

A Glimpse of the Army.

BY A. CONAN DOYLE.



If you want to enjoy God's fresh air, and the blue sky, and the heave and swing of a cantering horse, work in an enteric ward for a month, and then have a week's leave of absence amid the vast clear distances of the veldt, with the exhilarating atmosphere of the camp around you, and the intense living interest of war to fill your mind.

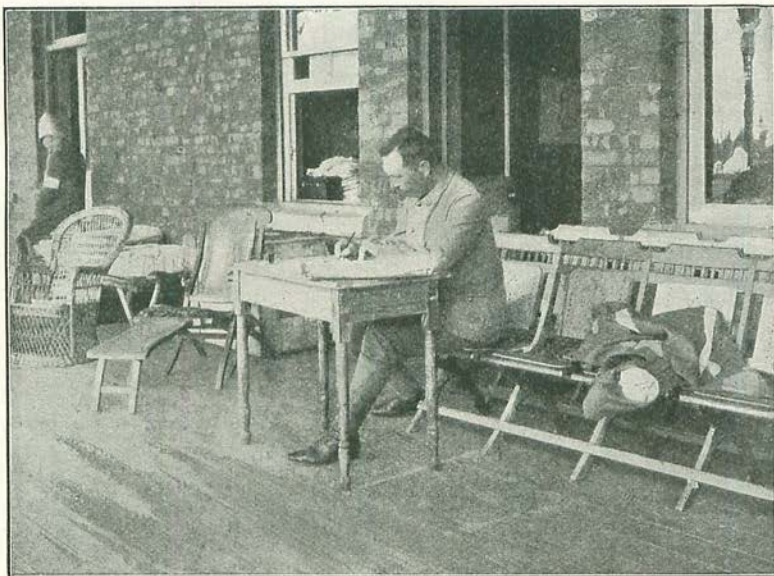
Such a holiday was mine last week, and ere the impression becomes blurred in my mind I would set my experience down on paper—though too near me, perhaps, to get the true focus of all that I have seen.

It was at Karee Siding that we overtook the army—or the centre column thereof. There, over a great olive green plain, heaving up into fantastic hills—there lay a portion of the greatest host which has ever marched under the British colours. These are the Guards' Brigade and Stephenson's Brigade (Welsh, Yorks, Essex, and Warwicks), the whole making the 11th Division. To think that we should have lived to see an English army with eleven divisions! From Kimberley to Elandslaagte, and from Karee to Burghersdorp, well over two hundred thousand sabres and bayonets were ready for the word to advance.

How we have chafed during these five weeks—the more so at the thought of how you must have chafed at home! But now we are well horsed and well fed and high of heart, and our little man is off again. There will be sore hearts if we stop again on this side of Pretoria.

Walk among the fierce brown infantry, see

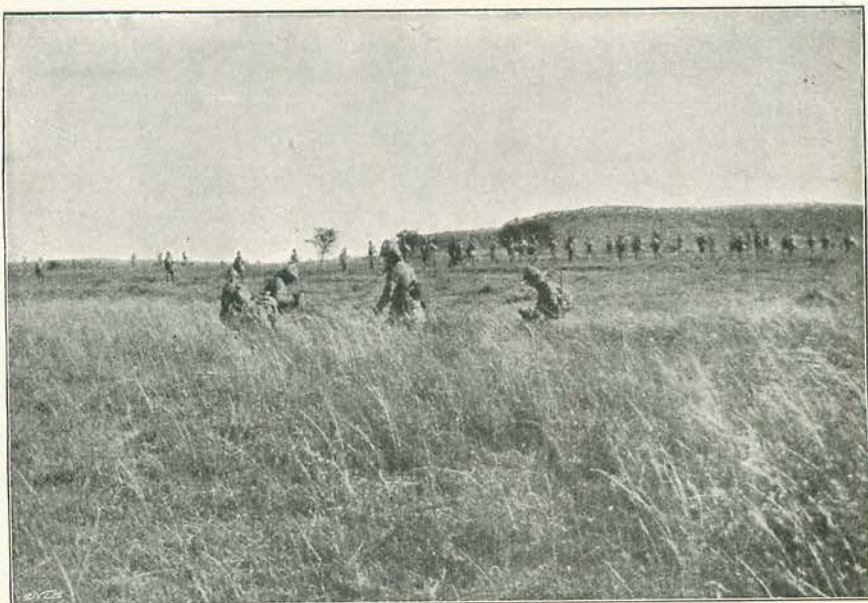
the splendid Colonials, mark the keenness of the cavalry, note the lines of the guns and the hard, savage faces of the men who will handle them. Who can stop this army on the open veldt, now that it has weeded out some of its incompetence and had time to learn in war a few of those lessons which should have been taught in peace? It makes one's heart bleed to think of the deaths and the mutilations and (worse than either) the humiliations which have come from our rotten military system, which has devoted years to teaching men to walk in step, and hours to teaching them to use their weapons.



