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THE LIFE OT 47 OF "CHINESE" GORDON,

R.E., C.B.



By CHARLES H. ALLEN, F.R.G.S.,

Secretary of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.

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“CHINESE” GORDON, R.E., C.B.

BY

CHARLES H. ALLEN, F.R.G.S.,

Secretary of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.

THE voice of the people, spoken in no uncertain tone, through countless organs of the press, has at length prevailed ; and the whole civilized world breathes more freely because Chinese Gordon after speeding over land and sea, as fast as steam could carry him, to try and restore order in the Soudan, and to undo the mischief wrought by months of incapacity and hesitation has at length safely arrived at Khartoum.

He has been living in Palestine during the past year, and might, at any time, have been relegated to the Soudan at a moment's notice. However, we will hope that, even now, the magic of his name will turn the scale with many of the powerful chieftains of that country who may be wavering in their allegiance.

Many persons may be asking themselves, “Who is Chinese Gordon? and why is he the only man whose presence can save the Soudan?”

This question may best be answered by stringing together in a compendious form a few of the incidents in his stirring life, for full particulars of which the reader is referred to the only three volumes that have yet been published concerning him, but which are too bulky and too costly to find their way into general circulation.* Having carefully studied all these works, and having had the great advantage and the high

* “*The Ever Victorious Army*,” by Andrew Wilson, 1868. “*Colonel Gordon in Central Africa*,” by Dr Hill, 1881, and 2nd Edition, 1884. “*The Story of Chinese Gordon*,” by A. Egmont Hake, 1884.

privilege of conversing and corresponding during several years with General Gordon upon some of those great questions which lie nearest his heart, the present writer may, perhaps, be considered not wholly unqualified for the difficult task he has undertaken. He is well aware of General Gordon's great dislike to being praised, as he has often heard him request that "no gilt might be laid upon him," when describing his deeds. This is almost an impossibility—nevertheless it shall be attended to as far as can truthfully be done in the following slight narrative. To Dr. Hill and Mr. Egmont Hake he is indebted for most of the information here given, though some incidents are taken from private letters written to himself.

GORDON'S TITLES.

It is almost as difficult to give this illustrious officer his proper designations as it is to select the salient points of his life. The sphere of his action extends over three continents, in each of which he has obtained some of the highest titles and honours. He is a *General* in the *British Army*, and a C.B. He is also a *Ti-Tu* (the highest rank conferred on any subject in China). He belongs to the *Order of the Star*, and is entitled to wear the *Yellow Jacket* and the *Peacock's Feather*. In Egypt he has attained to the rank of *Pasha*, and, as is well known, he was for some years *Governor-General of the Soudan*.

His life may be divided into five distinct and important sections, of each of which a slight sketch shall now be given.

HIS BOYHOOD.

CHARLES G. GORDON, fourth son of the late Lieut.-Gen. Henry W. Gordon, R.A., was born at Woolwich, January 28th, 1833. He comes of a family of soldiers, one of his immediate ancestors being a godson of the Duke of Cumberland (of Culloden notoriety), and a distinguished actor in the North American War, having served under Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham. Charles Gordon's early life presents little that is noteworthy; but we are told of one instance when the fire of the future hero flashed suddenly forth. Being rebuked during his cadetship for incompetence, and told that he would never make an officer, he suddenly tore the epaulets from his shoulders and flung them at his superior's feet.

GORDON IN THE CRIMEA, BESSARABIA, ETC.

Gordon worked steadily in the trenches before Sebastopol, where he distinguished himself by his skill in detecting the movements of the enemy. The present Lord Wolseley was his companion-in-arms, and is mentioned in Gordon's journal as having been slightly wounded. His capacity as an officer of Engineers procured his appointment on the Commission for settling the boundaries of Russia and Turkey, which employed him until the end of 1858.

GORDON IN CHINA : (*The Tai-Ping Rebellion.*)

In 1860 Gordon was ordered to China, and was present during the attack on Peking and the sack of the Summer Palace. It will be necessary here to say a few words respecting the great Tai-Ping rebellion, which at that time threatened not only to overturn the Imperial throne, but also to devastate the whole country. Some of the southern provinces had already been laid waste with fire and sword by the rebels, and the safety of Shanghai itself was threatened. This extraordinary rebellion was commenced by a fanatical schoolmaster called Hung, who had attracted to his standard an army consisting of several hundred thousand wild and ferocious followers. In some respects the commencement of the outbreak bears a similarity to the present insurrection in the Soudan under the Mahdi. Gordon quelled the insurrection in China and overthrew the armies of Hung and his companions: let us hope that he may be equally successful in putting an end to the formidable disturbances in the Soudan.

Hung said that his mission was to exterminate the Manchoo race, and he found hundreds of thousands to believe in him. Gradually the "prophet" gathered a great army, and gained one victory after another, until at last he stormed Nanking and established his throne there. Under the shadow of the Porcelain Tower he marshalled his great army, appointing his own relatives to the high office of Wangs, or Kings, and bestowing upon them various familiar nicknames, such as "Yellow Tiger," "Cock-Eye," "The One-Eyed Dog," &c. His troops ravaged the country, and the Imperialists could do nothing against him. The starving peasants were reduced to cannibalism; business in the coast towns was paralysed, and

the rebel who caused this desolation and suffering bestowed on himself the title of the Heavenly King.

The British Government having been asked to appoint an officer to take command of the Chinese Imperialist forces, Gordon was selected for that important post, and the following quotation from his letters home, in 1863, shows in what spirit he entered upon his gigantic task :—

“I am afraid you will be much vexed at my having taken the command of the Sung-kiang force, and that I am now a Mandarin. I have taken the step on consideration. I think that anyone who contributes to putting down this rebellion fulfils a humane task, and also think tends a great deal to open China to civilization. I will not act rashly, and I trust to be able soon to return to England ; at the same time I will remember your and my father's wishes, and endeavour to remain as short a time as possible. I can say that if I had not accepted the command I believe the force would have been broken up and the rebellion gone on in its misery for years. I trust this will not now be the case, and that I may soon be able to comfort you on this subject. You must not fret on this matter ; I think I am doing a good service . . . I keep your likeness before me, and can assure you and my father that I will not be rash, and that as soon as I can conveniently, and with due regard to the object I have in view, I will return home !”

THE EVER-VICTORIOUS ARMY.

“The ever-victorious army,” as Gordon's force was called, at first consisted of only 4,000 men, but indifferently armed. Under the sway of his genius, however, they soon became a formidable army, and their superior discipline enabled them to attack much larger forces with unvarying success. One or two gunboats also did good service in that land of canals and rivers, whilst the swiftness of Gordon's movements and the force of his unexpected blows soon created a panic amongst the insurgents. Stockade after stockade was stormed, and one city after another taken, till at last the neck of the rebellion was broken. The success of the “ever-victorious” army was largely owing to General Gordon's personal gallantry, without which it would have been impossible to have led his troops in assaults that often appeared like a forlorn hope. He carried no weapon himself, but always went into action armed with a small cane, with which he would stand calmly under the hottest fire, pointing to the spots he wished attacked, and encouraging his soldiers by voice and gesture. No wonder that this little cane was christened by the soldiers “*Gordon's wand of victory*,” and as he himself appeared to possess a charmed life, and seemed rather to enjoy standing amid a hailstorm of bullets, his men considered him invulnerable. It is related that once, as he was

leading a storming party, his men wavered under a terrific fire. Gordon turned cheerfully round, stood still, and calmly lighted a cigar. He then waved his "magic" wand, and his soldiers came on with a rush, carrying the position. Once only his good fortune failed him, and he was shot in the leg. He tried to conceal his wound, and stood giving orders till he nearly fainted, and had to be carried from the field. It is somewhat difficult to follow every movement of General Gordon in China, the reason for which may be found in the following extract. He says :—

"I have sent my journal of 1863, home. I do not want the same published, as I think if my proceedings sink into oblivion it would be better for everyone. My reason for this is, that it is a very contested point whether we ought to have interfered or not, on which point I am perfectly satisfied that it was the proper and humane course to pursue; but I still do not expect people that do not know much about it to concur in the same."

