone down to the banks of a friendly river that was to float them to safety. They had been lured to the appointed shambles, there to be given up to cruel death. 1857. June 27.

So foul an act of treachery the world had never seen. Doondoo Punt, Nana Sahib, the adopted son of the last of the Peishwahs, had studied to some purpose the early history of his race. He knew how the founder of the Mahratta Empire—the head of the great family who had been the masters of the Peishwahs—had, under false pretext of friendly embrace, dug his wagnuck into the bowels of the Mahomedan envoy, and gained by foulest treachery what he could not gain by force. The wagnuck was now ready—the wagnuck of a thousand claws—in the hands of the man who aspired to be the founder of a

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new or renovated Mahratta Empire. Day after day, week after week, the English, with their little band of fighting men, had defied all the strength of this new confederacy, aided by the moral and material help of our lessons and our resources; and now the enemy, under the garb of a new-born friendship, was hiding the cruel weapon that was to destroy them. Everything was ready for the great carnage. Tantia Topee, who had been appointed master of the ceremonies, sat enthroned on a "chaboutree," or platform, of a Hindoo temple, and issued his orders to his dependents. Azimoollah, also, was there, and the brethren of the Nana, and Teekha Singh, the new Cavalry General, and others of the leading men of the Bithoor party. And many Zemindars from the districts, and merchants and lesser people from the city, are said to have gone forth and to have lined the river banks to see the exodus of the English; not knowing what was to come, and not all, perhaps, rejoicing in our humiliation. It looked like a great holiday-show. Scarcely is a more animated scene to be witnessed on the banks of the Thames on the day of our great national boat-race. And it was something even more than this, for there was a great military display. The soldiery had gone out in force —Horse, Foot, and Artillery; and the troopers sat their horses, with their faces turned towards the river, as though anxious for the sport to begin. And their patience was not long tried. The signal had been given, and the butchery was to commence.*

* As Tantia Topee is here stated to have been the foremost agent in this hellish work, it will interest the reader to see the master-butcher's own account of the butchery: "The Nana," he declared, "got a female who had been captured before to write a letter to General Wheeler to this effect: that the Sepoys would not obey his orders, and that, if he wished, he (the Nana) would get boats and convey him and those with him in the entrenchment as far as Allahabad. An answer came from

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No sooner were our people on board the boats, than the foul design became apparent. The sound of a bugle was heard. The Native boatmen clambered over the sides of the vessels and sought the shore. Then a murderous fire of grapeshot and musket-balls was opened upon the wretched passengers from both banks of the river; and presently the thatch of the budgerows, cunningly ignited by hot cinders, burst into a blaze. There was then only a choice of cruel deaths for our dear Christian people. The men, or the foremost amongst them, strenuous in action to the last, leaped overboard, and strove, with shoulders to the hulls of the boats, to push them into mid-channel. But the bulk of the fleet remained immovable, and the conflagration was spreading. The sick and wounded were burnt to death, or more mercifully suffocated by the smoke; whilst the stronger

the General that he approved of this arrangement, and the same evening the General sent the Nana something over one lac of rupees, and authorised him to keep the amount. The following day I went and got ready forty boats, and having caused all the gentlemen, ladies, and children to get into the boats, I started them off to Allahabad. In the mean while, the whole army, artillery included, having got ready, arrived at the river Ganges. The Sepoys jumped into the water, and commenced a massacre of all the men, women, and children, and set the boats on fire. They destroyed thirty-nine boats; one, however, escaped as far as Kala Kunkur, but was there caught, and brought back to Cawnpore, and all on board of it destroyed. Four days after this the Nana said he was going to Bithoor, to keep the anniversary of his mother's death." This statement is at least partially true, and it might be suggested that the signal which Tantia Topee was seen to give was, according to his statement, a signal to start the boats. On this point, however, witnesses were examined and cross-examined with the same result. One said, "In my presence and hearing Tantia Topee sent for Teeka Sing, Soubahdar of Second Cavalry, known as a General, and gave him orders to rush into the water and spare none." Another said, "I was standing concealed in a corner, close to where Tantia Topee was seated, and I heard him tell Teeka Sing, a Soubahdar of the Second Cavalry, who was known as the General, to order the Sowars to go into the water and put an end to the Europeans, and accordingly they rushed into the river and murdered them." Other witnesses spoke distinctly to the same effect; one man adding, "All orders regarding the massacre, issued by the Nana, were carried into execution by Tantia Topee." I do not think that there can be the least doubt of the guilty activity of Tantia Topee in this foul deed.

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women, with children in their arms, took to the river, to be shot down in the water, to be sabred in the stream by the mounted troopers, who rode in after them, to be bayoneted on reaching land, or to be made captives, and reserved for a later and more cruel immolation. The fewest words are here the best. I should have little taste to tell the foul details of this foul slaughter, even if authentic particulars were before me. It is better that they should remain in the obscurity of an uncertain whole; enough that no aspect of Christian humanity, not the sight of the old General, who had nearly numbered his fourscore years, nor of the little babe still at its mother's breast, raised any feeling of compunction or of pity in these butchers on the river-side. It sufficed that there was Christian blood to be shed.

Whilst this terrible scene was being acted at the Ghaut, the Nana Sahib, having full faith in the malevolent activity of his lieutenants on the river-bank, was awaiting the issue in his tent on the cantonment plain. It is related of him that, unquiet in mind, he moved about, pacing hither and thither, in spite of the indolence of his habits and the obesity of his frame. After a while, tidings of the progress of the massacre were brought to him by a mounted trooper. What had been passing within him during those morning hours no human pen can reveal. Perhaps some slight spasm of remorse may have come upon him, or he may have thought that better use might be made of some of our people alive than dead. But whether moved by pity or by craft, he sent orders back by the messenger that no more women and children should be slain, but that not an Englishman was to be left alive. So the murderers, after butchering, or trying to butcher, the remnant

of our fighting-men, stayed their hands and ceased from the slaughter; and a number of weaker victims, computed with probable accuracy at a hundred and twenty-five, some sorely wounded, some half-drowned, all dripping with the water of the Ganges and begrimed with its mud, were carried back in custody to Cawnpore, by the way they had come, envying, perhaps, those whose destiny had been already accomplished. 1857. June 27.

Escape of the Single Boat.

But among the men—survivors of the Cawnpore garrison—were some who battled bravely for their lives, and sold them dearly. Strong swimmers took to the river, but often sunk in the reddened water beneath the fire of their pursuers; whilst others, making towards the land lower down the stream, stood at bay on bank or islet, and made vain but gallant use of the cherished revolver in the last grim energies of death. There was nothing strange, perhaps, in the fact that the foremost heroes of the defence were the last even now to yield up their lives to the fury of the enemy. One boat held Moore and Vibart, Whiting and Mowbray-Thomson, Ashe, Delafosse, Bolton, and others, who had been conspicuous in the annals of that heroic defence. By some accident or oversight the thatch had escaped ignition. Lighter, too, than the rest, or perhaps more vigorously propelled by the shoulders of these strong men, it drifted down the stream; but Moore was shot through the heart in the act of propulsion, and Ashe and Bolton perished whilst engaged in the same work. The grape and round-shot from the Oude bank of the river ere long began to complete the massacre. The dying and the dead lay thickly together entangled in

1857. June 27. the bottom of the boat,* and for the living there was not a mouthful of food.

As the day waned it was clear that the activity of the enemy had not abated. That one drifting boat, on the dark waters of the Ganges, without boatmen, without oars, without a rudder, was not to be left alone with such sorry chance of escape; so a blazing budgerow was sent down the river after it, and burning arrows were discharged at its roof. Still, however, the boat was true to its occupants; and June 28. with the new day, now grounding on sand-banks, now pushed off again into the stream, it made weary progress between the two hostile banks, every hour lighter, for every hour brought more messengers of death.† At sunset, a pursuing boat from Cawnpore, with fifty or sixty armed Natives on board, came after our people, with orders to board and to destroy them. But the pursuers also grounded on a sand-bank; and then there was one of those last grand spasms of courage even in death which are seldom absent from the story of English heroism. Exhausted, famishing, sick and wounded, as they were, they would not wait to be attacked. A little party of officers and soldiers armed themselves to the teeth,

* "The horrors of the lingering hours of that day seemed as if they would never cease. We had no food in the boat, and had taken nothing before starting. The water of the Ganges was all that passed our lips, save prayers, and shrieks, and groans. The wounded and the dead were often entangled together in the bottom of the boat; to extricate the corpses was a work of extreme difficulty, though imperatively necessary from the dreaded consequences of the intense heat and the importance of lightening the boat as much as possible."—*Mowbray-Thomson.*

† "At two P.M. we stranded off Nuzuffgurh, and they opened upon us with musketry. Major Vibart had been shot through one arm on the preceding day; nevertheless, he got out, and whilst helping to push off the boat was shot through the other arm. Captain Athill Turner had both his legs smashed. Captain Whiting was killed. Lieutenant Quin was shot through the arm; Captain Seppings through the arm, and Mrs. Seppings through the thigh. Lieutenant Harrison was shot dead. . . . . Blenman, our bold spy, was shot in the groin."—*Mowbray-Thomson.*

and fell heavily upon the people who had come down to destroy them. Very few of the pursuers returned to tell the story of their pursuit. This was the last victory of the hero-martyrs of Cawnpore.* They took the enemy's boat, and found in it good stores of ammunition. They would rather have found a little food. Victors as they were, they returned to the cover of the boat only to wrestle with a more formidable enemy. For starvation was staring them in the face. 1857. June 28.

Sleep fell upon the survivors; and when they woke the wind had risen, and the boat was drifting down the stream—in the darkness they knew not whither; and some even then had waking dreams of a coming deliverance. But with the first glimmer of the morning despair came upon them. The boat had been carried out of the main channel of the river into a creek or siding, where the enemy soon discerned it, and poured a shower of musket-balls upon its miserable inmates. Then Vibart, who lay helpless, with both arms shot through, issued his last orders. It was a forlorn hope. But whilst there was a sound arm among them, that could load and fire, or thrust with a bayonet, still the great game of the English was to go to the front and smite the enemy, as a race that seldom waited to be smitten. So Mowbray-Thomson and Delafosse, with a little band of European soldiers of the Thirty-second and the Eighty-fourth, landed to attack their assailants. The fierce energy of desperation drove them forward. Sepoys and villagers, armed and unarmed, surged around them, but they charged through the astounded mul- June 29.

* Mowbray-Thomson was one of these. Nothing can be more modest than this part of his narrative. "Instead of waiting for them to attack us, eighteen or twenty of us charged them, and few of their number escaped to tell the story."

1857. June 29. titude, and made their way back again through the crowd of blacks to the point from which they had started. Then they saw that the boat was gone. The fourteen were left upon the pitiless land, whilst their doomed companions floated down the pitiless water.

The last Stand. There was one more stand to be made by Mowbray-Thomson and his comrades. As they retreated along the bank of the river, seeing after a while no chance of overtaking the boat, they made for a Hindoo temple, which had caught the eye of their leader, and defended the doorway with fixed bayonets. After a little time they stood behind a rampart of black and bloody corpses, and fired, with comparative security, over this bulwark of human flesh. A little putrid water found in the temple gave our people new strength, and they held the doorway so gallantly, and so destructively to the enemy, that there seemed to be no hope of expelling them by force of arms. So whilst word went back to Dundoo Punt, Nana Sahib, that the remnant of the English Army was not to be conquered, the assailants, huddling round the temple, brought leaves and faggots, which they piled up beneath the walls, and strove to burn out the little garrison. Then Providence came to their help in their sorest need. The wind blew smoke and fire away from the temple. But the malice of the enemy had a new device in store. They threw bags of powder on the burning embers. There was now nothing left for our people but flight. Precipitating themselves into the midst of the raging multitude, they fired a volley and then charged with the bayonet. Seven of the fourteen carried their lives with them, and little else, to the bank of the river. There they took to the stream; but presently two of the swimmers were shot through the head, whilst

a third, well nigh exhausted, making for a sand-bank, had his skull battered in as soon as he landed. But the surviving four, being strong swimmers, and with heroic power in doing and in suffering, struck down the stream, and aided by the current, evaded their pursuers. Mowbray-Thomson and Delafosse, with privates Murphy and Sullivan, reached alive the territory of a friendly Oude Rajah, and survived to tell the story of Cawnpore. 1857. June 29.

