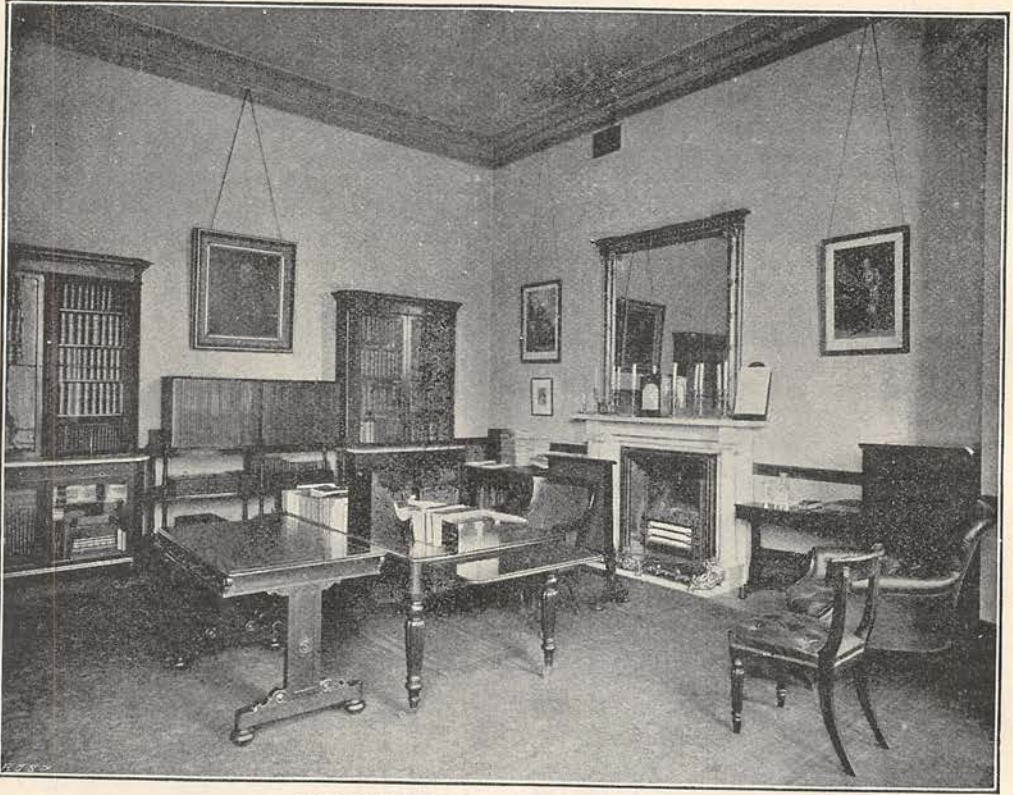


THE NEW COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

BY ARCHIBALD FORBES.



LORD WOLSELEY'S ROOM AT THE WAR OFFICE.



VIRTUAL headship of the Army of a great nation is a position of grave responsibility. Of the great departments administered under the Secretary for War, by far the most important is that of the Military Department,

the head of which is the Commander-in-Chief, who is the principal officer of the Headquarter Staff of the Army. Of that body the high functionary who is now its chief has declared that "it can compare most favourably on every point with that belonging to any other army of Europe. It is no longer composed," continues Lord Wolseley, "of men selected through family or political interest, but on account of their well-proved merits and ability." Yet hitherto there has been lacking to the Headquarter Staff an all-important functionary in the person of a Chief of Staff, who should act as the principal lieutenant of

the Commander-in-Chief, and who, in the words of an able writer, "would differentiate between qualifications, develop special talents, recognise individual idiosyncrasies, and turn each and every man to the best account."

The high office of Commander-in-Chief is of considerable antiquity. General Lord Ligonier was its first holder, nominated to the position in 1760; and the office has subsequently been dignified in the possession of it by illustrious soldiers who have won honours and advancement by eminent services on many battlefields. The Great Duke held it during some years of the long peace. Lord Hill, who fought with skill and success during the Peninsular campaigns and on the stubborn field of Waterloo, and who earned the title of "the right arm of Wellington," occupied the post from 1828 to 1842. From 1852 until 1856 it was held by Hardinge, who, entering the Army in 1791, became a field-marshal sixty-four years later; who, when a captain, retrieved the all but lost battle of Albuera; and who, in the Peninsula, at Ligny, and in the first Punjaub campaign, was in the heart

of sixteen general actions, and was wounded again and again. His successor was the Royal and venerable Prince who, after a long term of assiduous service, now retires from his high office, carrying with him the regard and affection of the Army.