DR. CONAN DOYLE AT BLOEMFONTEIN.
From a Photograph.

Stand in the pass at Karee, and look north in the clear, fresh morning air. Before you lies a great plain, dull green, with white farm-houses scattered here and there. One great donga slashes it across. Distant hills bound it on all sides, and at the base of those in front, dimly seen, are a line of houses and a steeple. This is Brandfort, ten miles off, and we are advancing to attack it.

The troops are moving forward, line after line of red face and khaki, with rumbling columns of guns. Two men sit their horses beside us on a knoll, and stare with their glasses at the distant houses. Gallant



KAREE SIDING, WHERE DR. CONAN DOYLE CAME UP WITH THE ARMY.
From a Photo. by a Military Officer.

figures both of them: the one spruce, *débonnaire*, well-groomed, with laughing eyes and upward-curved moustache, a suggestion of schoolboy mischief about his handsome face; the other, grim, fierce, all nose and eyebrow, white scales of sun-dried skin hanging from his brick-red face. The first is Pole-Carew, General of Division; the second is Brigadier Stephenson. We are finding our men, and these are among them.

Here is another man worth noting. You could not help noting him if you tried. A burly, broad-shouldered man, with full, square, black beard over his chest, his arm in a sling, his bearing a mediæval knight-errant. It is Crabbe, of the Grenadier Guards. He reins his horse for an instant while his Guardsmen stream past him.

"I've had my share—four bullets already. Hope I won't get another to-day."

"You should be in hospital."

"Ah, there I must venture to disagree with you." He rides on with his men.

Look at the young officers of the Guards, the dandies of Mayfair. No carpet soldiers, these, but men who have spent six months upon the veldt, and fought from Belmont to Bloemfontein. Their walk is dainty, their putties are well rolled—there is still the suggestion of the West-end.

If you look with your glasses on the left you may see movement on the farthest skyline. That is Hutton's Mounted Infantry, some thousands of them, to turn the flank of

any resistance. As far as you can see to the right is Tucker's Division (7th). Beyond that again are Ian Hamilton's Mounted Infantry and French's Cavalry. The whole front is a good thirty miles, and 35,000 men go to the making of it.

Now we advance over the great plain, the infantry in extended order, a single company covering half a mile. Look at the scouts and the flankers—we should not have advanced like that six months ago. It is not our additional numbers so much as our new warcraft which makes us irresistible. The big donga is only two thousand yards off now, so we halt and have a good look at it. Guns are unlimbered—just as well to be ready. Pole-Carew rides up like a schoolboy on a holiday.

"Who's seen old Tucker?" says he, with his glass to his eyes. He has sent a message to the scouts "There, now, look at that aide of mine. He has galloped along the donga to see if any Boers are in it. What right had he to do that? When I ask him he will say that he thought I was there. . . . Halloo, you, sir, why don't you come back straight?"

"I did, sir."

"You didn't. You rode along that donga."

"I thought you were there, sir."

"Don't add lying to your other vices."

The aide came grinning back. "I was fired at, but I dare not tell the old man."

Rap! Rap! Rap! Rifles in front,

"Who said 'rats'?" Everyone pricks up their ears. Is it the transient sniper or the first shot of a battle? The shots come from the farmhouse yonder. The 83rd Field Battery begins to fidget about their guns. The officer walks up and down and stares at the farmhouse. From either side two men pull out lines of string and give long, monotonous cries. They are the range-finders. A gunner on the limber is deep in a sixpenny magazine, absorbed, his chin on his hand.

"Our scouts are past the house," says an officer.

"That's all right," says the major.

The battery limbers up, and the whole force advances to the farmhouse. Off-saddle and a halt for luncheon.

Halloa! Here are new and sinister developments. A Tommy drives a smart buggy and pair out of the yard, looted for the use of the army. The farm is prize of war, for have

drinks milk out of a strange vessel, amid the laughter of his comrades. It is a grotesque and mediæval scene.

The General rides up, but he has no consolation for the women. "The farm has brought it upon itself." He rides away again.

A parson rides up. "I can't imagine why they don't burn it," says he.