Neglected Heroism.

Teeming as it does with records of heroic exploits, this narrative of the Sepoy War contains nothing that surpasses—perhaps nothing that can justly be compared with—this wonderful episode of the last struggles of the martyrs of Cawnpore. The grand national courage, of the manifold developments of which it is impossible to write without strong emotion, has no nobler illustration than that of the last stand of the remnant of the Cawnpore garrison. A year before, England had made tardy reparation of past neglect by instituting an Order of Valour. It bears a name which renders it personally dear to the recipients of this generation, and will be cherished in historical ages yet to come. It was right that of such an order there should be but one class. But if there had been many classes, Mowbray-Thomson and Delafosse, Murphy and Sullivan, would have earned the highest decoration of which the order could boast. But, I know not by what strange omission, by whose neglect, or by what accident for which no one is responsible, it happens that not one of these heroes has borne on his breast the Victoria Cross. Doubtless, they are the representatives of a gigantic disaster, not of a glorious victory. But the heroism of failure is often greater than the heroism of success. And since the time when, in the days of early Rome, the

1857. June. Three kept the Bridge, there have been none more worthy of all the honour that a sovereign or a nation can bestow on the doers of brave deeds, than those who held the temple on the banks of the Ganges, and fought their way through an armed multitude thirsting for their blood, until from village to village there ran the cry that the Englishmen could not be beaten.

Fate of the boat's company. Whilst the gallant Four, thus mercifully saved by what, humanly regarded, had seemed to be a summons to certain destruction, the companions from whom they had been severed were losing all hope of deliverance. What befel them after they drifted away, leaving Mowbray-Thomson and his little band of resolute fighting-men on the shore, can never be accurately known in detail. But the boat was overtaken, and all its living cargo carried back to Cawnpore, and turned out upon the well-known landing-place, where a great assemblage of Sepoys was ready to receive them. Some eighty Christian people in all had been brought back, after three days of agony and terror on the dark waters of the Ganges, too merciless to overwhelm them.* From the river bank they were driven, a miserable herd of men, women, and children, to the old cantonment, to await the execution of the orders of the Nana. He went out himself to gloat upon their sufferings. The men were doomed to death at once. The women and children, with greater refinement of cruelty, were suffered to survive their husbands and their fathers, and reserved for a second death. One English lady clung to her husband, and

June 30.

* Eighty is the number given by Mr. Sherer after very careful inquiry and collation of evidence. They were brought back on carts, and arrived at the Ghaut on the 30th of June.

perished. The rest were torn away, whilst the muskets of the Sepoys were loaded for that fatal fusillade. Then an English officer, who throughout all the accidents of that river voyage had preserved a prayer-book of the Church of England, sought permission to read to his doomed comrades a few sentences of that beautiful liturgy, whose utterances are never so touchingly appropriate as amidst the sorest trials and troubles of life. Leave was granted. And with one arm in a sling, whilst with the other he held the precious volume before his eyes, Seppings proclaimed to that doomed congregation the great message of salvation; and even amidst the roar and rattle of the musketry the glad tidings were still ringing in their ears, as they passed away to another world. 1857. June 30.

Then the women and children were sent to swell the crowd of captives, which these conquerors of the hour were holding still in store as a final relish for their feast of slaughter. All who had not been burnt, or bayoneted, or sabred, or drowned in the great massacre of the boats on the 27th of June, had been swept up from the Ghaut and carried to the Savada House, a building which had figured in the history of the siege as, for a time, the head-quarters of the rebel leader. And now these newly-made widows and orphans were added to the shuddering herd of condemned innocents.

This done, Doondoo Punt, Nana Sahib, carrying with him an infinite satisfaction derived from the success of his machinations, went off to his palace at Bithoor. Next day, in all the pride and pomp of power, he was publicly proclaimed Peishwah. No formality, no ceremony was omitted, that could give dignity to the occasion. He took his seat upon the throne. The sacrament of the forehead-mark was July 1. The Nana proclaimed Peishwah.

1857. July 1. duly performed. The cannon roared out its recognition of the new ruler. And when night fell, the darkness was dispersed by a general illumination, and showers of fireworks lit up the sky. But it was not long before, even in the first flush of triumph, heaviness fell upon the restored sovereignty of the Peishwah. He was, after all, only a miserable tool in the hands of others. And news soon reached him that, in his absence from Cawnpore, his influence was declining. The Mahomedan party was waxing strong. It had hitherto been overborne by the Hindoo power, probably more than all else for want of an efficient leader. But there was a Mahomedan nobleman, known as the Nunny Newab, who had taken a conspicuous, if not an active, part in the siege. At the commencement of the outbreak he had been made prisoner by the Nana Sahib, and his house had been plundered; but subsequently they had entered into a covenant of friendship, and a command had been given to the Newab. He directed or presided over one of the batteries planted at the Racquet Court, driving down to it in his carriage, and sitting on a chair, in costly attire, with a sword at his side and a telescope in his hand; and there was no battery that wrought us greater mischief than the Nunny Newab's. He had got together some cunning Native artificers, who experimentalised on red-hot shot and other combustibles, not without damage to the lives of those working in the batteries; and it was a projectile from one of his guns—described as a ball of resin—which set fire to the barrack in the entrenchments. The Nana was so delighted with this exploit that he sent the Newab a present of five thousand rupees, and the story ran, that in the administrative arrangements which were to follow the extirmination of the

English, he was to be Governor of Cawnpore. Among the Mahomedans of the neighbourhood he was held in high estimation, and large numbers of followers attended him as he went down every day to his battery. 1857. July.

And now there was some talk of setting up the Newab as head of the new Government. If this had been done there would have been faction fights between Hindoos and Mahomedans, which would have weakened the power of the general enmity to the Christian races, and hastened the day of retribution. Then other disturbing rumours reached him. The English reinforcements were advancing from Allahabad—hot for revenge, eager for blood. The story ran that the white soldiers were hanging every Native who came in their way. It was plain that the time for strenuous action had come. A great fear was settling down upon the minds of the inhabitants of Cawnpore, who were leaving their homes in the city and seeking refuge in the villages; and the military classes, as is ever their wont at such times, were clamouring for donatives, and declaiming against the parsimony of the Nana. To send forth assuring and even boastful addresses alike to the citizen and to the soldier, was his first care in this month of July;* and it was necessary, without delay, to issue largesses in money, and in the alluring shape of those much-coveted gold bangles, the thought of which, ever since the commencement of the siege, had stimulated the activity of the Sepoys.

So the Peishwah of the hour was summoned back to Cawnpore by the lieutenants whom he had left to govern in his absence. He established himself in an edifice, of goodly proportions, which had been built July 6.

* Some of these will be found in the Appendix.

1857. July 6. for an hotel by a Mahomedan capitalist; and here he held high carnival. The native gossips of the day related how, after the fashion of the East, he strove to drown the cares and anxieties which gathered round him, with music, and dancing, and buffoonery in public; and that he solaced himself, in more retired hours, with strong drink and the caresses of a famous courtesan. Day after day his scouts brought exaggerated stories of the advance of the English battalions; and he issued instructions to his officers to go out to meet them. He had put forth astounding proclamations to assure the people that the pride of the English had been humbled to the dust, and that their armies had been overwhelmed by more powerful nations, or, by God's providence, drowned in the sea. There was no lie which Doondoo Punt and his lieutenants had not put forth, in some shape or other, to assure the minds of the people and to make men believe that there was nothing now to be hoped or feared from the prostrate Feringhees. But ever, as the month of July wore on, news came from below that the English were advancing; and the Peishwah trembled as he heard, even in the midst of his revelries. There was, however, one more victory to be gained before the collapse of the new Mahratta power on the banks of the Ganges. And the Nana smiled as he thought that the game was all in his own hands.

The captives in the Beebee-ghur.

It was only a victory over a number of helpless women and children—a victory safe and easy. The English prisoners had been removed from the Savada Kotee to a small house, which had been built by an English officer for his native mistress (thence called the "Beebee-ghur"); but had more recently been the residence of a humble Eurasian clerk. There

1857. July 7–15.

was scanty accommodation in it for a single family. In this wretched building were now penned, like sheep for the slaughter, more than two hundred women and children. For the number of the captives had by this time been increased by an addition from a distance. Whilst our Christian people at Cawnpore had been suffering what has been but dimly portrayed in the preceding pages, there had been a great crisis at Futtehgurh, the British military station adjacent to the city of Furruckabad, in the district of that name. It lies on the right bank of the Ganges, eighty miles above Cawnpore. In the first week of June, after nearly a month of extreme anxiety, it had become apparent that the lives of all the Europeans, and they were many, would be sacrificed if they continued to dwell at Futtehgurh. So, not knowing in the first week of June the true position of affairs at Cawnpore, a large number of our people took to their boats and drifted down to the great British cantonment, as to a place of refuge. The story of Futtehgurh must be told in another chapter of this narrative. It is enough that it should be related here that those who descended the river were attacked on the way, and that when one boat reached the neighbourhood of Cawnpore the Nana Sahib's people captured it, dragged out its unhappy inmates, and carried them, bound, to the feet of their master. Then there was a slaughter, in his presence, of all the men, three excepted; and the women and children were carried off to swell the miserable crowd in the "Beebee-ghur."

This new prison-house lay between the Native city and the river, under the shadow of the improvised palace of the Peishwah, within sound of the noisy music, and within sight of the torch-glare which sig-

1857. July 7—15.

nalised his highness's nocturnal rejoicings.* Thus huddled together, fed upon the coarsest provender of the country, doled out to them by sweepers, their sufferings were intolerable. Cholera and diarrhœa broke out among them, and some were mercifully suffered to die.† If, in the agony and terror of this captivity, bereft of reason, any one of these sufferers anticipated, by action of her own, the day of doom, God will surely take merciful account of the offence. The horror of a fouler shame than had yet come upon them may have crazed more intellects than one. But there was in this no more than a phantom of the imagination. Our women were not dishonoured save that they were made to feel their servitude. They were taken out, two at a time, to grind corn for the Nana's household. An educated English gentle-

* The following minute description of the "Beebee-ghur" is from a private journal kept by Major Gordon of the Sixty-first: "It was a dismal kind of bungalow in a small compound near what used to be the Assembly Rooms. There was a narrow verandah running along nearly the whole of the front. At the two ends of it were bathing-rooms, opening both into the verandah and into side-rooms. Then came an inner entrance room, and then one about sixteen by sixteen, and then an open verandah as in front. At either side was a narrow room. . . . It was, in fact, two small houses, built on exactly the same plan, facing each other, and having a space enclosed between them."