Field-Marshal Viscount Wolsley is a scion of the Irish branch of the old Staffordshire family of Wolsley. There are two baronetcies in the Wolsley family. One of these remains in England, a member of which, to whom the Irish property was devised, was in 1744 created a baronet of Ireland; and a descendant of his, the late Major Garnet Joseph Wolsley, 25th Borderers, was the father of Lord Wolsley. The youngster was a student of military history at an early age. He was bent on becoming a soldier when a mere child, and he was scarcely in his teens when his name was put down for a commission. Meanwhile he was engrossed in surveying and in the acquisition of a knowledge of fortification, military engineering, and astronomical science—his proficiency in which became of valuable service to him when, although an officer of infantry, he proved his qualification for acting as an Assistant-Engineer during the siege of Sevastopol.

His actual military career began when, at the age of about nineteen, he became an ensign in the 80th Regiment, in March, 1852. The 80th was then engaged in the second Burmese war, and owing to the losses which it had sustained, young Wolsley was hurried away to the seat of war in charge of a detachment of recruits. An attempt on the part of a combined force to reduce the stronghold near Donabew of a Burmese chief named Mya-toon had miscarried, and it was found necessary to employ a stronger body of troops in the renewed enterprise. Among the requisite reinforcements was a detachment of the 80th, which Wolsley accompanied. On the morning of March 19th, 1853, the Burmese position was approached, and the 80th was detailed to head the assault. While well in front of the men of his storming party and close under the hostile breastwork, Wolsley encountered the first serious risk of his life. The treacherous earth gave way under him, and he fell into a covered pit, the bottom of which was studded with pointed stakes. Between those and the enemy's close fire he had rather a bad quarter of an hour, but finally was able to rejoin his detachment, which had fallen back. Shaken as he was by the earlier *contrestemps*, he volunteered to lead a second storming party, and the attempt resulted in complete success. Wolsley, however, and a young subaltern of another regiment, while racing along a narrow path for

the honour of being first over the breastwork, were struck down simultaneously, both wounded exactly in the same place. A large iron jingall ball tore away the muscle and surrounding flesh from Wolsley's left thigh, but fortunately the femoral artery, although laid bare, was not severed. While Wolsley lay helpless and prostrate he continued to cheer on his men, and refused to be removed until the enemy's position had been carried. For months his life hung upon a thread, owing to the constant danger of the artery sloughing; yet, thanks to a sound constitution, no permanent injury was sustained.

Recovered from his Burmese wound, Wolsley was presently posted to a lieutenancy in the 90th Regiment, to which he was destined to belong while he remained a regimental officer. The 90th did not reach the Crimea until the beginning of December, 1854, and on the following morning the regiment marched down into the trenches in face of Sevastopol. The strain on the Engineer officers engaged in the siege operations being excessive, Wolsley was presently summoned to take up the duties of Acting-Engineer, which he continued to perform during the protracted siege. During the nine months of active and continuous service before Sevastopol he was probably as often and as long on duty in the trenches as any officer in the Army. As an Engineer officer of the Right Attack he was in a post of exceptional danger, for of the fourteen Engineer officers killed during the siege, twelve belonged to that position, or were killed when on duty there.

It seemed, indeed, as if, almost to the last, he bore a charmed life. On one occasion his coat was pierced by a ball; on another a round shot struck the embrasure at which he was working, and his clothes were cut by splinters; on a third his cap was knocked off his head by a ball. Twice he was slightly wounded; but it was not until near the end of the siege that he was wounded so severely that his injuries were thought to be mortal. He was holding a gabion when it was struck in the centre by a Russian round shot, and the stones it contained were dashed with great force into Wolsley's face and body. The sergeant working with him pulled back without ceremony what he believed to be a dead body, intending to bury it in camp, when he presently discovered that the life of his officer was not extinct. The whole face of Wolsley, as well indeed as of most of his body, was honeycombed by wounds caused by stones from the gabion which were imbedded in the flesh. A large stone was driven through the cheek and jaw into the neck, where it lodged; the right wrist was all but