Unfortunately he afterwards destroyed these valuable journals.

GORDON'S OWN VIEW OF HIS WORK.

His own short summary of the war, written to his mother, may fitly close the account of the Chinese portion of his life :

"I shall, of course, make myself quite sure that the rebels are quashed before I break up the force, as otherwise I should incur great responsibility, but on these subjects I act for myself and judge for myself; this I have found to be the best way of getting on. I shall not leave things in a mess, I hope, but I think, if I am spared, I shall be home by Christmas. The losses I have sustained in this campaign have been no joke. Out of 100 officers I have had 48 killed and wounded, and out of 3,500 men nearly 1,000 killed and wounded; but I have the satisfaction of knowing that, as far as mortal can see, six months will see the end of this rebellion, while if I had continued inactive it might have lingered on for six years. Do not think I am ill-tempered, but I do not care one jot about my promotion, or what people may say. I know I shall leave China as poor as I entered it, but with the knowledge that through my weak instrumentality upwards of eighty to one hundred thousand lives have been spared. I want no further satisfaction than this."

When a sum of £10,000 was forwarded to him by the Emperor he divided it all amongst his troops.

WHAT *The Times* SAID.

In a leading article *The Times* of August 5, 1864, thus graphically summed up the benefits that had accrued to China by Gordon's brilliant operations against the rebels :—

"Never did soldier of fortune deport himself with a nicer sense of military honour, with more gallantry against the resisting and with more mercy towards the vanquished, with more disinterested neglect of opportunities of personal advantage, or with more entire devotion to the objects and desires of his own

Government, than this officer, who, after all his victories, has just laid down his sword. A history of operations among cities of uncouth names, and in provinces the geography of which is unknown except to special students, would be tedious and uninteresting. The result of Colonel Gordon's operations, however, is this: He found the richest and most fertile districts of China in the hands of the most savage brigands. The silk districts were the scenes of their cruelty and riot, and the great historical cities of Hangchow and Soochow were rapidly following the fate of Nanking, and were becoming desolate ruins in their possession. Gordon has cut the rebellion in half, has recovered the great cities, has isolated and utterly discouraged the fragments of the brigand power, and has left the marauders nothing but a few tracts of devastated country and their stronghold of Nanking. All this he has effected—first by the power of his arms, and afterwards still more rapidly by the terror of his name."

THE HEAVENLY KING.

Before Gordon left China he had the satisfaction of knowing that Nanking had fallen, and the rebellion was quite at an end. The miserable fanatic, who gave out that he was inspired, and took the name of the Heavenly King, refused to survive the cause for which he had so long fought, and which he had degraded by so many untold cruelties. It is said that his favourite amusement was to have his wretched captives flayed alive, or pounded to death, and he is considered by Mr. Hake to have been guilty of greater crimes than almost any other human (?) being! When all was lost he hung his wives and then committed suicide, and thus ended, with the death of this incarnate demon, one of the most terrible and desolating revolts that had ever scourged poor humanity. How could China sufficiently thank the modest young officer of Engineers who had delivered her from so great a tyrant?

GORDON AT GRAVESEND.

Even more unknown to the public than his Chinese life are the six peaceful years passed by Colonel Gordon, C.B., at Gravesend, where he was employed from 1865 to 1871 in the construction of the Thames defences. He had refused to be honoured or *fêted* when he returned from China, preferring to bury himself in obscurity, and to quietly and steadily carry out his duties. His engineering work afforded full scope for his military talents, whilst the moral and religious side of his nature had an ample field for congenial work. Those six years he describes as amongst the happiest of his life. Mr. Hake gives a few interesting particulars; but owing to Gordon's extreme reticence about himself and his dislike to all publicity

the full extent of his benevolent work on the Thames will never be known.

WHAT MR. HAKE SAYS.

"To the world his life at Gravesend was a life of self-suppression and self-denial; to himself it was one of happiness and pure peace. He lived wholly for others. His house was school, and hospital, and almshouse in turn—and was more like the abode of a missionary than of a colonel of engineers. The troubles of all interested him alike. The poor, the sick, the unfortunate were ever welcome, and never did suppliant knock vainly at his door. He always took a great delight in children, but especially in boys employed on the river or the sea. Many he rescued from the gutter; cleansed them and clothed them, and kept them for weeks in his home. For their benefit he established evening classes over which he himself presided; reading to and teaching the lads with as much ardour as if he were leading them to victory. He called them his 'kings,' and for many of them he got berths on board ship. One day a friend asked him why there were so many pins stuck into the map of the world over his mantelpiece; he was told that they marked and followed the course of the boys on their voyages—that they were moved from point to point as his youngsters advanced, and that he prayed for them as they went day by day. The light in which he was held by these lads was shown by inscriptions in chalk on the fences. A favourite legend was 'God bless the Kernel.' So full did his classes at length become that the house would no longer hold them, and they had to be given up. Then it was that he attended and taught at the ragged schools, and it was a pleasant thing to watch the attention with which his wild scholars listened to his words."

A gentleman who knew him well at this time has told the writer that Gordon used to bring his boys to London, when ready for sea, and take them himself to shipowners' offices until he found them a suitable berth. No trouble was too great for this indefatigable benefactor of his fellow creatures.

A LADY'S DESCRIPTION OF HIM.

"His benevolence embraced all," writes one who saw much of him at this time. "Misery was quite sufficient claim for him, without going into the question of merit, and of course sometimes he was deceived, but very seldom, for he had an eye that saw through and through people; it seemed useless to try to hide anything from him. I have often wondered how much this wonderful power was due to natural astuteness, or how much to his own clear singleness of mind and freedom from self that the truth about everything seemed revealed to him. The workhouse and the infirmary were his constant haunts, and of pensioners he had a countless number all over the neighbourhood. Many of the dying sent for him in preference to the clergy, and ever ready was he to visit them, no matter in what weather or at what distance. But he would never take the chair at a religious meeting, or be in any way prominent. He was always willing to conduct services for the poor and address a sweeps' tea meeting; but all public speechifying, especially where complimentary speeches were made in his honour, he loathed. All eating and drinking he was indifferent to. Coming home with us one afternoon late, we found his tea waiting for him—a most unappetizing stale loaf and a teapot of tea. I remarked upon the dryness of the bread, when he took the whole loaf (a small one), crammed it into the slop-basin, and poured all the tea upon it, saying it would soon be ready for him to eat, and in half-an-hour it would not matter what he had eaten. He always had dry, humorous little speeches at command that flavoured all his talk, and I remember the merry twinkle with which he told us that many of the boys,