† Mr. Trevelyan, referring to a diary kept by a Native doctor who visited the prisoners, says, "There is a touching little entry which deserves notice. In the column headed 'names' appears the words 'ek beebee' (one baby), under that marked 'disease' is written 'ap se,' of itself." As a "beebee" is not a baby, but a lady or woman, I attributed this error to the writer's brief residence in India, but I find the passage is taken from Mr. Sherer's official report, a document of the highest value. I must still, however, hold to the opinion that "ek beebee" means one lady, and I should have thought that the pathos of the "ap se" lay in its meaning that she killed herself, if it were not for a suspicion that in Sherer's report "beebee" is a misprint for "baba." I have not seen the original list, but it was translated by Major Gordon, who was on General Neill's Staff. This officer wrote down in his journal, at the time, most of the names. "From the 7th," he says, "to the morning of the 15th, twenty-eight people died; nine cholera; nine diarrhœa; one dysentery; three of wounds; one, an infant two days old; five, disease not mentioned. I could not make out all the names, but those of which I am sure are" . . and then a list is given, including, under date July 10, "A baby of two days old—of itself." This seems to be conclusive.

1857. July 7—15.

woman needed not even a week's residence in India to teach her the meaning of this. As they sat there on the ground, these Christian captives must have had some glimmering recollection of their biblical studies, and remembered how in the East the grinding of corn was ever regarded as a symbol of subjection—how, indeed, it was one of the crowning curses of the first great captivity on record.* When the wives of the English conquerors were set to grind corn in the court-yards of the Mahratta, the national humiliation was then and there complete—then, but only for a little while; there, but only on a little space. And the pathos of the picture is perfected when we see that these delicate ladies, with their faces to the grindstone, did not find the office so wholly distasteful, as it enabled them to carry back a little flour to the "Beebee-ghur" to feed their famishing children.

So here, just under the windows of the Nana Sahib, was a very weak, defenceless enemy, which might be attacked with impunity and vanquished with ease. But, with that other enemy, which was now advancing from Allahabad, and, as the story ran, destroying every one in their way, the issue of the contest was more doubtful. A great body of Horse and

* Some, perhaps, may have called to mind, in this hour of humiliation, the awful appropriateness of the forty-seventh chapter of Isaiah, and mostly of these solemn words:—"Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground. . . . . for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. Take the millstones and grind meal: uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers. . . . . Thou saidst, 'I shall be a lady for ever,' so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. Therefore, hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, 'I am and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children. But these two things shall come to thee in a moment, in one day, the loss of children and widowhood. . . . Evil shall come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth; and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off, and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly."

1857. July 7—15. Foot, with a formidable array of guns, had gone down to dispute the progress of the British; but, before the month of July was half spent, news came that they had been disastrously beaten. Havelock had taken the field in earnest. The hopes of his youth, the prayers of his manhood, had been accomplished; he had lived to command an army, to gain a victory, and to write a despatch in his own good name.

*** At the close of this chapter, I must express my obligations to the printed volumes of Captain Mowbray-Thomson and Mr. Otto Trevelyan. The reminiscences of the one writer and the investigations of the other have been equally serviceable to me. But to no one am I more indebted than to Colonel Williams for the invaluable mass of oral information which he has elicited and placed on record, and the admirable synopsis which accompanies it. From an immense pile of conflicting evidence, I believe that, guided by Colonel Williams, I have extracted the truth. There are still, however, some doubts and uncertainties as regards points of detail, especially in respect of the numbers both of the fighting men in the entrenchments and of the women and children in the "Beebee-ghur." The discrepancy with respect to the former may have arisen from the circumstance that in some lists the sick were computed, but not in others. Colonel Williams gives a nominal roll of European troops composing the English portion of the Cawnpore garrison who were killed between the 6th and 30th of June. In this we have the names of fifty-nine Artillerymen, seventy-nine men of the Thirty-second, forty-nine of the Eighty-fourth, and fifteen of the Madras Fusiliers—making in all two hundred and two, exclusive of officers. Mr. Sherer's numbers differ from these—his aggregate being a hundred and sixty-four. With regard to the women and children in the "Beebee-ghur," I think that Major Gordon's estimate is most probably correct. He says, after studying the list of prisoners, "It appears from this that two hundred and ten were left on the 11th, and as twelve died between that and the 15th, there must probably have been a hundred and ninety-seven when the massacre took place.

CHAPTER III.

GENERAL HAVELOCK AT ALLAHABAD — EQUIPMENT OF THE BRIGADE — ADVANCE TOWARDS CAWNPORE—JUNCTION WITH RENAUD—THE BATTLES OF FUTTEHPORE, AONG, AND CAWNPORE—THE MASSACRE OF THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN—RE-OCCUPATION OF CAWNPORE.

ASSURED of the miserable fact that Cawnpore had fallen, General Havelock, having halted Renaud's column at Lohanga, was eager to advance to join him and to push on for the recovery of the important position that we had lost, and the chastisement of the insolent enemy. He telegraphed to Sir Patrick Grant at Calcutta, saying: "We have lost Cawnpore, an important point on the great line of communication, and the place from which alone Lucknow can be succoured; for it would be hardly possible, at this season of the year, to operate on the cross-roads. My duty is, therefore, to endeavour to take Cawnpore, to the accomplishment of which I will bend every effort. I advance along the trunk-road as soon as I can unite fourteen hundred British Infantry to a battery of six well-equipped guns. Lieutenant-Colonel Neill, whose high qualities I cannot sufficiently praise, will follow with another column as soon as it is organised, and this fort is left in proper hands."* 1857. July.

* Marshman's Life of Havelock.

1857. July 4—7. Preparations for the March.

Havelock had hoped to commence his march on the 4th of July, but the impediments in the way of the complete equipment of his force were too numerous and too serious to admit of so early a movement. All the old difficulties, of which I have already spoken, were in his way, and it was not until the sun was dimly declining on the 7th that he could give the order to march. It was but a small force for the work before it. A thousand European Infantry soldiers, belonging to four different regiments, composed the bulk of Havelock's army. Some of these were seasoned soldiers, but some were raw recruits. Then there were a hundred and thirty of Brazier's Sikhs, a battery of six guns, and a little troop of Volunteer Cavalry, mustering only eighteen sabres, but in the hands of such men worth their number five times told. Among them were young officers, whose regiments had revolted,* and civilians whose cutcherries were closed; and as they rode out, badly mounted (for Palliser's Irregulars had taken the best horses), under their gallant leader, Captain Barrow of the Madras Cavalry, there was a large-hearted enthusiasm among them which made them feel equal to the encounter of any number of Native horsemen that could be brought against them. Nor should there be omission from the record of the fact that, when Havelock marched forth for the recovery of Cawnpore and the relief of Lucknow, he was accompanied by some of the best staff-officers with

* "New to the country, new to the service, unaccustomed to roughing it, brought up in every luxury, and led to believe that on their arrival in India they would have the same, these young officers (deprived of employment by the mutiny of their regiments) willingly threw themselves into the thick of the work, often without a tent or cover of any sort to shelter them from the rain or sun, with bad provisions and hard work. Side by side with the privates they took their turn of duty, and side by side with them they fought, were wounded, and some died."—*Quoted in Marshman's Life of Havelock. Author not stated.*

whom it has ever been the good fortune of a general to be associated. In Lieutenant-Colonel Fraser-Tytler and Captain Stuart Beatson he had a Quarter-Master General and an Adjutant-General of his brigade, selected by himself, not to be out-matched in efficiency by any officers of those departments. 1857. July 7—12.

It was a dull, dreary afternoon when Havelock's Brigade marched out of Allahabad, and very soon the rain came down in torrents to damp the ardour of the advancing force. Neither on that day nor on the succeeding one was the progress rapid. Many of the men were unused to Indian marching, and numbers fell in the rear, weary, footsore, disabled. There was great discouragement in this; but as Havelock advanced, it became more and more apparent to him not only that Cawnpore had fallen, but that a large body of the enemy were advancing to meet him, and this rendered it not only expedient, but imperative, that no time should be lost in joining the advanced column. Neill, doubtful, as it has been seen, of the fall of Cawnpore, had telegraphed to Sir Patrick Grant, urging him to push on Renaud's column, and Renaud was moving forward into the clutches of the Nana's force; and though Havelock's knowledge of the inestimable value at such a time of English life and English health rendered him careful of his men, he now recognised a paramount emergency overruling these considerations, and sped onwards by forced marches to overtake his Lieutenant. And an hour after the midnight of the 11th—12th of July, in the broad light of an unclouded moon, his foremost details came up with Renaud's detachment. Before dawn the junction was completed. Renaud drew up his men along the side of the road; and as the Highlanders struck up the stirring strain of the March for Allahabad.

1857. "Campbells are coming," welcomed the new arrivals with ringing cheers. Then they marched on together, and about seven o'clock the whole force halted at Belindah, a spot some four miles from the city of Futtehpore.*

July 12. The Battle of Futtehpore. The troops were weary and footsore, and Havelock was eager to give his men the rest and refreshment they so much needed. So arms were piled, and our soldiery were preparing for the morning meal, when their hungry hopes were disappointed by the unexpected arrival of a twenty-four-pound shot, which well-nigh reached the feet of the General. The truth was soon apparent. Colonel Tytler had gone forward with an escort to reconnoitre, and some spies, despatched by Lawrence from Lucknow, had brought him word that the enemy were at Futtehpore. There was no more thought of the breakfast. The battle was before them. The men stood to their arms and fell in at the word of command, and, forgetful of the long and weary night-march just ended, set their faces towards the camp of the enemy, and strode on, steady and stern, to meet them.

They soon met. For the enemy, thinking that they had come up with the advanced column only, under Major Renaud, swept forward with an insolent front, confident of victory. Conspicuous before all were the troopers of the Second Cavalry, who came on menacingly in an extended line, as though eager to

* *Calcutta Review*, vol. xxxii., Article, "Havelock's Indian Campaign," written by one who took part in it. This writer, a very able one, says, "We shall not soon forget the scene. . . . We well recollect how anxious Major Renaud was to capture Futtehpore before Havelock reached us, it having been reported to us that it was defended only by a few matchlock-men. This was probably correct at the time, but the Nana, with his large force, was marching down upon it, and had we advanced not a soul would have lived to tell the tale; but Providence preserved us from a fate which at that time would have been ruinous to our power in India."

enclose our little band in the toils of a swift destruction. So Havelock, as he wrote, unwilling "to be bearded, determined at once to bring on an action." Then the truth became miserably apparent to the enemy; and in an instant the light of proud defiance paled beneath the astounding disclosure. The weak detachment, that was to have been so easily overwhelmed, had suddenly grown, as though under the hand of Shiva the Destroyer, into a strong, well-equipped, well-handled force of all arms, advancing to the battle with a formidable line of guns in the centre. Flushed with the savage memories of the past, and eager for fresh slaughter, these bloodhounds of the Nana Sahib had rushed upon their prey only to find themselves brought face to face with death. Surprise, disappointment, fear, trod down even the brutal instincts within them, and the paralysis of a great reaction was upon them. The fight commenced. It was scarcely a battle; but it was a consummate victory. Our Enfield rifles and our guns would not permit a conflict. The service of the Artillery was superb. There had come upon the scene a new warrior, of whom India had before known nothing, but whose name from that day became terrible to our enemies. The improvised battery of which Havelock made such splendid use was commanded by Captain Maude of the Royal Artillery. He had come round from Ceylon, with a few gunners, but without guns; and he had gone at once to the front as one of the finest Artillerymen in the world. The best troops of the Nana Sahib, with a strength of Artillery exceeding our own, could make no stand against such a fire as was opened upon them.* Falling back upon the

1857. July 12.

* "The enemy's fire scarcely touched us," wrote Havelock; "ours for four hours allowed him no repose." "Twelve British soldiers

1857. July 12.

town, with its many enclosures of walled gardens, they abandoned their guns one after another to our exhausted battalions; and after one vain rally of the rebel Horse, which solved the vexed question of the unworthiness of Palliser's Irregulars, gave up the contest in despair. Then Havelock again lamented his want of Cavalry; for he could not follow up, as he wished, his first brilliant success: and more of the rebel Sepoys escaped than was pleasing to the old soldier. But he had done his work well and was thankful; thankful to his troops for their gallant services; thankful to the Almighty Providence that had given him the victory; and proud of the great national character which was now so nobly reasserting itself.* It was the first heavy blow struck at the pride of the enemy in that part of the country. The glad tidings were received with exultant delight in every house and bungalow in the country. In due time England caught up the pæan; and the name of Havelock was written at the corners of our

were struck down by the sun and never rose again. But our fight was fought neither with musket nor bayonet nor sabre, but with Enfield rifles and cannon: so we lost no men." This probably means no Europeans; for Havelock's biographer, after quoting the General's despatch, says, with reference to the conduct of the Irregular Cavalry at this time, that "only twelve followed their commanding officer, Lieutenant Palliser, whose blind confidence in his men and gallant spirit carried him headlong into the midst of the enemy (at Futtehpore), without a glance behind to ascertain if he were supported. Here he was overpowered and knocked off his horse, and would inevitably have been cut to pieces had he not been rescued by the devoted gallantry of his Native Ressaldar, who sacrificed his own life in endeavouring to save that of his leader."