smashed, and a serious wound was inflicted on his right shin, the bone of which exfoliated later. Both eyes were completely closed, and the sight of one was permanently destroyed. The surgeon's first casual diagnosis was tersely expressed in the words—"He's a dead 'un," but Wolseley roused himself to exclaim feebly, "I am worth a good many dead men yet!" His estimate of the situation proved the correct one, and, after passing some weeks in a darkened cave while, in a measure, recovering his eyesight, he joined the Quartermaster-General's department, and was one of the last to quit the Crimea. He had attained the rank of captain there after two years' service, and when as yet not twenty-two years of age; but, notwithstanding Lord Raglan's special mention of him in despatches and Sir Harry Jones' recommendation of him for promotion, he did not receive the brevet-majority which his services warranted. He brought home, however, the knighthood of the Legion of Honour and the Fifth Class Order of the Medjidie.

Headquarters and seven companies of Wolseley's regiment reached India in time to form part of the gallant little force with which Havelock and Outram accomplished, after hard fighting, what is known as the "First Relief" of Lucknow. The three remaining companies, one of which Wolseley commanded, were shipwrecked in the Straits of Banca while on the voyage to China. Reaching Calcutta from Singapore, the detachment was hurried up country to Cawnpore. After a skirmish at Bithoor, where Wolseley's dinner was cooked with the legs of Nana Sahib's billiard-table, Barnston's battalion of detachments, to which Wolseley belonged, moved up to the Alumbagh, pending Sir Colin Campbell's advance to the accomplishment of the "Second Relief" of Lucknow. Wolseley missed the desperate struggle in the Secundrabagh, but on the following day was charged by Sir Colin with the task of storming the strong position of the Mess-House with his own company, supported by some detachments. The building of the Mess-House itself was found abandoned, but Wolseley, after some sharp fighting, cleared the surrounding buildings of the hostile marksmen who infested them. Then, with only his own company, he dashed across the fire-swept open space from the Mess-House to the Motee Mahal, broke into that great structure by storm, drove the enemy from room to room, and chased them into the Goomtee.

Still, however, between the Motee Mahal, occupied by Wolseley's company—the leading detachment of the relieving force—and the "Engine House" and "Herrn Khana," the

advanced posts of the garrison, there remained an open space of considerable breadth swept by cross fire from the Kaiserbagh and the opposite side of the river. Wolseley called on his company to follow him across the fire-swept interval and thus earn the glory of achieving the earliest communication with the garrison. Simultaneously with his rush there broke out from the "Engine House" a detachment of the garrison bound on a sortie. Out in the open, about midway between the two posts, the advance of the delivering force and that of the beleaguered garrison joined hands. Strange to relate, relievers and relieved were of the same regiment. Headquarters and seven companies of the 90th belonged to the garrison, within touch of which were now the three companies which had been shipwrecked in the Straits of Banca, but were now rejoining the headquarters of the gallant regiment. And to Wolseley it was that there belonged the distinction of having thus been the first to effect a junction with the Lucknow garrison.

When Sir Colin Campbell gave an order, he hated that it should not be obeyed to the very letter. As soon as the ardour of the moment had died down in Wolseley, he had to recognise that old "Kubbar-dar" would have something very unpleasant to say to him for the offence of exceeding his orders. He tried skulking, but Sir Colin had very keen eyesight. The strength of language in which the chief administered a severe wiggling was quite equal to Wolseley's expectations, or rather apprehensions. When ordered only to take the Mess-House, how dared he exceed his instructions by attacking the Motee Mahal? It was lucky for Wolseley, continued Sir Colin, that he had kept out of the way on the previous night, for he (Sir Colin) declared that he never had been so furious against any man in his life. Then the old chief cooled down, and ended by expressing his intention to recommend the young captain for promotion as a reward for his conduct; and Sir Colin, who was soon to become Lord Clyde, was as good as his word.

On Sir Colin's departure from Lucknow after the final relief of the Residency and the withdrawal of its garrison, Outram remained with a division at the Alumbagh, and Wolseley participated in the many fights with the rebels which occurred in that vicinity from the end of November, 1857, to the beginning of March, 1858, when Sir Colin returned to Lucknow in great force, bent on accomplishing its final and utter reduction. The 90th were early in the Kaiserbagh, and participated in the loot of that wonderful palace. After the capture of Lucknow Wolseley was



Ames & Slingsby

Photograph by Werner & Son, Dublin.]