The little Dutch boy stares with large, wondering grey eyes. He will tell all this to his grandchildren when we are in our graves.

"War is a terrible thing," says the mother, in Dutch. The Tommies, with curious eyes, cluster round the doors and windows, staring in at the family. There is no individual rudeness.

One Kaffir enters the room. "A Kaffir!" cried the girl, with blazing eyes.

"Yes, a Kaffir," said he, defiantly—but he left.

"They won't burn the house, will they?" cried the mother.

"No, no," we answered; "they will not burn the house."

We advance again after lunch, the houses and steeple much nearer.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Cannon at last!

But it is far away, over at Tucker's side. There are little white puffs on the distant green hills. Those are shells bursting. If you look through your glass you will see—

eight miles off—a British battery in action. Sometimes a cloud of dust rises over it. That is a Boer shell which has knocked up the dust. No Boers can be seen from here.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

It becomes monotonous. "Old Tucker is getting it hot!" Bother old Tucker, let us push on to Brandfort.

On again over the great plain, the firing dying away on the right. We have had a gun knocked off its wheels and twelve men hit over there. But now Hutton's turning movement is complete, and they close in on the left of Brandfort. A pom-pom quacks like some horrid bird among the hills. Our horse artillery are banging away. White spurts of shrapnel rise along the ridge. The leading infantry bend their backs and quicken their pace. We gallop to the front,



From a Photo. by]

PLUCKING THE LOOTED FOWLS.

[Mr. H. C. Shelley.

they not fired at our troops? They could not help the firing, poor souls, but still this sniping must be discouraged. We are taking off our gloves at last over this war. But the details are not pretty.

A frightened girl runs out.

"Is it right that they kill the fowls?" Alas! the question is hardly worth debating, for the fowls are dead. Erect and indignant, the girl drives in her three young turkeys. Men stare at her curiously, but she and her birds are not molested.

Here is something worse. A fat white pig all smothered in blood runs past. A soldier meets it, his bayonet at the charge. He lunges and lunges again, and the pig screams horribly. I had rather see a man killed. Some are up in the loft throwing down the forage. Others root up the vegetables. One

but the resistance has collapsed. The mounted men are riding forward and the guns are silent. Long, sunlit hills stretch peacefully before us.

I ride through the infantry again. "The — blister on my toe has bust." "This — water-bottle!" Every second man has a pipe between his parched lips.

The town is to the right, and two miles of plain intervene. On the plain a horseman is rounding up some mares and foals. I recognise him as I pass—a well-known figure in society. A correspondent suggests that we ride to the town and chance it. "Our men are sure to be there." No sign of them across the plain, but we will try. He outrides me, but courteously waits, and we enter the town together. Yes, it's all right; there's a Rimington Scout in the main street—a group of them, in fact.

A young Boer, new caught, stands among the horsemen. He is discomposed—not much. A strong, rather coarse, face; well-dressed; might appear, as he stands, in an English hunting-field as a young yeoman farmer.

"Comes of being fond of the ladies," said the Australian sergeant.

"Wanted to get her out of the town," said the Boer.

Another was brought up. "I'd have got off in a minute," says he.

"You'd have got off as it was if you had the pluck of a louse," says his captor. The conversation languished after that.

In came the staff, galloping grandly. The town is ours.

A red-headed American Irishman is taken on the kopje. "What the — is that to you?" he says to every question. He is haled away to gaol—a foul-mouthed blackguard.

We find the landlady of our small hotel in tears—her husband in gaol, because a rifle has been found. We try to get him out, and succeed. He charges us 4s. for half a bottle of beer, and we wonder whether we cannot get him back into gaol again.

"The house is not my own. I find great, burly men everywhere," he cries, with tears in his eyes. His bar is fitted with pornographic pictures to amuse our simple farmer friends—not the first or the second sign which I have seen that pastoral life and a Puritan creed do not mean a high public morality.

Sit on the stoep and smoke in the moonlight.

There comes a drunken inhabitant down the main street. A dingy Tommy stands on guard in front.

"Halt! Who goes there?"

"A friend."

"Give the countersign!"

"I'm a free-born Englishman!"

"Give the countersign!"

"I'm a freeborn—" With a rattle the sentry's rifle came to his shoulder and the moon glinted on his bayonet.

"Hi, stop!" cries a senior correspondent. "You Juggins, you'll be shot! Don't fire, sentry!"