* See Havelock's Order of Thanks issued next day to the troops under his command, in which he attributes the victory, with a sort of Cromwellian many-sidedness, "to the fire of British Artillery, exceeding in rapidity and precision all that the Brigadier has ever witnessed in his not short career; to the power of the Enfield rifle in British hands; to British pluck, that great quality which has survived the vicissitudes of the hour and gained intensity from the crisis; and to the blessing of Almighty God on a most righteous cause—the cause of justice, humanity, truth, and good government in India."

streets, on the sides of our public conveyances, and on the sign-boards over our houses of public entertainment.* 1857. July 12.

The story of Futtehpore.

Futtehpore was given up to plunder. It was a guilty—a blood-stained city. A few weeks before it had risen in rebellion. And now the mark of a just retribution was to be set upon it. The story may be briefly told in this place. The Treasury-guard consisted of some sixty or seventy Sepoys of the Sixth Regiment. About the end of May, a large detachment of the Fifty-sixth, with some Sowars of the Second Cavalry—both of which regiments were then fast seething into rebellion at Cawnpore—arrived at Futtehpore with treasure from Banda, and passed on to Allahabad. What dark hints and suggestions may have passed between them can never be known. No great uneasiness was then felt by the European residents. The temper of the people did not seem to differ much from what it had been in more quiet times, and public business went on from day to day in the old groove without interruption.

The Chief Civil Officer at Futtehpore was Mr. Robert Tudor Tucker, the Judge. He was a brother of the Commissioner of Benares. There were some strong resemblances between them. Both were de-

* It appears from Tantia Topee's narrative, which on such a point as this may be trusted, that the Sepoys were anxious that the Nana should accompany them to Futtehpore. "The Nana refused," he said: "I and the Nana remained at Cawnpore, and sent Jowalla-Persaud, his agent, along with them to Futtehpore." Tecka Sing, the Second Cavalry General, accompanied him. The Allahabad Moulavee, also, appears to have been with the Nana's party at this time. One of the witnesses, whose depositions have been published by Colonel Williams, when asked, "Who commanded at the battle of Futtehpore?" answered, "I myself saw Tecka Singh, the General, and the Allahabad Moulavee, and Jowalla-Persaud, going off to command. Many others went—small fry of leaders."

1857. vout Christian men, earnestly and conscientiously treading the appointed path of official duty. People spoke of Henry Tucker as an enthusiast; but the enthusiasm of Robert Tucker had been roused to a still higher pitch by the intensity of his religious convictions, which, even from his schoolboy days up to the prime of his mature manhood, had been striking deeper and deeper root, in spite of all the discouragements and distractions of Eastern life. At the entrance to Futtehpore he had erected four pillars of stone, on two of which were engraved the Ten Commandments, in Persian and Hindee, and on the others, in the same characters, scriptural texts containing the essence of the Christian faith. There they stood, that he who ran might read, proclaiming to Hindoos and Mahomedans the cherished creed of the Feringhees; but no man defaced or insulted them. And the good Judge made no disguise of his efforts to convert the people; but still no man molested him. His kindness and liberality seem to have endeared him to all classes. They saw that he was just and gentle; merciful and self-denying; and that he taught lessons of love by the practice of his daily life. In very literal truth, he was what the Natives of India, often in exaggerated language, call a "poor man's provider." Wherever misery was to be found, his helping hand was present. The destitute and the sick were his children, in the absence of those endeared to him by the tenderest ties. For he was a husband and a father; but his family at this time were in England; and when the day of trouble came he rejoiced that he stood alone.

The storm burst on the 9th of June. The two great waves of rebellion, the one from Allahabad, the other from Cawnpore, met here with overwhelm-

1857. June 9.

ing force. Hindoos and Mahomedans rose against us; the latter, as ever, with the more cruel violence. The roving bands of Sepoys and Sowars and escaped gaol-birds, who were flooding the surrounding districts, wholly disorganised our police; and what was said to be a Mahomedan conspiracy was hatched in the very heart of the city. Then the dangerous classes seem to have bubbled up, and there were the usual orgies of crime. The Treasury was plundered. The prison-gates were broken open. The Record-office was burnt down. Other public offices were condemned to the same destruction. The Mission premises were attacked. And, when the European community gathered together in a barricaded house resolved that it would be utter madness to remain any longer at Futtehpore, for all authority was gone, all hope of maintaining any longer a semblance of Government utterly departed, they left the station by the light of blazing bungalows, and sallied forth to find themselves "amidst a perfect Jacquerie of the surrounding villages."* But they made their way across the Jumna to Banda, and were saved.

One Englishman stood fast. One Englishman could not be induced to quit his post, whatever might be the perils which environed him. As long as there was a pulse of life in his body, Robert Tucker believed that it was his duty to give it to the Government which he served. Throughout the day he had been most active in his endeavours to suppress crime and to restore order. Unlike his brother Henry, who had never fired a shot in his life, or carried a more formidable weapon than a riding-whip, the Futtehpore Judge armed himself, mounted his horse, and went out against the enemy, with a few horse-

* Mr. Sherer to Mr. Chester, June 19, 1857. MS.

1857. June 9.

men at his back. He left some rebels dead in the streets, and carried back with him some wounds upon his person.* His countrymen, when they turned their backs on Futtehpore, left him in the Cutcherry, still hoping against hope that he might weather the storm; and believing that, if this by God's Providence were denied to him, it was his duty alike to God and Man to die at his post.

The issue was soon determined. What followed the departure of his countrymen is but obscurely known. Of the one patent, miserable fact, that Robert Tucker was killed, there was never a moment's doubt. The story ran that at the head of the Mahomedan conspiracy, or if not at its very heart, was a well-known Native functionary—Deputy-Magistrate by office—Hikmut-oollah by name. He had received great benefits from Mr. Tucker, who had full faith in the man; and for some time it was believed that Mussulman treachery and ingratitude had culminated in the crowning crime of this man's life. "Poor Tucker," wrote Mr. Sherer, the Magistrate of Futtehpore, to Commissioner Chester, "was shot by Hikmut-oollah's orders, he himself reading out the Koran whilst the guns were fired. A Native Christian, Joseph Manuel, a servant of mine, was present when this took place." But many still doubt, if they do not wholly discredit, much that has been said of Hikmut-oollah Khan. He might have saved his benefactor, but did not. Perhaps he went with the stream, not having courage to oppose it. The crime may have

* Mr. Clive Bayley, in his Allahabad report, says: "It is impossible not to admire, however much it might be regretted, the heroic devotion of the late Mr. Tucker; nor is it much a matter of wonder that his conduct and his personal prowess (Mr. Tucker was, I believe, more than once wounded early in the day) actually succeeded in preserving, for a few hours longer, some show of order."

been but negative. But History does not doubt that the Futtehpore Judge sold his life dearly on the roof of the Cutcherry. Resolutely and fiercely he stood at bay, loading and firing, loading and firing, until he had shot down many of his assailants. It is said that he was not overcome at last until the insurgents had fired the Cutcherry. And so the quiet Christian Judge, so meek and merciful in time of peace, giving unto Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, rose in the hour of war to the noblest heights of heroic daring, and died for the Government that he had served. 1857. June 9.

There were some, however, even in that guilty city, who viewed with horror and indignation the murder of the good Judge. And as the ruffians were returning from the Cutcherry, rejoicing in their cruel work, two Hindoos met them, and openly reviled them for slaying so just and righteous a man. Had he not always been the friend of the poor? But the murderers were in no mood to be rebuked. Furious before, they were infuriated to a still higher pitch by these reproaches. So they fell upon the witnesses and slew them.

In Havelock's camp there was at this time one of the civil officers who had escaped, more than a month before, from Futtehpore. Mr. Sherer, the Magistrate, after many adventures, had made his way to Allahabad, and had thence marched upwards with the avenging army.* For five weeks anarchy and confusion had reigned throughout the district. The authority of the Nana Sahib had been nominally recog- The punishment of Futtehpore. July 12—13.

* Mr. Willock had gone on, as civil officer, with Renaud's detachment. He had been very active during the crisis at Allahabad, and both then and afterwards had proved himself, in conflict with the enemy, to be a gallant soldier.

1857. July 12—13.

nised, but in truth there was scarcely any semblance of Government. Every man stood up for himself, taking and keeping what he could. Along the line of Havelock's march, Sherer observed the significant symbols of a widespread desolation—telling afterwards the story of what he saw in one of the best of those admirable official narratives through which many of our foremost civilians have done so much for historical truth. "Many of the villages," he wrote, "had been burnt by the wayside, and human beings there were none to be seen. . . . The swamps on either side of the road; the blackened ruins of huts, now further defaced by weather-stains and mould; the utter absence of all sound that could indicate the presence of human life, or the employment of human industry, such sounds being usurped by the croaking of frogs, the shrill pipe of the cicala, and the under-hum of the thousand winged insects engendered by the damp and heat; the offensive smell of the neem-trees; the occasional taint in the air from suspended bodies, upon which, before our very eyes, the loathsome pig of the country was engaged in feasting;—all these things appealing to our different senses, combined to call up such images of desolation, and blackness, and woe, as few, I should think, who were present would ever forget."* And

* The other side of the picture should, in fairness, also be given. In the following we see some of the phenomena of the great revolt against civilisation which preceded the retribution whose manifestations are described in the text: "Day by day," says a writer in the *Calcutta Review*, "as we marched along, we had ample evidence of the certainty with which the Asiatic had determined to tear us out of the land, root and branch; the untiring malignity which had, not content with murder and mutilation, burned our bungalows and desecrated our churches only as an Asiatic can desecrate, we had witnessed, but we scarcely expected what we saw in passing along the road. There was satisfactory evidence that the genius of the revolt was to destroy everything that could possibly remind one of England or its civilisation. The telegraph wires were cut up, strewing the ground, and in some instances carried off, the

now in the city itself were silence and solitude scarcely less impressive and significant. The streets were deserted; but there were signs of recent habitation. In the shops and houses much wealth of plunder was left, which could not be removed in time by the affrighted owners beyond the reach of the despoilers. So now our soldiers, English and Sikhs, were let loose upon the place, and before the day was spent it had been sacked. Next morning, when the column moved on, the Sikhs were left behind, flushed with delight at the thought that to them had been entrusted the congenial task of setting fire to the town. 1857. July.