*For the family of
Wolsley*

appointed to the staff of the Quartermaster-General's department of the Lucknow Field Force, commanded by Sir Hope Grant. At the beginning of the summer campaign of 1858 in Oude he had the gratification to learn that he had been gazetted brevet-major for his services during the Mutiny, and at the close of the final campaign in May, 1859, he received the brevet of lieutenant-colonel at the age of twenty-six. He was not long employed in peace work. Sir Hope Grant was appointed to the command of the expedition to China which left Calcutta in February, 1860, in which Wolseley participated in the capacity of Deputy-Assistant-Quartermaster-General in charge of the topographical department. He himself is the historian of that campaign, in which he greatly distinguished himself, and in which he had many interesting and exciting experiences. In the words of his biographer, "during that brief space in Wolseley's military career incidents had been crowded sufficient to make a lifetime eventful."

Few people know that Wolseley was once officially stated to have risen from the ranks. Mr. Low is responsible for the curious story. A fortnight after having been gazetted to his company, the authorities, on the ground that he was too young, cancelled the promotion they themselves had authorised. He promptly intimated his resolution to leave the service if not immediately reinstated, and the order was rescinded. Some time afterwards Captain Wolseley learned the true cause of the strange conduct of the authorities. The father of a young officer had gone to the Horse Guards with the complaint that his son, who was older than Wolseley, had not obtained his company. The official answer was to the effect that the son was too young, and it was explained that the promotion of Captain Wolseley was an exception to the rule, *because he had risen from the ranks*. It was not until later that the authorities discovered the curious blunder which had been committed.

Colonel Wolseley returned to England in May, 1861, after an absence of four years. A lengthened period of leave was before him, and he was hunting in the County of Cork when, in November of that year, he was suddenly recalled to active service. The United States Commodore Wilkes had perpetrated the "Trent Outrage," and the British Government promptly insisted on reparation for the insult. Troops, arms, and military supplies were rapidly despatched to Canada; and a number of selected officers, of whom Wolseley was one, were sent to prepare for the reception and distribution of the troops throughout the provinces. In his capacity as Assistant-Quartermaster-General,

Wolseley was stationed at Rivière du Loup, charged with making arrangements for the accommodation and forwarding of the troops. On the settlement of the Trent affair he determined to visit the Confederate headquarters in the field, and, accompanied by his friend Mr. Frank Lawley, he ran the blockade of the Potomac, and, after a visit to Richmond, where he was received with great cordiality, he proceeded to General Lee's headquarters, where he and Lawley were introduced to the famous chief of the Confederate Army, who received them with kindly courtesy. From Lee's headquarters they passed on to those of General Stonewall Jackson, at Bunker's Hill. With that famous soldier they had a most pleasant interview, and were agreeably surprised to find him very affable, having been led to expect that he was silent and almost, indeed, morose.

It was during his long term of service in Canada, which extended, with intervals of leave at home, from 1862 until 1870, that Wolseley prepared the first edition of that most practical and comprehensive work, "The Soldier's Pocket-Book." It meets every emergency of the soldier's needs on field-service. Naturally it is for the most part technical, but the civilian reader may enjoy many passages of it. For its author is endowed with the rare gift of relieving the driest details with bright flashes of quaint, fresh originality. Every page is suffused with his racy individuality and quiet easy humour. "The sanitary officer on campaign," he writes, for instance, "is a very useless functionary. I have never heard him make any useful suggestions, whereas I have known him make very silly ones. But this is not wholly his fault; for with an army moving it is impossible to drain a town or to carry out any great sanitary measure." Inculcating, as he never tires of doing, the cultivation of the military spirit, he writes:—"The better you dress the soldier, the more highly will he be thought of by women, and consequently by himself." There is a direct frankness in the occasional cynicism of "The Soldier's Pocket-Book," of which the following is a characteristic specimen:—"As a nation we are bred up to feel it a discredit even to succeed by falsehood; we keep hammering along with the conviction that 'Honesty is the best policy,' and that 'Truth always wins in the long run.' These pretty little sentences do well for a child's copybook; but the man who acts upon them in war had better sheathe his sword for ever." The commander who would succeed, it seems, must lie like a Russian diplomat; and Wolseley genially suggests to him that, *inter alia*, "he