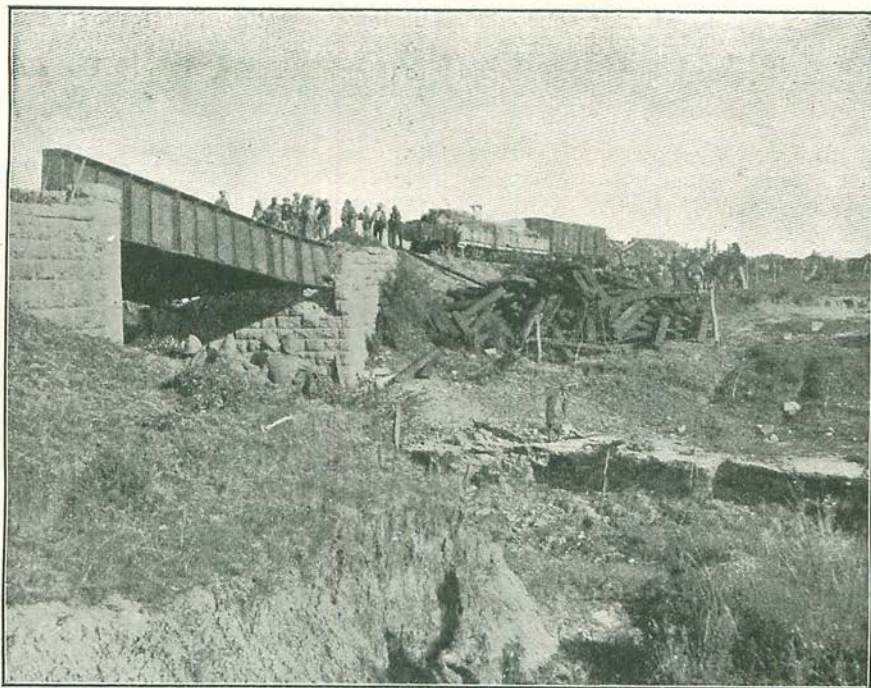
Tommy raised his rifle reluctantly and advanced to the man. "What shall I do with him, sir?" he asked the correspondent.

"Oh, what you like!" He vanished out of history.

I talk politics with Free Staters. The best opening is to begin, in an inquiring tone, "Why did you people declare war upon us?" They have got into such an injured-innocence state that it comes quite as a shock to them when they are reminded that they were the attackers. By this Socratic method one attains some interesting results. It is evident that they all thought they could win easily, and that they are very bitter now against the Transvaal. They are mortally sick of the war; but, for that matter, so are most of the British officers. It has seemed to me sometimes that it would be more judicious, and even more honourable, if some of the latter were less open about the extent to which they are "fed-up." It cannot be inspiring for their men. At the same time there would be a mutiny in the Army if any conditions short of absolute surrender were accepted—and in spite of their talk, if a free pass were given to-day, I am convinced that very few officers would return until the job was done.

Our railway engineers are great. The train was in Brandfort next day, in spite of broken bridges, smashed culverts, twisted metals, every sort of wrecking. So now we are ready for another twenty miles Pretoria-wards. The Vet River is our goal this time, and off we go with the early morning.

Another great green plain, with dotted farms and the huge khaki column slowly spreading across it. The day was hot, and ten miles out the Guards had about enough. Stragglers lay thick among the grass, but the companies kept their double line formation, and plodded steadily along. Ten miles sounds very little, but try it in the dust of a column on a hot day, with a rifle over your shoulder, a hundred rounds of ammunition, a blanket, a canteen, an empty water-bottle, and a dry tongue,



REPAIRING RAILWAY NEAR BRANDFORT—"THE TRAIN WAS IN BRANDFORT NEXT DAY, IN SPITE OF BROKEN BRIDGES, SMASHED CULVERTS, TWISTED METALS, EVERY SORT OF WRECKING. [Mr. H. C. Shelley.]

A grey-bearded padre limped bravely beside his men.

"No, no," says he, when offered a horse. "I must not spoil my record."

The men are silent on the march; no band, no singing. Grim and sullen, the column flows across the veldt. Officers and men are short in their tempers.

"Why don't you," etc, etc, bleats a subaltern.

"Because I never can hear what you say," says the corporal.

They halt for a midday rest, and it seems to me, as I move among them, that there is too much nagging on the part of officers. We have paid too much attention to the German military methods. Our true model should have been the American, for it is what was evolved by the Anglo-Celtic race in the greatest experience of war which the Anglo-Celtic race has ever had.

On we go again over that great plain. Is there anything waiting for us down yonder where the low kopjes lie? The Boers have always held rivers. They held the Modder. They held the Tugela. Will they hold the Vet? Halloa, what's this?