On the 15th of July, Havelock, having on the preceding day dismounted and disarmed the Irregular Cavalry, whose treachery was undeniable, again came in front of the enemy. They had posted themselves in strength at the village of Aong, with something of an entrenchment in front, and on either flank some walled gardens, thickly studded with trees, which afforded serviceable shelter to their musketeers. But no superiority of numbers or of position could enable them to sustain the resistless rush of the English. Very soon they were seen in confused flight, strewing the ground as they fled with all the abandoned impedimenta of their camp—tents, stores, carriage, and munitions of war. But the cost of that morning's success was indeed heavy. For one of the best soldiers in the British camp was lost to it for ever. Major Renaud, who had charged at the head of the Madras Fusiliers—his beloved "Lambs"—was carried mortally wounded to the rear. Those who knew him best deplored him most; but the grief which Battle at Aong. July 15.

telegraph posts were dug out, the bungalows burnt, and the poor unoffending milestones, so useful even to themselves, but still English, were defaced, and in many instances destroyed."

1857. July 15. arose when it was afterwards known that he was dead was not confined to his old comrades of the Coast Army. He had already earned an Indian reputation.

Passage of the Pandoo-nuddee.

The day's work was not then over. A few miles beyond the village of Aong was a river to be crossed, known as the Pandoo-nuddee. It was but a streamlet in comparison with the Ganges, into which it flowed. But the July rains had already rendered it swollen and turbid; and if the bridge by which it was crossed had been destroyed by the enemy, Havelock's progress would have been most disastrously retarded. So, when his scouts told him that the enemy were rallying, and were about to blow up the bridge, he roused his men, exhausted as they were, and called upon them for a new effort. Nobly responding to the call, they pushed forward with unexpected rapidity. It was a two hours' march to the bridge-head under a fierce sun; but our weary people carried the energies of victory with them to the banks of the Pandoo-nuddee. The enemy, strengthened by reinforcements which had come in fresh from Cawnpore, under Bala Rao, the brother of the Nana, were entrenched on the other side with heavy guns, which raked the bridge. But Maude's battery was soon brought into action; and a favourable bend of the river enabling him so to plant his guns as to take the enemy in flank, he poured such a stream of Shrapnel into them that they were bewildered and paralysed, and, some say, broke their sponge-staffs in despair. They had undermined the bridge-head, and had hoped to blow the whole structure into the air before the English could cross the river. But there was not a cool head or a steady hand among them to do this work. And the Fusiliers, under Major Stephenson, with an expression on their stern

faces not to be misunderstood, swept across the bridge, and put an end to all fear of its destruction. Then the rest of Havelock's force accomplished the passage of the river, and pushed on with their faces towards Cawnpore, weary and exhausted in body, but sustained by the thought of the coming retribution. 1857. July 15.

They did not then know the worst. The crowning horror of the great tragedy of Cawnpore was yet to come. On the afternoon of that 15th of July, Doondoo Punt, Nana Sahib, learnt that Havelock's army had crossed the Pundoo-nuddee, and was in full march upon his capital. The messenger who brought the evil tidings was Bala Rao himself, with a wound in his shoulder, as proof that he had done his best. It might be that there was a coming end to the short-lived triumphs of the new Peishwah. What now was to be done? The chief advisers of the Nana Sahib were divided in opinion. They might make a stand at Bithoor, or form a junction with the rebel force at Futtehgurh, or go out to meet the enemy on the road to Cawnpore. The last course, after much confused discussion, was adopted, and arrangements were made to dispute Havelock's advance. The issue was very doubtful; but, as already said, the mighty conquerors of Cawnpore had one more victory to gain. They could slaughter the English prisoners. So, whether it were in rage, or in fear, or in the wantonness of bestial cruelty; whether it were believed that the English were advancing only to rescue the prisoners, and would turn back on hearing that they were dead; whether it were thought that as no tales can be told by the dead, the total annihilation of the captives would prevent the identification of the arch-offenders on The last massacre.

1857. July 15.

the day of retribution; whether the foul design had its birth in the depths of the Nana's black heart, or was prompted by one still blacker, the order went forth for the massacre of the women and children in the Beebee-ghur. The miserable herd of helpless victims huddled together in those narrow rooms were to be killed. What followed is best told in the fewest and simplest words. There were four or five men among the captives. These were brought forth and killed in the presence of the Nana Sahib. Then a party of Sepoys was told off, and instructed to shoot the women and children through the doors and windows of their prison-house. Some soldierly instincts seem to have survived in the breasts of these men. The task was too hideous for their performance. They fired at the ceilings of the chambers. The work of death, therefore, proceeded slowly, if at all. So some butchers were summoned from the bazaars—stout Mussulmans accustomed to slaughter; and two or three others, Hindoos, from the villages or from the Nana's guard, were also appointed executioners.* They went in, with swords or long

* Some obscurity surrounds this terrible incident, and perhaps it is better that it should be so. Colonel Williams, to whose investigations History is so much indebted, says with respect to the evidence before him, that, "on approaching the last and most terrible scene, all seem instinctively to shrink from confessing any knowledge of so foul and barbarous a crime as the indiscriminate slaughter of helpless women and innocent children. Evidence that seems clear and strong from the 15th of May to the 14th of July, suddenly ceases on the fatal day of the 15th of that month." The most reliable testimony was that of some half-caste drummers or band-boys. But the principal witness, whose narrative is the most detailed, and seemingly the most authentic of all (John Fitchett, drummer of the Sixth Native Infantry), who stated that he had been a prisoner with our people, was clearly convicted of a direct falsehood in this respect; and it is only where his evidence was supported by others that it is to be entirely trusted. It should be stated here that the male prisoners, shot to death on the 15th of July, were three of the principal fugitives from Futtehgurh, and two members of the Greenaway family. The Sepoy-Guards at the Beebee-ghur, who refused to slaughter the women and children, belonged to the Sixth Regiment from Allahabad. The Nana is stated to have been so incensed by their conduct that he threatened to blow them from guns.

knives, among the women and children, as among a flock of sheep, and with no more compunction, slashed them to death with the sharp steel. 1857. July 15—16.

And there the bodies lay, some only half-dead, all through the night. It was significantly related that the shrieks ceased, but not the groans. Next morning the dead and the dying were brought out, ghastly with their still gaping wounds, and thrown into an adjacent well. Some of the children were alive, almost unhurt; saved, doubtless, by their low stature, amidst the closely-packed masses of human flesh through which the butchers had drawn their blades; and now they were running about, scared and wonder-struck, beside the well. To toss these infantile enemies, alive or dead, into the improvised cemetery, already nearly choked-full, was a small matter that concerned but little those who did the Nana's bidding. But beyond this wholesale killing and burying, which sickened the whole Christian world, and roused English manhood in India to a pitch of national hatred that took years to allay, the atrocity was not pushed. The refinements of cruelty —the unutterable shame—with which, in some of the chronicles of the day, this hideous massacre was attended, were but fictions of an excited imagination, too readily believed without inquiry and circulated without thought. None were mutilated—none were dishonoured. There was nothing needed to aggravate the naked horror of the fact that some two hundred Christian women and children were hacked to death in the course of a few hours.*

* This is stated, in the most unqualified manner, by the official functionaries, who made the most diligent inquiries into all the circumstances of the massacres of June and July. Mr. Sherer and Mr. Thornhill, in their official reports, speak most distinctly in denial of the assertion that our women had been mutilated and dishonoured. Colonel Williams, than whom there can be no better authority, says that the most searching and earnest inquiries totally disprove the unfounded assertion, which was

1857. July 16. Battle of Cawnpore.

Then, this feat accomplished, the Nana Sahib and his allies prepared to make their last stand for the defence of Cawnpore and the Peishwahship. On the morning of the 16th, Doondoo Punt went out himself with some five thousand men—Horse, Foot, and Artillery—to dispute Havelock's advance. The position—some little distance to the south of Cawnpore—which he took up was well selected; and all through that July morning his lieutenants were disposing their troops and planting their guns. Meanwhile, Havelock and his men, unconscious of the great tragedy that, a few hours before, had been acted out to its close, were pushing on, under a burning sun, the fiercest that had yet shone upon their march. Exhausted as he was by the mid-day heats the English soldier toiled on, sustained by the thought that he might still rescue from destruction the two hundred women and children held in foul durance by the Nana. To faint or fail at such a time would have been, he thought, cowardice and crime. So weary and foot-sore, dizzy beneath the vertical rays of the meridian sun, and often tortured by parching thirst, he plodded along the baked road and panted for the coming encounter.

The hour of noon had passed before the English General learnt the true position of the enemy. It was plain that there was some military skill in the rebel camp, in whosesoever brain it might reside;

at first so frequently made and so currently believed, that personal indignity and dishonour had been offered to our poor suffering countrywomen. To this it may be added, that some of the administrators of the Mutiny Relief Fund in England took great pains to investigate certain alleged cases of mutilation, said to have been brought over from India, but failed to track down a single one. The most authentic case of mutilation with which I am acquainted is one that comes to me from Ireland, whilst I am writing this chapter. Some wild Irishmen went into the house of a Mr. Connor, and, taking him for another man, against whom they had a grudge, deliberately cut off his nose.

for the troops of the Nana Sahib were disposed in a manner which taxed all the power of the British Commander, who had been studying the art of war all his life. To Havelock's column advancing along the great high road from Allahabad—to the point where it diverges into two broad thoroughfares, on the right to the Cawnpore cantonment and on the left, the "great trunk," to Delhi—the Sepoy forces presented a formidable front. It was drawn up in the form of an arc, bisecting these two roads. Its left, almost resting upon the Ganges, had the advantage of some sloping ground, on which heavy guns were posted; whilst its right was strengthened by a walled village with a great grove of mango-trees, which afforded excellent shelter to the rebels. Here also heavy guns were posted. And on both sides were large masses of Infantry, with the Second Cavalry in the rear, towards the left centre, for it was thought that Havelock would advance along the Great Trunk Road. When all this was discerned, it was plain that to advance upon the enemy's front would be to court a great carnage of the troops, upon the care of which so much depended. Havelock's former victories had been gained mainly by the far-reaching power of the Enfield Rifles and the unerring precision of Maude's guns. But now he had to summon to his aid those lessons of warfare—both its rules and its exceptions—which he had been learning from his youth upwards; and they did not fail him in the hour of his need. He remembered "old Frederick at Leuthen," and debouching to the right, advanced in open column against the enemy's left flank. The movement had its disadvantages, and had he been the paper-pedant, which some thought him, he might not have resorted to such a manœuvre. But its success

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1857. July 16. proved the efficacy of the exception. He had fully explained the intended movement to his commanders. Standing in the midst of them, he had traced in the dust, with the point of his scabbard, the plan of operations, and had convinced himself that they thoroughly understood it. Then the order was given for the advance; and primed with good libations of malt liquor, they moved forward in column of subdivisions, the Fusiliers in front, along the high road, until they reached the point of divergence. Then the Volunteer Cavalry were ordered to move right on, so as to engage the attention of the enemy and stimulate the advance of the entire force, whilst the Infantry and the guns, favoured by the well-wooded country, moved off unseen to the right. The feint succeeded admirably at first. The Cavalry drew upon themselves the enemy's fire. But presently an open space between the trees revealed Havelock's designs, and the Nana's guns opened upon our advancing columns, raking the Highlanders and Sixty-fourth, not without disastrous effect. But nothing shook the steadiness of the advance. That hardest lesson of all to the British soldier, to reserve his fire, had been learnt to perfection by these brave fellows. The last subdivision having emerged from the wood, they were rapidly wheeled into line, and, to the consternation of the enemy, moved forward with a resolute front and disconcerted the arrangements on which the Nana had prided himself so much and so confidently relied. But the native legions had strong faith in the efficacy of their guns, which outmatched our own in number and in weight of metal. At that time we could not make fitting response, for Maude's battery was struggling through ploughed fields, and his draft-cattle were sinking exhausted by the way; and even

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when they came up, these light field-pieces, worked as well as guns were ever worked, could but make slight impression on the heavy ordnance from the Cawnpore magazine.