can, by spreading false news among the gentlemen of the press, use them as a medium by which to deceive the enemy." The author is a born foe to incapacity. "Do not be contented," he demands, "with any but the best officers and the best men for these small wars of ours; and if some old Adjutant-General Pipeclay refuses to let you have them, be assured the English people will support you; their sound common-sense will be too powerful even for the opposition of poor Lieutenant-General Sir Regulation Routine." It will be seen from such outspoken utterances that even while in comparative obscurity Wolseley was never any respecter of persons. Further quotation is not here possible; but it may be said that strewn over the pages of "The Soldier's Pocket-Book" may be found instance on instance of its author's singular power of dashing in with a few strong strokes of his pen a picture that speaks, and lives, and remains in the memory.

Notwithstanding almost continuous military employment of some kind or other during his nine years of Canadian service, this period of Wolseley's career must have been somewhat dreary. He had got, it was true, a step of rank in 1865, from Brevet-Lieutenant-Colonel to Brevet-Colonel; but I have heard—not, indeed, from his own lips, but on what may be regarded as good authority—that there were times of depression when he was all but decided to quit the service altogether and to betake himself to the avocation of a civil engineer, for which he had eminent qualifications. Any such brooding notions were, however, promptly dissipated when, early in 1870, disloyal ebullitions on the Red River became so serious that the authorities determined to despatch a body of troops to restore the Queen's authority in that remote Settlement, and to nominate Colonel Wolseley to the command of the expedition. Supreme command, whether of a great army or of a comparatively small force, is the worthy aspiration of the zealous and ambitious soldier. It was after forty-two years of stagnation and depression that the dearest wish of Havelock's longing heart was at last gratified on the Allahabad parade-ground by the realisation of the dream of his early life, the ambition of his maturity—an independent command of soldiers in the field. More fortunate than Havelock, to Wolseley there had come independent command at the age of thirty-seven, and after only eighteen years of service. With what resolution, fertility of resource, and unvarying cheerfulness he conducted the arduous journey and voyage over a distance of six hundred miles by water and land-portages, the Argonauts whom he had

led testified enthusiastically on their return to civilisation.

Wolseley returned to England towards the end of 1870. But that the interest of the nation was then centred in the mighty struggle between France and Germany, much greater attention would have been given to the progress and successful issue of the Red River expedition. The Queen bestowed on him the well-deserved honour of the K.C.M.G., and while engaged in the expedition he had received the C.B. But routine held its stern sway, and it befell the man who had recently been the leader of a force equivalent to a strong brigade of all arms to revert temporarily to the position of a major on half-pay. Six months later a sphere of duty was found him at the Horse Guards as an Assistant Adjutant-General.

My personal acquaintance with Sir Garnet Wolseley began during the autumn manoeuvres of 1871 in the vicinity of Aldershot. He had been sent down, mainly in the nature of an experiment, to act as chief of staff to Sir Charles Staveley, who commanded one of the contending divisions. Staveley did not believe in anything so new-fangled as a chief of staff, and in effect, as I understood, told Wolseley that he had no occasion for his services. A man of a sweet temper, Wolseley accepted the situation blandly, and thenceforth, in effect, filled the rôle of a gentleman at large. One day, during a fight on the Hog's Back; I had been talking with old General Blumenthal, the Chief of Staff of the German Crown Prince in the recent war. As I left him I happened to notice a smart and dapper staff-officer on an exceptionally well-bred chestnut charger. The rider approached, and remarked very genially, "Let me introduce myself. I am Sir Garnet Wolseley, and, if I do not mistake, you are Mr. Forbes?" I believe that I expressed surprise that Sir Garnet Wolseley should care to know a member of a class of men of whom he had written so slightly in his "Soldier's Pocket-Book." He made some rejoinder personally complimentary to myself, and I had the good fortune for many years to have the honour of his friendship.

I may remark a finely chivalrous trait in Wolseley's character. About a year after his return from Canada, the late Duke of Wellington offered for competition among the officers of the Army a prize of £100 for the best essay on "The System of Field Manœuvres best suited for enabling British Troops to meet a Continental Army." The arbiter was the late Sir Edward Hamley, then Commandant of the Staff College, and the author of that military classic, the "Operations of War."