A startled man in a night-cap on a dapple-grey horse. He gesticulates. "Fifty of them—hot corner—captain shot—lost my helmet." We catch bits of his talk. But

what's that on the dapple-grey's side? The horse is shot through the body. He grazes quietly with black streaks running down the reeking hair.

"A West Australian, sir. They shot turble bad, for we were within fifty yards before they loosed off."

"Which kopje?"

"That one over yonder."

We gallop forward, and pass through the open ranks of the Guards' skirmishers. Behind us the two huge naval guns are coming majestically up, drawn by their thirty oxen, like great hock-bottles on wheels. In front a battery has unlimbered. We ride up to the side of it. Away in front lies a small, slate-roofed farm beside the kopje. The Mounted Infantry have coalesced into one body and are moving towards us. "Here's the circus. There is going to be a battle," was an infantry phrase in the American War. Our circus was coming in, and perhaps the other would follow.

The battery (84th R.F.A.) settles down to its work.

Bang! I saw the shell burst on a hillside far away. "3,500," says somebody. Bang! "3,250," says the voice. Bang! "3,300." A puff shoots up from the distant grey roof as if their chimney were on fire. "Got him that time!"

The game seems to us rather one-sided, but who is that shooting in the distance?

"Wheeeeeee"—what a hungry whine, and then a dull, muffled "Ooof!" Up goes half a cartload of earth about a hundred yards ahead of the battery. The gunners take as much notice as if it were a potato.

"Wheeeeeee—ooof!" Fifty yards in front this time.

"Bang! Bang!" go the crisp English guns.

"Wheeeee—ooof!" fifty yards behind the battery. They'll get it next time as sure as fate. Gunners go on unconcernedly.

"Wheeeee—ooof!" Right between the guns, by George! Two guns invisible for the dust. Good heavens, how many of our gunners are left? Dust settles, and they are all bending and straining and pulling the same as ever.

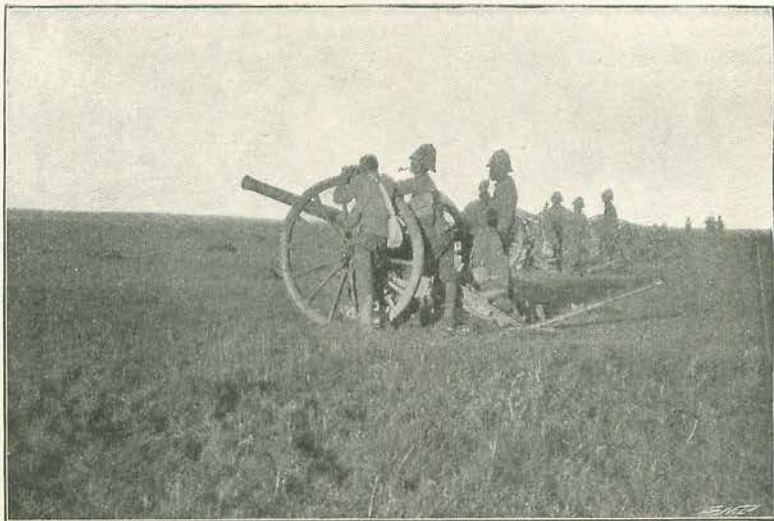
Another shell and another, and then a variety, for there comes a shell which breaks high up in the air—wheeeeeee—tang—with a musical, resonant note, like the snapping of a huge banjo-string, and a quarter of an acre of ground spurted into little dust-clouds under the shrapnel. The gunners take no interest in it. Percussion or shrapnel, fire what you will, you must knock the gun off its wheels or the man off his pins before you settle the R.F.A.

But every shell is bursting true, and it is mere luck that half the battery are not down. Once only did I see a man throw back his head a few inches as a shell burst before him. The others might have been parts of an automatic machine. But the officer decided to shift the guns—and they are shifted. They trot away for half a mile to the right and come into action again. Good old 84th Battery! Nothing the matter with it.

The lonely hero is the man to be admired. It is easy to be collectively brave. A man with any sense of proportion feels himself to be such a mite in the presence of the

making of history that his own individual welfare seems for the moment too insignificant to think of. The unit is lost in the mass. But now we find ourselves alone on the plain with the battery away to the right. The nerves of the novice are strung up by the sound of the shells, but there is something of exhilaration in the feeling also.

There is a fence about two hundred yards off, and to this we tether our horses, and we walk up and down trying with our glasses to spot where the Boer guns are. We have suspicions, but nothing more. Our gunners may know, but we do not feel confident about it. Surely the stealthy, lurking gun



From a Photo. by] • "GOOD OLD 84TH BATTERY!"—NEAR BRANDFORT.