For a little space, therefore, the Sepoys exulted in the preponderance of their Artillery-fire, and between the boomings of the guns were heard the joyous sounds of military bands, striking up our stirring national tunes, as taught by English band-masters, and, as though in mockery, selecting those with the greatest depth of English sentiment in them. It was a dire mistake. As he caught the familiar sounds of "Cheer, boys, cheers!" the face of the British soldier settled down into that stern, compressed look, when the rigid jaw tells how the teeth are clenched and the muscles strung, and the heart is hard as a stone. The battle now was to be won by the pluck of the English Infantry. It was not a number of "mere machines" that Havelock was urging forward, but so many individual men with great hearts in their bosoms, every one feeling as if he had a personal wrong to redress. The awful work of charging heavy guns, well served by experienced gunners, was now to be commenced; and the Highlanders, led by Colonel Hamilton, took the post of honour, and were the first to charge. The shrill sounds of the pibroch from the bagpipes in the rear seemed to send them all forward as with the force of a catapult. The rush of the kilted soldiers, with their fixed bayonets, cheering as they went, was what no Sepoy force could withstand. Strongly posted as the guns were in a walled village, village and guns were soon carried, and there was an end to the strength of the enemy's left.

The Sepoy troops fled in confusion—some along

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the Cawnpore road, others towards the centre of their position, where a heavy howitzer was posted, behind which for a while they rallied. There was more work then for the British Infantry. A few minutes after their first grand rush they had gathered breath, and fallen again into orderly array. Then Havelock challenged them a second time with a few of those spirit-stirring words which, from the lips of a trusted general, are as strong drink to the weary soldier, and every man felt invigorated, and equal to any work before him. The Highlanders responded with a cheer, and, followed by the Sixty-fourth, flung themselves on the trenchant howitzer and the village which enclosed it, and again the burst was irresistible. The gun was captured, and the village was cleared.

For, just at this critical moment, the little body of Volunteer Cavalry, composed mainly of English officers, appeared upon the scene, flushed with a noble enthusiasm, resolute and dauntless, determined to show with their flashing sabres what they could do against any odds. Never was there a more heroic charge. It was the charge of but Eighteen. Captain Barrow led it. And among those who went into action was Captain Beatson, who had been struck down by cholera, and who was powerless to sit his horse; but, dying as he was, he could not consent to lose his chance of taking his part in the great act of retribution. So he placed himself upon a tumbril and was carried into action, and as dear life was passing away from him, his failing heart pulsed with great throbs of victory. The sabres of the Eighteen were less bright and sharp after they had encountered the enemy. When they drew rein, diminished in numbers—for horses and riders had been shot down—the Footmen of the British Army saluted them

with a ringing cheer; and the General again and again cried, "Well done! I am proud to command you!" It was this body of "Gentlemen Volunteers," into which the "Bayard of the Indian Army"—James Outram—felt it, a month afterwards, a high privilege to enlist, when he might have commanded the whole of the force. 1857. July 16.

Whilst the Cavalry were thus covering themselves with glory, the Infantry swept on to the enemy's right, where two more guns were posted, and carried them with the irresistible ardour that takes no denial. But the enemy, having found fresh shelter in a wooded village, rallied with some show of vigour, and poured a heavy fire into our line. Weary and exhausted as our people were, they had lost none of the grand enthusiasm, which made every man a giant; and when the calm clear voice of the General was heard, inquiring who would take that village, the Highlanders bounded forward, as if they had newly come into action, and the rest responded with like alacrity to the appeal. Again the Sepoy host were swept out of their cover, and seemed to be in full retreat upon Cawnpore, as though the day were quite lost. But there was yet one more stand to be made. As gun after gun was captured by the rush of our Infantry, still it seemed ever that more guns were in reserve, far-reaching and well-served, to deal out death in our ranks. Baffled and beaten as he was, the Nana Sahib was resolute to make one more stand. He had a twenty-four pounder and two smaller guns planted upon the road to the Cawnpore cantonment, from which fresh troops had come pouring in to give new strength to the defence. It was the very crisis of the Peishwah's fate. Conscious of this, he threw all his individual energies into the work before him,

1857. July 16. and tried what personal encouragement could do to stimulate his troops. And he flashed his gaudy presence on his people in a last convulsion of courage and a last effort of resistance.

For there was at this moment a pause in our onward operations. The great tidal wave of British conquest seemed for a moment to be receding. Our gun-bullocks were utterly exhausted by the day's work, and could not bring our artillery to the front. Our Infantry soldiers, not less physically exhausted, though wonderfully sustained by the strong humanity within them, were lying down, partly to rest, partly to escape the tearing fire of the enemy. As they lay on the ground, they heard exultant noises in the enemy's camp. The clanging of the cymbals, the shrill blasts of the bugles, and the roll of the drums heard between the intervals of the artillery fire, told that there was unwonted excitement in the Sepoy ranks. It sounded like a boast and a menace; and it filled with fresh fury the breasts of our weary troops. Sights followed sounds rapidly. There was the bustle of a hostile advance. The Infantry were moving forward. The Cavalry were spreading themselves out as though to swoop down upon our little body of fighting men and to encompass them with swift destruction, whilst the guns continued to pour forth their round shot in an almost unintermittent stream. To the quick eye of the General it then appeared that there was not a moment to be lost. So he called upon his men to rise; and they leaped at once to their feet, stirred almost to madness by the taunts of the enemy. One more rush, and the victory, like those which had gone before, would be complete.

Then Havelock's eyes were gladdened by a sight which seemed to be a glorious response to all the

dreams of his youth and all the prayers of his manhood. The Infantry prepared to advance right upon the death-dealing battery of the enemy, the Sixty-fourth Foot, led by Major Sterling, in front. At this moment the General's aide-de-camp—"the boy Harry"—wheeled his horse round to the centre of the leading regiment, and rode straight upon the muzzle of the twenty-four pounder, whose round shot had now been supplanted by grape, which was making deadly gaps in our advancing column. It was a moment of rapture to the white-haired veteran, compensating him for all disappointments and delays, for all unjust supersessions, for all professional discouragement, when he saw that last battery carried and knew that his son was safe. The work was well nigh done, when four guns of Maude's battery came up to complete it. A terrific fire was opened upon the beaten enemy, who were soon in confused flight; and, after such a day's fighting as might have tried to the utmost the powers of the best troops in the best of climates, they bivouacked at nightfall two miles from Cawnpore, every man too weary to need a pillow and too thirsty not to relish even a draught of dirty water. 1857. July 16.

They were then two miles from the cantonment, and next morning they marched on to occupy it. But ere they were under arms a dreadful story ran like a shudder along the line. They were too late to save: they had come only to avenge. Havelock's spies had brought in word that the captive women and children, whom they had hoped to rescue, had passed beyond the reach of human aid. The morning's news clouded the joy of yesterday's victory; and our men went on with heavy hearts to the scene of our recent national sorrows. The enemy had evacuated the place, leaving behind them only a body of horse to announce the July 17. Cawnpore re-occupied.

1857. July 17. exodus of the rebel force by blowing up the great magazine, the resources of which had constituted their strength, and given them six weeks of victory. As our advanced guard neared the Cawnpore cantonment, there was seen to rise from the earth an immense balloon-shaped cloud, and presently was heard a terrific explosion, which seemed to rend the ground beneath one's feet with the force of a gigantic earthquake. There was no mistaking such a proclamation; and as one man said to another, "There goes the magazine!" many, doubtless, thought how different it would have been if this exploit had not been left to our successors. By this one fatal omission all had been lost to us at Cawnpore.

But now the English flag was again hoisted, and Havelock, profoundly thankful to the Almighty disposer of events, who had given him the victory, put forth an eloquent, spirit-stirring "Order," in which the just meed of hearty commendation was given to the troops which had won his battles for him. "Soldiers," he said, "your General is satisfied, and more than satisfied, with you. He has never seen steadier or more devoted troops. Between the 7th and the 16th you have, under the Indian sun of July, marched a hundred and twenty-six miles and fought four actions." Such troops and such a General were worthy of each other. No troops fought better throughout the war, and none were ever better commanded. The last engagement, known as the Battle of Cawnpore, stamped Havelock's character as a military commander. The battle, as he wrote, "was won by God's blessing, *non vi sed arte*." It was one of those triumphs of mind over matter, "by which man conquers man." We had everything against us. Numbers some five times told; a far greater strength

of artillery; a commanding position, with strong natural defences—all favoured the enemy; whilst a climate more deadly to the exotic soldier than grape and canister, and heavy, broken ground, over which our exhausted cattle could not drag their guns, so as to bring them into action when most wanted, fearfully diminished the fighting powers of our scanty force. Had Havelock, after the fashion of some rash and inexperienced commanders, attempted to carry the enemy's position in front, he would probably have lost half his men; but the dexterous flank movement, which so disconcerted the plans of the Nana Sahib, saved our own people from the wholesale carnage which would otherwise have descended upon them. There was not a life wasted. The indomitable pluck of the British Infantry was husbanded to the best purpose, and every man felt that confidence in his leader which makes each soldier worth a file. 1857. July 17.

But Havelock had only made a beginning, and he did well in reminding his followers that their work was only begun. Cawnpore was but the first stage of the career of victory which lay before them. "Your comrades at Lucknow," said the General in his order of thanks, "are in peril. Agra is besieged; Delhi is still the focus of mutiny and rebellion. You must make great sacrifices if you would obtain great results. Three cities have to be saved, two strong places to be disblockaded. Your General is confident that he can accomplish all these things, and restore this part of India to tranquillity, if you only second him with your efforts, and if your discipline is equal to your valour."

It might be thought that these "ifs" were not needed; that the English soldiers who had followed Havelock from Allahabad to Cawnpore, and had

1857. June 17—18.

already so nobly seconded his efforts, had placed themselves beyond the reach of all such doubts and suspicions. But the General was a practised writer of despatches and general orders; for years he had been doing for others what he was now doing for himself. Few men knew better the use of words or was less likely to make a slip in any public manifesto. There was, in truth, no ingratitude and no inadvertence in this language of misgiving. There was only too much justice, and too deep a meaning in it. For, scarcely had the Force reached Cawnpore, when it was seen that the demoralisation of drunkenness was upon it. "Whilst I was winning a victory," said Havelock, "on the sixteenth, some of my men were plundering the Commissariat on the line of march." And once within reach of the streets and bazaars of Cawnpore, strong drink of all kinds, the plunder chiefly of our European shops and houses, was to be had in abundance by all who were pleased to take it. And that they did take it was not surprising. Even "Havelock's saints," if there had been a re-birth of them, would have been sorely tempted and tried by this upward march, by the heat, the hunger, the thirst, the fatigue; by the excitement of constant battle, by the thought of the intolerable wrong that had been inflicted on our people, and by the burden of the retribution which they carried with them. They had seen death in many shapes; and now they had brought in for burial the bodies of their comrades slain in the battle or stricken down by the pestilence. These evil influences—still more evil in their alternations, now of excitement, now of depression—drove the British soldiers to the brief solace of strong drink; and such a state of things arose, that Havelock now did what Neill had before

done at Allahabad—he "ordered all the beer, wine, spirits, and every drinkable thing at Cawnpore, to be purchased by the Commissariat." "If it had remained," he said, reporting what he had done to the Commander-in-Chief, "it would have required half my force to keep it from being drunk up by the other half, and I should not have had a soldier in camp." 1857. July.

CHAPTER IV.