thinking that being invited to live with the Colonel meant delicate fare and luxury, were unpleasantly enlightened upon that point when they found he sat down with them to salt beef and just the necessary food. He kindly gave us a key to his garden, thinking our children might like to walk there sometimes. The first time my husband and I visited it, we remarked what nice peas and vegetables of all kinds there were, and the housekeeper coming out, we made some such remark to her. She at once told us that the Colonel never tasted them—that nearly all the garden, a large one, was cultivated by different poor people to whom he gave permission to plant what they chose, and to take the proceeds. She added that it often happened that presents of fine fruit and flowers would be sent to the Colonel, and that he would never so much as taste them, but take them or send them at once to the hospital or workhouse for the sick. He always thanked the donors, but never told them how their gifts had been appreciated. We used to say he had no *self*; in that following his Divine Master. He would never talk of himself and his doings. Therefore his life never can and never will be written. It was in these years that the first book about him came out. He allowed the author to come and stay at Fort House, and gave him every facility towards bringing out his book (all the particulars about the Tai-ping Rebellion) even to lending him his diary. Then, from something that was said, he discovered that personal acts of his own (bravery, possibly) were described, and he asked to see what had been written. Then he tore out page after page, the parts about himself, to the poor author's chagrin, who told him he had spoiled his book. I tried to get at the bottom of this feeling of his, telling him he might be justly proud of these things; but was answered that no man has a right to be proud of anything, inasmuch as he has no *native* good in him—he has received it all."

HIS MEDALS.

"He had a great number of medals, for which he cared nothing. There was a gold one, however, given to him by the Empress of China, with a special inscription engraved upon it, for which he had a great liking. But it suddenly disappeared; no one knew where or how. Years afterwards it was found out, by a curious accident, that Gordon had erased the inscription, and sent the medal anonymously to Canon Miller to be sold for the relief of the sufferers from the cotton famine at Manchester."

"Thus he spent the next six years of his life: in slums, hospitals, and workhouse, or knee-deep in the river at work upon the Thames defence."

After spending a year or two in the scene of his former labours as English Commissioner on the Danube, he was asked to undertake the administration of the Soudan. This office he accepted, but refused to take more than £2,000 per annum; scarcely enough to cover his expenses. This portion of his life certainly possesses more interest for Englishmen at the present moment than even the history of his brilliant exploits in China.

SIR SAMUEL BAKER.

Gordon's great precursor in the difficult task of bringing the Soudan into order and subduing the Slave-hunting hordes was Sir Samuel Baker, whose remarkable journey to the Lake districts is so graphically described in his *Ismailia*, published in 1874. Encouraged by the warm support of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, who visited Egypt in 1869, the Khedive Ismail appointed Sir Samuel Baker to the command of a large force with which he was "to strike a direct blow at the Slave-trade in its distant nest." The firman contained amongst other clauses the following:—"To subdue to our authority the countries situated to the South of Gondokoro; to suppress the Slave-trade, to introduce a system of regular commerce; to open to navigation the great Lakes of the Equator, and to establish a chain of military stations and commercial depôts throughout Central Africa," &c. A rather large commission, and one which taxed the resources of the commander to the fullest extent. How well Sir Samuel Baker executed his task, and how he opened up the Nile country as far as the Lakes, is well told in his two interesting volumes. He returned to Cairo in August, 1873, after an absence of more than four years, and in February, 1874, Gordon took up the work, commenced by his energetic and courageous predecessor.

GORDON IN THE SOUDAN.

The Soudan is, strictly speaking, a mere geographical expression, its real meaning being *The Country of the Blacks*, and is equivalent to the former name of Nigritia, given to that part of Africa which extends from the Red Sea to the Atlantic. The Egyptian Soudan, with which Gordon had to deal, consists of the country stretching from the Mediterranean nearly to the Equator, a length of almost 1,700 miles, with an average width of nearly 700 miles—or about the size of Europe, omitting Russia.

Colonel Gordon's first expedition took him up the Nile as far as Lake Albert Nyanza, and even some distance beyond, though he turned back at the border of King Mtesa's country, having no mission beyond Mrooli, and his further advance might have produced complications which he was anxious to avoid.

His remarks upon the disappointment that he must naturally have felt at retracing his steps, when only a few miles from the Victoria Nyanza, are characteristic of the man.

"You can imagine what I must feel about this bit of the Nile, for it is the *only bit* I have not done from Berber upwards to Lake Victoria! But reason says Divide, and weaken your forces; concentrate, and strengthen your forces; and so my personal feelings must be thrown over."

This is a specimen of how he acted throughout his long career; self was always thrown over when duty was in the way.

The principal object of Colonel Gordon's first journey was to establish military posts all along the Nile, from Khartoum to the Lakes, and to put together a steamer on Lake Albert Nyanza. He succeeded in both these objects, although the difficulties which he had to overcome were well nigh insurmountable.

He was also commissioned to put down the Slave-trade—an apparently impossible task—but one in which he certainly made some progress, whilst he succeeded in striking terror into the hearts of the Slave-dealers.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS, 1874.

(*Vide Dr. Hill's Book.*)

"I think the Khedive likes me, but no one else does; and I do not like them—I mean the swells, whose corns I tread on in all manner of ways. . . . I saw _____ at Suez. He agrees with me in our opinion of the rottenness of Egypt: it is all for the flesh, and in no place is human nature to be studied with such advantage. Duke of This wants steamer—say, £600. Duke of That wants house, etc. All the time the poor people are ground down to get money for all this. Who art thou to be afraid of a man? If He wills, I will shake all this in some way not clear to me now. Do not think that I am an egotist; I am like Moses who despised the riches of Egypt. We have a King mightier than these, and more enduring riches and power in Him than we can have in this world. I will not bow to Haman. . . ."

"Khartoum, March 14.—We left Berber on March 9, and arrived here on the 13th, at daybreak. The Governor-General met your brother in full uniform, and he landed amid a salute of Artillery, and a battalion of troops with a band. It was a fine sight (the day before your brother had his trowsers off, and was pulling the boat in the Nile, in spite of crocodiles, who never touch you when moving). He cannot move now without guards turns in out. I have got a good house here, and am very happy and comfortable.

"I had a review the day after my arrival, and visited the hospital and the schools. They are well cared for, and the little blacks were glad to see me. (I wish that flies would not dine in the corners of their eyes!) Khartoum is a fine place as far as position goes. The houses are made of mud, and flat-roofed. I leave on the 20th for Gondokoro, and hope to be there on April 18th. The caravan comes after me, and will be there in two months. I am quite well and have quiet times in spite of all the work. Tell _____ (as he said), 'Self is the best officer to do anything for you.'"

For the information of those who may not have a map of these regions, it may be useful to state in general terms that Cairo is situated nearly on the parallel of 30° N. Lat., Khartoum 15° N. Lat., and Gondokoro 5° N. Lat. Thus it is more than 1,000 miles, *as the crow flies*, from Cairo to Khartoum, and an additional 700 to Gondokoro. The distance by river is probably twice as great. It is several hundred miles further still from Gondokoro to the Albert Nyanza.

ON THE NILE ABOVE KHARTOUM.

Colonel Gordon stayed at the wretched station of Saubat not only in order to transform it from a Slave depôt to a military post, but also because the soldiers had an idea that it was an unhealthy spot, and he wished to show them that it was not more so than others.