Many essays were sent in, each distinguished by a number and a motto inscribed by its writer. Under the signature of "Ubique" Wolseley competed for this prize, but, although his essay made many novel and bold suggestions and went into considerable detail, he had not the fortune to be the winner of the prize, though he ranked among the first ten after the successful candidate. That deservedly fortunate officer was Lieutenant (now Colonel) J. F. Maurice, R.A. When Sir Garnet Wolseley was choosing his staff in preparation for the Ashantee campaign, he made haste to appoint Lieutenant Maurice his private secretary, and has made a point of having him on his staff in all his subsequent campaigns. I was an invalid at the time and unable to accompany the expedition; but Sir Garnet at my request did me the favour to allow Maurice to fill my place as regarded the correspondence of the *Daily News*, a task which he performed with great brilliancy.

The brilliant success achieved by Sir Garnet Wolseley as the commander of the Ashantee expedition in 1873-74, gave proof to the nation that in him it possessed a general of exceptional gifts and qualifications. The issue of that complex and difficult undertaking made it abundantly clear that Wolseley was possessed of fertility of resource, strength of purpose, self-reliance, high military capacity, and remarkable administrative skill. From the first landing on the pestilential shore of the Gold Coast until the day he led his troops back victorious from the destroyed Coomassie, Wolseley was the heart and soul of the enterprise, his moving and master spirit, its strong backbone. He never faltered or lost his resolution when repeated hindrances threatened to baulk him; harassed by a depressing and almost deadly climate, his buoyant courage never deserted him. Sovereign and nation welcomed him home. The Queen reviewed the Ashantee regiments, headed by their chief. The thanks of both Houses were voted to commander and troops. Honours and crosses were tendered to Wolseley, some of which he modestly declined. The House of Commons voted him a grant of £25,000. Although when on campaign he had held the local rank of major-general, he was still only a brevet-colonel, and his substantive rank was merely that of a half-pay major. But he was now promoted to the full rank of major-general "for distinguished conduct in the field." The freedom of the City of London was presented to him with a sword of honour in recognition of his gallant services.

Constantly abroad myself on service in the field, I merely heard of Sir Garnet casually, at first as Inspector-General of the Auxiliary

Forces, and later, in the beginning of 1875, as having been sent to Natal charged with the task of reforming the administration of that Colony. This expedition was familiarly spoken of in Natal as the "Champagne Campaign." Returning to England in the beginning of 1878, I found that war between England and Russia was considered imminent, and that Sir Garnet Wolseley had been nominated as chief of staff to Lord Napier of Magdala, the designated commander of the anticipated expeditionary army. But the war-cloud passed away, dispelled by the labours of the Berlin Congress. Lord Beaconsfield suddenly announced the annexation of Cyprus, and intimated the appointment of Sir Garnet Wolseley as Her Majesty's High Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief of that island.

Sir Garnet was good enough to invite me to accompany him, and a week later he and his staff were on the way to Brindisi in a saloon carriage. The rapidity and thoroughness with which "His Excellency" assimilated document after document was equalled only by the alacrity with which, when a batch of papers had been conquered, he went to sleep at a moment's notice. Such a man for alternate work and sleep I had never known. It occurred to me that he must be amassing a reserve of sleep against the prolonged toil which awaited him in Cyprus. On the further voyage in the *Himalaya* work and sleep again alternated, but Cyprus once reached, a period of indefatigable activity set in. Within a week after reaching Larnaca roads, Sir Garnet knew the island as if it had been the palm of his hand. His capacity for work was immense, but he never seemed oppressed. Always cheery under the burden, ever ready with a quaint flash of humour or a light touch of badinage, he was the brightest companion I have ever known.