[Mr. H. C. Shelley.

is worth six guns which stand bravely forth in the open. These farmers have taught our riflemen their business, and they bid fair to alter the artillery systems of the world as well. Our guns and theirs are like a fight between a blind man and one who can see.

An artillery colonel is wandering loose, and we talk. He has no job of his own, so he comes, like the coachman on a holiday, to watch some other man's guns at work. A shell falls some distance short of us.

"The next one," says the colonel, "will go over our heads. Come and stand over here." I do so, with many mental reservations. Wheeeeeee—

"Here it comes!" says the colonel. "Here I go!" think I. It burst on our level, but forty yards to the right. I secure a piece as a souvenir.

"Shall we wait for another?" I began to be sorry that I met the colonel.

But a new sensation breaks upon us. Looking back we see that the two monster naval guns are coming into action not fifty yards off our tethered horses, which stand in a dead line before their huge muzzles. We only just got them clear in time. Bang! the father of all the bangs this time, and a pillar of white smoke with a black heart to it on the farther hill. I can see some riders, like ants, going across it—Boers on the trek. Our men take the huge brass cartridge-case out of the gun.

"Can I have that?"

"Certainly," says the lieutenant.

I tie it on to my saddle, and feel apologetic towards my long-suffering horse. The great gun roars and roars, and the malignant spouts of smoke rise on the farthest hill.

A line of infantry in very open order comes past the great guns, and I advance a little way with them. They are Scots Guards. The first line goes forward, the second is halted and lying down.

"That's right! Show where you are!" cries the second line, derisively. I seem to have missed the point, but the young officer in the first line is very angry.

"Hold your tongues!" he shouts, with his red face looking over his shoulder. "Too many orders. No one gives orders but me." His men lie down. The sun is sinking low, and it is evident that the contemplated infantry assault will not come off. One of the great naval shells passes high over our heads. It is the sound of a distant train in a tunnel.

A man canters past with a stretcher over his shoulder. His bay horse lollops along, but the stretcher makes him look very top-heavy. He passes the guns and the infantry, and rides on along the edge of a maize field. He is half a mile out now, heading for the kopje. Every instant I expect to see him drop from his horse. Then he vanishes in a dip of the ground.

After a time the stretcher appears again.



"WE SEE THAT THE TWO MONSTER NAVAL GUNS ARE COMING INTO ACTION."
From a Photo. by Mr. H. C. Shelley.

This time two men are carrying it, and the horseman rides beside. I have bandages in my pocket, so I ride forward also.

"Has a surgeon seen him?"

"No, sir." They lay the man down. There is a handkerchief over his face.

"Where is it?"

"His stomach and his arm." Pull up his shirt, and there is the Mauser bullet lying obvious, under the skin. It has gone round instead of penetrating. A slit with a pen-knife would extract it, but that had better be left for chloroform and the field hospital. Nice, clean wound in the arm.

"You will do very well. What is your name?"

"Private Smith, sir. New Zealander." I mention my name and the Langman Hospital at Bloemfontein.

"I've read your books," says he, and is carried onwards.

There has been a lull in the firing and the sun is very low. Then after a long interval comes a last Boer shell. It is an obvious insult, aimed at nothing, a derisive good-night and good-bye. The two naval guns put up their long necks and both roared together. It was the last word of the Empire—the mighty angry voice calling over the veldt. The red rim had sunk and all was purple and crimson, with the white moon high in the west. What had happened? Who had won? Were other columns engaged? No one knew anything or seemed to care. But late at night as I lay under the stars I saw far on the left front signal flashes from over the river, and I knew that Hutton was there.