HAVELOCK AT CAWNPORE—STATE OF THE SOLDIERY—DISCOURAGING CIRCUMSTANCES—FLIGHT OF THE NANA—DESTRUCTION OF THE BITHOOR PALACE—ARRIVAL OF NEILL—HIS PUNISHMENT OF CRIMINALS—FIRST MOVEMENT TOWARDS LUCKNOW—GENERAL ASPECTS OF THE REBELLION.

1857. July. State of the Soldiery

THE English soldier is never a model of forbearance. When the blood is up and the drink is down he is very terrible to all who come across his path. Even in fair fight with a Christian enemy, there are times and seasons when the instincts of a brutal nature are stronger than the conscience and the reason of the man. The honourable resistance of brave men, fighting for their hearths and altars, has often roused the passions of our soldiery to such a height that they have spared neither sex nor age, yielded to no pity, and abstained from no crime. But never, since England had a standing army, have such provocations assailed our fighting-men as those which hardened the hearts of Havelock's battalions on their march to Cawnpore. The rage within them was not wholly an unrighteous rage, for at the bottom of it was an infinite compassion for the women and children who had been so foully wronged, and a just hatred and horror of the crime of the wrong-doers; and they did well to be angry. The Tragedy of Cawnpore

excited an intense national hatred in the breasts of Englishmen in distant countries and after a long lapse of time; but here our soldiers were on the very scene of the butchery, the butchers were still red-handed, and the evidences of the slaughter were still fresh—visible to the eye, clear to the understanding, with a horrible suggestiveness even to the most obtuse. Our people went to the Entrenchments, and there they wondered and admired. They went to the Beebeeghur, and there they shuddered and wept. To think of so much consummate bravery and of the end of it, was enough to madden even sober-minded men, and to stimulate them to acts of fearful retribution. 1857. July 16—18.

If, then, the first days of the re-occupation of Cawnpore had been stained by excesses on the part of our soldiery—far greater than any which are recorded against them—it would be the duty of the historian to speak lightly of their offences. Neither in the Cantonment nor in the Town was there any enemy, in the military sense of the word; for the once boastful army of the Nana was broken and dispersed, and none clearly knew whither it had gone. But those were days in which whole races were looked upon as enemies, and whole cities were declared to be guilty and blood-stained. And if Havelock's fighting men, whilst the blood was still wet in the slaughter-house, had looked upon every Native found in the neighbourhood of that accursed spot as an adherent of the Nana, and struck at all with indiscriminate retribution, such sweeping punishment might now be looked back upon with less feeling of shame than upon much that was done, before and after, under less terrible provocation. As the record runs, it does not seem that the burden laid

1857. July 16—18. upon Cawnpore was heavy in relation to its guilt.* Heaven knows what was in their hearts, or what might have been done, but for the strong restraining hand laid upon them by their Commander. That the citizens themselves expected chastisement is certain. For whilst a few, on our arrival at Cawnpore, came to our camp with propitiatory offerings of milk and vegetables, fruits and flowers, large numbers flocked panic-struck out of the town to hide themselves in the adjacent villages, or to seek safety on the Oude side of the river. Some were propelled by the knowledge of their guilt; some, scared by the tidings that had come from below, fled under the instinct of self-preservation. Meanwhile, our people were plundering in all directions, the Sikhs, as ever, showing an activity of zeal in this their favourite pursuit. It is probable that much of the property then seized underwent only a process of restoration, and came back to the nation at last to which it properly belonged. But this did not hallow it in Havelock's eyes. He set his face stedfastly against it, and issued an order in which he said, "The marauding in this camp exceeds the disorders which supervened on the short-lived triumph of the miscreant Nana Sahib. A Provost-Marshal has been appointed, with special instructions to hang up, in their uniform, all British soldiers that plunder. This shall not be an idle threat. Commanding officers have received the most distinct warnings on the subject."

Doubts and anxieties.

This was not cheerful work, but there was other

* Most exaggerated stories of this retributory carnage at Cawnpore were at one time in circulation. It was stated both in Anglo-Indian and in Continental journals that ten thousand of the inhabitants had been killed. This was a tremendous assertion, representing rather what might have been than what was. Some wished that it had been so, for vengeance' sake; others, that there might be a pretext for maligning the English.

perhaps still more depressing. The sick and wounded were to be visited. Cholera and dysentery were in his Camp. Two of the finest soldiers in the army lay dying—one stricken in the battle, the other by the pestilence. Human aid could do nothing for them. Then there was great doubt as to the position of the enemy. Strong as it was in courage, Havelock's column was very weak in numbers, and tidings came that the Army of the Nana Sahib was at Bithoor, mustering five thousand muskets and sabres, and forty-five guns. It was probable that the place had been strengthened by every possible means which the wealth of material in his hands could supply, and it was certain that our light artillery could make no impression on a stronghold so fortified and defended. It was not strange, therefore, that, in the lull which succeeded the re-occupation of Cawnpore, all these discouragements caused a feeling of depression almost amounting to despondency to sink for a little space into Havelock's mind.* But it presently passed away. For the good Providence which had battled so often for us was still on our side, and the dangers which he had dreaded were delusions. 1857. July 16—18. Renaud and Beatson.

In truth, he had already accomplished more than he had ventured to hope. He had beaten the enemy more thoroughly on the 16th than he knew at the time, and there was no present fear of the Nana bringing his broken battalions into the field against us. After the battle, the baffled Mahratta had taken Flight of the Nana.

* "As he sat at dinner with his son on the evening of the 17th, his mind appeared, for the first and last time, to be affected with gloomy forebodings, as it dwelt upon the possible annihilation of his brave men in a fruitless attempt to accomplish what was beyond their strength. After remaining long in deep thought, his strong sense of duty, and his confidence in the justice of his cause, restored the buoyancy of his spirits, and he exclaimed, 'If the worst comes to the worst, we can but die with our swords in our hands.'"—*Marshman's Life of Havelock.*

1857. July 16—18. flight to Bithoor, attended by a few Sowars; and as he rode through Cawnpore, his horse flecked with foam, he might have met the public criers proclaiming that the Feringhees had been well nigh exterminated, and offering rewards for the heads of the few who were still left upon the face of the earth. But the lie had exploded, and his one thought at that moment was escape from the pursuing Englishman. Arrived at Bithoor, he saw clearly that the game was up. His followers were fast deserting him. Many, it is said, reproached him for his failure. All, we may be sure, clamoured for pay. His terror-stricken imagination pictured a vast avenging Army on his track; and the great instinct of self-preservation prompted him to gather up the women of his family, to embark by night on a boat to ascend the Ganges to Futtehgurh, and to give out that he was preparing himself for self-immolation. He was to consign himself to the sacred waters of the Ganges, which had been the grave of so many of his victims. There was to be a given signal, through the darkness of the early night, which was to mark the moment of the ex-Peishwah's suicidal immersion. But he had no thought of dying. The signal light was extinguished, and a cry arose from the religious mendicants who were assembled on the Cawnpore bank of the river, and who believed that the Nana was dead.* But, covered by the darkness, he emerged upon the Oude side of the Ganges, and his escape was safely accomplished.†

* Mr. Sherer, from whose report these particulars are taken, says: "The Gungapootras were waiting on the shore. About mid-stream the light was extinguished, and, with a yell that must have reached the boat, the mendicant Brahmins rushed up to the Palace and commenced plundering all that they could lay their hands on. The crafty Nana was disembarking in the darkness on the other side."

† His last act before leaving Bithoor was the murder of the only

Meanwhile, Havelock, thinking that a strong force of the enemy would probably soon march down upon his position, had moved the bulk of his little army to the north-western point of the cantonment, near Newab-gunj, to defend the line of the Great Trunk Road. Strategically, the movement was the result of an error; but, in another sense, it was grounded upon a too substantial fact, and had a wisdom of its own, apart from the manœuvres of the enemy. It took the troops far away from the temptations of the liquor-shops, and contributed greatly to the maintenance of that discipline which he had sorrowfully seen fading away. And whilst the military chief was thus taking measures for the protection of both races, the civil magistrate was proclaiming through the City the re-assertion of the British power and the re-establishment of the British law. At the Cotwalee, the people flocked around Sherer and his escort, and professed their delight at our reappearance amongst them. And there was probably much sincerity in these professions, on the part at least of the trading classes, who commonly lost more than they gained by these convulsions. Not only were the English and their followers good customers in quiet times, but the peaceful citizens had an interest in the maintenance of order and the upholding of the law, for with the predatory classes, who thrive in times of tumult and terror, there was little respect for colour or creed. The wolfish propensities of humanity were, in all such conjunctures, strongly developed, and as

1857. July 16—18.

July 18.

captive in his hands. This was a woman, named Carter, who had been taken prisoner, and who had survived the pangs and perils of childbirth in the Nana's Palace. The widows of the deceased ex-Peishwah had treated her with kindness: but when the Nana fled from Bithoor he order the woman and her infant to be put to death, and the guard faithfully obeyed him.

1857. at Allahabad so at Cawnpore, innocent industry cowered beneath the rampant rapacity of crime.

July 19. Destruction of the Bithoor Palace.

On the following day, it was determined that the actual position of affairs at Bithoor should be ascertained beyond all doubt. So a detachment was sent out under Major Stephenson, of the Madras Fusiliers, to beat up the quarters of the some-time Pretender to the Peishwahship, and to set our mark upon the place. The information which Havelock had received from his spies caused him rightly to think that it would not need the services of a strong force to do all that was required. The old home of the Nana had been abandoned. There was no enemy to be seen. So the Palace lay at the mercy of our soldiery —and it was soon despoiled and destroyed. There was much of the plunder of our dwelling-houses in its apartments—traces of our English civilisation everywhere in kid-gloves and champagne, and books for hot-weather reading. But the Government treasure, to which the Nana had helped himself in such profusion, was not to be found, and the family jewels had either been carried off or hidden away, past all chance of immediate discovery. It was reserved for a later domiciliary visit to disclose some of the hiding places of the abandoned property.* But a considerable wealth of artillery was carried off by Major Stephenson on his return march to Cawnpore.

So, for the time at least, there was a clearance on that side of the river. The local influence of the Nana was gone. The last home of the Peishwahs

* A Native witness, who kept a diary of the incidents of this eventful summer—"a humble but loyal subject of the State, Nanuck-chund by name"—says that the treasure (coin) had been looted by the people before the English arrived. Mr. Sherer says that, in his opinion, the destruction of the Palace was a mistake, as it rendered more remote the prospect of discovering concealed treasure.

1857. July 19.

was a ruin. The only important member of his household who remained was the Nana Narain Rao, son of the Soubahdar Rumchunder Punt. This man had been well known to the English at Cawnpore, and had been by many of our people, with only a hazy knowledge of native individuality, mistaken for the other and greater Nana, the adopted son of the Peishwah, of whom he was in truth only a retainer.* Whether this man were one of those double-dyed traitors who hang on to the skirts of success and are driven backwards and forwards by every gust of fortune, or whether his sympathies had all along been with the English, it is hard to say; but it is stated that he had been imprisoned by the Nana, and it is certain that, after his master's flight, he made tenders of allegiance and offered his services to the British General.† He had been the first to send word

* See note on this subject, vol. i. page 575. I suspect that many who have talked of their acquaintance with the Nana, knew only Nana Narain Rao.