Very few men, in my experience, are so ready and cordial as is Lord Wolseley in expressing gratitude for any little service which may be rendered. Perhaps I may be pardoned for citing an instance. While Lord Chelmsford was slowly and circuitously moving in the direction of Ulundi, Wolseley had reached South Africa with instructions to take over the civil and military command in the eastern portion of that territory. Time did not serve him to overtake the army drifting towards Ulundi, and I was well aware that he would be on tenterhooks until he should have definite intelligence as to the situation of the army advancing deviously towards Cetewayo's capital. As soon as the victory of Ulundi was accomplished, on the 4th of July, I rode with all haste to the

nearest telegraph office at Landsmann's Drift, whence I wired to Sir Garnet a short account of the victory of the British arms. The message reached him at Fort Pearson on the Natal border. A member of his staff subsequently told me how Wolseley received it. "Thank God," he exclaimed, with a deep sigh of relief, "this is the best news I have received since I landed. My mind is now at rest." He read the message aloud amid cheers. Then he exclaimed, "I must thank Forbes at once. Brackenbury! despatch this message immediately: 'Sir Garnet expresses to Forbes his sincere thanks for his most welcome news, the first intelligence of the success. He congratulates Forbes on his energy.'" An acknowledgment such as that goes straight to a man's heart.

Wolseley's enduring fame as a commander in the field will no doubt rest chiefly on the campaign in Egypt of 1882, and on the less regular but more exciting and vivid struggle for the rescue of Gordon. There can be but one opinion as to the skilful strategy which he displayed in the Egyptian campaign when opposed to an enemy by no means contemptible. He had been suffering from fever before leaving England, and his eyesight was in such a dangerous state that under medical advice he made the journey by sea in a state-room protected from the light by darkened curtains. But he rallied on reaching Alexandria, and his first action was to put in practice the dexterous ruse which was a principal feature of the plan of campaign he had matured in his room in the War Office. He encountered not a few delays and hindrances, yet he fought and won the final and decisive battle of the campaign on the day and on the spot which he had specified before leaving England. The night march from Nine Hill across the desert to within striking distance of the face of Arabi's entrenchment, at the precise moment offering the best opportunity for the assault delivered so vigorously, was a brilliant triumph of tactical skill, and the victory of Tel-el-Kebir worthily earned for its organiser the peerage which his sovereign made no delay to bestow.

Owing to the vacillation and procrastination of the Government of the day, the task enjoined on Lord Wolseley of attempting to rescue Gordon was from the outset very much in the nature of a forlorn hope. He and his whole command strained every nerve to accomplish the relief of their heroic and devoted comrade. How, after desperate fighting, it was finally ascertained that Gordon had perished only two days before succour was approaching, all the world remembers. The skilful and gallant attempt had failed almost

by a hair's-breadth, but through no default of leader or of troops. Gordon and Wolseley had been bosom friends for many years.

To my thinking, apart from his military genius and personal self-reliance, Lord Wolseley's most marked faculty is his perception of individual character. With this intuitive skill in selection as a guide, early in his career of command he began to gather around him a band of devoted adherents, in each one of whom he had recognised some special and particular attribute of which, when the occasion occurred, he has taken astute and purposeful advantage. His circle of adherents Lord Wolseley has always been on the alert to recruit without regard to interest or position, and acting simply on his perception of character. And he has constantly and almost exclusively employed his own men, arguing with great force and sound reason that what he may have to undertake he could accomplish more efficiently and smoothly with instruments whom he had proven, and between whom and himself there existed a mutual familiarity of methods, rather than with new and unaccustomed men of whom he has had no experience.

With Wolseley's first command his mastery over men and things disclosed itself. One of those who knew him best designated him "A sovereign among soldiers." Of the Ashantee campaign another superior officer thus wrote of him: "His means were limited by time and circumstances; with a handful of men he was required to accomplish a hitherto unattainable feat. . . . Our success was due to the leader and his choice of able subordinates, all of whom acknowledged their chief's superior military genius, and he impressed on all his iron will and steadfast determination. Few men, it may be said of him, as of Pitt, made fewer mistakes or left so few advantages unimproved. To all his other great qualities he added that fire, that spirit, that courage, which, giving vigour and confidence to his soldiers, bore down all resistance."

The precise nature of the functions devolving upon the new Commander-in-Chief seems still, for the moment, somewhat unsettled. But a wise public will assuredly enforce the demand of the Army for concentration of responsibility in his personality, subject to the Parliamentary control expressed in the superior authority of the Secretary of State, and loyally supported by the high officers of the Headquarters Staff and the Military Department as a whole. Still in his mature prime, hale, active and energetic as he is highly-trained and intellectual, Lord Wolseley may be trusted to inspire the Army with the zeal and thoroughness of its head.