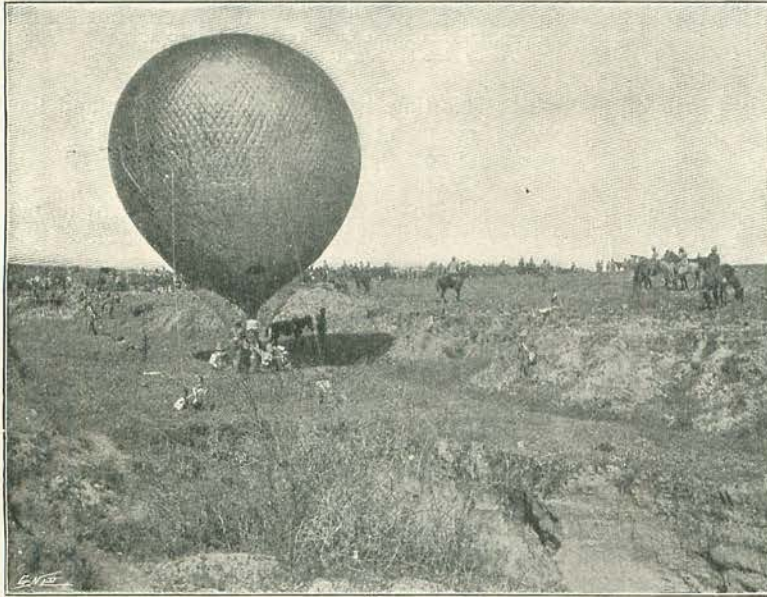
So it proved, for in the morning it was over the camp in an instant that the enemy had gone. But the troops were early afoot. Long before dawn came the weird, muffled tapping of the drums and the crackling of sticks as the camp-kettles were heated for breakfast. Then with the first light we saw a strange sight. A monstrous blister was rising slowly from the veldt. It was the balloon being inflated—our answer to the lurking guns. We would throw away no chances now, but play every card in our hand—another lesson which the war has driven into our proud hearts. The army moved on, with the absurd windbag flapping over the heads of the column. We climbed the kopjes where the enemy had crouched,

trails of waggons, ambulance carts, private buggies, impediments of all kinds, radiate out from the army. It is a bad drift, and it will be nightfall before they are all over. We pass the last of them, and it seems strange to emerge from that great concourse and see the twenty miles of broad, lonely plain which lies between us and Brandfort. We shall look rather foolish if any Boer horsemen are hanging about the skirts of the army.

We passed the battlefield of last night, and stopped to examine the holes made by the shells. Three had fallen within ten yards, but the ant-heaps round had not been struck, showing how harmless the most severe shell fire must be to prostrate infantry. From the rifling marks in the clay the shells were

large ones—forty-pounders, in all probability. In a little heap lay the complete kit of a guardsman—his canteen, water-bottle, cup, even his putties. He had stripped for action, with a vengeance. Poor devil, how uncomfortable he must be to-day!

A Kaffir on horseback is rounding up horses on the plain. He gallops towards us—a picturesque, black figure on his shaggy Basuto mount. He waves his hand



THE WAR-BALLOON NEAR BRANDFORT—"A MONSTROUS BLISTER WAS RISING SLOWLY FROM THE VELDT." [Mr. H. C. Shelley.]

and saw the litter of empty Mauser cases and the sangars so cunningly built. Among the stones lay a packet of the venomous-looking green cartridges still unfired. They talk of poison, but I doubt it. Verdigris would be an antiseptic rather than a poison in a wound. It is more likely that it is some decomposition of the wax in which the bullets are dipped. Brother Boer is not a Bushman, after all. He is a tough, stubborn fighter, who plays a close game, but does not cheat.

We say good-bye to the army, for our duty lies behind us and theirs in front. For them the bullets, for us the microbes, and both for the honour of the flag. Scattered

excitedly towards the east.

"Englishman there—on veldt—hurt—Dutchman shoot him." He delivers his message clearly enough.

"Is he alive?" He nods.

"When did you see him?" He points to the sun and then farther east. About two hours ago apparently.

"Can you take us there?" We buy him for two shillings, and all canter off together.

Our road is through maize fields and then out on to the veldt. By Jove, what's that? There is a single black motionless figure in the middle of that clearing. We gallop up and spring from our horses. A short, muscular, dark man is lying there with a



From a Photo. by]

"A CONVOY IS COMING UP."

[Mr. H. C. Shelley.

yellow, waxen face, and a blood-clot over his mouth. A handsome man, black-haired, black-moustached, his expression serene. No. 410 New South Wales Mounted Infantry—shot, overlooked, and abandoned. There are evident signs that he was not alive when the Kaffir saw him. Rifle and horse are gone. His watch lies in front of him, dial upwards, run down at one in the morning. Poor chap, he had counted the hours until he could see them no longer.

We examine him for injuries. Obviously he had bled to death. There is a horrible wound in his stomach. His arm is shot through. Beside him lies his water-bottle—a little water still in it, so he was not tortured by thirst. And here is a singular point. On the water-bottle is balanced a red chess pawn. Has he died playing with it? It looks like it. Where are the other chessmen? We find them in a haversack out of his reach. A singular trooper this, who carries chessmen on a campaign. Or is it loot from a farmhouse? I shrewdly suspect it.