When he speaks of himself as "your brother," it must be remembered that he is writing to his sister, to whom very many of his letters were addressed.

"It has been a great work, but I have changed the station. I say I!—but in reality it has been the Slave-hunters whom I have taken into my employ. They are such active, hardy fellows, mostly Berberans; not natives of Berber necessarily, but a people inhabiting Dongola, or thereabouts—the remnant of an ancient race. . . . I would sooner, I think, have the Saubat Government than the whole government. To do anything, there is nothing like beginning on a small scale, and directing your energy, like a squirt, on one particular thing. I have made *such* a pair of trowsers for one of the blacks, and the *housewives* are so useful!"

ILLNESS OF HIS EUROPEAN FOLLOWERS.

"Gondokoro, Sept. 11, 1874.—Such an amount of work with my sick, and no chance of getting them off for a long while, I fear. My place is a complete hospital. Now, I will tell you how we started, and what has become of them all. Your brother, *well*, but a shadow; Kemp, engineer, well; Gessi, well, has had a severe fever; his Greek servant, ill, more or less; result: no work; Berndorff, German, my servant, ill; Mengies, German servant, sent back ill; Russell, ill, cannot be moved, invalidated; Anson, dead; De Witt, amateur like Berndorff, dead; Campbell, ill; Linant, very ill, cannot be moved; Long, with King Mtesa, have not heard of him for six months."

THE PENALTIES OF GREATNESS.

"I suffer a little like royalty—that is to say, nothing the Soudan soldier likes better than watching every movement one makes. It is very irritating. One or two will stand for hours watching me. Some people do not like dogs, for they often stare so. Yet I am not like royalty a bit, for I cleaned a duck-gun in public to-day. I will be natural, *coûte que coûte*, and I am quite sure I cleaned the gun better than any Arab would. . . . Neither here nor at Kerri are there mosquitoes; at Lardo very few. You can have but little idea what an intense comfort this is. At Gondokoro they swarmed, and bit you under the table and wherever any skin was tight—trowsers, shirt or coat was to them no obstacle. They liked a cane-bottomed chair best for you to sit on."

HIS MISSION IN THESE LANDS.

"Residence in these Oriental lands tends, after a time, to blunt one's susceptibilities of right and justice, and, therefore, the necessity for men to return at certain periods to their own countries to re-imbibe the notions of the same. Some men become imbued with the notions of injustice much quicker than others when abroad, but — certainly has not taken much time to throw off all the trammels of civilized life, and to be ready to take up the unjust dealings of an Arab Pasha. The varnish of civilized life is very thin, and only superficial. . . . Man does not know what he is capable of in circumstances of this sort ; unless he has the lode star, he has no guide, no councillor in his walk.

"I feel that I have a mission here (not taken in its usual sense). The men and officers like my justice, candour, my outbursts of temper, and see that I am not a tyrant. Over two years we have lived intimately together, and they watch me closely. I am glad that they do so. My wish and desire is that all should be as happy as it rests with me to make them, and, though I feel sure that I am unjust sometimes, it is not the rule with me to be so. I care for their marches, for their wants and food, and protect their women and boys if they ill-treat them ; and *I do nothing of this—I am a chisel which cuts the wood, the Carpenter directs it.* If I lose my edge, He must sharpen me ; if He puts me aside and takes another, it is His own good will. None are indispensable to Him."

END OF GORDON'S FIRST EXPEDITION TO CENTRAL AFRICA.

"Khartoum, October 29, 1876.—I see there are English sparrows here ; it is quite a pleasure to see them. . . . [These letters are my journal, so do not nail me down to anything I may say that I propose to do.]"

"Cairo, December 2.—I arrived here to-day at seven in the morning, twenty days from Khartoum. I called on Cherif Pasha, who is Minister for Foreign Affairs, and he was very civil ; but I do not think he relished telling the Khedive I would not stay in his service.

[Colonel Gordon arrived in London on December 24th, 1876.]

Colonel Gordon had been almost exactly three years in the Soudan. He had performed a vast work, and had opened the country from Cairo to the Lakes, establishing fortified posts and uprooting the Slave-trade in many parts. For a full description of this work, and for an account of the terrible difficulties he had encountered from the opposition of the Slave-dealers, the unhealthy nature of the climate, and the *want of nourishing food*, the reader is referred to Dr. Hill's and Mr. Hake's most interesting volumes. No one can appreciate what Gordon went through. Nearly all white men who went out to him died or were invalidated home. He alone seemed to brave all vicissitudes ; but even his iron frame had many a rude shaking.

His personal servant, a German, forsook him and fled. Upon which he remarked, with characteristic sententiousness, "so much the better ! The best servant I ever had is myself ; *he* always does what I like."

COLONEL GORDON'S SECOND JOURNEY TO THE SOUDAN.

Colonel Gordon was not, however, long allowed to remain at home, for we soon find the Khedive (Ismail) putting great pressure upon his friend to induce him to return to the scene of his former exploits. But this time his empire was to be largely extended, and his rule was to be even more absolute.

On the 31st January, 1877, Colonel Gordon thus writes in London :—

"I have promised :—that if His Highness will not give me the province of Soudan, I will not go back to the Lakes. I do not think he will give it, and I think you will see me back in six weeks. . . . I hope to start to-night. I will make a stand at Cairo ; and, if I see it is no use going up, I will give it up."

But he did not give it up. The Khedive, as will shortly be seen, granted to Colonel Gordon all that he demanded, and he soon after started upon his second expedition to the Soudan.

On February 17 the Khedive thus wrote to Colonel Gordon :—

"Setting a just value on your honourable character, on your zeal, and on the great services that you have already done me, I have resolved to bring the Soudan, Darfour, and the provinces of the Equator into one great province, and to place it under you as Governor-General. As the country which you are thus to govern is so vast, you must have beneath you three vakeels (or deputy-governors), the first for the Soudan properly so-called ; the second for Darfour ; and the third for the shores of the Red Sea and the Eastern Soudan. . . . There are two matters to which I would draw your attention : the first, the suppression of slavery ; the second, the improvement of the means of communication. As Abyssinia for a great distance lies along the borders of the Soudan, I beg you, when you are on the spot, to look carefully into the state of affairs there ; and I give you power, should you think well, to enter into negotiations with the authorities of that kingdom, to the end that a settlement may be arrived at of the matters in dispute between us and them."

On February 18, 1877, Colonel Gordon left Cairo for Suez, on his way to Massawa, where he arrived on the 26th of that month.

CAMEL RIDING.

"I expect to ride 5,000 miles this year, if I am spared. I am quite alone, and like it. I am become what people call a great fatalist, viz., I trust God will pull me through every difficulty. The solitary grandeur of the desert makes one feel how vain is the effort of man. This carries me through my troubles and enables me to look on death as a coming relief when it is His will. The heat is sometimes terrible. I am now accustomed to the camel. It is a wonderful creature, with its silent, cushion-like tread. . . .