† The "humble but loyal subject of the State," whose evidence is cited in a previous note, was very anxious to convict Narain Rao of double treachery. He states, that "Nana Narain Rao conducted Nana Doondoo Punt to the other bank of the Ganges and returned to Bithoor. Those men went to him and reminded him that his father, Rumchunder Punt, had been a faithful servant and Soubahdar of the Nana, and he (Narain Rao) was bound to protect the property at Bithoor. But Narain Rao paid no attention. On the contrary, he gave out that the Nana's boat had capsized, and then presented himself at Bithoor. He declares that the Nana forcibly took him away; but he ran away, and came here. People say it is a great falsehood, and if this Nana (the Soubahdar's son) wished it, and was really attached to the British cause, he could easily get Nana Doondoo Punt captured."—In another entry in his journal, he says: "*July* 19. I was told to-day that, owing to the treachery of Nana Doondoo Punt, the Bara, &c., of Bithoor have been set on fire, and that the traitor Nana Narain Rao wishes to pass himself off as a well-wisher of the Government."—"*July* 20. It is just as I anticipated. Nana Narain Rao, son of the Soubahdar, wishes to pass himself off as a well-wisher of the Government; but there is a great crowd at this moment, and the Suhib-logue have no time to spare. It is also very difficult to find witnesses against him by summary inquiries, and I see no chance of filing a complaint against him before any officer." This man's evidence is not very trustworthy. He says that, on the 17th of July, he saw General Havelock and General Neill near the Cotwallee, at Cawnpore. But Neill did not arrive till three days afterwards.

1857. July 19. to Havelock that Bithoor had been evacuated by the Nana and his followers, and it was at least probable that some useful information might, at a later period, be derived from him. So he was kindly received, but not without some cautionary words.

Neill's departure from Allahabad.

In the meanwhile Colonel Neill was making his way up to Cawnpore. After the departure of Havelock, he had been actively employed in maturing his arrangements for the defence of Allahabad, and in endeavouring to collect troops from below. In this last respect he had made no great progress; for the unsettled state of affairs at Benares* made Colonel Gordon, who thought that the latter place was of the two in the greater danger, reluctant to diminish his military strength. But he had pushed forward his defensive measures with an elaborate completeness, which left nothing unconsidered, scarcely anything undone. And when he found that his duty summoned him to Cawnpore, to take a more active part in the coming campaign, he drew up an elaborate paper of instructions for the guidance of his successors, which he committed to the care of Captain Drummond Hay.† On the important subject of "Supplies" he wrote at some length. On the number and disposition of the troops he next commented. "By order of Government," he said, "this garrison

* "I look upon Benares as much more exposed than Allahabad, inasmuch as you have a regular fort, whereas our position as a military one is bad as bad can be without fortifications. A few hundred Europeans separated from the river by a city containing half a million of inhabitants, and the country people already becoming more and more hostile every day, while we are at any time exposed to an invasion from Oude, *viâ* the unoccupied post of Jaunpore." — *Gordon to Neill. July* 11.

† Of H.M.'s Seventy-eighth, Colonel O'Brien had been appointed Neill's successor at Allahabad, but he did not arrive in time to receive charge directly from Neill.

is to be maintained at the strength of six hundred and forty-five Europeans. Of these I would not have more than three hundred and forty-five inside the Fort, seventy in the Musjid, a Company at the Railway Station near the Kooshen Gardens, a Company at Mr. Hodgson's house, and some in the Church in Cantonments. . . . The church would be occupied by soldiers as a barrack." Those were days when we could not afford to be nice in matters of this kind, and such desecrations were of ordinary occurrence. He wrote also of the state of the defences, pointing out all the weak points; of the Police; of the Arsenal and the Ordnance Stores; of the Intelligence Department; and under the head of "Hanging" he wrote, "I have always tried by general court-martial any prisoners connected with the garrison, the Provost hanging those so sentenced." Then, after precise instructions relating to the families of officers and soldiers, to the training of picked Infantry soldiers in the gun-drill, to repair the distressing deficiency of Artillerymen, and to the sanitary condition of barracks and other quarters for the soldiery, he proceeded to speak of the operations to be undertaken in the event of fresh manifestations of revolt. This section he headed "Defensive Operations;" but he characteristically added, "I prefer the offensive system." "If I had the power," he wrote, "I should never permit an enemy to enter the City. With a small force, in addition to a garrison sufficient to hold the Fort, the City, Cantonment and all between the two rivers, could be disputed for long against superior numbers. I would hold Kydgunge to the last, and if closely invested would cut down the trees within fire and gunshot of the Fort, knock down some garden walls near the Fort, and if the

1857. July 7—15

1857. July 7—15. enemy attempted to assault from the Papamow or Benares side, they could easily be prevented crossing the river. I prefer the offensive system, and always follow it when possible; make frequent sharp attacks, well planned and supported, using as much artillery, nine-pounders if possible, as I could muster. The general object is now to put down the parties moving about and plundering villages; Native troops (the Sikhs) answered well, and did good service. When Europeans are en route, they may be employed, but I would never send them out on purpose, except in cases of emergency. Powder-bags, to blow in doors, &c., are useful things to have in this village. Also rockets, when to be had, and persons who know the use of them."

July 15. All this done for the continued security of the important position which his energy had saved, Neill was eager to go to the front. The opportunity was before him. On the 15th of July he had received a telegraphic message from the Commander-in-Chief, containing laudatory recognition of Havelock's victory before Futtehpore, and of the general conduct of the operations intrusted to him. With this had come also an important addition: "But his (Havelock's) health is not strong, and the season is very trying; it is urgently necessary, therefore, that provision should be made for placing the command of the column in tried hands of known and assured efficiency, in whom perfect confidence can be placed, in case Havelock should become from any cause unfit for duty. You have been selected for the post, and accordingly you will proceed with every practicable expedition to join Havelock, making over the command of Allahabad to the next senior officer." The rank of Brigadier-General had been conferred on

Neill, and, thus stimulated by the feeling that he had the full confidence of Government, he started on the same evening for Cawnpore; and on the morning of the 20th he arrived there and reported himself to the Commander of the Force. "I had hardly seen General Havelock," he wrote afterwards in a letter to a friend, "before he said to me: 'Now, General Neill, let us understand each other; you have no power or authority here whilst I am here, and you are not to issue a single order.' "* 1857. July 20.

But it was arranged that whilst Havelock, being in chief command, should mature his arrangements for the crossing of the Ganges, Neill should remain in charge of Cawnpore. One of his first acts, after his arrival, was to inquire into all the circumstances of the recent massacres, and to do what he could to avenge them. There are deeds which it is better to suffer the actor to chronicle in his own words. In a letter before me, Colonel Neill, after describing events already recorded in this narrative, says: "The men were shot, the women and children were brought up to a little bungalow near the Assembly-rooms. The Futtehgurh fugitives, such as were saved, were brought in there too. I have sent a list of all, and their fate. Upwards of two hundred women and Neill at Cawnpore.

* It should be stated, however, that as Neill entered in his journal at the time that he had been well received by Havelock, it may be assumed that there was no discourtesy in the manner in which this intimation was conveyed. See following passage: "Got into Cawnpore about seven A.M., Monday 20th . . . and am well received by General Havelock. Poor Captain Beatson, Adjutant-General, died of cholera, and Currie, of Eighty-fourth, died of his wound, a round short in the side; saw Renaud, his left leg taken off, high up the thigh, looking very pale and ill. . . . Stephenson, with remainder of Fusiliers, gone out to Bithoor with Cavalry and Sikhs to destroy it. Cavalry with Barrow bring in guns in the forenoon. . . . General Havelock informs me he will leave me at Cawnpore in command during his absence. . . . . Much plundering in the city by Sikhs, Sixty-fourth and Seventy-eighth; most disgraceful."

1857. July.

children were brought into that house; many had been killed in the boats, many killed and died in the entrenchments; all who survived fever, dysentery, and cholera, in the confinement in that house, were barbarously murdered, after the receipt of the intelligence of Havelock's first victory—this by the Nana's order. They were badly fed and treated at first, but afterwards got more and clean clothing, and servants to wait on them. They were sent their evening meal on that fatal day, and after it these fiends rushed in and butchered them all; they were shot and hacked to pieces. The bodies of all who died there were thrown into the well of the house, all the murdered also. I saw that house when I first came in. Ladies' and children's bloody torn dresses and shoes were lying about, and locks of hair torn from their heads.* The floor of the one room they were all dragged into and killed was saturated with blood. One cannot control one's feelings. Who could be merciful to one concerned? Severity at the first is mercy in the end. I wish to show the Natives of India that the punishment inflicted by us for such deeds will be the heaviest, the most revolting to their feelings, and what they must ever remember.† I issued the following order, which, however objectionable in the

* Other narrators have described the scene in similar language. Major North says: "Tortured by the fierce thirst of revenge, and penetrated by the sense of their sufferings, strange wild feelings awoke within us. Vaunting, eager, maddened, we sped onward to the dreary house of martyrdom, where their blood was outpoured like water; the clotted gore lay ankle deep on the polluted floor, and also long tresses of silken hair, fragments of female wearing apparel, hats, books, children's toys, were scattered about in terrible confusion." The alleged inscriptions on the walls were malicious or silly forgeries.

† In another letter, Neill says: "My object is to inflict a fearful punishment for a revolting, cowardly, barbarous deed, and to strike terror into these rebels. . . . No one who has witnessed the scenes of murder, mutilation and massacre, can ever listen to the word 'mercy' as applied to these fiends."

estimation of some of our Brahminised infatuated elderly gentlemen, I think suited to the occasion, or rather to the present crisis: '25th July, 1857. The well in which are the remains of the poor women and children so brutally murdered by this miscreant, the Nana, will be filled up, and neatly and decently covered over to form their grave: a party of European soldiers will do so this evening, under the superintendence of an officer. The house in which they were butchered, and which is stained with their blood, will not be washed or cleaned by their countrymen; but Brigadier-General Neill has determined that every stain of that innocent blood shall be cleared up and wiped out, previous to their execution, by such of the miscreants as may be hereafter apprehended, who took an active part in the mutiny, to be selected according to their rank, caste, and degree of guilt. Each miscreant, after sentence of death is pronounced upon him, will be taken down to the house in question, under a guard, and will be forced into cleaning up a small portion of the blood-stains; the task will be made as revolting to his feelings as possible, and the Provost-Marshal will use the lash in forcing any one objecting to complete his task. After properly cleaning up his portion, the culprit is to be immediately hanged, and for this purpose a gallows will be erected close at hand.'—The first culprit was a Soubahdar of the Sixth Native Infantry, a fat brute, a very high Brahmin. The sweeper's brush was put into his hands by a sweeper, and he was ordered to set to work. He had about half a square foot to clean; he made some objection, when down came the lash, and he yelled again; he wiped it all up clean, and was then hung, and his remains buried in the public road. Some days after, others were brought

1857. July.

1857. July.

in—one a Mahomedan officer of our civil court, a great rascal, and one of the leading men: he rather objected, was flogged, made to lick part of the blood with his tongue. No doubt this is strange law, but it suits the occasion well, and I hope I shall not be interfered with until the room is thoroughly cleansed in this way. . . . I will hold my own, with the blessing and help of God. I cannot help seeing that His finger is in all this—we have been false to ourselves so often."

This story has been told before,* and with comments of various shades of opinion. It is very safe and easy in quiet times, and in a Christian land, to condemn such acts as these with placid judicial severity, for the sentence of condemnation demands no thought, and is sure to evoke much sympathy. But we must re-live that month of July, and transport ourselves to the threshold of the Beebeeghur, rightly to estimate them. If ever, in the history of human strife, it were righteous to invest retribution with unknown terrors, it was whilst the blood of our innocents was still red in the slaughter-house. It was not that men, in ordinary conjunctures strong-headed and tender-hearted, lost the power of discerning between right and wrong in the face of the horrors that beset them, but that many of the wisest and best amongst our people, sternly composed in the midst of all excitements and bewilderments, deliberately harboured the conviction, that it was their duty to put mercy far away from them, and to visit exceptional wickedness with an exceptional severity of punishment. There was a remorseless logic in the arguments on which they built up this faith. It was contended that as there were different degrees of

* It was first published, soon after the event, in an Ayrshire journal.