We collect the poor little effects of No. 410—a bandolier, a stylographic pen, a silk handkerchief,

a clasp-knife, a Waterbury watch, two pounds six-and-sixpence in a frayed purse. Then we lift him, our hands sticky with his blood, and get him over my saddle—horrible to see how the flies swarm instantly on to the saddle-flaps. His head hangs down on one side and his heels on the other. We lead the horse, and when from time to time he gives a horrid dive we clutch at his ankles. Thank Heaven, he never fell. It is two miles to the road, and there we lay our burden under

a telegraph post. A convoy is coming up, and we can ask them to give him decent burial. No. 410 holds one rigid arm and clenched fist in the air. We lower it, but up it springs, menacing, aggressive. I put his mantle over him; but still, as we look back, we see the projection of that raised arm. So he met his end—somebody's boy. Fair fight, open air, and a great cause—I know no better death.

A long, long ride on tired horses over an endless plain. Here and there mounted Kaffirs circle and swoop. I have an idea that a few mounted police might be well employed in our rear. How do we know what these Kaffirs may do among lonely farms held by women and children? Very



GENERAL POLE-CAREW (IN THE CENTRE) OUTSIDE BRANDFORT.

From a Photo. by Mr. H. C. Shelley.

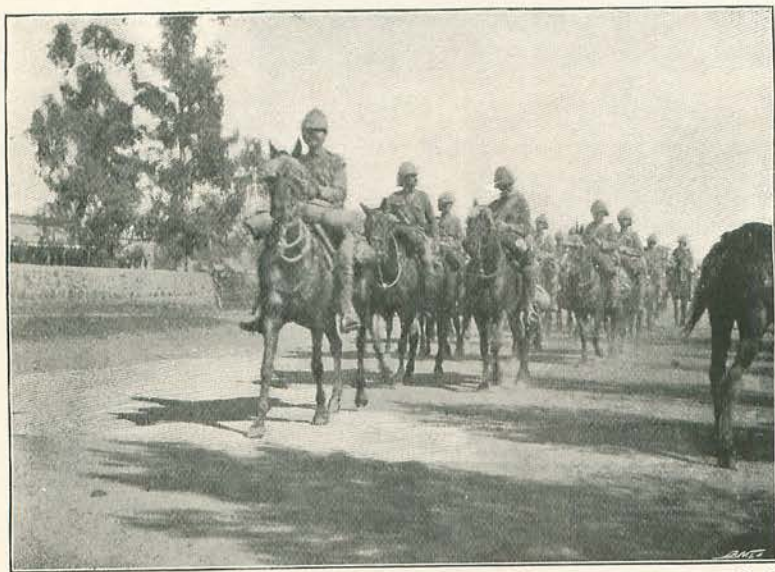
certain I am that it is not their own horses which they are rounding up so eagerly.

Ten miles have passed, and we leave the track to watch our horses at the dam. A black mare hard-by is rolling and kicking. Curious that she should be so playful. We look again, and she lies very quiet. One more has gone to poison the air of the veldt. We sit by the dam and smoke. Down the track there comes a Colonial corps of cavalry—a famous corps, as we see when our glasses show us the colour of the cockades. Good

Here is a small convoy, with an escort of militia, only a mile or two out from Brandfort. They are heading wrong, so we set them right. The captain in charge is excited.

"There are Boers on that hill!" The hill is only half a mile or so away on our left; so we find the subject interesting. "Kaffirs!" we suggest.

"No, no, mounted men with bandoliers and rifles. Why, there they are now." We see moving figures, but again suggest Kaffirs.



From a Photo. by]

THE BRITISH TROOPS ENTERING BRANDFORT.

[Mr. H. C. Shelley.

heavens, will we never have sense beaten into us? How many disasters and humiliations must we endure before we learn how to soldier? The regiment passes without a vanguard, without scouts, without flankers, in an enemy's country intersected by dongas. Oh, for a Napoleon who might meet such a regiment, tear the epaulettes of the colonel from his shoulders, Stellenbosch him instantly without appeal or argument. Only such a man with such powers can ever thoroughly reorganize our army.

Another six miles over the great plain.

It ends by our both departing, unconvinced. We thought the young officer jumpy over his first convoy, but we owe him an apology, for next morning we learned that the Mounted Infantry had been out all night chasing the very men whom we had seen. It is likely that the accidental presence of the convoy saved us from a somewhat longer journey than we had intended.

A day at Brandfort, a night in an open truck, and we were back at the Café Enterique, Boulevard des Microbes, which is our town address.