"I have a splendid camel—none like it ; it flies along, and quite astonishes even the Arabs. I came flying into this station in marshal's uniform, and before the men had had time to unpile their arms I had arrived, with only one man with me. I could not help it ; the escort did not come in for an hour and a-half afterwards. The Arab chief who came with me, said it was the telegraph. The Gordons and the camels are of the same race—let them take an idea into their heads, and nothing will take it out. If my camel

feels inclined to go in any particular direction, there he will go, pull as much as you like. The grand cordon was given to a man who guaranteed to give it to me as we approached the station; but alas! it did not come for an hour afterwards. It is fearful to see the Governor-General, arrayed in gold clothes, flying along like a madman, with only a guide, as if he was pursued. The Mudir had not time to gather himself together before the enemy was on him. Some of the guards were down at a well, drinking; it was no use, before they had got half-way to their arms, the goal was won. Specks had been seen in the vast plain around the station, moving towards it (like Jehu's advance), but the specks were few—only two or three—and were supposed to be the advance guard, and before the men of Fogia knew where they were, the station was taken. The artillery-men were the only ones ready!"

This marvellous power of endurance and swiftness in travelling often stood Gordon in good stead. He came upon the people unawares, and before his enemies had time to organize any resistance he often rushed in and obtained their submission.

THE BURDEN IS ALMOST TOO GREAT.

"I have an enormous province to look after; but it is a great blessing to me to know that God has undertaken the administration of it, and it is His work, and not mine. If I fail, it is His will; if I succeed, it is His work. Certainly, He has given me the joy of not regarding the honours of this world, and to value my union with Him above all things. May I be humbled to the dust and fail, so that He may glorify Himself! The greatness of my position only depresses me, and I cannot help wishing that the time had come when He will lay me aside and use some other worm to do His work. You have reached your happy eventide. I would that the heat of my life-day was over; but He will aid me, and not suffer me again to put down anchors to this world.

"Khartoum, May 18.—I think the people like me, and it is an immense comfort that, while in the old *régime* ten or fifteen people were flogged daily, now none get flogged. A huge crowd stand around the palatial gates all day, but only a few are privileged with an interview, for I keep a box with a slit in the lid for petitions at the door, and every one can put his petition in it. Hitherto the people could never approach the Governor, unless they bribed the clerks. £600, £300, 10 ounces of gold, £100, and £80 have been given to my head clerk merely in the hope of getting a place."

THE ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

"Oomchanga, June 21.—The immense difficulty there is in causing this Slave traffic to cease, has now come home to me. I wish one of the Anti-Slavery Society, capable of understanding the question, would come here and give me the solution of it. I have complete power—civil and military. No one would say a word if I put one or ten men to death; and, therefore, I must be considered entirely responsible if the Slave-trade goes on. But here is my position: Darfour and Kordofan are peopled by huge Bedouin tribes under their own sheikhs, who are rather more than semi-independent. The country, for the most part, is a vast desert, with wells few and far between, some of which are only known to these tribes. Some of these tribes can put from 2,000 to 6,000 horse—or camel—men into the field; and a revolt, as I know to my cost, is no small thing in such a country. Now these tribes raid on the Negro tribes to the south, or else exchange cloth for Slaves with the Bedouin tribes beyond even the pretended boundary of Egypt."

THE SLAVE QUESTION.

"I wish you would send me the Anti-Slavery Society's publication. I do not know the name or where it is published.*

* *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, 55, New Broad Street, E.C.

"People think you have only to say the word and Slavery will cease. Now here the Gallabat merchants I have told you of, have taken thirty of this tribe. I am trying to search them out, but I dare not do anything against these Gallabats on account of my present position with respect to Shaka. I fear to raise these men against me; they are well-disposed at present.

"One thing troubles me. What am I to do with the three or four thousand slaves, women and children, that are now at Shaka, if we take it? I cannot take them back to their own country; I cannot feed them. Solve this problem for me; I must let them be taken by my auxiliaries, or by my soldiers, or by the merchants. There is no help for it. If I let them loose they will be picked up in every direction, for an escaped Slave is like an escaped sheep—the property of him who finds him or her. One must consider what is best for the individual himself, not what may seem best to the judgment of Europe; it is the Slave who suffers, not Europe."

"People have little idea how little glorious war is; it is organized murder, pillage, and cruelty, and it is seldom that the weight falls on the fighting men—it is on the women, children, and old people. The Crimea was the exception."

THE SLAVE-HUNTERS AGAIN.

"August 31, 1877.—In the midst of my actions against the insurgent tribes, while everything is tending to the end of the revolt, I have received intelligence that the Slave-traders, with their troops of armed slaves, numbering some 6,000, have camped near Dara. I am obliged to go there at once, . . . Started for Dara. Met *en route* the Lieutenant-Colonel who was bribed, coming to meet me. I would not see him. He has allowed his men to rob right and left, and the people came running to me all along the road. These irregulars steal a boy or a girl with as little compunction as a fowl. It is really terrible.

* * *

"I got to Dara alone, about 4 p.m., long before my escort, having ridden eighty-five miles in a day and a-half. About seven miles from Dara I got into a swarm of flies, and they annoyed me and my camel so much, that we jolted along as fast as we could. Upwards of 300 were on my camel's head, and I was covered with them. I suppose that the queen fly was among them. If I had no escort of men, I had a large escort of these flies. I came on my people like a thunderbolt. As soon as they had recovered, the salute was fired. My poor escort! Where is it? Imagine to yourself a single, dirty, red-faced man on a camel, ornamented with flies, arriving in the divan all of a sudden. The people were paralysed, and could not believe their eyes."

SLAVE-HUNTERS OVERAWED.

"Dara, Sept. 2, 1877.—No dinner after my long ride, but a quiet night, forgetting my miseries. At dawn I got up, and putting on the golden armour the Khedive gave me, went out to see my troops, and then mounted my horse and with an escort of *my* robbers of Bashi-Bazouks, rode out to the camp of the other robbers three miles off. I was met by the son of Sebehr—a nice-looking lad of twenty-two years—and rode through the robber bands. There were about 3,000 of them—men and boys. I rode to the tent in the camp; the whole body of chiefs were dumbfounded at my coming among them. After a glass of water I went back, telling the son of Sebehr to come with his family to my divan. They all came, and sitting there in a circle, I gave them in choice Arabic my ideas—that they meditated revolt; that I knew it; and that they should now have my ultimatum—viz., that I would disarm them and break them up. They listened in silence, and then went off to consider what I had said. They have just now sent in a letter stating their submission, and I thank God for it. They have pillaged the country all round, and I cannot help it. . . . I am running a great risk in going into the slaver's nest with only four companies, but I will trust to God to help me, and the best policy with these people is a bold one.

A CARAVAN OF SLAVES.

"*Entre nous*, I think I am conveying from Shaka to Obeid a caravan of Slaves. I cannot help it. One man says that seven women who are with him are his wives! I cannot disprove it. There are numbers of children—the men say that they are all their offspring. . . . When you have got the ink which has soaked into blotting-paper out of it, then Slavery will cease in these lands.

"I have not yet made up my mind what to do about the Slaves and the Slave question; but I mean to stop, and that at once, the Slave-markets at Katarif, Galabat and Shaka; next, I must prevent the raids on the black tribes near the Bahr Gazelle, for which I have given orders. Galabat is a place under a semi-independent chief of the Tokrookis. The Tokrookis are immigrants from Darfour, and are a fierce set. Then at Zeila there is another semi-independent chief, of much power with the tribes, named Aboubec'r. He is a great Slave exporter, and is too strong to touch unless you have plenty of troops. . . . It turns out that the men of Sebehr's son had nought to do with one of the Slave-gangs I met. The Slaves came from Dara, and had been captured and sold to the pedlars by my own officers and men. . . . One of the Shaka men who is riding with me tells me that hundreds and hundreds die on the road, and that when they are too weak to go the pedlars shoot them. I believe this man to be quite truthful."

The risk that Gordon ran by going almost alone into the camp of the greatest Slave-dealer in the Soudan can scarcely be over-rated. It was one of those acts of audacity which were not uncommon in his remarkable career; but from which he always managed to extricate himself unharmed. In China he once accidentally during the capture of a city found himself in the midst of the rebel soldiers, amongst whom he was forced to spend a most anxious and uncomfortable night. Fortunately they refrained from hurting him, and he subsequently persuaded them to let him go.

A similar danger happened to him not long since in the Cape Colony, when Mr. Sauer, the Secretary for Native Affairs, induced him to go on a friendly mission to the Basuto Chief Masupha. Whilst he was there alone and unarmed, as a messenger of peace, the Government induced another Basuto chieftain to attack Masupha. Gordon's marvellous power of inspiring savages with confidence in his perfect integrity once more saved his life, as Masupha, seeing clearly how completely his guest was ignorant of these tactics, allowed him to go in peace.

The great feature in Gordon's character is his sublime faith, which seems to interpenetrate his whole being, and is able to "remove mountains." The "Hill Difficulty" was ever swallowed up in the boundless sea of his unflinching faith; and danger fled away before the steady gaze of the calm, silent, benignant English Pasha, who swept across the solitary desert on his

swift-footed dromedary. This strong faith enabled him to ride single-handed into the camp of the insurgent Slave-dealer and order him to give in his submission.

That Colonel Gordon had no easy time of it in the Soudan may be evident from the quotations already made from his voluminous letters. The following extract under date October, 1877, shows that the officials not only feared but respected him.

"Your brother is much feared and, I think, respected; but not overmuch liked. His refusals are definitive and very strongly couched. 'Never!' is the answer to many requests shouted with a loud voice, and followed with 'Do you understand?' and, 'Have you finished?' Pashas are threatened that if they do not move swiftly I will come after them myself. I pursued one all the way from Dara, and he barely got out of Khartoum in time. He halted at five days distance, thinking the pursuit at an end; but I gave him a telegram, and started him again. . . . Every one wants money, and we have it not.

"The people in the Soudan tremble before your brother. . . . Sometimes I take my watch and say, 'Now you may talk for an hour.' They do talk for a long time; then I say, 'Have you finished?' They begin again. At last, worn out (for I give them no answer till they say they have finished), I say 'I will not hear of it.' Then they begin again; and when they own to having finished, I give them the same answer. They then give up and go away."

In 1877 Gordon rode 3840 miles on camels; the effects of which he thus describes:

"From not having worn a bandage across the chest, I have shaken my heart or my lungs out of their places, and I have the same feeling in my chest, as you have when you have a crick in the neck. In camel-riding you ought to wear a sash round the waist and another close up under the arm-pits; otherwise all the internal machinery gets disturbed. I say sincerely that though I prefer to be here sooner than anywhere else, I would sooner be dead than lead this life. I have told my clerk, to his horror, to bury me when I die, and to make the Arabs each throw a stone on my grave, so that I may have a good monument. It is strange, fatalists as they are in theory, how they dislike any conversation like this; they consider it ill-omened, though they agree that it is written when we are to die."

This kind of life continued for another year. In July, 1878, Gordon thus writes from Khartoum:—

"We have taken twelve caravans of Slaves in two months, which is not bad; and I hope to stop this work ere long. I intercepted a letter from a man up in the Bahr Gazelle, saying he had a lot of Slaves, but he could not find a way to send them down. So I have come down on him, and on those to whom he wrote. . . . If I can, I will stop this Slave work."

In September he writes again:—

"The sight of these ninety Slaves was terrible. I did not see them; but a friend of mine says that there were few over sixteen years of age—some of them had babies, some were little mites of boys and girls!! Fancy, they had come over 500 miles of deserts, and were a residue of four times their number. It is much for me to do to keep myself from cruel illegal acts towards the Slave-dealers; yet I think I must not forget that God suffers it, and that one must keep to the law. I have done the best I can, and He is Governor-General."

Gordon was now getting heartily sick of his work, the difficulties of which were greatly aggravated by the manner in which he was thwarted at headquarters. In one letter he states that the Khedive never punished the men whom he sent down to Cairo, but that they appeared at his balls with the greatest coolness !

To pass away the time we find him taking the clocks to pieces in order to mend them, and complaining that he was quite beaten by a cuckoo clock. The dulness of his position was sometimes intolerable, and he thought that a labourer's lot was much to be envied.

Questioning some of the chiefs of Darfour he learns to his horror that one third of the population of that country has been carried away into Slavery. On this he thus comments :—

“When one thinks of the enormous number of Slaves which have passed into Egypt from these parts in the last few years, one can scarcely conceive what has become of them. There must have been thousands on thousands of them. And then again, where do they all come from? For the lands of the natives which I have seen are not densely peopled. . . . We must have caught 2,000 in less than nine months, and I expect we did not catch one-fifth of the caravans. Again, how many died *en route*? The Slaves are most undemonstrative. They make no signs of joy at being released. I suppose the long marches have taken all the life out of them.”

Notwithstanding the splendid efforts of Sir Samuel Baker in his campaign against the Slave-dealers, and of the five years' heroic and stupendous struggle of Colonel Gordon, this modern Hercules had reluctantly to confess that he had not succeeded in thoroughly cleansing the great Augean stable of the man-stealers. It is heart-breaking to read the following passages, amongst many others, in his reports on the condition of that plague-stricken country. Moreover, he knew that when his back was turned the desolating scourge would once more spread over the land

There is no radical cure for the Slave-trade but by putting down the Slave-markets of Egypt and Turkey. Not the open markets—these have been closed long ago, as a sop to Europe—but those secret and unclean dens where human flesh is bought and sold—the flesh of high-priced fair Circassian women for the harems of rich Pashas, and that of the less valued ebony-skinned sons and daughters of Africa, who have been torn from their far distant homes, and dragged in chains across thirsty deserts, to be sold at so much per head for domestic service or for the Egyptian army.



THE MAHDI.

(Copied from *The Daily Telegraph*, by kind permission of the proprietors. Engraved by A. S. Cattell and Co., by Zinco process.)

THE GREAT SLAVE QUESTION IN 1879, AFTER FIVE YEARS
OF LABOUR !

"All the road from here to Shaka is marked by the camping-places of the Slave-dealers ; and there are numerous skulls by the side of the road. What thousands have passed along here ! . . . I hear some districts are completely depopulated, all the inhabitants having been captured or starved to death. If our Government, instead of bothering the Khedive about that wretched debt, had spent £1000 a year in sending up a Consul here, what a deal of suffering might have been saved ! . . . As for Slaves, I am sick of them, and hope soon to see the last of them ; poor creatures ! I am sorry I cannot take them back to their own countries, but it is impossible to do so. . . . There must have been over 1000 Slaves in this den, and yet the Slave-dealers had had warning of my approach ; and at least as many as 500 must have got away from me. The Bedouin Arabs are up all over the country ; and so are the black tribes, I hear, at Bahr Gazelle. We have got at the heart of them this time. But for how many years has this been going on ?

"Just as I wrote this I heard a very great tumult going on among the Arabs ; and I feared a fight. However, it turned out to be caused by the division of the Slaves among the tribes ; and now the country is covered by strings of Slaves going off in all directions with their new owners. The ostriches are running all about, and do not know what to make of their liberty. What a terrible time of it these poor, patient Slaves have had for the last three days—hurried on all sides, and forced first one day's march in one direction, and then off again in another. It appears that the Slaves were not divided, but were scrambled for. It is a horrid idea, for, of course, families get separated ; but I cannot help it, and the Slaves seem to be perfectly indifferent to anything whatsoever. Imagine what it must be to be dragged from your home to places so far off—even further than Marseilles or Rome. In their own lands some of these Slaves have delightful abodes, close to running water, with pleasant glades of trees, and seem so happy ; and then to be dragged off into these torrid water-forsaken countries, where to *exist* only is a struggle against nature !

SKULLS !

"Why should I, at every mile, be stared at by the grinning skulls of those who are at rest ? I say to Yussuf Bey, who is a noted Slave-dealer, "The inmate of that ball has told Allah what you and your people have done to him and his."

"Yussuf Bey says, 'I did not do it ;' and I say, 'Your nation did ; and the curse of God will be on your land till this traffic ceases.' . . . Just as I wrote these words they came and told me that another caravan of eighteen Slaves had been captured, with two camels. I went to see the poor creatures. They were mostly children and women—such skeletons some of them. Two Slave-dealers had escaped. Now fancy all this going on after all the examples I have made ! Fancy, that in less than twenty-four hours I have caught seventy ! There is no reason to doubt but that seventy a day have been passing for the last year or so. You know how many caravans I have caught—some seventy or eighty ; besides those 1,000 I liberated (?) at Kalaka. It is enough to cause despair. Thus, in three days, we have caught 400 slaves. The number of skulls along the road is appalling. We shall capture a number more at the wells to-night ; for as the Slave-dealers thought I should act on what Abel Bey told me (*i.e.*, that there were no Slaves or Slave-dealers here), and as they had deceived the Italian, they had not taken the precaution of filling their water-bags. Thus they are unable to flee, as there lies three days' journey around here without water. Now, the wells here are guarded. The number of Slaves captured from the dealers in this campaign must be close upon 1,700 ! I have no doubt that very great suffering is going on among the poor Slaves still at large ; for the dealers not yet captured will not

be able to go to the wells to-night, and they will not surrender till pounced on to-morrow. The Slaves are delighted; they are mostly women and children. One little wretch, named Capsune, is not yet four years old, but he has given capital information about the Slave-dealers. He is all stomach and head, with mere pins of legs. (N.B.—Capsune is now in England with Mr. Felkin).

" . . . We have caught more slaves during last night and to-day. The Slave-dealers, seeing the wells guarded, let them go. However, some huge caravans, regardless of their having no water, and of the three days' desert, have escaped. They were pursued by some of the natives; but the slave-dealers fired on them, and so the natives returned here. They noticed that one of the fugitives had died *en route*. It is very terrible to think of the great suffering of the poor Slaves thus dragged away; but I had no option in the matter, for I could not catch them. The water here is horrible,—it smells even when fresh from the wells. I have ordered the skulls, which lay about here in great numbers, to be piled in a heap, as a memento to the natives of what the Slave-dealers have done to their people. . . . To give you an idea of the callousness of the people in these lands, I will tell you what happened to-day. I heard a voice complaining and moaning for some hours, and at last I sent to inquire what it was. It turned out to be an Egyptian soldier, who was ill and wanted water. There were within hearing some thirty or forty people,—some of them his fellow-soldiers,—yet not one, though they understood his language, would give a thought to him. . . ."

HOW MANY SLAVES DIE?

"I have just made a calculation of the loss of life in Darfour during the years 1875-1879. It comes to 16,000 Egyptians, and some 50,000 natives of Darfour. Add to this the loss of life on the Bahr Gazelle, some 15,000, and you will have a fine total of 81,000; and this exclusive of the Slave-trade, which one may put down for these years at from 8c,000 to 100,000."

THE SLAVE-DEALERS.

"Upwards of 470 Slave-dealers have been driven out of this place since I came here two days ago. This evening we were surprised at a caravan of 122 Slaves coming in; the Slave-dealers had come on here with them, and hearing I was here, and having no water, they abandoned their Slaves and fled. The Slaves were sadly distressed by thirst: thirty had died on the road. They had come from near Dara. Though the water here is putrid, and everything is wretched enough, I feel revived when I make these captures. You must count them up. From Oomchanga to Toashia during—say a week—we must have caught from 500 to 600. I suppose we may consider that nearly that number must have been passing every week for the last year-and-a-half or two years along this road!!! And this during my tenure of office!!!—which is very creditable to me. These Slaves just captured have been four or five days without water. They were in the most terrible distress."

FEMININE VANITY.

"To show that the passion of the female sex for finery exists even in the midst of the greatest suffering, three black sluts were brought before me to be questioned as to the escaped Slave-dealers. I saw one carefully undo the corner of a filthy bit of cloth she had on, and produce a necklace of a few paltry beads, which she put on and then looked quite happy. These Slaves had naught to eat for five days; for of course as they could carry no water they could carry no food. . . . Capsune never smiles—he has gone through too much bitterness to feel any joy. I asked him to-day if he had got over his fatigues. He said, 'No, no—I still feel the effects of my journey, and (patting his globe) want of water.' He is only stomach and head—*one globe on the top of another.*"

"June 21, 1879.—More Slaves caught. To-day I was obliged to come to a decision as to the future of the 450 Slaves I had here; who, of course eating, were a real burden. After a long discussion, I have decided to give them

over to the natives of the place, who are of their own blood. When I sent for the Slaves, and told them they could not be sent back to their own homes whence they were torn, but that they were free to go were they liked, they all decided to stay with their fellow-countrymen here, and now they are all streaming over the country on the way to their new homes."

The people of England will surely soon begin to see that all these Egyptian disturbances turn upon the question of Slavery, just as truly as the war in the United States was in reality a Slave-holders' war.

This fact has for years been proclaimed by the ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY, on the unimpeachable evidence of SCHWEINFURTH, BAKER, GORDON, FELKIN, and others.

GESSI PASHA.

"June 25.—Yesterday the post came in from Gessi. . . . He says that the last of the bands of robber Slave-dealers is crushed. I am waiting for him here. . . . He has just arrived, looking much older. Having arranged with him for the future of the Bahr Gazelle, I am now starting for Khartoum. He is going back to follow up Sebehr's son. . . . He is very much gratified at having been made a Pasha, with the second class of Oomanlie, and with my gift—*i.e.*, Soudan's gift of £2,000.

In July, 1879, Gordon left the Soudan after the deposition of the Khedive Ismail. His work against the Slave-dealers was ably carried on by his officers, Gessi Pasha, Emin Bey, Lupton Bey, and others; and a very considerable success was obtained. After Gessi Pasha's tragic death in 1881, the Slave-dealers again had it pretty much their own way. The result we all know in the revolt headed by the Mahdi.

It can scarcely be said that the delay in sending General Gordon to the Soudan has been owing to any lack of warning on the part of those best qualified to judge. In March of last year the writer of this paper published the following extract of a letter from Khartoum, forwarded to him from Egypt by the celebrated African traveller, Dr. Schweinfurth:—

"The Europeans at Khartoum appear to be anxious for the re-appointment of His Excellency Gordon Pasha, as Governor-General; they believe, rightly or wrongly, that he is the only man capable of crushing the rebellion. Our correspondent also says that a large number of the most influential natives hold the same opinion; and confirms the statement that Gordon Pasha was the most popular and beloved Governor-General that ever ruled the Soudan, and that a lively recollection of the wisdom and firmness which he displayed, during his tenure of office, is cherished by all classes of the population of Egypt's distant and troublesome dependency."

Some weeks ago, an eminent person, well known in the philanthropic world, forwarded to the writer the following enthusiastic and fervent appeal, respecting the sending out of

General Gordon to the Soudan (he was at that time living at Jaffa, the ancient Joppa) :—

“Would that an angel would stand at Earl Granville's side and say unto him, ‘And now send men to Joppa, and call for one,’—Gordon : . . . ‘he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.’”

The “angel” *has* appeared—in the form of *Vox Populi*—and Gordon has told them what they ought to do ! Will they do it ?

After Colonel Gordon left the Soudan he undertook a mission to the court of the King of Abyssinia. This mission was one of extreme personal danger and difficulty, and was undertaken purely from a feeling of good nature. The terms offered to King John were such as were not likely to please that irascible monarch ; and it is tolerably certain that it was only the coolness and courage of the envoy that prevented the king from carrying out his threat of executing him. A rather sensational account has been printed of Gordon having seized a chair and placed it on a level with the king's throne, but the writer has his authority for stating that this never occurred : in his own simple language he said, “it would have been both rude and foolish.” He says that the story must have arisen from his having told the king's interpreter that he did not fear him, for “The king's heart is in the hands of the Lord, as the rivers of water ;

‘He turneth it whithersoever He will.’”

He also told the king that death would be a great blessing to him personally, and that therefore he did not fear it.

Of General Gordon's subsequent history little need be said. The unfortunate error of judgment which allowed him to be so overpersuaded as to consent to accept the post of Secretary to Lord Ripon, Viceroy of India, caused much remark at the time. Those who knew General Gordon, feeling sure that a man of his nature and strength of character could never tolerate such a position, did not share the feeling of wonder with which the news of his sudden resignation was received by the public. This resignation was immediately followed by a self-imposed mission to China, which resulted in the conclusion of terms of peace between that country and Russia. Thus for the second time China has been deeply indebted to the exertions of General Gordon.

On his return from China he consented to undertake a military command in Mauritius, mainly to oblige a fellow officer.

His mission to the Cape Colony was a disappointment. Mr. Hake calls it, "his *first* failure." We can all heartily join in the prayer that it may be his *last*.

GORDON'S PRESENT JOURNEY TO THE SOUDAN.

On the 16th of this present month the writer saw General Gordon enter the train at Charing Cross to start on his intended journey to the Congo, *via* Brussels. Not more than three or four persons witnessed his departure—one of these being his own and Livingstone's old friend, the Rev. Horace Waller, who accompanied him to Dover. Two days afterwards Gordon again left Charing Cross, having been summoned from Brussels by a telegraphic order the very day he arrived there. In a few hours, he had made all his arrangements with the Government—his own personal requirements appear to be almost *nil*—and he left for Egypt and the Soudan by the Indian Mail.

On February 3rd, DR. SCHWEINFURTH wrote from Cairo to the author of this pamphlet :—

"GENERAL GORDON flashed through CAIRO like a meteor! I feel sure that he will have a complete success in the Soudan. His policy there will astonish the world."

In the House of Commons on the 12th inst., Mr. GLADSTONE spoke of a plan which had been submitted to the Government by General Gordon, which in any other man's hands would be presumptuous and fanatical! But, he continued, "it is not presumptuous nor fanatical in the case of a man with the gifts and powers of General Gordon."

This plan could not yet be divulged without danger, but the Prime Minister stated that "General Gordon went, not for the purpose of reconquering the Soudan, or to persuade the chiefs of the Soudan—the Sultans at the head of their troops—to submit themselves to the Egyptian Government. He went for the double purpose of evacuating the country, by extricating the Egyptian garrisons, and *reconstituting it, by giving back to these Sultans their ancestral powers*—withdrawn, or suspended, during the period of Egyptian occupation."

Here is a *rôle* worthy, indeed, of the Napoleon of Peace, who goes forth unarmed, like David, save with the few "smooth stones" drawn from the Word of God, with which he will destroy those "hosts" of oppression and misrule that have so long desolated the land!

General Gordon has arrived at Khartoum, having safely passed over the dangers of the Korosko desert. The intense anxiety with which his dangerous journey was watched is almost without a parallel. History records no more heroic figure than that of this simple-minded, God-fearing, Christian Officer, perched aloft upon his swift-footed dromedary, and riding forth with only one English friend and companion, the gallant Col. Stewart, and a few Arab attendants, to confront the wild and barbarous hordes of the Mahdi! The eyes of the whole civilised world followed with eager but anxious gaze the progress of that little cavalcade, and great was the feeling of relief when it once more reached the placid waters of the Nile.

The *Times* Correspondent, telegraphing from Khartoum on the 20th and 21st February, gives a graphic description of General Gordon's entry into that place, and of his prompt and energetic action in reforming abuses, which may be thus epitomised: He was received by thousands of the population, who flocked to meet him, and kissed his hands and his feet, and called him their saviour.

Then he began his work of cleansing the Augean stable, fouled by the crimes of many a Pasha. The people's debts were cancelled, the books containing the account of indebtedness were thrown into a bonfire, together with the bastinado-sticks, the kourbatches and other instruments of torture. The oppressive Bashi-Bazouks were abolished, and the walls of the filthy prison, in which lay men and women who were absolutely rotting with disease and dirt, were pulled down. An old Sheikh was carried into Gordon's presence whose feet had been bastinadoed into a jelly by the late Governor. A telegram was forthwith despatched to Cairo, ordering this cruel Governor to send up £50 for the benefit of the Sheikh, or if he objected, the Governor himself was to be sent up to be tried. Gordon has established boxes into which all the people may drop their petitions, and all are certain to receive redress

and justice. He has opened fresh gates to the city, and abolished the tax heretofore levied on those who entered. He has proclaimed a free market, and has sent away the fellaheen soldiery, who will now return to Cairo. The Bashi-Bazouks are soon to follow, and the city will be guarded by the Soudan alone.

General Gordon, in a farewell letter to Colonel Coetlogon, who goes down with the troops, and whose gallant conduct he praises in the highest terms, concludes in these words: "Rest assured that you leave this place as safe as Kensington Park."

It would be difficult to find an instance in history where one man, by the force of his character and the magic of his name, has in so short a time performed so mighty a work, and has lifted a whole nation from the depths of despair and degradation into the sunshine of happiness, and into a feeling of security and peace, as has already been done by General Gordon.

GENERAL GORDON'S PROCLAMATION.

The proclamation in which General Gordon states that he has not come to interfere with slavery in no way alters the existing law, nor is it intended to do so. By the Convention made between England and Egypt in 1877, *sales* of slaves from house to house are declared to be legal in the Soudan up to 1889, and after that date there is nothing that would interfere with the *holding* of slaves. Enemies of General Gordon had spread the report that he had come up for the purpose of declaring *immediate* emancipation. The proclamation stating that he should not interfere with the already existing law was only issued in self-defence.

HIGHGATE, LONDON,

February 23, 1884.

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